

PARISH BY-LAWS

Saint John the Baptist Orthodox Church in the State of New York, Monroe County, and the City of Rochester

I. Preamble

The name of this parish is *Saint John the Baptist Orthodox Church*. The parish was founded on May 17, 1964 as a community of Orthodox faithful committed to: the use of the English language for all liturgical services, ethnic diversity, and welcoming all who seek Christ and His Holy Church. The parish was incorporated by registration with the County Clerks Office (pursuant to Article 5-C of the Religious Corporations Law), Monroe County, State of New York, on December 30, 1966 under the corporate name of *Saint John the Baptist Orthodox Catholic Church*. The parish is under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Diocese of New York and New Jersey (the Diocesan Authority) of the Orthodox Church in America. These by-laws shall be in conformity and compliance with the Statute of the Orthodox Church in America adopted by the Second All-American Council of October 1971 as amended by subsequent and future All-American Councils. A copy of the current Statute of the Orthodox Church in America is attached as Appendix I. All provisions contained therein are hereby affirmed and integrated into these by-laws; in the event of incongruity, the provisions of the Statute of the Orthodox Church in America shall take precedence over that which is contained herein. Reference in these by-laws to “the Statute” shall refer to the currently adopted and governing Statute of the Orthodox Church in America. Subsequent reference in these by-laws to “the parish” shall refer to the body incorporated as Saint John the Baptist Orthodox Catholic Church in Monroe County, State of New York on December 30, 1966 and henceforth known as *Saint John the Baptist Orthodox Church*.

II. Vision, Mission and Objectives

Our vision: to be a living manifestation of the Body of Christ filled with grace, truth and love.

Our mission: to be a community of Orthodox Christians faithful to the doctrines, teachings, and traditions of the Holy Orthodox Church under the ecclesiastical authority and guidance of the Diocese of Washington and New York, Orthodox Church in America. **Our objectives:** (1) to celebrate, witness and proclaim the fullness of our Orthodox faith to all who seek Christ and His Holy Church; (2) to love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our mind, and with all our strength; (3) to love one another; (4) to conduct the services, sacraments and rites of our faith in the English language; (5) to welcome visitors; (6) to show hospitality to strangers; (7) to comfort the afflicted; (8) to assist those in need; (9) to grow in our faith as individuals, as families, and as a parish; (10) to lead all to the knowledge of the truth and the way of salvation; (11) to defend, support and strengthen the one, holy, catholic and Apostolic Church; (12) to look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.

III. Membership

1. “**Voting Members**” must fulfill the requirements contained in the Statute (Article X, Section 5) and:

- a. be eighteen years of age or older;
 - b. be sacramentally active through participation in the sacraments of Holy Communion and Confession;
 - c. have a current parish membership information form completed and filed;
 - d. financially support the work of the parish;
 - e. be involved in the life of the parish for a period of at least six months; and
 - f. not claim voting membership in another parish of the Orthodox Church in America or a parish under the ecclesiastical authority of another canonical Orthodox jurisdiction established in the United States of America.
2. **“Non-voting Members”** are
- a. Orthodox Christians who attend the worship services of the parish on a frequent and regular basis; or
 - b. individuals who have been formally entered into the catechumenate.
3. **“Friends of the Parish”** are those who attend and/or support the parish while not fulfilling the requirements of voting or non-voting membership.
4. **Revocation of Voting Member Status.** The parish council may initiate action to remove the status of voting member from a person who:
- a. knowingly defies the teachings or canons of the Orthodox Church; or
 - b. obstructs the decisions duly rendered by a general parish meeting, the parish council, the Rector, or the Diocesan Authority; or
 - c. causes turmoil, conflict or disruption so as to adversely affect the spiritual life of the parish.

Any action to remove an individual from the status of voting member will, upon approval of the parish council, be referred to the appropriate Diocesan Authority for adjudication and resolution.

