



**BY-LAWS OF  
THE MALANKARA  
CATHOLIC YOUTH  
MOVEMENT OF NORTH  
AMERICA (MCYMNA)**

## **CHAPTER I**

### **General Information & Objectives**

**1. Name**

The name of the organization of the youth of the Malankara Catholic Church, shall be **Malankara Catholic Youth Movement of North America**, in short **MCYMNA**.

**2. Emblem**

This shall be the official emblem of the Organization. The emblem exhorts the youth, who are the continuation of the salvific mission of Jesus Christ to be aware of the responsibility they have received from the power of the Holy Cross and Holy Bible to spread out the light on earth.

**3. Flag**

The colors of the flag of the organization shall be red, white and yellow respectively from the top. All three shall be of identical size. The length and width of the flag shall be in the ratio of 3:2. The white piece in the center shall display the emblem of the Organization. The red color of the flag symbolizes the integral transformation to be realized by the Youth through Christ who, with His Blood, initiated a new age; the white color represents the mission to extend the peace and tranquility realized by the Malankara Church through reunion to the communities outside the church, the yellow stands for the fellowship and communion in the one, holy, catholic apostolic church.

**4. Jurisdiction**

The organization shall extend to the MCYM of the St. Mary Queen of Peace Syro-Malankara Catholic Eparchy of USA & Canada.

**5. Goal**

The mission of the Church is to continue the plan of salvation definitively begun by God the Father in His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. The ultimate goal of this organization is to make God's plan of salvation available to humanity through the Malankara Catholic Church. Evangelization is the means to realize this. This organization aims at the integral development of Youth and the total liberation of society according to the Gospel. For the realization of this goal, the following general plan of action is undertaken:

**a. Spiritual**

Help the youth to deepen their Christian faith and to apply principles of Catholic faith in their daily lives. Give training to acquire through a life of prayer, Scriptural meditation, a spiritual outlook, and a style of leadership proper to Christian ideals. Encourage spiritual direction and help them to actualize an exemplary lifestyle grounded in Christian principles. Enable

them to lead an exemplary sacramental life by developing an appreciation for the liturgy, theology, spirituality and disciplinary patrimony of the Church. Give them practical training to take up leadership roles in catechesis, prayer meetings, retreats, Bible conventions, etc. with a view to revitalize the parish community.

**b. Intellectual**

Empower the youth to learn, appreciate, and propagate the doctrines of the Church. Encourage and facilitate the acquiring of technical knowledge with a scientific approach in regards to the developments in the secular world. Conduct discussions, seminars, debates, excursions and other methods; organize study circles, online resources and make educational and religious publications available.

**c. Social**

Prepare the youth to analyze the actual state of society, to engage against social evils and to work for the creation of a new society through positive action based on Christian ideals. Encourage new initiatives focused on the betterment of society and seek solutions for social problems through organized activities including, but not limited to corporal works of mercy, fundraisers, collections, and natural disaster responses. Collect and disseminate information on relevant programs of the government and the Church for the good of the people, and endeavor to make this help available especially to the deserving. Encourage mental health awareness and facilitate opportunities for mental health services especially for those who seek it. Plan action programs for the progress of marginalized communities and of groups subjected to injustice, neglect, and with disabilities.

**d. Cultural**

Embrace and incorporate Christian values with North American and Indian cultural traditions that fall in line with Catholic faith and morals. Create opportunities to understand American and Indian intellectual heritage (Systems of Philosophy), organize youth festivals, literary and cultural training camps and competitions, cultural gatherings etc. to discover and to develop the literary and athletic abilities of the youth.

**e. Political**

Encourage the meaningful involvement in politics by forming them to make well-informed, faith centered decisions abiding by the teachings of the Catholic Church. "In the Catholic Tradition, responsible citizenship is a virtue, and participation in political life is a moral obligation. This obligation is rooted in our baptismal commitment to follow Jesus Christ and to bear Christian witness in all we do. As the Catechism of the Catholic Church reminds us, "It is necessary that all participate, each according to his position and role, in promoting the common good. This obligation is inherent in the dignity of the human person. . . . As far as

possible citizens should take an active part in public life” (nos. 1913-1915)”<sup>1</sup> Refer to Appendix C for some helpful resources.

