

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
THE HOLY NAME SOCIETY

Officers Handbook

Official Handbook for Parish
Holy Name Society Officers



Preface

Vatican II has had a profound impact on all of the apostolates within the Catholic Church, and this is particularly true of the lay apostolates. One of the key documents from Vatican II on the proper role of the laity within the Church; *The Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity; Apostolicam Actuositatem*, states,

“...the laity likewise share in the priestly, prophetic, and royal office of Christ and therefore have their own share in the mission of the whole people of God in the Church and in the world.(2) They exercise the apostolate in fact by their activity directed to the evangelization and sanctification of men and to the penetrating and perfecting of the temporal order through the spirit of the Gospel.” (Chapter 1, Number 2)

For over a century, the Holy Name Society has been exercising that sort of genuine apostolate here in North America and beyond, particularly by spreading devotion to His most Holy and Sacred Name through Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy.

The post-Conciliar Church has increased the demands on the lay apostolate more than ever before in the history of the Church. That these demands may be answered effectively, and that the maximum results of the lay apostolate may be achieved, suggest the need for a well-organized, highly effective and efficient lay apostolate.

Any organization is only as effective as its leadership, and the leaders can succeed only if they have well defined areas of responsibility. In order for parish Holy name Societies to be successful in fulfilling their role in the Church they must have effective leadership. Thus the duties and the responsibilities of the parish Holy Name Society officers as well as those of the principal committee chairs are detailed in this handbook. Everything contained in this book is based on considerable experience derived from successful Holy Name Societies.

The suggestions and recommendations in this book, when followed; should greatly assist parish Holy Name Society Officers in their leadership roles. This should lead to successful activities and programs of parish societies with the aim to help members grow in holiness and obtain their salvation.

Brendan Larnen, O.P.
“Past Spiritual Director”
(Revised 2013)

Holy Name Pledge

Blessed be God.

Blessed be His Holy Name.

Blessed be Jesus Christ, true God and true man.

Blessed be the Name of Jesus

I believe, O Jesus,

That Thou art the Christ,

The Son of the living God.

I proclaim my love

For the Vicar of Christ on earth.

I believe all the sacred truths.

Which the Holy Catholic Church

Believes and teaches.

I promise to give good example

By the regular practice of my faith.

In honor of His Divine Name,

I pledge myself against perjury.

Blasphemy, profanity and obscene speech.

I pledge my loyalty

To the flag of my country

And to the God given principles

Of freedom, justice and happiness

For which it stands.

I pledge my support

To all lawful authority

Both civil and religious.

I dedicate my life

To the Honor of the Sacred Name

Of Jesus Christ,

And beg that He

Will keep me faithful

To these pledges

Until death. Amen.

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Introduction

The purpose of this Handbook is to provide the necessary information for those wishing to establish a new parish Holy Name Society and for those being called to be officers of existing parish Holy Name Societies. The first sections provide an overview of the history of the Holy Name Society from its establishment forward. Each officer of the Holy Name Society should be well versed in this rich history and understand the canonical structure of this Confraternity.

The manual also recommends an organizational structure and procedures for effective leadership that have been refined over many years of running effective parish Holy Name Societies.

With the grace of God, may this manual assist Holy Name Officers perform their duties of service in His Holy Name.

History of Devotion to the Holy Name

The development of devotion to the Holy Name falls loosely into three periods. The first phase was in the Old Testament times as evidenced by the praise of the name of the Lord throughout the Psalms the Books of Job, Sirach and Isaiah.

The next period was in the very early Church and was cultivated by the Apostles and the early disciples as shown in The Acts of the Apostles. In this period devotion is to the Name of Christ, to the Name of Christ Jesus, to the Name of the Lord, and to the Name of Jesus.

The third phase is found in the early middle ages. Devotion to the Holy Name was fixed specifically to the Name of Jesus. Pope Gregory X (1271 - 1276) and the Council of Lyons in the year 1274 initiated a call of the Universal Church to this special devotion. Through the works of Fr. John Garbella O.P., Blessed John of Vercelli; the sixth Master General of the Order of St. Dominic, the Dominicans began preaching on the virtues of the Holy Name and built special altars where the lay faithful could venerate the Holy Name of Jesus. This phase was continued by St. Bernardine of Siena (1380 - 1444). St. Bernardine made the object of devotion the Monogram of the Holy Name. St. Bernardine painted a special wooden tablet with the Monogram of the Name of Jesus surrounded by rays of the sun. St. Bernardine and his contemporary St. John Capistran popularized this devotion and made it so widespread that the monogram of the name of Jesus, even today, stands at the side of the cross as a symbol of Christianity.

The Franciscan Order initiated Confraternities to the Holy Name of Jesus in the 16th century. Pope Julius II (1503-1513) granted two separate indulgences to this confraternity (*History of Development of Devotion to the Holy Name*, P.R. Biasiotto, O.F.M., 1943).

Confraternities to the Most Holy Name of God were instituted through the efforts of the Dominican Order in the later part of the 1500's. This Confraternity, also known as "The Confraternity Against Oaths," later became "The Society of the Holy Name of Jesus."

The Church formally recognized the Confraternity of the Most Holy Names of God in 1571 when Pope Pius V gave the

Dominican Order sole jurisdiction over this society in his Bull *Decet Romanum*.

In 1727 Pope Benedict XIII confirmed various privileges on both the Society of God and the Society of the Name of Jesus in his document the *Pretiosus*. The two confraternities were essentially merged under the name Confraternity of the Most Holy Names of God and Jesus by Pope Benedict XIII on 26th of May 1727 when he gave exclusive rights to both the Confraternity of the Most Holy Name of God and the Confraternity of the Most Holy Name of Jesus to the Dominican Order.

Today the only titles used for these Societies is the Society of the Holy Name or Holy Name Society. The Holy Name Society is spiritually rooted in the zealous devotions that began in the Dominican Order and flourished through the work of St. Bernardine and his Franciscan Brothers.

St. Bernardine - Holy Name of Jesus

During his travels on foot through the various provinces of Italy, St. Bernardino of Siena persuaded the residents of the city states to take down the arms of their warring factions from the church and palace walls and to inscribe there, instead, the monogram of the Most Holy Name of Jesus “I H S” He thus gave a new impulse and a tangible form to the devotion to the Holy Name of Jesus.

St. Bernardine frequently held a wooden board, with the sacred monogram “I H S” surrounded by rays of light painted on it, in front of him while preaching. After these sermons he would expose the Sacred Name of Jesus for veneration and plead with the people to embrace as their

way of life this heavenly name and all it signified. He appears to have introduced this custom at Volterra in 1424.

Holy Name Society—A Confraternity

The Confraternity of the Holy Names of God and Jesus, popularly known as the Holy Name Society, is fundamentally and essentially a spiritual organization for Catholics. It is canonically erected to the Dominican Order. Its purpose is to assist the members of the confraternity grow in holiness, achieve their salvation, and zealously labor to build the Kingdom of God here on earth by practicing and spreading devotion to the Most Holy Name of Jesus.

There is nothing extraordinary expected or demanded of Holy Name members. They are asked to be faithful to their religious duties and to perform some of them in union with fellow-members of the Society. For this corporate activity and their spiritual and corporal works of mercy, members of the Holy Name Society receive special indulgences.

Basically spiritual but zealously active, embracing Catholics from all walks of life, this confraternity under the guidance of its Spiritual Moderators renders service to the Church, while bestowing uncounted blessings on its members. As a Confraternity of the Catholic Church the Holy Name Society is governed under the Code of Canon Law – 1983, Book II, “The People of God, Part 1, “The Christian Faithful”, Title V, “Associations of the Christian Faithful”, Chapter II, “Public Associations of Christian Faithful”. As such, all Constitutions, By-laws, Procedures and any or all documents of governance of any (Arch)diocesan or parish Holy Name Society are subject to this section of Canon Law. Under Canon law, (Can. 312) the local Bishop has complete

jurisdiction over the parish Holy Name Societies within his (Arch)diocese.

Statement of Purpose

The Holy Name Society promotes reverence for the Sacred Name of God and that of Jesus Christ, obedience and loyalty to the Magisterium of the Catholic Church, and personal sanctification and holiness of its members. Members are called to contribute to the evangelization mission of the Church and to perpetual acts of reverence and love for our Lord and Savior. The Apostolate of the Society is to assist in parish ministries by performing the Corporal Works of Mercy as well as the Spiritual Works of Mercy.

Fidelity to the Catholic Church

“No one can have God as Father who does not have the Church as Mother.” — St. Cyprian

Members of the Holy Name Society - believe that the Catholic Church - the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church - is the one true Church founded by Jesus Christ.

We believe Jesus Christ is the invisible Head of the Catholic Church - our Pope, the Vicar of Christ on earth and the direct Successor of the Apostle Peter, is the spiritual guide and shepherd of the Catholic Church.