III. Parish Leadership and Administration

1. **Rector.** The rector of the parish will serve under the guidance and directives of the Statute (Article X, Section 4).
2. **Additional Clergy** may be appointed by the Diocesan Authority to assist the Rector. They shall be responsible for duties approved by the Diocesan Authority. They shall be under the supervision, and subject to the authority, of the Rector.
3. **General Parish Meeting.** The parish shall convene an annual meeting of all voting members each year during the month of November. Additional general parish meetings may be convened, if necessary, as determined by the parish council. In faithfulness to the Church’s understanding of leadership within the Body of Christ, the general parish meeting is the highest administrative body in the parish. Such meetings shall be convened and function according to the Statute (Article X, Section 7 a-b). Decisions and resolutions shall be made by majority rule of the voting members present. In addition, such meetings shall function in accordance with the following:
 - a. **Chairman.** The chairman of the meeting is the Rector. The Rector may appoint a member of the parish council to chair the meeting. If the parish is temporarily without a Rector, the parish may request that the Diocesan Authority appoint the Warden or another parish council member to serve as chairman.

- b. **Quorum.** A minimum attendance of one-third of the voting members of the parish is required to establish a quorum. A general parish meeting may not be duly convened unless a quorum is present.
 - c. **Authority.** Approval of the annual parish budget, amendments to the parish by-laws, authorization for the sale or purchase of real property, and the election of parish council members are solely under the authority of a general parish meeting.
 - d. **Agenda: Subjects for Consideration.** Subjects for consideration, deliberation, and action include, but are not limited to:
 - i. approval of the parish budget;
 - ii. election of parish council members;
 - iii. reports by the Rector, Warden, and Treasurer;
 - iv. amendments to the parish by-laws;
 - v. election of a delegate or delegates to represent the parish at councils and assemblies of the Diocese and the Orthodox Church in America;
 - vi. election of financial auditors;
 - vii. approval for major construction or repairs to the church edifice and other parish buildings or properties;
 - viii. if there is a pastoral vacancy, petitioning the Diocesan Authority to assign a priest;
 - ix. discussion of any matters relating to the good order of the parish.
 - e. **Diocesan Approval.** The decisions and resolutions of a general parish meeting shall be submitted to the Diocesan Authority within ten days of the meeting. Upon confirmation and approval by the Diocesan Authority, the decisions and resolutions of the general parish meeting shall be binding on the Rector, parish council, and all members of the parish.
 - f. **Announcements.** General parish meetings shall be announced in writing in the parish bulletin and verbally during the Sunday announcements for at least four consecutive weeks prior to the meeting date. As part of these announcements, a request will be made to submit the names of nominees to fill the parish council positions that will be filled by election at the upcoming meeting.
- 4. Parish Council.** The parish council shall serve under the guidance and directives of the Statute (Article X, Section 8 a-d).
- a. **Responsibilities of the parish council shall be:**
 - i. execution of the annual parish budget as approved by a general parish meeting (resource reallocation and unbudgeted expenditures of an urgent nature are permitted; however, reallocations and unbudgeted expenditures exceeding \$3000 must be presented to a general parish meeting for approval);
 - ii. oversight, planning, and management of parish operations;
 - iii. deliberation and resolution of unforeseen issues and requirements as they arise;
 - iv. preparation of a proposed budget for the annual general parish meeting;
 - v. strategic planning;
 - vi. monitoring, sustaining, and nurturing the good order of the parish;
 - vii. confirming and supervising the members of the ministry council.

