

The MGOCSM Constitution

Preamble

Mission Statement – “Worship, Study, and Service”--within the practices and beliefs of the Orthodox Christian faith of the Three Holy Ecumenical Councils.

Purpose: The purpose of the MGOCSM of North America shall be to serve as the united body of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Youth from all Dioceses in North America. This organization shall serve in furthering those collective efforts which the individual Dioceses wish to undertake together and benefit those interests which are deemed best held in common by the president of the MGOCSM

History: This organization is understood to be an inclusive movement originally created as the MGOCSM of America in 2001 by the Metropolitan of the American Diocese in his capacity as President of Spiritual Organizations; and is intended to continue existing through all future subdivisions of this entity. The ancient root of this movement is the MGOCSM of India is without question. This Constitution seeks only to lay a framework for the organization. Anything not particularly specified within this document shall be governed by the spirit of Christian love, faith and doctrines of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church.

The Constitution of MGOCSM North America

Chapter 1. Name and Authority

1. The name of the organization originally known as the Mar Gregorios Orthodox Christian Student Movement of the American Diocese (also as known MGOCSM of the American Diocese), shall henceforth be known as the Mar Gregorios Orthodox Christian Student Movement of North America (here after known as MGOCSM of North America).

2. The patron of the movement shall be the spiritual head of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church, the Catholicose of the East.

3. The President of the MGOCSM of North America shall be a single Metropolitan from one of the respective Diocese within North America.

3.1 The President shall hold office for one year.

4. This organization, originally intended to serve the youth of a single “American Diocese”, shall henceforth remain applicable through subsequent subdivided North American-based Dioceses, as defined by the Holy Synod and Managing Committee of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church in India and its Catholicose of the East.

4.1 In its new configuration, authority which was before vested solely in the Metropolitan of the American Diocese, shall now be vested in the respective Metropolitans of these Dioceses, their successors, and shall remain through all future subdivisions as approved by the Holy Synod of the Church.

4.2 If the authority, purpose, structure or functions of the MGOCSM of North America ever fall into question, then such disputes must be resolved by contacting the Holy Synod of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church.

5. This Constitution shall be subject and submissive to the Constitution of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church and supplemental to the bylaws of any Diocese on the North America thereafter.

Note –The following framework is intended to promote ease of communication and consistency of structure. Individual Metropolitans are understood to have all necessary latitude within this framework to better minister their congregations. This structure empowers officers at two levels: Diocesan and National.

Chapter 2. Diocesan Structure

6. Diocesan President - The Diocesan President of MGOCSM within a Diocese shall be the Metropolitan of the respective Diocese.

6.1 The President shall be charged with the general supervision, spiritual guidance and administration at the Diocesan-level.

6.1.1 Such administration shall include, but not be limited to, the issuing of kalpanas (official letters) and the reviewing of any and all decisions made by any MGOCSM council .

6.2 The President shall appoint a Diocesan Secretary and any supplementary Diocesan Vice Presidents as their term would dictate or whenever else deemed necessary.

6.3 The President of each Diocese shall preside over all meetings or delegate an acting president or overseer.

The President shall have the power to call any Council meeting within His own diocese.

6.4 The President shall be responsible for dividing his diocese into smaller administrative areas

6.4.1 The size and and number of parishes within a given area will be set at the President's sole discretion

6.4.2 The Presidents of each Diocese shall issue a kalpana describing the date place and agenda of the assembly a minimum of 4 weeks prior to the event.

7. Diocesan Vice President - A Diocesan Vice-President shall be a priest advisor as appointed by the Diocesan President for a term to be determined by the Diocesan President.

7.1 The office of the Vice-President shall serve to assist the President with his duties within a specific regions and his chief duty shall be to act as an advisor to his respective area(s).

7.2 Vice Presidents shall maintain an advisory role at area events and maintain correspondence with the President and Diocesan Secretary concerning the area.

8. Diocesan Secretary - The Diocesan Secretary shall be appointed by the President and be subject to this authority.

8.1 The position of Diocesan Secretary shall be to oversee any MGOCSM Diocesan-level or area-level events, on behalf of its President.

8.2 If delegated by the President, the Diocesan Secretary shall be empowered to convene and preside over Diocesan-level Council meetings.

8.3 The Diocesan Secretary shall bear ultimate responsibility for the maintenance of all records pertaining to the Diocesan-level MGOCSM.