We believe the Church is Christ’s Body on earth, it is protected by the promise of Jesus Christ to be guided by the Holy Spirit, protected from all error, and victorious over evil as He says “the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Mt. 16:18).

At the beginning of this Third Christian Millennium, the Holy Name Society is committed to the New Evangelization

proclaimed by our Holy Father of blessed memory, Pope John Paul the Great, to take advantage of this “springtime” for the Church and the unprecedented opportunity we have to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Our apostolate to spread devotion to the Most Holy Name of Jesus is intended to give a tangible, visible witness to Christ and His Church.

The Holy Name Society is committed to helping its members grow in holiness through devotion to the Most Holy Name of Jesus. Members in this confraternity are called to be leaders and to follow the footsteps of St. Dominic and St. Bernardine of Siena and all the saints to strengthen themselves with the Most Holy Eucharist, cleanse themselves in the sacrament of penance, nourish their souls on Sacred Scripture, increase their desire of divine love through prayer, and lead their families, friends, and coworkers by their acts of charity and piety.

May the Most Holy Name of Jesus Christ be praised, now and forever!

Description of a Member

A member of the Holy Name Society is a practicing member of the Catholic Church who through devotion to the Name of Jesus Christ is inspired to holiness and sanctification, who through a personal commitment to the spiritual and corporal works of mercy, labors to spread the Kingdom of God here on earth for the greater glory and honor of Jesus Christ.

Obligations of Members

All who are professed members of the Holy Name Society must:

- Praise and glorify God by fidelity to prayer, especially by both private and public Holy Name devotions and as far as it can be done, bring others, particularly those committed to the member's care, to know and honor the name of God.
- Recognize His divine authority and believe that all power on earth, civil and religious comes from Him and respect and promise to obey all lawfully constituted authority.
- Proclaim love and obedience to the Pope, the Vicar of Christ on Earth.
- Believe all the sacred truths, which the Holy Catholic Church believes and teaches and to educate himself and all those in his charge in these truths.
- Promise to strive for perfection by frequent reception of the sacraments, daily prayer, spiritual reading, acts of penance and mortification, and fraternal charity - "You must, therefore, be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect." Mt 5:48.
- In honor of His Divine Name, avoid disrespect to the name of God, of Jesus, and of what is sacred and should abstain from all improper language, such as blasphemy, perjury, profanity, cursing, obscene speech and indecency, and as far as prudence permits induce others to refrain from such insults to God and immorality. – "Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name." Mt 6:9
- Avoid any conduct that would be scandalous or cause or tempt others to ridicule or despise the Catholic faith or the Confraternity – lest it be true "The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you." Rom 2:24.
- Fulfill all the obligations of membership in the Mystical Body of Christ, the Catholic Church, according to one's

state in life, as well as the specific obligations of membership in the Society, particularly attendance at all devotional events.

It should be noted that regulations imposed do not bind under the pain of sin. Members of the Confraternity as a matter of honor and obedience should live up to these regulations. They should also, in all of their activities, as members, be mindful of the divine law of charity.

Spiritual Benefits of Membership

Every Professed Member of the Confraternity of the Most Holy Names of God and Jesus, while he is faithful to his obligations shares in all of the blessings from the Masses, good works, preaching, teaching and the manual labor of the Dominican Order. This includes a share in the thirty-three Masses which each Dominican is bound to say every year for the souls of the departed brethren.

The Sacred Penitentiary, in response to the petition of the Dominican Order, granted a plenary indulgence to the members of the Most Holy Name of God and the Most Holy Name of Jesus, on the following occasions

- The day of the member's induction into the Confraternity
- Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ - Christmas Day (December 25)
- The Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God and the Holy Name of Jesus (January 1)
- Resurrection of the Lord - Easter Sunday
- The Solemnity of Christ the King (Last Sunday in Ordinary Time – last Sunday prior to the start of the Season of Advent)

- The Annunciation of the Lord (March 25) The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (August 15)
- The Feast of Saint Joseph the Worker (May 1)

The following partial indulgences are particularly applicable to faithful Professed Members of the Holy Name Society who:

- In the performance of their duties and in bearing the trials of life, raise their mind with humble confidence to God, asking – if only mentally – some pious invocation. "Blessed be the name of God", and similar invocations of devotion to the name of God would be applicable in this grant. (cf. The Decree in the Apostolate of the Laity, 4, "Whatever you do in word or work, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks to God the Father through Him").
- In a spirit of faith and mercy give of themselves or of their goods to serve others in need.
- In spirit of penance voluntarily deprive themselves of what is licit and pleasing to them.
- Recite the Litany of the Holy Name of Jesus.
- Wear the Holy Name emblem – properly blessed by any priest.

(Reference the Enchiridion of Indulgences given by the 1968 Decree of the Sacred Apostolic Penitentiary for all of the requirements necessary to obtain Indulgences)

Holy Name Society and the Church

What is the Holy Name Society?

The Holy Name Society is the popular or common name for the Confraternity of the Most Holy Names of God and Jesus. It can also be referred to as the Society of the Holy Name. It is a confraternity of the Catholic Church canonically erected to the Order of Friar Preachers —the Dominican Order. The Holy Name Society is committed to teaching and spreading devotion to the Most Holy Name of Jesus.

What is a Confraternity?

Confraternities (Latin *confratria* or *confraternitas*) are voluntary associations of Catholic lay people and clerics that exist for the promotion of special religious devotions, acts of piety and spiritual and corporal works of mercy. The main reason confraternities exist is for the personal sanctification of their members. It is through their spiritual activities and works of mercy that members in confraternities obtain the special graces and indulgences necessary to attain their salvation.

How does the Church recognize Confraternities?

The Church recognizes confraternities as “Public Associations of Christian Faithful” as defined under the 1983 Code of Canon Law.

Canon 298 (2) states, “Christ’s faithful are to join those associations, which have been established, praised or recommended by the competent ecclesiastical authority.” In addition the official document of the Church on the role of the lay faithful, *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, “Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity” calls all members of the Mystical

Body of Christ to spread the kingdom of Christ throughout the earth for the glory of God the Father.

“As far as possible the laity ought to provide helpful collaboration for every apostolic and missionary undertaking sponsored by their local parish.” (*Apostolicam Actuositatem* (10) Pope Paul VI November 18, 1965)

The Holy Name Society functions at the parish level to provide members the opportunity to respond to this call of the Church.

Catechism teaching on Holy Name Society

The Catholic Catechism states

“all the lay faithful by virtue of their Baptism and Confirmation have the right and duty, individually or grouped in associations, to work so that the divine message of salvation may be known and accepted by all men throughout the earth” (CCC 900).

In addition, the Catechism teaches that:

“...lay people are called by God to make of their apostolate, through the vigor of their Christian spirit, a leaven in the world” (CCC 940)

The Holy Name Society by promoting the sanctity and holiness of its members and through its efforts of teaching and spreading devotion to the Most Holy Names of God and Jesus provides a framework for members to work as “leaven in the world”.

When was the Holy Name Society started?

The Holy Name Society traces its roots to the Council of Lyons in the year 1274. The Albigensian Heresy was posing a serious challenge to the Medieval Church. This heresy was

devastating society – it challenged the divinity of Christ, repudiated all of the sacraments of the Church and encouraged taking one’s life. Pope Gregory X convened a special council of Bishops in Lyons, France. The Council prescribed that the faithful should have a special devotion to the Holy Names of God and Jesus in reparation of the insults offered to it by the Albigensian blasphemers. In a special letter to Fr. John Garbella O.P., Blessed John of Vercelli; the sixth Master General of the Order of St. Dominic, the Dominicans were asked to spread this devotion. The Dominican’s fervently executed the pope’s command, preaching everywhere the power and glory of the Holy Name of Jesus.

The Church formally recognized the Confraternity of the Most Holy Names of God in 1571 when Pope Pius V gave the Dominican Order sole jurisdiction over this society in his Bull *Decet Romanum*.

Later in 1727 Pope Benedict XIII confirmed various privileges on both the Society of God and the Society of the Name of Jesus in his document the *Pretiosus*, which placed both societies under the exclusive rights of the Dominican Order.

What are the Charisms of Holy Name Society?

Canonical ties to the Order of St. Dominic give members special charisms that stem directly from the holiness, preaching, teaching, and good works of the many men who have consecrated their lives to Jesus Christ as Dominican Priests and Brothers. In a very special way members share in the tireless zeal for the salvation of souls of St. Dominic, the unsurpassed intellect and humility of St. Thomas Aquinas, and the sanctity and holiness of Blessed John of Vercelli. The Holy Name Society has been adorned with privileges,

indulgences, and other apostolic graces by Pope Pius IV, Clement VIII, Innocent XI, Benedict XIV, Pius X, and Paul VI. The Magisterium of the Church has uniquely positioned the Holy Name Society within lay apostolates in the Church. These indulgences come from the abundance of graces won for mankind by the passion and death of Jesus Christ.

