

Guidelines for the appointment of, and for the tasks allocated to, delegates of the International Old Catholic Bishops' Conference (IBC) for Old Catholic congregations and groups without diocesan organization.

1. Basis

The basis for the proposed guidelines is Art 3 lit i of the Statute of the International Bishops' Conference (IBC):

(The IBC) exercises jurisdiction over Old Catholic parishes and groups outside the local church of a member of the IBC or in formation, by commissioning one or more bishops (whether or not a member of the IBC) to fulfill this task.

2. Scope of the Guidelines

In executing and applying the article above, the present guidelines have the following kinds of church communities and groups in mind who, by their documented acceptance in principle of the 'Declaration of Utrecht' of 1889 and the 'Statute of the International Old Catholic Bishops' Conference' of 2000, have aligned themselves with the Union of Utrecht of the Old Catholic Churches:

2.1. Congregations and groups who in their countries have not been organized as a diocese or have not been recognized by the IBC as a diocese¹.

2.2. Congregations and groups, who in the past in their countries have been organized as a diocese and have been recognized by the IBC as member churches of the Union of Utrecht, but who, for certain reasons and over a longer period, have not enjoyed a proper functioning diocesan organization (for example: no synod, no bishop, no episcopal administrator)².

3. Appointment

3.1 Before the appointment of a delegate, the Office of the IBC must consult with the elected representatives of the church community concerned.

3.2.1 The IBC appoints a bishop as delegate for any of the above mentioned church communities by a simple majority.

3.2.2 This has to be on the understanding that the church of the bishop who has been designated delegate agrees with his appointment; this church accepts no responsibility for his (the delegate's) fulfilling of his tasks.

3.3 The appointment is for a period of four years. Thereafter, in the light of 3.1 and 3.2, an extension of the commission is possible.

4. Tasks

4.1. The delegate exercises jurisdiction on behalf of the IBC as well as in agreement with the existing church statutes of the church community concerned and in a spirit of co-operation with the elected representatives of that church.

4.2. In the church for which he is responsible, the delegate of the IBC has to perform especially the following tasks:

4.2.1. He gives spiritual support to the church community he has been placed in charge of by regular contact, exchange of information and pastoral visits.

4.2.2. He is responsible for carrying out church rites such as confirmation, ordination to the diaconate and priesthood (presbyterate), whereby he may delegate the administration of confirmation to a priest

¹ As of 2001: France, Italy, Scandinavia (Sweden and Denmark)

² As of 2001: The Old Catholic Church of Croatia (HravskaKatoli_ka Crkva - recognized since 1924, respectively 1974).

of the church community concerned. Moreover, he arranges for the church community to be provided annually with the chrism and the other oils.

4.2.3. He is to encourage the church community to develop local and, if appropriate, diocesan regulations; he is to stimulate and support them in their witness and service, in the academic formation of candidates for ministry in the church, as well as in their relationships with other churches.

4.3. In line with Article 14 lit. a and b of the Inner Order of the IBC Statute the delegate of the IBC is responsible for ordinations to the diaconate and the priesthood, the reception of clergy for ministry, for assigning their duties and for their (voluntary or forced) resignation from church ministry. In doing this, he acts in compliance with the existing local regulations.

4.4. The delegate of the IBC makes sure from written references that persons seeking ordination as deacon or priest or asking for reception as clergy into the church community concerned

- should have adequate theological and pastoral formation
- if necessary, can produce letters of ordination
- have been made aware of the fundamentals of Old Catholic theology - if possible in connection with an Old Catholic seminary which has been recognized by the IBC
- are accepted by the elected representatives of that church community.

5. Finances

The delegate can invoice the IBC for expenses. In this case the IBC meets the travel costs, while the church community concerned meets accommodation costs as far as possible.

6. Reporting to the IBC

6.1 The delegate of the IBC produces a yearly written report for the attention of the IBC.

6.2 The report must contain among other things particulars about the following points:

- new developments or difficulties that have arisen
- numbers of congregations and their faithful, numbers of the clergy
- the financial situation
- the present state of development in building up diocesan structures
- the delegate's work with the elected representatives of the church community
- consolidating an Old Catholic identity
- ecumenical co-operation

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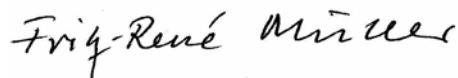
For the International Old Catholic Bishops' Conference (IBC)

The President:

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