8.4 The Diocesan Secretary may conduct programs or create an administration among multiple areas in his Diocese. Such areas may then also elect office bearers to carry out necessary functions, but may not supersede the Diocesan structure or the overall authority of the President.

9. MGOCSM Diocesan Treasurer - A Diocesan Treasurer shall be appointed by the President

9.1 The Treasurer shall be responsible for the day-to-day maintenance and budgeting of the Diocesan account. The treasurer shall also be held responsible for presenting the relevant financial reports to the President and Diocesan Council

10. MGOCSM Diocesan Council Representatives - Diocesan Council Representatives shall be elected by the units of their specific area.

10.1 Each MGOCSM Diocesan Council Representative shall answer directly to the authority of the President

10.2 The Council Representative shall be elected within a specific time frame between September to December.

10.3 The Council Representative shall oversee all organizational and administrative

Chapter 3. National Structure

12. MGOCSM General Secretary of North America – The General Secretary shall be empowered to coordinate all common Inter-Diocesan efforts in conjunction with Diocesan Presidents and their Diocesan Secretaries. These common efforts shall include, but not be limited to the following: camps, retreats and conferences, mission projects, fundraisers, ministerial efforts, and any other united efforts on behalf of the MGOCSM of North America.

12.1 This position shall neither be subordinate nor superior to any Diocesan Secretary, but serve to assist in the greater coordination among the Dioceses in North America.

12.2 The General Secretary is required to be an individual with sufficient administrative experience in North America.

12.2.1 It shall be preferable that this individual shall have adequate theological and/or pastoral training corresponding to the stature of the job functions.

12.3 The MGOCSM General Secretary of North America shall be chosen as follows:

12.3.1 The open nominations of qualified individuals shall be taken from the floor of the United General Assembly until no more than five candidates remain after majority voting.

12.3.2 Once recommendations are finalized by the United General Assembly, a single General Secretary shall be appointed from that list, through agreement by all existing Diocesan Metropolitans of North America.

12.3.3 It shall be the responsibility of the outgoing General Secretary to ensure that this process is complete before the end of his term. Should there be a prolonged interim period, the outgoing General Secretary shall be discrete in reasonably maintaining the position until his successor is finalized.

12.4 The General Secretary shall set the agenda for the meeting of the MGOCSM National Council and the United General Assembly

12.5 The term for the position shall be two years.

13. General Treasurer for the MGOCSM of North America - A General Treasurer shall be elected by majority election at the United General Assembly.

13.1 The General Treasurer shall be responsible for the day-to-day budgeting of the National MGOCSM account. He or she shall also be held responsible for presenting the relevant financial report to the President and National Council.

13.2 The term of the General Treasurer shall be two years.

14. United MGOCSM National Council – The United MGOCSM National Council shall be a joint body consisting of all the Presidents (Chapter 2 Section Section 6), Vice Presidents (Chapter 2 Section Section 7), General Secretary (Chapter 2 Section Section 8), General Treasurer , Diocesan Secretaries, Diocesan Treasurers (Chapter 2 Section Section 9) and MGOCSM Diocesan Council Representatives (Chapter 2 Section Section 10) from every Diocese in North America.

14.1 The National Council shall be empowered in a capacity to represent their respective Diocese for the common and united functions of the MGOCSM of North America. The MGOCSM General Secretary of North America shall preside over and coordinate this body with the permission of the National MGOCSM President . The General Secretary shall, in consultation with the Diocesan Secretaries and permission of their respective Presidents, convene at least two United MGOCSM National Council meetings per year.

14.2 The function of the council shall be to initiate and maintain all common

- 1) camps, retreats and conferences
- 2) mission projects
- 3) fundraisers
- 4) ministerial efforts
- 5) any other united efforts on behalf of the MGOCSM of North America.

Maintaining the unity of the MGOCSM of North America as one of their most important functions

14.3 The United MGOCSM National Council shall set the date and time for the Annual United General Assembly with the approval of the President of the MGOCSM of North America.

Chapter 4. United General Assembly

15. United General Assembly – A United General Assembly shall be defined as the annual joint gathering of the youth from all North American Dioceses.

15.1 The purpose of the United General Assembly shall be:

15.1.1 Dissemination information

15.1.2 Passage of relevant amendments to the Constitution

15.1.3 Election of a General Treasurer of North America

15.1.4 Any other relevant matter set in the agenda within the scope of the MGOCSM of North America.

15.1.5 Nomination of the General Secretary of North America

15.2 At least one United General Assembly must be held each year.

15.3 The United General Assembly shall consist of the United MGOCSM National Council and the delegates elected from the units, non-delegates attending, whose number shall be determined by the MGOCSM National Council.