What is the Apostolate of Holy Name Society?

The Holy Name Society promotes reverence for the Sacred Names of God and Jesus Christ, obedience and loyalty to the Magisterium of the Catholic Church, and the personal sanctification and holiness of its members. Members are called to contribute to the evangelization mission of the Church and to make perpetual acts of reverence and love for our Lord and Savior. The apostolate of the society is to assist in parish ministries by performing the Corporal Works of Mercy and the Spiritual Works of Mercy.

Corporal Works of Mercy are those that tend to bodily needs of others. They are to: feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, shelter the homeless, visit the sick, visit the imprisoned and bury the dead.

Spiritual works of mercy are to: instruct the ignorant (teach the faith), counsel the doubtful, admonish sinners, bear wrongs patiently, forgive offenses willingly, comfort the afflicted and pray for the living and the dead.

Members of the Holy Name Society – both individually and collectively in parish Societies – are called to build the kingdom of God by practicing and spreading a special devotion to the Most Holy Name of Jesus.

The Holy Name Society member through their spiritual and corporal works of mercy labors to become like the good

servant (Mt 25:21) not the unprofitable servant (Lk 17: 10) or the useless servant (Mt 25:29).

Who can become Members?

There are two forms of Membership, Novice Member and Professed Member. Membership in the Holy Name Society is open to all Catholics, the lay faithful, religious and clergy. They must be firm believers in all that the Catholic Church believes and teaches and put these teachings into practice in their daily lives. These beliefs of the Catholic faith are expressed in the Credo of the People of God, issued by Pope Paul VI on June 29, 1968. (Canon 316 §1)

To become a Novice member requires the candidate to fully believe and put into practice in their daily lives all of the promises specified in the Holy Name Pledge. The candidate must also fulfill any and all of the obligations and duties for a Novice Member as prescribed by the parish, Deanery, Vicariate, Federation, and or (Arch)diocesan Holy Name Society with jurisdiction over the area the Novice resides. Novice members may belong directly to the National Association if they reside in an area where there is no active Parish, Deanery, Vicariate, Federation or (Arch)diocesan Holy Name Society.

To become a Professed Member of the Society requires making public professions at a special Induction Ceremony. After the Induction Ceremony the candidate becomes a Professed Member in the Confraternity of the Most Holy Names of God and Jesus and now obtains the graces, indulgences, rights, privileges and Spiritual Benefits of Membership.

Age of Admission

To become a Novice Member of the Society the candidate must have reached the age of reason (about 7 years of age). Junior Holy Name Societies can be formed for Novice Members that are under the age of 18.

The practice of having Junior Holy Name Societies for youth is highly recommended. Junior Holy Name Societies can be formed in conjunction with Catholic Schools under the supervision and leadership of a Catholic Priest. Another example of an excellent place to form a Junior Holy Name Society is with the Altar Servers in parishes with an active Holy Name Society.

Candidates must be 18 years of age to become a Professed Member in the Confraternity of the Holy Names of God and Jesus.

Benefits of Membership

By virtue of its ties to the Dominican Order, Professed Members of the Society share in a very special way in the rich treasury of graces won for the Mystical Body of Christ by the passion and death of its head, Jesus Christ. Every member of the Society, while he is faithful to his obligations, shares in the blessings from the Masses, good works, preaching, teaching and manual labor of the Dominican Order. In addition, indulgences are available for members through their devotion to the Holy Name of Jesus.

Dismissal from Confraternity

Once a member is validly received, their membership endures in perpetuity unless they are dismissed for a worthy reason according to requirements outlined within

Canon Law, with modifications necessary for Public Associations of Christ's Faithful.

A Professed Member of the Holy Name Society cannot be terminated from the Society for failure to pay dues, attend meetings, or go to Holy Communion with the Society. Their membership, however, may be deemed inactive; and they may be dropped from the Society's **active** member list after a specified period of non-attendance at Society activities.

While dismissal of members should be a rare event in the Society, there are valid occasions when official dismissal should be taken in order to avoid serious defamation or scandal to the Church. Prudence and Charity must be exercised prior to and during the initiation of any dismissal action. Reference (Canon 316 §1 and §2)

Patron of the Holy Name Society

Blessed John of Vercelli – Fr. John Garbella O.P.

Feast Day: December 1

John Garbella, was born near Vercelli in northwest Italy in the early 13th century. He entered the Dominican Order in the 1240s and served in various leadership capacities. Fr. John Garbella O.P. was elected sixth master general of the Dominicans in 1264, he served for almost two decades.

Known for his tireless energy and his commitment to simplicity, Fr. John Garbella O.P. made personal visits—typically on foot—to almost all the Dominican houses, urging his fellow friars to strictly observe the rules and constitutions of the Order.

Pope Gregory X enlisted the help of Fr. John Garbella O.P. and his fellow Dominicans in helping to pacify the States of Italy that were quarreling with one another. He was also called upon to draw up a framework for the Second Council of Lyons in 1274. It was at that council that he met Jerome of Ascoli (the man who would later become Pope Nicholas IV), then serving as master general of the Franciscans.

Following the Second Council of Lyons, Pope Gregory selected the Dominicans to spread devotion to the name of Jesus. Fr. Garbella O.P. took the task to heart, requiring that every Dominican church contain an altar of the Holy Name of Jesus. Groups were also formed in the parishes to combat blasphemy and profanity.

Even though the Confraternity of the Most Holy Names of God and Jesus was not canonically recognized until the 1500's, Blessed John's efforts to promote devotion to the Holy Name of Jesus throughout the entire Church in the 1200's, makes him the patron of the Confraternity of the Most Holy Names of God and Jesus – The Holy Name Society.

Emergence of the Holy Name Society in America

The Reverend Charles Nerinckx, pioneer priest of Kentucky, preached the importance of devotion to the Holy Name of Jesus, and the oldest existing charter of the Confraternity in this country was obtained by Father Nerinckx in 1808 in the state of Kentucky.

The apostolate of Father Charles H. McKenna, O.P., near the end of the 19th century brought the Society into prominence east of the Mississippi River. Father McKenna devoted nearly fifty years to the promotion of the Society.

Father Charles H. McKenna, O.P. was appointed by his Provincial the Director of the Rosary Confraternity and the Holy Name Society of the St. Joseph Province in September of 1900. The first Holy Name Society initiated under Fr. McKenna was St. Edward's Church in Philadelphia in October of 1900. Five-hundred and fifty members were inducted. Fr. McKenna asked each Bishop to dispense with the Clementine Decree which allowed only one Confraternity or Society per city or town. The Rescript of the Holy Father dated May 20, 1896 gave the local Bishops, a method to formally dispense with this decree. At the request of Fr. McKenna almost all of the Bishops endorsed this decree.

Fr. McKenna was successful at starting hundreds of Holy Name Societies across the United States and inducting thousands of members during his tenure as Confraternity Director which spanned from September of 1900 through 1914. Fr. McKenna was known as the "Apostle of the Holy Name" for his great devotion to the Holy Name of Jesus and his tireless efforts to promote the Holy Name Society.

In the years from 1914 until 1960, parish Holy Name Societies and diocesan unions were formed throughout the United States and parts of Canada. Great acts of public devotion to the Holy Name of Jesus were carried out by members of the Holy Name Society during these formative years of the Society.

The first Holy Name Society Unions were formed in 1882, with the first Diocesan Union of the Holy Name Society being formed in Brooklyn, New York and the first Archdiocesan Union being formed in New York City. This organization was needed by 1882 to better organize

activities with the numerous parishes that had formed Holy Name Societies.

The concept was copied in a few months in the diocese of Newark. Bishops were quick to take advantage of the opportunities offered by such a spiritual concentration of Catholic fervor and in a few short years, unions were formed in many more dioceses; e.g., Baltimore, Boston, Buffalo, Chicago, Cincinnati, Detroit, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh and several others.

The National Association of Holy Name Society (NAHNS) was formed on February 1, 1970 when the Dominican Order formally transferred governance of the Holy Name Society to the lay members of the Holy Name Society in the United States and Canada. From 1970 to the present day, the NAHNS has worked with (Arch)Diocesan Unions and parish Holy Name Societies to promote public devotion to the Holy Name of Jesus and the sanctity and holiness of its members.

Parish Holy Name Society

Canonical Requirements

For many centuries Holy Name Societies were only found in Dominican parishes and priories. In the United States, from the early 1900's until 1960 almost all parishes received charters to form a Holy Name Society.