## **6. Heavenly Patron**

St. Francis of Assisi shall be the heavenly patron of this organization. October 4, the feast day of the saint shall be actively observed as MCYM Day, at the unit, region, eparchial, and ecclesial levels.

## **7. Chief Patron**

The Major Archbishop- Catholicos of the Malankara Catholic Church shall be the chief patron of this organization.

## **8. Chairman**

The Bishop of the Eparchy of St. Mary Queen of Peace is the chairman of this Movement. In each and every matter of dispute that may arise in the Movement, the decision of the Chairman shall be final and beyond litigation.

## **9. Membership**

### **a. Nature**

All youth of the Malankara Catholic Church between the ages of 15 and 30 are eligible for membership provided they subscribe to the objectives and activities of the organization.

### **b. Membership Fees**

A local unit may institute annual membership fees in consultation with the Eparchial Board, local Pastor, and approval of 2/3 of the MCYM General Body present for voting on the issue. It is suggested that the Youth Group fee be set at a minimum of \$25.00 with a family maximum of \$100, so as not to put an undue burden on those families with multiple children. The funds shall be used solely for the purposes of Youth activities such as retreats, regional/eparchial events, etc. Any individual members or families who are facing financial burdens may be exempted on a case-by-case basis. The failure to pay a membership fee (if applicable) is not ground for denying membership to an individual(s).

### **c. Loss of Membership**

Membership cannot be granted to those under canonical censures, members or active workers of organizations prohibited by the Church. Those youth who have not constitutionally acquired membership do not acquire the rights and privileges of the members. Membership is liable to forfeiture due to nonparticipation without due cause for a continuous period of three years or by a declaration by the diocesan patron that the member acts against the aims and objectives of the Church or the Organization. Participation in illegal activities, immoral behavior contrary

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<sup>1</sup> Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), 2007, #13.

to Catholic teachings, or any other actions deemed inappropriate by the director are considerations for loss of membership. As stated above in 9b, membership fees, if applicable, are not a reason in itself for the exclusion of any youth eligible to be an MCYMNA member.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **Organizational Structures**

#### **10. Constitution**

The organization shall be constituted as here under:

**I. Church wise**

Organization of the MCYM activities of the entire Malankara Catholic Church

**II. Eparchy wise**

Organization of the activities of the MCYM in the existing Eparchy of the Malankara Catholic Church.

**III. Regional**

Organization of the activities of the MCYM in the Region within the Eparchy of the Malankara Catholic Church.

**IV. Unit wise**

Organization of the activities of the MCYM in the existing parishes of Arch/Diocese of the Malankara Catholic Church.

#### **11. Administrative Set-up**

##### **Eparchy Level**

The Organization shall have a Chairman, a Director, An Assistant Director, Regional Boards and Unit/Parish Boards.

The Eparchial Board shall prepare the constitution for them, according to the spirit of the constitution of the MCYM Central administrative body and without going against it. When the constitution is published, the constitution of the Central administrative body shall be published as Part I and Eparchial constitution as Part II.

**a. Chairman**

The chairman of the Organization shall be the Bishop of the Eparchy.

**b. Director**

The director of the organization shall be a priest appointed by the Chairman.

**c. Assistant Director**

The Chairman may appoint an Assistant Director

**d. Eparchial Board**

Consists of youth leaders elected by the MCYM members of the Eparchy. The board should constitute a President, 2 Vice Presidents, 1 General Secretary, 1 Joint Secretary, 1 Treasurer, 1 Joint Treasurer and 2 Public Relation Officers. The Chairman, Director, Assistant director, Past President, and the Animator(s) are ex-officio members of this body.

According to the discretion of the Director, representatives can be added to the Eparchial Board from missions.

**e. Animator**

The Eparchial animator(s) are appointed by the Chairman.

**Regional Level**

The Organization shall have a Director, Regional Boards and Animators.

**a. Director**

The director of the organization shall be a priest appointed by the Chairman.