15.4 All resolutions brought to the floor of the United General Assembly shall be passed with at least 2/3's majority of those members present who are able to vote.

15.5 Agenda of the Meeting -

15.5.1 The General Secretary of North America shall be responsible for delivering a report on the overall movement at the annual United General Assembly.

15.5.2 The Diocesan Secretaries shall be responsible for delivering an annual report concerning their respective Diocese at the annual United General Assembly.

15.5.3 The General Treasurer for the MGOCSM for North America shall deliver an updated Statement of Accounts at the annual United General Assembly.

15.5.4 There shall be a confirmation of the existing terms of national officers, which geographic areas are represented, and the names of all Diocesan officers and MGOCSM Council Representatives during every United General Assembly.

15.5.5 Election of the General Treasurer for the MGOCSM of North America and letter of recommendation for General Secretary as needed.

15.5.6 Any discussions and voting concerning amendments to this Constitution.

15.5.7 Any other matters on the pre-determined agenda.

Note- Any other issues raised on the floor of the Assembly that are not on the pre-determined agenda, shall be subject to the approval of the General Secretary in consultation with the Presidents.

Chapter 5. Account & Property of the MGOCSM of North America

16. There shall be a financial account with all common donations collected. Such account shall be maintained under the name MGOCSM of North America.

16.1 The name "MGOCSM of North America" shall be the property of all Dioceses in North America of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church and shall be theirs for any marketing purposes and fund-raising.

16.2 This MGOCSM Account shall be a unique and separate account from any other church funds.

16.3 The Bank Account of the MGOCSM of North America shall be operated by the General Secretary and maintained by the General Treasurer of the MGOCSM of North America.

16.4 All financial transactions more than \$500 must be approved through the consent of all Diocesan Presidents and within the budget of the United MGOCSM National Council. Any incidental uses unbudgeted and/or amounting to less than \$500 may be used and ratified by the Council at a later date.

16.5 Records of the account shall be readily available to any member of the MGOCSM of North America upon request.

16.6 The United National Council shall have the power to set any dues and organize fundraisers, as it may deem necessary for united endeavors

16.7 The United National Council shall collect annual registration dues as deemed necessary.

Chapter 6. Membership

17. Unit Membership - To be eligible for membership, a unit shall be defined as parish, or any gathering of youth at least of high school age, willing to yield to this Constitution, having previously been baptized within the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church or other churches in communion with the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church. A unit in good standing as a member unit of the MGOCSM of North America will:

17.1 respect, adhere, and uphold the faith and doctrines of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church

17.2 be current in any membership dues of the MGOCSM of North America.

17.3 respect, adhere, and uphold this Constitution.

17.4 recognize the authority of the Metropolitan of its respective geographical Diocese, as appointed by the Holy Synod.

Note: Units outside of a parish may be formed under the advisement of the General Secretary in conjunction with the Diocesan Metropolitan and shall register appropriately with the MGOCSM of North America.

18. Individual Membership -

18.1 Any individual who wishes to be a member of the MGOCSM of North America must be at least of high school age and validly baptized within the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church, or a church in communion with it. Should an individual seek membership without such validly accepted baptism, such membership issue shall be resolved by the Diocesan Secretary in conjunction with the respective Diocesan Metropolitan.

18.2 An individual may only be a member of one MGOCSM unit at any given time. If such person wishes to become a member of another unit, that person shall renounce membership to the original unit first, before being given membership to the new unit.

Chapter 7. Areas and Local Structure

19. Creation - The creation of an “area” for the purposes of the MGOCSM dual-structured system shall be as follows:

19.1 An “area” is established for the National structure when it has brought a resolution through its National Council Representative, approved by the United MGOCSM National Council, and formally declared by its respective Metropolitan, and passed by the United General Assembly

19.2 The MGOCSM National Council may also make an independent determination on the need to create a new Area within the National structure with the approval of the respective Metropolitan, approved by the National Council and passed by the United General Assembly.

19.3 The creation of such areas within the National structure shall be determined by the following factors: geographical proximity and/or population density and/or any other issues determined by the council.

19.4 The creation, revocation, or combining of areas within the national structure may be passed by final decision of the MGOCSM National Council and with the ratification by each Metropolitan.