When a parish wishes to establish a Society, the Pastor or Spiritual Moderator requests a "charter" from the Confraternity Director of the Dominican Order in the appropriate Dominican Province (visit nahns.com to determine appropriate Dominican contact information). The

Charter is an ecclesiastical document and as such is issued in the name of the church. It is recommended the Charter be framed and hung in the sacristy of the church. Since it is issued “in perpetuum” (forever), should the Charter be lost or destroyed, the canonical status of a parish Society is not affected.

The second canonical requirement of the Society is keeping the names of all Professed Members in a permanently bound book. This book is referred to as a Holy Name Register. Special Holy Name Registers may be obtained from the National Association of the Holy Name Society Supply Office. The register should be kept with the other official records of the Society.

A special religious ceremony is required for a person to become a Professed Member of the Confraternity of the Holy Names of God and Jesus. A copy of the Induction Ceremony is available from the NAHNS – visit nahns.com for more details.

Since the Society is an Indulgenced Confraternity of the Church, the above mentioned canonical requirements must be met in order that the members of the Society may receive all of the spiritual benefits.

In summary, the canonical conditions include the following items:

- Permission of the Bishop.
- A Charter from the Dominican Master General (obtained from the Dominican Confraternity Director)

- Religious ceremony to become a Professed Member (Ceremony available from the NAHNS – visit nahns.com for details)
- Recording of names of Professed Members in a permanent book (book obtained from the NAHNS Store nahns.com)

Charter

Each parish Holy Name Society must be properly chartered by the Dominican order. Also, if the local Holy Name Society spans several parishes, (example: New York Firefighters, south Miami Beach, southeast Metro Junior HNS, etc) a charter will need to be properly issued for at least one of the parishes that falls within the scope of the Holy Name Society. A charter may be issued under the title of a church or a chapel in which the Blessed Sacrament is usually reserved and access to public worship is usually available.

The Dominican Confraternity Director of the Dominican Province is responsible for issuing the charter. You may find the appropriate contact for your region by going to the National Holy Name Society web site – nahns.com or send an email to info@nahns.com.

Erecting a Parish Holy Name Society

Prior to inducting members into a parish Holy Name Society the Society must be chartered properly to the Dominican Order in the Dominican Province that has jurisdiction over the (Arch)Diocese the parish is located. Once the parish Society is chartered, a special ceremony is required to properly erect the Society. Two forms are provided for the ceremony - one for erecting the Society during Mass and one during Morning or Evening Prayer. The Official Book of

Ceremonies – available from the NAHNS (nahns.com) contains this special erection ceremony

Recruiting Members

Membership in the Confraternity is a spiritual calling to give honor and reverence to God and a commitment to work to achieve sanctification through fraternal cooperation in carrying out the mission and purpose of the Confraternity; which is "*to spread devotion to the Holy Names of God and Jesus.*" It is important to attract those who are faithful in their religious practices, strong in faith, interested in learning the true teachings of the Catholic Church and who wish to grow in personal holiness.

Catholics who desire to serve God and their parish and to progress in their faith journey with other like-minded souls should be contacted to become members. It is important to ensure that the candidates are Catholics in good standing and that they regularly practice their Catholic faith.

Formation of Members

Membership into the Holy Name Society is restricted to Catholics in good standing with the Church as defined under Canon Law. (Can. 316 §1)

Before induction as a Professed Member at the formal Induction Ceremony, recruited candidates or novitiates, must learn about and understand the Obligations of Membership in the Confraternity.

The Spiritual Moderator of the parish Society should contact each of the novice-members to assist them in learning the History, Purpose, Mission, Spiritual Benefits of Membership, Obligations of Membership and the Holy Name Pledge

before the formal Induction Ceremony. They should be given a copy of the Constitution and By-Laws of the Parish Society so they fully understand the purpose of the Confraternity and how it is governed.

During their novitiate (trial period), novice-members should demonstrate their sincerity and commitment by attending all spiritual conferences, devotional activities and assemblies.

The names of the Professed Members must be written in ink in the Official Register of the Holy Name Society. The Spiritual Moderator or the priest conducting the induction ceremony should sign and date the page containing the signatures. After the induction ceremony the candidates become Professed Members in the Confraternity of the Most Holy Names of God and Jesus and now obtain the graces, indulgences, rights, benefits and spiritual benefits of membership.

Leadership of a Parish Holy Name Society

The following pages provide guidelines for parish Holy Name Society officers. Some flexibility is allowed and even encouraged to allow for the formation of Leadership Boards that meet the needs of the specific parish Holy Name Society. It is important that the parish Holy Name Society have an updated and accurate Constitution and Bylaws that clearly state the duties and responsibilities of each office.

Officer Positions

The following Officer positions are required for the successful operation of a parish Holy Name Society; Spiritual Moderator, President, Vice President, Secretary and

Treasurer. Additional Officers may be necessary depending on the size of the parish Holy Name Society and the activities and programs that the Society undertakes. With the growth of the Society additional positions may be necessary; such as the Immediate Past President and Marshal and in some cases, the chairperson(s) of selected Standing Committees.

Leadership Board

The parish Holy Name Society Leadership Board has the responsibility of selecting, defining, developing and executing the apostolate activities of the parish Holy Name Society. They also help determine the fund raising activities of the Society and ensure the Constitution and the Bylaws are followed. It is the responsibility of the Leadership Board to plan activities for the Monthly parish Membership Assemblies.

Duties and Accountability

Special duties are assigned to each office and those selected for these offices should be held accountable for their fulfillment. Every official of the Society has specific tasks to perform. If the tasks are not fulfilled, the Society will suffer. Before accepting nomination for an office, prospective candidates should prayerfully consider themselves competent and willing to fulfill the requirements of their office.

Tenure of Office

The tasks imposed upon officers involve sacrifice of time, talent and energy. Better results can be secured by limiting the tenure of office. It is difficult to state what the ideal term limit should be since circumstances and resources vary. A one year term is the minimum, with two years

considered more appropriate. In some cases a three year term may be advisable, but this is the maximum tenure recommended. Some of the main reasons for limiting the officer's term include:

1. It often takes a time for a person to become accustomed to the duties and responsibilities of a position and then finally to begin to be able to effectively apply their skills to the given tasks. Thus some time needs to be factored in for the startup of each new officer team.
2. The organization gains overall if different people's perspectives are allowed to influence the management and guiding of the organization.
3. A person who knows in advance that the duration of sacrifices for the office is limited is willing to make these sacrifices. Frequently people refuse to accept an office because they feel that it will become an extended commitment of time and energy.
4. The knowledge that the opportunity for service and achievement is limited produces the pressure and urge to get started immediately. Leaders who think they have indefinite tenure are inclined to delay and, through this delay, are kept from making a genuine contribution.
5. With a frequent change in officers many additional members become more intimately acquainted with the Society and consequently better members. A corps of retired officers, too, is beneficial for a Society. Former officers become very valuable members.

Elections and Advancements

It is important to preserve some link between the past and present Leadership Board to continue the traditions of the parish Holy Name Society. This can be accomplished through a promotional system for officers or through elections of the Officer positions on the Leadership Board.

In some cases, it is advisable to have the Vice President automatically rotate into the President position to maintain continuity. The automatic promotion of some of the other officers in a Society, while it helps to retain experience, involves difficulties and disadvantages. It is distinctly undesirable to adopt a definite policy of advancement for all officers. Since there are special requirements for each office, it is apparent that a person qualified to hold one position may not have the skills necessary to succeed at another. An efficient and effective Secretary may not have the leadership attributes necessary to function as a President, as an example.

It is highly recommended that the positions on the Leadership Board be staggered. It is undesirable for the entire Leadership Board to turn over at the same time. Depending on the size of the Leadership Board, it is recommended that only one-third of the Leadership Board be eligible for turnover at any one time. It is highly recommended that no more than one half of the positions on the Board be up for election at one time.

Election Policy and Process

Skilled and properly qualified officers are required for a successful Society.

Special qualifications are required for each office. It is recommended that an open election, in which the nominations are made from the floor, not be used as this method is not effective at securing the most competent leaders.

The selection of qualified candidates is an important job, and should be entrusted to a group of qualified members. This group or committee is typically called the Nominating Committee. Experience has proven the value of appointing former officers of the Society to serve on this committee. The Reverend Pastor or Spiritual Moderator should also be invited to serve as a member of this committee.

The following procedure is recommended for the Nominating Committee.

1. A study of the roles, responsibilities, activities and skills required for each office.
2. An analysis of the membership to ascertain the members who seem to possess the desired ability.
3. Review availability of qualified members.
4. Conduct personal interviews with prospective candidates by the Spiritual Moderator and committee members.

General Qualifications of Officers

The success or failure of a Holy Name Society usually reflects the ability and enthusiasm of its officers. It is important, therefore, to select qualified officers and to train them properly.