**b. Regional Board**

Consists of youth leaders elected by the MCYM members of the Eparchial region. The board should constitute a President, a Vice President, a General Secretary, a Joint Secretary, Treasurer, and a Public Relation Officer. The Chairman, Director, Past President, and the Animator(s) are ex-officio members of this body.

**c. Animator**

The Regional animator(s) are appointed by the Director, with approval from the Chairman.

**Parish/Mission level**

The Organization shall have a Director, Animators, President, Vice President, Secretary, Joint Secretary, Treasurer, and Public Relation Officer.

**a. Director**

The director of the organization shall be the parish priest.

**b. Parish Board**

Consists of youth leaders elected by the MCYM members of the parish/mission. The board should constitute a President, a Vice President, a General Secretary, a Joint Secretary, Treasurer, and a Public Relation Officer. The Director, Past President, the Animator(s) and MCYMNA Board members, if applicable, are ex-officio members of this body.

**d. Animator**

The parish level animator(s) are appointed by the Director.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **Powers & Prerogatives**

#### **12. Powers and Prerogatives of the Office-Bearers**

##### **I. Chairman**

The Chairman holds the authority and the right to issue directives, to make arrangements and to exercise overall control conducive to the progress of the official organization in its (ecclesial) life and activities; the appointment of the director, assistant director, animator(s) and other necessary leadership positions, the confirmation of office bearers, approval of constitutional amendments, final decision concerning matters of dispute regarding the organization and all other powers included in this constitution are vested in the Chairman.

##### **II. Director**

The Director, who is subject to the Chairman, provides spiritual leadership conducive to the realization of the objectives of the organization; approves the general policy formulation and amendments thereof of the organization; participate when required in meetings at all levels and give directives; promotes the organization's ecclesial life and activities by ensuring the cooperation of regional MCYM directors, directors of other organizations within the Eparchy and other relevant parties; convene meetings of the eparchial board in emergencies and at other times of need.

Additionally the competence of the Director extends to all other matters mentioned in this constitution.

##### **III. President**

The general administration and leadership of the organization is the responsibility of the President. It is the duty of the President to convene or arrange the governing body meetings and general body meetings; to issue statements consistent with the objectives and declared policies of the organization; preside over meetings of the secretariat, syndicate and senate (when applicable); ensure the smooth functioning of the governing body; guide constructive action to associate with the activities of the wider Church in its various spheres that are relevant to the mission and aims of MCYM, especially with the MCYM units outside of the Eparchy; plan activities jointly with the Chairman, Director, and other powers mentioned in this constitution.

##### **IV. Vice-President**

In the absence of the President or in the event of the resignation of the President until the election of this successor, the Vice President shall exercise all powers and discharge all the responsibilities of the President. Besides assisting the president in the activities of the

organization, he/she shall handle matters entrusted to him/her by the President.

V. **General Secretary**

It is for the General Secretary to discharge the routine administrative tasks of the organization. In addition to the powers and responsibilities mentioned in other articles of this constitution, the General Secretary shall exercise the following: carry on correspondence and maintain their files, send information about the meetings, issue circulars as authorized by the Chairman, director, and president; prepare annual and semi-annual reports; maintain the minutes of meetings and distribute them to all relevant parties, report of activities and registers. The General Secretary may entrust his/her rights and duties to the joint secretaries, when found necessary, with the approval of the governing body.

VI. **Joint Secretary**

Discharge the duties of the General Secretary in his/her absence or upon their resignation until another is appointed. The Joint Secretary shall also handle other responsibilities entrusted to him/her by the General Secretary.

VII. **Treasurer**

In addition to the powers and duties listed in other articles of this constitution, the treasurer shall have the following powers and duties: receive and issue receipts with the seal of parish thereof of dues to the organization such as fees, contributions, donations etc. explore avenues of income for the organization; under the directives of the board incur expenses authorized by the board; maintain accounts of the assets, income and expenses of the organization and preserve all the documentation in the parish office under his/her personal control and responsibility. The documentation shall not be removed from the parish for any reason unless directed by the Eparchial Bishop, the MCYMNA Director, or the Parish Pastor.