- b. **Parish council meetings** shall be convened as determined by the members and confirmed by the Rector at least once per each calendar month. Monthly parish council meetings shall be open to visitors; however, special closed sessions may be convened by unanimous decision of the parish council. Decisions made in any closed session shall be reflected in the minutes and available for dissemination to all parish members. To be duly convened, the following members of the parish council must be in attendance: 1) the Rector, 2) the Warden or the Assistant Warden, 3) the Treasurer, and 4) the Secretary. In the case of an extraordinary circumstance, the parish council may permit another voting member of the parish to represent a council member who is unable to attend; however, such persons shall not possess parish council voting privileges.
- c. **The election of parish council members** will take place at the general parish meeting held annually in September. Nominees for a position on the parish council must be voting members who are willing, able and committed to attending monthly meetings throughout the year. Nominees must be identified and authorized by the Rector prior to the general parish meeting in order to confirm eligibility based upon the Statute and the by-laws of the parish. Parish council members shall be elected at the general parish meeting from among those nominated. If one nominee is presented for election to a position on the parish council, a simple affirmation by a majority of those attending the general parish meeting is required for election; if more than one nominee is presented, a ballot vote shall be taken and the nominee receiving the most votes shall be elected. In the event of a vacancy, the parish council may appoint an interim member to the parish council pending the next general parish meeting during which an election will be held to fill the vacancy.
- d. **Parish council members and terms of office** shall be:
 - i. **The Rector** is a permanent member of, and presides over, the parish council. He approves the convening of parish council meetings. He shall present a monthly report on matters of faith, worship, and the spiritual health of the parish. In consultation with the other members of the parish council, he shall prepare the agenda for meetings. The Rector may appoint the Warden to preside over a parish council meeting.
 - ii. **The Warden** is the chief executive officer of the parish and shall have management control of the operational affairs of the parish subject to the oversight authority of the parish council. The Warden is responsible for supervising the other elected parish council members, and leading the parish council in fulfilling all responsibilities contained in paragraph 4a of these by-laws. The Warden shall ensure that all decisions and resolutions of the general parish meeting and parish council are implemented. The Warden, with the concurrence of the Rector, is empowered to call special meetings of the parish council. The Warden shall perform additional duties as may be assigned by the general parish meeting, Rector, parish council, or these by-laws. The **term of office** shall be one year, beginning on January 1st and terminating on December 31st. At the conclusion of the Warden's term, the outgoing Assistant Warden shall assume the

position of Warden. *To implement these by-laws, a Warden shall be elected at the first general parish meeting following the adoption of these by-laws.*

- iii. **The Assistant Warden** shall assist the Warden and perform additional duties as assigned by the general parish meeting, Rector, Warden, or parish council. In the absence or incapacity of the Warden, the Assistant Warden shall perform the duties and exercise the authority of the Warden. The **term of office** shall be one year, beginning on January 1st and terminating on December 31st. The Assistant Warden shall be elected each year during the annual general parish meeting. At the conclusion of the term in office, the Assistant Warden shall assume the position of Warden for the following year as described in paragraph 4dii.
- iv. **The Treasurer** shall have the care and custody of parish funds. The Treasurer shall keep a full and accurate account of all moneys received and paid by the parish and shall render a statement of accounts monthly, at general parish meetings, and whenever the Rector, parish council or Warden shall request. The Treasurer shall remit to the Diocesan Authority all assessments required according to the directives of the Statute. The Treasurer shall perform all other necessary actions and duties in connection with the administration of the financial affairs of the parish and those duties usually pertaining to the office of treasurer of a not-for-profit religious corporation. The Treasurer shall sign all checks, drafts, or other official documents having to do with the financial matters of the parish. In consultation with the parish council, the Treasurer shall prepare a proposed budget for the annual general parish meeting. The **term of office** shall be two years, beginning on January 1st and terminating on December 31st of the following year. The Treasurer shall be elected every two years, in those years ending with an even number (i.e. 0,2,4,6,8) during the annual general parish meeting.
- v. **The Secretary** shall record the proceedings, decisions, resolutions, and prepare minutes for all meetings of the parish council and all general parish meetings. These minutes shall be published, made available to the members of the parish, and retained in the parish archives. The Secretary shall keep in safe custody the official documents and records of the parish as determined by the parish council or Warden, perform duties related to the office of Secretary, and fulfill additional duties as may be assigned by the parish council or Warden. The **term of office** shall be two years, beginning on January 1st and terminating on December 31st of the following year. The Secretary shall be elected every two years, in those years ending with an odd number (i.e. 1,3,5,7,9) during the annual general parish meeting. *To implement these by-laws, a Secretary shall be elected at the first general parish meeting following the adoption of these by-laws and shall serve a term of one year.*
- e. **Resignation.** An elected parish council member may resign at any time by submitting a written notice to the parish council. Such resignation shall take