19.5 Any creation, revocation, or combining of areas by the MGOCSM National Council for the National Structure shall in no way preclude a Metropolitan from adjusting areas within His own Diocesan structure to better minister to the youth there.

Chapter 8. Amendments

20.1 Any amendments and revisions to this Constitution must first be brought as a resolution to the MGOCSM National Council and approved by a 3/4 majority vote of the number of areas required for a quorum. (A Quorum is defined as 50% of all eligible representatives plus one more representative.)

20.2 A United General Assembly shall subsequently be convened for the purpose of approving any changes in whole or in part; as approved by the National Council in Chapter 8, Section 1. During this meeting any and all issues raised concerning the amendment must be presented to the Assembly by the National Council.

20.3 After presentation by the National Council, the resolution for revision shall require a 2/3 majority of the United General Assembly present, and also be approved by the respective Metropolitans.

20.4 For the sake of expediency and economy; if the National General Assembly is willing to vote on an amendment or revision, but require substantial revisions to the version originally presented, then a 3/4 majority vote will be required for passage instead of the 2/3 required in Chapter 8, Section 3. (The term substantial revisions shall be subject to the interpretation of the National General Secretary during the Assembly.)

Chapter 9. Missions and Projects

21.1 The Missions and Projects of the MGOCSM of North America, as well as any other entity created or active on the united national level, shall be under the direct supervision of the Metropolitans and the MGOCSM Diocesan Council.

21.2 A area may create its own departments and projects they deem fit, which are not under the direct supervision of the MGOCSM National Council but subject to the approval of their respective Metropolitan.

Annexure

MGOCSM Diocesan Council Meeting Procedures:

1. Administration -

1.1 The Diocesan Council shall consist of the elected representative of every area.

Note - In the event of difficulties arising, which prevent elected Council Representative from attending, the Regional Vice President may empower an individual to serve as representative only for that specific meeting. Such a delegate would have full authority as an MGOCSM Diocesan Council Representative. Empowered individual must have written consent of the Area Vice President, or by appealing to the Council, which already consists of the President and/or his delegate. Any individual may only hold one position on the Council at a time and thus, only one single vote. Area representatives may not run for office during the term.

1.2 The President (or his delegate) shall preside over all MGOCSM Diocesan Council meetings. Such presiding officer is to maintain the order of the meeting, call any matter to a vote, facilitate the discussions, and make rulings if necessary.

1.3 The MGOCSM Diocesan Secretary shall be responsible for keeping any notes and minutes made of meetings in his/her possession.

1.4 Each meeting shall elect one member of the MGOCSM Diocesan Council to act as a recording secretary for that meeting.

1.5 A written document describing all passed resolutions at the MGOCSM Diocesan Council meeting must be distributed to all Diocesan Council representatives for the purpose of disseminating the information to individual chapters. Such document will be provided by the MGOCSM General Secretary within 30 days of the meeting.

2. Agenda -

2.1 The agenda for any MGOCSM Diocesan Council meeting shall be published at the time the official notice of the meeting is first given and approved.

A) Minutes from the previous meeting shall be read and approved. All resolutions approved via electronic communications shall be ratified at the following council meeting.

2.2 The MGOCSM Diocesan Treasurer shall provide an updated treasurer's report at each meeting.

2.3 As permitted by the President, every Council Representative shall provide a brief up to date report of their respective area.

2.4 All resolutions for consideration are governed as follows: Each potential action by the MGOCSM Diocesan Council shall be considered only when in the form of a written resolution, signed by an author before consideration.

i) Once a resolution is brought before the Council, minor amendments and changes may be made that would not alter the overall intent of the document.

ii) If a resolution has been altered to a point that does not reasonably reflect the author's original intent, then a new resolution must be written and resubmitted.

iii) Every resolution that has been brought for consideration shall consist of a resolution number reflecting the date and its chronological order.

3. Voting -

3.1 The simple majority of total MGOCSM Diocesan Council membership shall be the quorum for council meetings.

i) The above voting total includes the President, the Diocesan Secretary, Area Vice Presidents, the MGOCSM Treasurer and the Diocesan Council Representatives.

ii) In the case of a tie or deadlock, only the President (if present) or his presiding officer (if not present) may cast the deciding vote.

3.2 All proposals brought to a vote must be in resolution form.

3.3 A 2/3 majority of the members present are required for passage of any resolution.

3.4 Any matter passed by the council, physical or non-physical is subject to final approval of the president.