The Treasurer is also responsible to submit the statement of income and expenditure on a semi-annual basis (that is, once every six months), and the statement for the specified period must be submitted when requested by the auditor, if one is appointed; The treasurer is to maintain proper documents of authorization and vouchers for expenses incurred (no money shall be reimbursed unless a proper receipt and written request is submitted (refer to Appendix B); invest the funds of the organization in the bank as joint accounts of the Director and Treasurer.

Reimbursements are common practices and parishes. The key to any type of reimbursement request is to ensure that the paperwork is



complete, all receipts are attached, which are meant to ensure the legitimacy of any reimbursements distributed.

Cash in the form of advances or reimbursements should be used on a limited basis and clear ground rules around cash is critical. Cash is a form of payment or receipt that must be clearly tracked and accounted for at all times because it has a higher risk of fraudulent activity. Cash as a form of advanced payment should only be considered when all other forms of payment such as check or credit card cannot be accepted

The Treasurer has no authority to incur any liability in the name of the organization except when authorized by the executive board. He/she cannot retain any sum in excess of 250 USD/CAD. The treasurer is empowered to spend up to 250 USD/CAD on their own initiative in case of emergency. The organization is not bound by any transaction of the treasurer without due authorization, vouchers and bills.

#### **VIII. Public Relations Officer(s)**

The public relations officer(s) shall have the following powers and duties: access to all social media accounts related to the MCYM (e.g.: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc.), advertising/promoting MCYM events and communication for all youth events. The public relations officer(s) are bound to follow the Eparchy Policy and Procedure (hereafter referred to as EPAP) 2020-01 & 02 respectively once the Eparchial policies are promulgated by the Eparchial Bishop. It is incumbent on those elected to this office to read and be familiar with these Eparchial policies. A copy of this policy will be provided to the elected official(s) and will be available to download from the Eparchial Website.

#### **13. The Powers and Rights of the Governing body MCYM Board**

This is the executive body of the organization. It would meet whenever required to organize activities and to issue directives. It has to form the church level advisory council and appoint diocesan observers.

#### **14. Meetings**

Each MCYM Board meets as and when required. There should be a minimum of one meeting or activity per month. These activities should be related to and fall under the five pillars: spiritual, intellectual, social, cultural, and political. Refer to Chapter 1 Section 5. Meeting minutes should be recorded by the Board Secretary or by another the Joint Secretary in the Secretary's absence. The names of all the members present at the meeting should be recorded. The presence of the Unit Director is recommended for all meetings. The Unit Animator must be present at all meetings.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **15. Election and tenure**

#### **I. Eligibility**

Those who are elected to the Eparchial Board must be 18 years of age and should have already completed a minimum of one year as an office bearer at a regional or unit level. Tenure in the Eparchial Board is restricted to two consecutive terms. Officers must complete the Safe Environment Requirements of the Eparchy.

Aspects of eligibility may include:

- Level of participation in MCYM activities (Prayer meetings, MBOC, adoration, etc.)
- Holy Qurbano attendance and regular participation in the parish
- Attendance in MCYM meetings
- Involvement in parish social/outreach activities (picnic, church cleaning, community service, blood drive etc.)
- Whether he/she is a good role model to youth and children.

#### **II. Election**

The Director shall be the returning officer for elections. The Eparchial board is elected from the MCYM members present at the election taking place at the Eparchial Family Convention or an event/meeting approved by the Chairman. Full information concerning those elected shall be communicated to the Chairman. Aspects of eligibility should be confirmed prior to election by the Eparchial Director. One post of Vice-president in the Eparchial Board shall be female. Election to the Eparchial Board shall be by relative majority. Final decision in all disputes concerning the conduct of election shall rest with the Chairman. Results of elections become effective only after endorsement by the Chairman. In case of urgency or other unusual circumstances (Eg. COVID-19 pandemic), elections may be held in a hybrid format with virtual components with the approval of the Chairman.

#### **III. Tenure**

Three years shall be the term of the Eparchial and Regional Boards. The Eparchial Board may have their term extended under the direction of the Chairman. One year shall be the term of a Parish Board.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **16. Sources of Income**

The income of the MCYM shall consist of the sum received from the MCYM Day Collection, donations, income accruing from financial schemes (e.g. certificates of deposit), and bank interest, or other events as approved by the Parish Pastor (e.g.: Bake Sale, Car Wash, etc.). The MCYM Day collection shall be used according to the norms of the Commission. The assets of the organization shall remain institutional and no part of assets or income from them is divisible among members. In case the activities of the organization cease or are terminated, the balance of assets after payment of all dues is to be utilized by the Chairman or Director for the welfare of the Church.