effect at the time specified in such notice or at a time determined by the parish council.

- f. **Removal.** An elected parish council member is subject to removal, with or without cause, at any time. Such removal shall be enacted by:
 - i. unanimous action of the other parish council members; or
 - ii. the majority action of a general parish meeting; or
 - iii. the action of the Diocesan Authority.
 - g. **Vacancies** shall be filled in accordance with paragraph 4c of these by-laws.
 - h. **End of term responsibilities.** Upon termination of their service, outgoing members of the parish council must relinquish possession and control of parish records, documents, property and materials related to their office.
- 5. Ministry Council.** The parish council shall appoint persons from among the voting and non-voting members of the parish to coordinate various ministries within the parish. Their individual responsibility shall be to coordinate a particular ministry within the life of the parish while encouraging others to work with them; their corporate responsibility shall be to advise the parish counsel regarding ministry effectiveness, funding requirements, and associated concerns.
- a. **Goal.** The goal of the ministry council is to provide every member of Saint John the Baptist Orthodox Church an opportunity to offer their time and talents in supporting the ministries of the parish. We ask every member to participate, as much as possible, in one or more of these ministries.
 - b. **Members** of the ministry council serve at the pleasure of the parish council. The ministry council members shall represent and coordinate, but not be limited to, the following:
 - i. **Liturgical Music Ministry**
 - ii. **Religious Education Ministry**
 - iii. **Charities & Philanthropic Ministry**
 - iv. **Outreach & Evangelization Ministry**
 - v. **Social Events Ministry**
 - vi. **Stewardship & Fundraising Ministry**
 - vii. **Church Beautification & Maintenance Ministry**
 - viii. **Youth Ministry**
 - ix. **Senior Ministry**
 - x. **Parish Library Ministry**
 - xi. **Parish Bookstore Ministry**
 - c. **Meetings** of the ministry council shall take place at least four times each calendar year, and be scheduled to correspond with a parish council meeting. Ministry council members may attend any parish council meeting, or may be specifically asked to attend a parish council meeting, to discuss matters pertaining to their area of ministry.

IV. Parish Property

- 1. **Property** of the parish consists of real and personal property acquired, purchased, devised, bequeathed, or donated to the parish for any purpose; or, purchased, leased, constructed or otherwise acquired by the parish for the promotion of the Orthodox Christian way of worship and life.
- 2. **Dissolution.** Should the parish, as a legal corporation defined in Section I of these by-laws, be dissolved or otherwise abolished, the real and movable property, financial

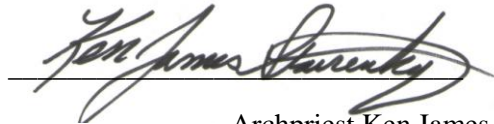
resources, and title deeds shall be at the disposition of the Diocesan Authority of the Diocese of Washington and New York, Orthodox Church in America.

V. Authority of By-Laws

These by-laws were adopted by the parish at a duly convened general parish meeting on September 19, 2004. These by-laws are effective as of the date of approval of the Diocesan Authority. These by-laws revoke, supplant, and supersede any and all by-laws of the parish previously in use. These by-laws may be amended by the decision of a general parish meeting and subsequent approval of the Diocesan Authority.