The model for every Holy Name member is the life of our Divine Savior. This is particularly true of the officers in a Society dedicated to honor His Holy Name. Officers should strive to emulate Christ's charity towards others, to master His patience and His understanding of human nature, to capture His tremendous enthusiasm and to imitate His love for His Church.

It is impossible to establish standards for predicting with certainty which individuals will become successful officers, but there are some general qualifications or characteristics which all officers should possess. Among the more essential there are:

- **Religious Character:** Mass attendance on all Sundays and all Holy Days of Obligation, frequent reception of the Sacraments of Confession and the Holy Eucharist, obedience to the Magisterium of the Catholic Church and all teachings of the Catholic Church, and a sincere respect for the priesthood and an active involvement in parish life.
- **Ability to Work with Others:** Successful operation of a Holy Name Society demands cooperation among officers and with other parish groups.
- **Willingness to Sacrifice:** An officer does much more than attend meetings. The conscientious fulfillment of an office of the Society involves many evenings of work, planning and making arrangements. Those chosen for an office must have the ability and willingness to make this sacrifice of time. There are many zealous and devoted Holy Name members who are prevented, by causes beyond their control, from making the necessary sacrifices. In some cases, a person's occupation or domestic situation make it difficult, if not impossible, to fulfill the requirements of an office. These situations must be considered.
- **Previous Experience:** Individuals who have had experience in another organization, civic or religious, or

whose business or profession is such that it has trained them in organizational work, may be the best qualified to become efficient officers.

Training of Officers

The selection of qualified officers is only the first step in developing a successful Society. These officers need training and information on the Holy Name Society. This includes the purpose, history and activities of the Society; the policies and practices of the parish Society; and the nature and content of their duties. An informal training program is recommended.

The following sources of information are useful for training new Holy Name Society leaders:

- The web site of the National Association of the Holy Name Society. A wide variety of information is available here including downloadable documents and publications (nahns.com).
- The National Holy Name Society web store (nahns.com) – a place where Holy Name materials may be purchased.
- Constitution: the Constitution of the parish Holy Name Society explains the organization and activities of the organization, the method of conducting its work, and the duties of the parish officers. A copy of these documents should be given to all newly elected officers. New officers should read the Constitution and Bylaws of their local Holy Name Society.
- Where an (Arch)Diocesan Union exists the officers of a parish Holy Name Society, and particularly the president, should be familiar with the (Arch)Diocesan Constitution and should keep in touch with the (Arch)Diocesan officers. Resources from the (Arch)Diocesan union can provide assistance in starting

a new parish Holy Name Society and in welcoming a new parish Leadership Board.

- Meeting with Retiring Officers: in a successful Society each new administration begins where its predecessor left off. It is recommended to ensure this cooperation is a permanent policy so that every officer can feel free to approach their predecessor for advice and help as needed. The individual officers can explain to their successors the routines which have been followed and give them the records of their office. This cooperation helps reduce or eliminate costly errors leading towards a faster startup and greater success.

Financing the Holy Name Society

An annual membership fee is one logical answer to how to finance the activities of the Holy Name Society. The average member of a Religious and Spiritual organization typically expects and wants to contribute toward its maintenance, and will do so if the amount is reasonable. The amount can be easily determined by a vote of the membership.

If there are any members who cannot afford this small payment, special arrangements can be made to void the annual dues for an individual in a confidential manner. It should be noted that no person is to be refused membership based upon the ability to pay dues. The Holy Name Society is primarily a spiritual organization; financial considerations are secondary.

If additional funds are needed beyond what can be collected via reasonable dues, Societies should consider other simple fund raisers. There are endless ideas that have been put into practice over the years. Activities related to education, faith formation, and/or spiritual enrichment such as

speakers, conferences or retreats are consistent with the spiritual nature of the Society and when run efficiently can generate a source of income.

Duties of Holy Name Society Officers

Spiritual Moderator

The Spiritual Moderator is key to the success of a Holy Name Society. All religious issues are subject to the approval and authority of the Spiritual Moderator. The Spiritual Moderator of the Society is the Spiritual and Religious leader of the parish Society, and its success or failure will reflect, in great measure, on the time, energy and zeal they place on the Society.

The Spiritual Moderator sets the tone and direction for the Holy Name Society. The Spiritual Moderator should start each meeting with a prayer and the Holy Name Pledge. In addition the Spiritual Moderator understands the spiritual needs of the parish and can recommend the most appropriate spiritual activities and initiatives of the Holy Name Society, such as Holy Hours of Prayer, Vigils, Days of Reflection, Retreats, Spiritual Talks, Catechesis Classes, Memorial Masses for the Living and Deceased Members, Food and Clothing Drives, Prison Ministry and Visiting the Sick, etc.

It is highly desirable to have the Pastor of the parish be the Spiritual Moderator of the Holy Name Society, if this is possible. If the size of the parish prevents the Pastor from serving as the Spiritual Moderator then the Parochial Vicar of the parish is the second best option. If this is not

feasible, then a retired Priest or a Deacon assigned to the parish should be selected.

General Duties

The Spiritual Moderator has many duties to perform as the Spiritual Head of the Society. The general duties can be listed as follows. The Spiritual Moderator:

- Directs the Spiritual Works of Mercy of the Society.
- Presides at Spiritual events of the Society.
- Serves as the spokesperson within the parish for the Spiritual Benefits of membership of the Society.
- Visibly shows support for the Holy Name Society through words and actions and most importantly through personal attendance at Society sponsored events.
- Acts as a liaison between the parish Society and the Pastor of the parish (if the Spiritual Moderator is not the Parish Priest)

President

Together with the Spiritual Moderator the president provides leadership to the parish Holy Name Society. The president with the Leadership Board provides for the success or failure of the Societies programs. The president's office involves many duties including knowledge of the traditions and the customs of the Holy Name Society; setting the example of strong spiritual commitment and the exercise of effective leadership for the benefit of the entire Society membership.

The office of president calls for strong leadership skills including the ability to provide effective planning, direction

and the coordination of the Leadership Board and of the membership of the Society.

General Duties

The president has various duties to perform depending on the size of the parish Society. The general duties can be listed as follows. The president:

- Works with the Spiritual Moderator to develop projects and plans for the Society membership that will contribute to the spiritual development of the members.
- Plans, coordinates Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy for the Society in coordination with the Leadership Board and consistent with the goals of the parish and the majority interest of the members.
- Calls and presides at the meetings of the Society.
- Serves as the spokesperson for and representative of the Society in its relations with other parish and community groups.

The president plans and coordinates the activities of the Society in coordination with the Leadership Board. This is the president's most important function. Under this title, the president is expected to perform the following duties:

1. Study the construction and tradition of the Society in order to understand the activities and procedure of the Society, as well as the duties of officers and such committees as may be needed for execution of the program.
2. Appoint committees as needed. The exercise of sound judgment in the appointment of committee leaders is very important. Since a special work of the Society is

entrusted to each committee, members are chosen for their ability to fulfill the requirements of their office.

3. Train the officers and committee leaders. An alert president supports the associated officers and committee leaders with all available information on their respective offices. As part of this training, the president should arrange a meeting with the retiring administration so that the new group may benefit from the experience of their predecessors.
4. Prepare a general program for the current administration. This program should have specific objectives consistent with the Spiritual goals of the Holy Name Society. While the president takes the initiative in arranging the program, it is discussed and officially adopted by the entire board and membership. This general program includes the activities which will be sponsored; the dates when they will be conducted; and the individuals who will be responsible for their conduct.
5. Coordinates and supports the work of all officers and committees. The president is ultimately responsible for all activities of the Society. Consequently the president must be kept informed of the activities of the Committee members; the progress which is being achieved; and the problems being encountered.
6. The president can best exercise responsible leadership by calling the officers and committee leaders together on a regular basis for ongoing review of progress and issues.

Successful leadership consists first of quality planning and effective execution coupled with an insightful review of the decisions which affect the membership. This means that the president, as presiding officer, has important duties before, during and after each meeting.

Before the Leadership Board Meeting: The president's preparation includes:

1. A review of the previous meeting minutes. This includes a study of the attendance, the action items assigned, and all decisions discussed and or voted on.
2. The arrangement of the order of business and the formation of a definite agenda and time schedule for the meeting. These arrangements can be made best at the meeting of the Leadership Board. It is valuable to discuss in advance all committee reports.
3. The presentation of the meeting agenda to the Pastor or Spiritual Moderator.
4. The preparation of the introduction for the guest speaker and other features of the meeting.
5. The supervision of the physical arrangements for the meeting.