### **17. Celebration**

At the local, regional and national levels, MCYM Day should be acknowledged and celebrated in some manner at the discretion of the director at that level. Other significant feast days may be celebrated as well.

### **18. Eparchial Office**

The headquarters of Eparchial level activities functions at the Eparchial Chancery 1500 DePaul Street, Elmont, NY 11003.

### **19. Registers and Records**

The following registers and records must be maintained. Contact information of all MCYM members (including telephone and email address), meeting minutes, bylaws, and financial information such as assets of the organization, bank records, receipts, and other relevant materials. The minutes of the meeting are to be signed by all those present at the meeting and must be written in either blue or black ink. The minutes of each meeting should be signed by the Secretary and approved by the Director. This book must have sequentially numbered pages. The financial records are to be kept in an accounting book and accounts must be signed by the Treasurer and one other member of the Executive Board. An electronic copy of the above-mentioned registers can be created, but there must also be a physical, hard copy, handwritten book which is kept at the Parish.

## **CHAPTER VI**

### **20. Disciplinary Action**

#### **Dismissal**

MCYMNA officers who are absent from five consecutive meetings without a valid reason informed to the Director will be subject to dismissal. The cases will be reviewed on an individual basis by the Chairman and the MCYMNA Director.

#### **Appeal**

- Appeals of the board members at the Parish level should be submitted for review to the MCYMNA Director at the discretion of the Parish priest.
- Appeals of the board members at the Regional level should be submitted for review to the MCYMNA Director at the discretion of the Regional Director.
- Appeals of the board members at the Eparchial level should be submitted for review to the Chairman at the discretion of the MCYMNA Director. If the case is against the MCYMNA Director himself, the appeal should be submitted directly to the Chairman.
- The final instance of appeal is the Chairman in all cases. The decision of the Chairman is final in all circumstances.

### **21. Resignation**

There should be sufficient and just reasons for the resignation of any office-bearer of MCYM. Resignation must be submitted in writing to the appropriate individual. A resignation should be submitted at least two (2) weeks in advance. In the case of a local unit resignation, notice must be sent to the Parish Pastor; if a resignation occurs on a Regional or Eparchial Board, the notice of resignation is to be sent to the respective Director. The decision on the resignation should be taken by the concerned Director in consultation with the concerned executive committee and communicated in writing to the concerned individual within thirty (30) days. It is the prerogative of the Chairman to accept the resignation of MCYMNA Board members.

### **22. Review and Amendments**

There shall be an orientation to the bylaws at the start of an Eparchial Board's term. The Eparchial MCYMNA Board reserves the right to revise these bylaws at any time, subject to the approval of the Eparchial Bishop, interpret and administer these bylaws based on circumstances and events. These bylaws shall be reviewed as needed. The review of the bylaws are to determine that all aspects of the bylaws are being adhered to. Proposals for additions, amendments, or removals shall be given by the Eparchial Board to the Eparchial Bishop. The Eparchial Bishop has the power to accept, reject, or return with remarks, all amendments to the constitution. Amendments become effective only with ratification by the Eparchial Bishop.

### **23. Interpretation of Law**

The authority to interpret this constitution is reserved to the Eparchial Board. The interpretation shall become authoritative only when it is approved by the Eparchial Bishop. Final decision regarding the organization rests with the Chairman in compliance with the head of the Malankara Catholic Church.

## **Appendix A - Additional Organization Structures**

Certain structures are not yet established in the current context of the MCYM in the Eparchy. In the interim period, the majority of the responsibilities of the missing structures will be fulfilled by the MCYM Eparchial Board, in consultation with the Bishop and in collaboration with the regional and local MCYM leadership and official gatherings of MCYM members within the Eparchy to the extent that it is possible.

These shall be instituted when the Eparchy reaches a point where it is feasible and the need demands it.