END OF BY-LAWS

To the glory of God



Date: 29 September 2004

Archpriest Ken James Stavrevsky
Rector,
Saint John the Baptist Orthodox Church

APPROVED BY

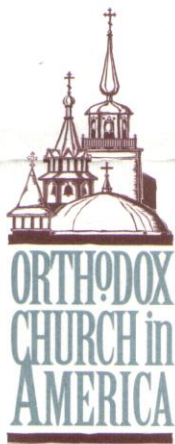
+HERMAN, Archbishop of Washington, Metropolitan of All America and Canada

Date: October 11, 2004

Diocesan Authority,
Diocese of New York and New Jersey
Orthodox Church in America

October 11, 2004

Archpriest Ken James Stavrevsky
Saint John the Baptist Orthodox Church
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Rochester, NY 14620



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Dear Father Ken:

This is to acknowledge that I have received and reviewed the minutes of the general parish meeting of September 19, 2004, as well as the proposed revised by-laws that were ratified at that meeting.

I wish to inform you that I have accepted and blessed both the minutes and the proposed revision in the by-laws, as presented and ratified at the parish meeting.

Be assured of my blessing and continued prayers for you and the faithful of Saint John the Baptist Church.

With love in Christ,



+HERMAN
Archbishop of Washington
Metropolitan of All America and Canada

cc: Archimandrite Nicholas (Iuhos), Acting Chancellor

The Statute of the Orthodox Church in America Article X The Parish

Section 1: The Parish

The parish is a local community of the Church having at its head a duly appointed priest and consisting of Orthodox Christians who live in accordance with the teachings of the Orthodox Church, comply with the discipline and rules of the Church, and regularly support their parish. Being subordinate to the Diocesan Authority, it is a component part of the Diocese.

Section 2: Governing Statute

The organization and administration of a parish are subject to this Statute as adopted at the Second All-American Council of October 19th-21st, 1971, or as amended at any subsequent Council.

Section 3: Parish and Diocese

The parish is established by decision of the Diocesan Bishop within whose diocese it is constituted and after the local group petitioning him has satisfied the Bishop that it is self-supporting and stable and that its charter and by-laws are consistent with canonical requirements and the Statute of the Church. Every parish charter or set of by-laws must provide the mechanics for implementing all decisions of the All-American Council. No charter or by-laws of a parish shall be effective unless approved by the Diocesan Authority. According to the teaching of the Orthodox Church, the Bishop is the head of all parishes which constitute his diocese. He appoints parish clergy, has the obligation and right of regular and special visitations to the parish, approves received reports on parish life and, in case of conflicts and disorders within the parish, takes all necessary measures consistent with the Holy Canons.

Section 4: Rector

At the head of the parish is its Rector. According to the teachings of the Church, he is the spiritual father and teacher of his flock and the celebrant of the liturgical worship established by the Church. He teaches and edifies the People of God entrusted to his spiritual care "with no partiality" (James 2:1) and sees to it that all activities within the parish serve the religious goals of the Church. He is appointed by the Diocesan Bishop and cannot leave his parish without the permission of the Bishop. No activities in the parish can be initiated without his knowledge, approval, and blessing; neither should he do anything pertaining to the parish without the knowledge of his parishioners and parish organs elected by them, so that always and everywhere there may be unity, mutual trust, cooperation, and love. In conformity with his teaching office, the Rector shall have final authority over the church school. To be free from material preoccupations and wholly committed to his sacred ministry, the priest must be compensated by the parish, the amount of his compensation being clearly agreed upon at the time of his appointment.

Section 5: Parishioners

- a. Parishioners are those who, by virtue of their Baptism and Chrismation, are members of the Body of Christ and strive to live in accordance with their high calling (Eph. 4:1) as Orthodox Christians. No one can be a member of the parish if he openly betrays the teaching of the Orthodox Church, or if he leads a life or acts in a manner condemned by the Holy Canons as incompatible with the name of Orthodox Christian.
- b. A "voting member" of the parish is a member [as defined in Article X, Section 5(a)] at least eighteen years of age, who partakes of the Sacraments of Confession and Holy Communion in his home parish at least once a year; has belonged to the parish for a period as may be fixed by the parish; and regularly fulfills such financial obligations as may be established by the All-American Councils, Diocesan Assemblies, and parish.