During the Meeting: As the presiding officer, the president:

1. Calls the meeting to order. It is important that all meetings be called to order at the appointed time. It is equally important to adjourn promptly.
2. Stands when addressing the assembly.
3. Expedites the transaction of business during the meeting.
4. Maintains proper order by recognizing the right of all members and assigning the floor to them impartially.
5. States all motions clearly and clarifies any questions which may arise.
6. Calls for a vote on both the affirmative and negative of all questions and announces the results of the vote.
7. Ensures parliamentary procedures are followed.

8. Does not debate or discuss any question while occupying the chair. If the president wishes to enter the debate, the president must appoint a temporary chairman and leave the chair.
9. Signs all official documents on behalf of the Society.

The president in addition to the primary responsibility as leader of the parish Society is also the intermediary between the parish Society and the (Arch)Diocesan Union – when one exists. If an (Arch)Diocesan Union does not exist the President is the intermediary between the parish Society and the NAHNS Regional Vice President (complete listing found on the NAHNS website nahns.com). The president is also the representative of the Society in its relations with all other parish groups and Organizations.

Vice President

The vice-president of an organization takes over all the duties of the president when the latter is not able to be present at a meeting. It is highly suggested that the vice president has both general and specific duties.

General Duties

The general duties of the Vice President concern the fact that the vice president “shall have all the powers and perform all the duties of the President in the absence of the latter.” Beyond that, it is highly recommended that the Vice President have other specific duties such as being the chairperson of the membership committee, the finance committee and/or similar duties.

The Vice-President, therefore, should be thoroughly familiar with the duties of the President as outlined in the previous section. In addition Vice President could be assigned the de

facto chair of one or more important committees of the Holy Name Society.

Secretary

The secretary is responsible for documenting the key decisions of the Society and keeping the official records of the Society.

General Duties

The secretary records the minutes of the meetings of the Society, conducts the correspondence, and keeps the records of the Society. The secretary often is consequently called the historian, correspondent, and record clerk of the Society.

These duties indicate the required qualifications for the office, namely, the ability to write well, a sense of accuracy, and understanding of system and the value of records, and sufficient free time to perform the many duties of the office.

The duties of the secretary include the following items:

1. Record the minutes of all meetings. This includes the minutes of the regular and special meetings of the Society. These minutes contain the record of all the acts and transactions of the Society.
2. Review and draft a copy of the meeting minutes for formal approval at the subsequent meeting.
3. Publish the approved minutes to the appropriate officers, members, and others.
4. Receive all official correspondence of the Society. Copies of official letters and documents sent to other officers of the Society should be given to the secretary.
5. Respond to all official requests as directed by the Leadership Board promptly.

6. Maintain a file of all minutes, official correspondence received, and replies made.
7. Communicate notices of all official meetings and events of the Society via the parish bulletin and or other effective communication media.

Official Records

The records of the secretary include:

1. The current membership roster of the Society. *Note: this membership roster is distinctly separate from the Official Register of Professed Members.* An individual could be either a Novice Member or a Professed Member, a Professed Member being a person who is officially inducted into the Society, their name is written in the Official Register.
2. A complete listing of **all** of the Professed Members of the Society living and deceased – this list is kept in the Official Register of Members which is required by the canonical regulations of the Confraternity.
3. A record of all the official minutes and official reports of the Society.
4. A record of all officers, committee chairs, and members of the standing and special committees. This includes their office, name, address, e-mail address, and telephone number.
5. Copies of the Constitution and By-laws of the parish Society. The secretary should bring a copy of these documents to all meetings of the Society.

There are several incidental duties which the secretary is often called upon to do. These include the signing of all papers, acts and transactions of the Society when directed by the president; supplying the president with a list of the unfinished business items from each meeting; advising the

president during the meeting of the order of business; and assisting the president in executing this order.

Suggestions for Meeting Minutes

The meeting minutes are the official and permanent record of the Society. It is important, therefore, to prepare this record accurately, and to write them well and legibly. A preliminary draft should be prepared, reviewed and approved by the Leadership Board. The approved minutes must be kept in a suitable secure location.

The minutes should contain:

1. The nature of the meeting: regular or special meeting; the name of the Society; the date, time and place of the meeting; and the name of the presiding officer as well as a list of all attendees of the meeting and a list of absent and excused Leadership Board Members.
2. Minutes should indicate if a quorum exists to conduct official business.
3. A record of all major business transacted. The details of discussions can be omitted. All matters are to be presented objectively.
4. All motions are recorded. This notice includes the exact wording of the motion, the name of its presenter, the individual who seconded the motion, and the results of the vote, whether approved, disapproved or tabled.
5. A summary of any committee reports presented during the meeting. It is not necessary to incorporate these reports in their entirety since they are normally filed with the minutes. It is sufficient to state the facts that a report has been presented, giving a summary of its contents, and indicate what disposition has been made of the report. If the report calls for a specific action by

the Society, this recommendation is recorded in the same manner as formal motions.

6. List of action items assigned during the meetings, the due date of the action items and the person assigned the action item.

Historical Documentation

It is important that the Secretary be able to readily access recent records of the organization and important information at the request of the officers and members. It is suggested that the secretary carry with them the following items when preparing for and attending Society events and activities:

1. A roster of members including members address, email address and phone numbers.
2. Minutes of meetings (Leadership Board and Special, and General Assembly)
3. Roster of officers and committee chairs (addresses, email addresses, and phone numbers)
4. List of district and diocesan union Holy Name Society officers and Regional Vice President.
5. Important formal communications for reference purposes.
6. List of the Order of business for Leadership Board and General Membership meetings.
7. Written reports made by officers and Committee Chairs.

Treasurer

Finances are of secondary importance in the Holy Name Society, but a certain amount of money is required to carry out the apostolate of the Society. The treasurer is responsible for maintaining the financial records of the Society. A member who is experienced and familiar with

general accounting practices and policies, like an accountant, should be sought for this office.

The registers and records of the treasurer should be audited by a special Auditing Committee at the end of each fiscal year. The Auditing Committee should present its formal report to the Leadership Board of the Society.

General Duties

The duties of the treasurer include the collection of dues and other revenues of the Society; the disbursement of the funds; keeping the financial records of the Society; and assisting the Leadership Board manage the funds of the Society to keep the Society financially solvent. In fulfilling these duties, the treasurer acts at times as a collector, bookkeeper and controller.

In the role of collector, the treasurer does the following:

1. Receives the dues and all other revenues of the Society.
2. Deposits all money in the bank account of the Society. If the Society does not maintain a separate bank account, the treasurer deposits the money of the Society with the Financial Administrator of the parish.
3. Keeps a record of the membership and notes their payment of dues.
4. Reminds the members to pay their dues. The dues of a Holy Name Society are considered as a contribution to the Society, and no member may be disqualified because the member cannot or does not meet the financial requirements. While the treasurer sends a statement of dues to the members, the

treasurer must exercise great prudence in order not to offend any member.

The treasurer does the following activities:

1. Receives all invoices.
2. Obtains authorization for payment of the invoice from the Leadership Board.
3. Pays all obligations by check. If the Society does not maintain a checking account, the treasurer obtains a receipt for all payments.

The treasurer keeps the following records on behalf of the Society:

1. A register in which all income and expenditures of the Society are recorded.
2. The receipts for the income, copies of all invoices, receipts for disbursements, and cancelled checks.

In the role of controller, the treasurer does the following:

1. Creates and submits an annual budget with the input of the Leadership Board. The treasurer should gather input for the proposed budget by reviewing the financial records for past years, and by asking other officers and committee leaders for their anticipated expenses for the coming year.
2. After the proposed budget has been adopted by the Leadership Board, the treasurer monitors the actual expenses and revenue as compared to the approved budget. If there is a significant discrepancy between planned and actual, the treasurer should bring this to the Leadership Board's attention at the earliest opportunity.
3. Create and submit a report on the financial condition of the Society for each meeting of the Leadership Board and for selected General Meetings. The

report should contain income and expenditures for the period, as well as the cash balance of the Society.

4. Cooperates with the special Audit Committee by providing open access to all financial records and addressing all recommendations of the Audit Committee.

Upon starting a term as the treasurer, all of financial records of the Society; the registers, reports, budgets and statements should be provided to the treasurer. Also, work with the previous treasurer and the financial administrator of the parish and the bank to secure the necessary authorization to write checks/request checks for the Society.

Marshal

The physical arrangements required for the activities and events of the Society may require the services of a designated individual. This individual officer is called the Marshal.

General Duties

1. Reserve the necessary meeting rooms and facilities.
2. Arrange appropriate seating, audio/visual, and support materials as needed for each meeting, activity and event.
3. Manage the food and beverages that may be needed.
4. Ensure the facilities are restored to clean and tidy status after all activities of the Society.
5. Work with other officers and committee leaders to ensure sufficient copies of handouts/reports/prayer books and cards are available ahead of time.