### **I. Eparchial Secretariat**

- **Otherwise known as MCYMNA**

### **II. Eparchial Syndicate**

- A body constituting of representatives of each parish (eg. President's Group)
- Prepare schemes for the affairs of the organization in accordance with the instruction of the chairman and of the senate; discuss activities with mission areas in and outside the country and coordinate them on the ecclesial level, with the approval of the Chairman. The Syndicate appoints the office bearers to those youth movements in which MCYM has participation/lead role; (to ensure equal participation and opportunity for all Eparchy, rotation has to be followed), help to form units in the diocese and mission areas on request; issue statements in the name of the organizations and make appeals to authorities; make arrangements for an official publication of the organization; organize various forums in aid of the activities of the organization; appoint various study groups and take follow-up action on the basis of their reports.

### **III. Eparchial Senate**

- A combined body consisting of Eparchial Secretariat and Eparchial Syndicate.
- Formulate the policies of the organization in accordance with the interests and objectives of the Church; approve and amend the constitution and submit it to the approval of the Chairman; discuss issues of importance for the Church and Society; plan church wide constructive activities; discuss and approve the budget, income and expenditure and annual report; submit, when required, requests to the Eparchial Pastoral Council Commission for the Youth.

### **IV. Central Syndicate**

- Refers to the combined body constituting all the members of the MCYMNA
- The Central Syndicate meets and makes decisions whenever necessary. Its quorum shall be  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the total membership. When a meeting is reconvened due to lack of quorum for the first, quorum may be disregarded, provided there is no change in the agenda of the meeting.

### **V. Central Senate**

- Refers to the combined body of the parish level unit officers.

VI. **Eparchial Pastoral Council Commission for the Youth.**

- Consists of the Pastoral Council members appointed by the Eparchial Bishop for a term of three years.
- Objectives include preparation of plans to be implemented at the Eparchial level.

VII. **The Eparchial MCYMNA Commission**

- The Eparchial MCYMNA Commission is the consultative body of the MCYMNA.
- It is a permanent body that works separately but in a complementary way with the MCYMNA Board.
- It is composed of a group of people of various ages chosen by the MCYMNA Director and approved by the Eparchial bishop.
- The purpose of the group is to gain insights from all demographics regarding the youth, to work at a grassroots level to aid the youth at the parish, and to act as a liaison between the parents and the MCYMNA Board to execute projects.

## Appendix B - Sample Voucher for Reimbursement of Expenses

This template or one similar should be used by all MCYM units in the Eparchy. The key elements which are to be incorporated into the form are as follows:

1. Name & Date: Name of the person making the submission & date submitted
2. Type of Request: Is this an advance for something, or reimbursement?
3. Type of Expense (e.g.: Office, Food, Venue deposit, etc.) and amount paid
4. Name & Address of the person who should receive payment & signature of the person submitting the form
5. Signature of Treasurer & President (or other board official) if expense is over \$250.

### Expense Requisition Form

Requested By: \_\_\_\_\_

Request Type: Expense Authorization

Advance for Venue/Event Booking

**Details:**

Type of Expense: Office /Food/ etc.

Amount:


**Payment Details:**

Payee Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Payee Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Submitter: \_\_\_\_\_

Date:

**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY**

Check number Issued: \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date:

Authorized Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date:

**\*For all expenses over \$250, two signatures are required\***

## **Appendix C - MCYMNA & Political Engagement**

- **USCCB Political Responsibilities Guidelines:**  
<https://www.usccb.org/resources/dos-and-donts-guidelines-during-election-season?fbclid=IwAR3Aunn8m21bAN6rmTNv97xBz2Atxm6ReYhUU0GV8kS146eyt0A5AkUGL-U>
- **USCCB Conscience and the Catholic Voter**  
<https://www.usccb.org/about/pro-life-activities/respect-life-program/upload/Conscience-and-the-Catholic-Voter.pdf?fbclid=IwAR3Aunn8m21bAN6rmTNv97xBz2Atxm6ReYhUU0GV8kS146eyt0A5AkUGL-U>
- **Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship**  
<https://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/faithful-citizenship/upload/forming-consciences-for-faithful-citizenship.pdf>