

BYLAWS

African Catholic Community at St. Joseph (Fullerton) Baltimore, Maryland

ARTICLE I – Name

The name of this organization shall be African Catholic Community at St. Joseph (Fullerton) (hereinafter referred to as ACC).

ARTICLE II – Mission and Vision

To provide an environment at St. Joseph Church for Catholics of African descent to live the Gospel, to proclaim the Gospel by word and example, to share a communion with Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit, as well as to bring together a diversity of people united in faith, hope and love to cherish their culture.

ACC shall:

1. Promote Catholic ethics, cultural values, charity, fellowship, service, vocations, cooperation and understanding among parishioners of African descent and other members of St Joseph Church.
2. Hold events at St. Joseph which encompass African traditions to increase spiritual faith and awareness.
3. Actively participate in St. Joseph Church activities that promote relationships with other parishioners and the community including church fundraising.

ARTICLE III – Organization

Section 1: The management of ACC shall be vested in the Executive Council (hereinafter referred to as the Council). The Council shall comprise 5 elected members, the Immediate Past President and 2 appointed Spiritual Advisors.

Section 2: ACC shall be based at St. Joseph Church, Baltimore, Maryland.

Section 3: The Pastor of St. Joseph Church shall oversee the activities of ACC. From time to time, at the discretion of the St. Joseph Church, the Pastor could schedule a meeting with the President or all officers of ACC for a review of activities.

ARTICLE IV – Membership

Membership is open to all baptized Catholics of African descent by birth, marriage or naturalization who are registered parishioners at St. Joseph Church. An annual nominal validation fee of \$25 shall be accepted from every registered member of ACC.

ARTICLE V – Officers

All active members are eligible to be elected to the Council. The officers of ACC shall be the President, Secretary, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Communication Liaison/Webmaster, Immediate Past President and two Spiritual Advisors. All officers, except the Immediate Past President and the Spiritual Advisors, shall be elected in a general meeting. The President in consultation with the general membership shall appoint the Spiritual Advisors. All elected members of the Council shall serve a term of two years and shall not serve more than two successive terms. The responsibilities of the officers are defined in the Bylaws of the Organization.

ARTICLE VI – Duties of Officers

Section 1: The President shall be the principal representative of ACC and the facilitator of the Executive Council. He/she shall preside over the general meetings and be responsible for the program and various functions at ACC ceremonies and may deliver an address during such meetings. The President shall continue to serve on the Council for two years following the end of his/her term of office. The President shall be one of the signatories to ACC bank account.

Section 2: The Secretary shall be responsible for all correspondence, including meeting minutes of the Organization. The records and seal of ACC shall be in his/her custody. The Secretary shall assume the duties of the President in his/her absence and/or if the President is unable to perform his/her duties.

Section 3: The Treasurer shall deposit into ACC bank account, all monies of the Organization handed to him/her by the Financial Secretary within 3 business days of receipt. He/she shall disburse, preferably by check writing, monies, as directed by the Council. He/she shall have charge of all the treasures of the Organization. He/she shall regularly reconcile ACC financial records with the Financial Secretary. The Treasurer shall be one of the signatories to ACC bank account.

Section 4: The Financial Secretary shall keep a record of the transactions of ACC. He/she shall collect all monies due to the Organization, including membership fees, keep proper account of all financial transactions, and render an annual financial statement to the Organization.

Section 5: The Communication Liaison/Webmaster shall be the principal liaison of ACC. He/she shall be responsible for the timely dissemination of all ACC-planned events and notifying members of scheduled meetings. He/she shall maintain and update the contents of ACC webpage in collaboration with the Parish Office.

Section 6: The Spiritual Advisors shall be the spiritual animators/facilitators. The Spiritual Advisors shall play an important role in promoting the spiritual growth and Mission of ACC through provision of days of recollection, retreats, spirituality workshops, spiritual reading materials, and celebrations. The Spiritual Advisors shall provide consultation, advice and assistance in situations where the mission, spirituality and/or Bylaws of ACC are not followed.

ARTICLE VII – Meetings

The Executive Council shall meet on as needed basis. Regular general meetings shall be held once every month.

The African Mass of ACC shall be celebrated quarterly.

ARTICLE VIII – Funds

The funds of ACC shall be derived primarily from annual membership validation fees, donations, as well as from gifts, endowments, bequests to the Organization and other sources as may be agreed upon by the Council.

ARTICLE IX – Standing Committees

Section 1: Active ACC members shall volunteer to serve on the following Committees:

1. Evangelization and Outreach Committee
2. Welfare and Culture Committee
3. Youth Committee

Members of each committee shall elect a Coordinator of their committee. The committees shall give reports of their activities to the general membership annually.

Section 2: The Evangelization and Outreach Committee shall be responsible for arranging African Mass, charitable campaigns in surrounding communities, reaching out to other immigrant Catholic communities as well as organizing monthly religious activities such as Bible study and praying the Rosary.

Section 3: The Welfare and Culture Committee shall be responsible for organizing receptions, family picnics, trips, and seasonal festivities. The Committee shall also be responsible for arranging spiritual retreats and for paying visits to the sick, aged, crisis-ridden and bereaved members. The Committee shall also be responsible for organizing activities to promote African culture.

Section 4: The Youth Committee shall organize and promote youth programs and events in collaboration with St. Joseph Parish Youth Ministry. The committee shall develop strategies for assisting ACC youths to benefit from opportunities available in the Society.

Section 5: Ad hoc Committees shall be established on as needed basis, by the President with the approval of the general assembly.

ARTICLE X – Order of Business

The general assembly shall regularly meet in the Parish Center at St. Joseph Church every month. Voting by raising hands shall be taken on substantive questions and matters at the discretion of the presiding officer and/or upon the request of at least one-half (1/2) of members present.

The order of business meetings shall be as follows:

1. Opening Prayer
2. Reading of Minutes
3. Matters Arising
4. Reports of Officers and committees
5. New Business
6. Other Matters
7. Adjournment
8. Closing Prayer

ARTICLE XI – New Initiatives

Any ACC member with a new initiative should first send it to the President to put on the meeting agenda for discussion and approval by the general assembly.

ARTICLE XII – Remuneration

The Council members shall render their services to ACC on a voluntary basis and shall not be entitled to any stipend except for well-documented expenditures on behalf of the Organization.

ARTICLE XIII – Resignation

By tendering their letters of resignation, Council members can discontinue rendering their services to ACC before the next election. The entire Council shall appoint an interim officer pending a general election.

ARTICLE XIV – Special Events

Members of ACC shall gather and participate in any special event affecting or organized by an active member when invited.

An active member is a member who has paid the annual validation fee and attended at least half of the meetings of the ACC.

ARTICLE XV – Changes in Bylaws

Section 1: Amendments to the Bylaws may be proposed by at least two-thirds active members of ACC and delivered to the President who shall transfer it to the reconstituted ad hoc Bylaws Committee. Proposals initiated by the members shall be considered by the Bylaws Committee, which shall then make recommendations on the proposal(s) to ACC membership at the general meeting at which the amendments are to be considered. A two-thirds vote of active members present shall be required for adoption of the amendment.

ARTICLE XVI – Indemnity

The ACC shall indemnify all officers or ACC members voluntarily serving on behalf of the Organization for all expenses, judgments, fines, excise taxes, and amounts actually paid in settlement and necessarily incurred in connection with litigation arising out of their voluntary service to the Organization except in cases of willful misconduct or negligence in accordance with policies of St. Joseph Church.

Finalized and approved by ACC General Assembly on September 9, 2017