6. Maintain order during meetings and events.
7. Keep and care for the supplies of the Society and give the appropriate supplies to the officers who have charge of their distribution. The marshal should keep a record of all supplies received and distributed. A copy of this record should be given to the secretary and treasurer of the Society.

Depending on the size the Society and the scope of the events/activities, additional members may be appointed to assist the marshal in the above items. In larger Societies, a special committee may be given these responsibilities.

Committees

Committees are the vehicle through which many of the initiatives and functions of the Society are carried out.

Each committee has a chairperson who is responsible for the overall work and direction of the committee. The chair is also responsible for keeping the Leadership Board and members of the Society informed of the activities, results and requirements of the committee.

Committees generally fall into two categories:

- Standing Committees (Permanent) - those committees that are a permanent part of the organization. If one of the standing committees did not exist, the organization would suffer greatly and likely cease to fulfill its overall mission.
- Special Committees (Temporary) - are formed as needed to address the changing needs, initiatives, priorities, projects and activities of the organization.

The committees required in any parish Holy Name Society will vary depending on the size, focus and emphasis of the particular Society. However, there are some common committees that are recommended for Holy Name Societies. These are the Membership and Religious and Spiritual Renewal Committees.

Standing Committees

The standing committees highlighted here (Membership and Religious and Spiritual Renewal) are normally found in some form in most Holy Name Societies. These committees cover the main elements that need to be present in a successful Society. Each Society retains flexibility in being able to structure and form their specific standing committees in the manner that make the most sense.

Membership

The Membership Committee is the recruiting arm of the Holy Name Society. It is a very important committee and is therefore recommended that it be a standing or permanent committee of the Society. The Membership Committee aims to keep the present membership active, and to secure new members for the Society. It is recommended that the Vice President be a de facto member of this Committee or be the de facto chair of the membership committee.

The Membership Committee performs two general functions:

1. It conducts membership campaigns to recruit new members for the Society.
2. It works to maintain membership attendance at Society events and meetings.

A successful committee must perform both of these functions well. In an established society, the second function of maintaining an active membership becomes the more important regular duty of the committee.

The committee consists of chairperson and members. Its members should be chosen very carefully. In addition to the general qualities desired of all officers, the members of this committee should possess the following traits:

- Knowledge of the Holy Name Society. This includes information on the Spiritual Benefits and Indulgences granted to Professed Members, Obligations of Membership, History of the Society, purpose of the Society and the key initiatives and activities of the Society.
- Gift of communication and the ability to persuade and influence potential members.

There are a variety of techniques that could be used by the Membership Committee to achieve success. Some possibilities include:

- Membership Campaign – specific time where the focus is on reaching out to potential new members and bringing them into the Society.
- Special Holy Name activities geared toward the parish overall and those who are not currently Holy Name members.
- Membership Day – special day during the year where the pastor speaks about the benefits of Holy Name membership and encourages parishioners to join. Members would normally be available after all parish weekend masses to provide information about the Holy Name Society and to encourage new members to join.

- Personal Solicitation – all members whether on the Membership Committee or not should always be working to invite new people into the Holy Name Society.
- Novice Membership – this form of membership in the Holy Name Society can be a stepping stone to professed membership. Parishioners and people attending Holy Name activities, meetings and events should be encouraged to join the organization as novice members initially. They can then be convinced to become Professed Members at the appropriate time.

Religious and Spiritual Renewal

The primary objectives of the Society are respect and devotion for the name of God and Our Divine Savior and the sanctification and holiness of its members. Any program adopted by the Society should be in keeping with these objectives.

Some suggestions for programs under this committee are listed below:

Retreats

Retreats can be an excellent format for intense spiritual formation and growth. This Committee is responsible for the details of the retreat including the theme/content, arranging the facilities, taking care of the dates, promotion of the retreat, arrangements for transportation if necessary, and making this information available to membership at regular intervals during the year.

Religious Materials

There has been a tremendous growth of multi-media materials on many varied subjects concerning the Catholic Church and its doctrines. It is a very praiseworthy custom for a Holy Name Society to sponsor a multi-media rack in the church and to maintain it. This undertaking is usually self-supporting and can do a great deal of good for the people of the parish.

Corporal Works of Mercy

This committee is responsible for a wide variety of activities and projects conducted for those in the local area in need of assistance. The Church's works of mercy offer an excellent framework and structure for organizing efforts in this area.

Prayer Chain

Prayer chains are an excellent method to get members to pray for each other and for their special intentions. This Committee develops a process to collect and communicate prayer requests and prayer intentions within the Society and if desired, the entire parish family. This committee receives prayer requests and distributes these prayer intentions to members. It is important that requests be kept discrete and confidential.

Faith Formation / Apologetics

This committee works to increase the members understanding of the teachings of the Catholic faith. This can be done in a number of ways such as using bible studies, catechetical studies or RCIA type programs.

Apologetics programs help to go beyond the basic understanding of the faith moving members to an ability to readily explain the teachings of the Church and to defend those teachings. This can be completed through educational sessions, by the use of apologetics books, literature, and videos, and through speakers and conferences.

Special Committees

Each Society has a specific personality and character. Special Committees provide an opportunity for the Society to cultivate their special and unique Charisms or gifts of the Holy Spirit. Special Committees are designed to take on activities and functions that help the Society be more effective and efficient in carrying out their apostolate and performing their Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy in His Holy Name.

Special Committees that have been useful in numerous Societies throughout the history of the organization are; Finance, Communications, Prison Ministry, Life Marriage Family Youth, Blessed John of Vercelli, Visiting the Sick and Military Support. More information on these Special Committees can be found in the Special Committee Section of this Manual.

Special Committee Information

Special Committees are designed to take on activities and functions that help the Society be more effective and efficient in carrying out their apostolates and performing their Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy.

The following Special Committees that have been useful in helping Societies become more efficient and effective:

Communications

All the activities being planned and carried out by the Holy Name Society need to be communicated. A committee often assumes responsibility for these elements working closely with the secretary, the president and the pastor. There are limitless ways to communicate, many available for no cost. The specifics of how and when to communicate are left to the imagination and talents of the local Holy Name members.

Examples of communication tools used widely are Newsletters, Parish Bulletin Announcements, e-mails, and the use of the many popular Social Media applications.

Finance

This committee works to monitor and manage the finances of the Society. The Finance Committee works closely with the treasurer and functions as an extended resource, planning body and oversight group for the treasurer. It should be noted that the Holy Name Society is not about making money. However, money is useful and often necessary in carrying out the actions and activities of the Holy Name Society. Proper stewardship of the financial resources is a desirable virtue. It is recommended that the Treasurer be a de-facto Chairperson of this Committee. Special Committees that are aligned with the National Association of the Holy Name Society (NAHNS) Committees are:

Prison Ministry

The Holy Name Society has a long history of successful ministry in prisons. This effort has brought Christ to countless individuals, many who previously had neither hope nor any knowledge of Jesus. Some local Societies chose to work directly in prisons. For those that don't, you are still encouraged to participate and support the Holy Name Society prison ministry through educational and awareness efforts and prayer for those who are in prisons and those working with them. All Societies and members are encouraged to consider the gift of financial support to those engaged in prison ministry on behalf of the Holy Name Society.

Blessed John of Vercelli

The Blessed John of Vercelli committee within a local Society works in concert with the National committee to increase awareness of the life of Blessed John of Vercelli. The committee works to promote prayer, devotion, and holiness in the members of the Society using Blessed John's actions and words as a model and guide. The committee also works towards the cause of his canonization through advocacy and by providing financial support.

Life Marriage Family Youth

This committee assist Holy Name Society members implement the U.S. Catholic bishops' plan for rebuilding a Catholic culture in accord with a consistent ethic of life, which holds that all life is sacred from the moment of conception to the moment of natural death, protecting the sanctity of the sacrament of marriage, promoting Catholic social teaching and promoting activities for the proper formation of Catholic youth and young adults. The National Association's committee for Life Marriage Family Youth is an

excellent source of ideas and suggestions regarding activities and initiatives in this area.

Energies directed toward the youth in the local area are highly encouraged. Successful Holy Name activities with the youth, while meritorious in their own right, also serve as a feeder system to the adult Holy Name Society. If a Catholic school is part of the local landscape, the Youth committee could possibly plan activities with the school over the course of the year. Forming a Junior Holy Name Society is a good way to engage the youth allowing them to develop their leadership skills and select, plan and implement projects that are meaningful to them. A Junior Holy Name Society makes the young members conscious of the evils of blasphemy and puts them in the habit of receiving the Sacraments regularly.

Examples of Special Committees that support the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy that a Society may wish to perform are:

Military Support

The Military Committee has the responsibility to maintain contact with members in military service and their families. Some suggested activities for this committee might include the following items:

- Publish a special bulletin or newsletter for those of the parish who are in military service. This bulletin could likewise be sent to veterans who are home bound or in hospitals.
- Arrange to contact all veterans living in the area.
- If military veterans of the parish are confined to hospitals within the vicinity, the Sick and Vigil

Committee should be given their names and a visit made to the hospital.