Section 6: Financial Obligation

Each year the parish shall remit to the Diocesan Treasurer its minimum financial support to the Diocese and to the Orthodox Church in America. This minimum financial support shall be determined by the number of parishioners of the parish [as defined in Article X, Section 5(a)] who are eighteen years of age and over. The parish is also responsible for submitting annually, by January 31st, a census containing the names (first and last) and addresses of such parishioners to the Diocesan Bishop. Additions and/or deletions shall be reported as they occur.

Section 7: The Parish Meeting

- a. Since, according to the universal teaching of the Church, all members of the Body of Christ are responsible for the preservation of the Faith and the edification of the Church, the by-laws of each parish shall provide for regular or special meetings of voting parishioners in good standing. At these meetings all matters pertaining to the life of the parish may be discussed and acted upon, all necessary measures for the spiritual and material welfare of the parish initiated and approved, and officers and members of the Parish Council and other parish bodies provided for in the parish by-laws nominated and elected. All regular and special parish meetings must be announced by the parish priest from the Ambo on three consecutive Sundays and published in the church bulletin. The parish Rector presides at the parish meeting.
- b. The Rector is the intermediary between the parish and the Diocesan Authority, and, in case of his disagreement with one or several decisions of the parish meeting, his motivated opinion must be recorded in the minutes and the whole matter submitted to the Diocesan Bishop. Parish officers may state their motivated opinion, first to the District Dean, then to the Diocesan Bishop.

Section 8: The Parish Council

- a. The parish meeting shall elect a Parish Council to assist the Rector in the administration of the parish and to execute the decisions of the parish meeting. The Parish Council shall consist of as many officers and members as provided for in the parish by-laws. Their mode of election and their terms of office shall also be determined by the by-laws regularly adopted.
- b. All officers and members of the Parish Council shall, after their election at the parish meeting and approval of the Diocesan Authority, be duly installed by the Rector, making a solemn commitment to uphold their office.
- c. The Orthodox Church teaches that there should be an active cooperation between clergy and laity on all levels of Church life. And since the Parish Council is the main parish organ of such cooperation, none of its meetings may be held without the knowledge and blessing of the Rector who, as the head of the parish, must take part in the discussion and solution of all parish affairs. While the priest is the head of the parish, he does not have to be Chairman of meetings. Laymen may be Chairmen. The minutes of all meetings of the Parish Council shall be signed by the Rector and the senior elected officer of the parish. In the case of the Rector's disagreement with one or several decisions of the Parish Council, his motivated opinion shall be recorded in the minutes and the matter referred to the parish meeting.
- d. The Parish Council shall be responsible not only for the spiritual and material needs of the parish, but also for the parish's unity and connection with the Diocese and the Church, for each parish is called to be a living cell and a member of the Body of Christ, and each carries responsibility for the whole Church.

Section 9: The Parish Property

- a. The parish or parish corporation is the sole owner of all parish property, assets, and funds. In administering them, however, the parishioners and the officers elected by them must always remember the religious nature, purposes, and goals of the parish and act as trustees of God's, not man's, property. The parish, as the whole Church, serves God and cares for God's work in the world, and all decisions concerning parish property must be inspired by that care and by the spiritual needs of the Church.
- b. If the parish is abolished, its property is disposed of following the provisions of the parish bylaws. If no such provisions exist, the property is at the disposition of the Diocesan Authority. In all cases, the sacred and untouchable items: the Holy Antimension, the Tabernacle, and the Sacred Vessels, must be surrendered to the Diocesan Bishop.