- Arrange for the distribution of printed material pertaining to veteran privileges under existing State and Federal legislation. Pay particular attention to educational advantages offered to veterans and see that these opportunities are brought to the attention of young veterans who might want to take advantage of them.
- Keep in touch with all other agencies that attempt to help the veterans, e.g., employment agencies, etc. Keep a list of the services that these organizations offer to a veteran and likewise the addresses of these organizations so that when a veteran is looking for help the Military Committee may give them a definite address to which they may appeal.
- Arrange with the Pastor to conduct religious celebrations, e.g., Memorial Masses, Funerals, Processions, etc. for military members (active or retired).
- Endeavor to make all veterans good, active Holy Name members.

Visiting the Sick

This committee will vary from parish to parish in its exact emphasis but will generally be aligned to one of more of the following corporal or spiritual works of mercy: visit the sick, bury the dead, comfort the afflicted, and pray for the living and the dead. If the Society desires to take on this activity, it will need a way of knowing who the sick/suffering are of the parish. The parish office and/or the pastor can be of assistance in this area. The sick/suffering person (or their family) should be contacted prior to a visit. The people who are visited do not need to be Holy Name Society members.

If specific situations permit, a repeating scheduled visit is desirable such as each week, every two weeks, or what is appropriate based upon the people involved. While individuals are visiting sick/suffering, the entire Holy Name Society membership should be reminded to pray for those people (the sick/suffering and those visiting them).

It is a common practice among Holy Name Societies to have a Mass said for deceased members. The suggested time for such a Mass is one month from the day of the individual's death. The chairperson of the Visit the Sick Committee should arrange for this Mass, notify the Society and also the family of the deceased of the time and place of the Mass.

It is also common for Holy Name Societies to have Masses said for all their deceased members. This should be done on a regularly scheduled interval (ex: once a month, once a year, etc).

Prayer vigils for deceased Holy Name Members are a wonderful spiritual bouquet. There are a variety of formats that can be used varying in content and length. Consult with the Pastor and Society Spiritual Moderator to select something appropriate for the situation.

Leadership Board Meetings

Cooperation among officers and coordination of results can be obtained by conducting regular meetings for the officers. At these Leadership Board meetings the officers report the progress made and the problems encountered with their assignments. The results are compared and studied, and a rather accurate picture of the Society status is obtained. As a result each officer knows what is expected; what the other

officers are doing; and the progress which the Society is making.

These Leadership Board Meetings are for planning the activities and events of the parish Society, determining and approving expenditures of the Society and for making sure all Committees are functioning as planned and required. These meeting should be run using Roberts Rules of Order. As the Leadership Board comes together and begins to lead the organization, the board should begin to focus more and more attention to the monthly meetings of the Society. The plan should be laid out a year in advance. People can then be assigned to lead and work on appropriate activities over the course of the year.

Leadership Board meetings are valuable for planning the regular meetings of the Society. Excessive, unproductive discussion and wasted time can be avoided by this procedure. A meeting of the officers should be held at an agreeable and reasonable time. The frequency of these meetings will depend upon the specific Holy Name Society. Every month is a good guideline, however many Society's take the summer months off.

Getting the New Leadership Board Up and Running

The main energies of the President should be toward solidifying the operation of the new board via the first couple of Leadership Board meetings. This means the President will have to prepare in advance for those meetings. The President will need to set the direction with the board so the organization can follow. To accomplish this, the President will have to do some preparation. Toward this end, it is suggested that the President does the following or similar actions:

1. Meet with the outgoing members of the Leadership Board to get the input on the past, present and the future of the parish Society.
2. Visit the Pastor to get his input on plans and activities for the upcoming year, and to get his blessing.
3. Start forming ideas for activities and actions to complete during your term including identifying potential committee leaders.
4. Schedule the first meeting of the Leadership Board.

Monthly General Membership Meetings

It is important that the president as well as the entire Leadership Board understands the differences in meetings of the Leadership Board and the monthly Society meetings. The most successful parish Holy Name Societies distinguish between the two types of meetings and plan the agendas accordingly.

The following table highlights the similarities and differences of the two meetings.

Agenda Items	Leadership Board	Monthly Society
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	Meeting	Meeting
Opening, closing prayer	Yes	Yes
Conducting the business of the operation	Yes	No
Establish committees	Yes	No
Review committee reports	Yes	No
Set annual budget	Yes	No
Review finances	Yes	Yes
	(monthly)	(annually)
Define the activities for the year	Yes	No
Faith Formation (speakers, activities)	No	Yes
HNS Projects (Prison Ministry, Blessed John, LMFY)	No	Yes
Works of Mercy	No	Yes

The main thing you will notice is that the details related to the planning and oversight of the parish Holy Name Society are the responsibility of the Leadership Board. These items should be on the agendas of the Leadership Board meetings.

The monthly society meetings should focus on some combination of the main Holy Name initiatives: spiritual formation of members, devotions to the Holy Name of Jesus, and spiritual and corporal works of mercy. This distinction of duties and content helps to keep all members satisfied and helps to build a successful parish Holy Name Society. Obviously, the general members need to be aware of the overall plans, and the overall financial situation of the Society. And in some cases their input is needed in deciding and selecting projects and programs. But, the normal

monthly meeting of the Society should not include the normal business meeting topics; most members don't join for this purpose; they join to be spiritually enriched and as they grow, to put their faith into action via projects and activities of the Holy Name Society. Let those whose responsibility it is to lead accomplish this via the Leadership Board meetings. All others should be spiritually enriched each time they attend a monthly meeting.

Do:

- Arrange programs that appeal to the majority of the membership.
- Start your programs punctually; this adds to the appreciation of a “good” program.
- Have the presiding officer be brief and concise in their introductions; after all, it is the guest speaker or entertainment the members are interested in.
- Give thought to the details of your program; a well-thought-out program is sure of success.
- Consult with the membership and the Spiritual Moderator to obtain their ideas.

Avoid:

- Being narrow in selecting programs and projects.
- Being content to arrange a program and relax — your responsibility does not end until the program is over.
- Permitting your speaker to be embarrassed during a question period by members making speeches from the floor. The presiding officer should be in command of the situation at all times.

The secret to all successful programming is that you keep the interest of members. This occurs if you provide

interesting and engaging programs. Interests vary, even among Holy Name members; consequently it is recommended that you determine the interests of your membership before you set out to plan a series of programs. The National Association officers, Diocesan and Regional Holy Name leaders are a valuable resource in providing suggestions for program ideas.

In devising a program for the year, the program chairman must give thought to several factors that will present themselves; what type of programs should we have, are they self-supporting, how are finances to be provided for programs that require it, are the proper facilities available, is a program suitable for every month, several times a year, or just once? These and other factors will need to be considered in developing the program for your Society.

Spiritual Renewal

Spiritual renewal is required for some existing parish Holy Name Societies and their members who have allowed their agenda to become more social/secular and fund raising oriented and less spiritual and less devotional.

“I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.” John 15:5.

Many who initially became members of the Holy Name Society for spiritual growth or spiritual renewal have experienced years of projects and/or fundraising activities. These types of activities stifle the spiritual enthusiasm of Holy Name members and lead them to becoming less active and in some cases totally inactive.

The Holy Name Society should be providing its members with spiritual enrichment and respite from their labors through their fraternal devotions of prayer, praise and adoration. The parish Society should be sponsoring Retreats, Mornings of Recollection and or Days of Recollection, Eucharistic Adoration and Benediction and other spiritual and religious activities. The Confraternity should also provide for the religious education of their members.

The Spiritual Moderator should work with the Officers and members to ensure the activities of the parish Holy Name Society are in accordance with the Obligations of Membership and the parish Constitution and By-laws. Holy Name Society members should have observable spirituality by publicly performing charitable acts and spreading honor and devotion to the Holy of Jesus.

Steps to Spiritual Renewal

The following steps are recommended for renewal of the parish Holy Name Society that has drifted away from a spiritual focus.

Update the parish Holy Name Society Constitution and By-laws to make sure they are in full accordance with the Church's teaching on the role of the Lay Apostolates within the Church – *Apostolicum Actuositatem*. Distribute a copy of the revised Holy Name Society Constitution and By-laws to current members so they are aware of the spiritual nature of the Society.

Schedule spiritual conferences of the Society on a regular basis. These conferences should not be business meetings.

The conferences should contain topics that help the Holy Name Society members learn to teach, spread, and defend the Faith.

Schedule traditional spiritual and devotional activities, i.e., days of recollection, annual retreats, prayer devotions, and other activities necessary to spread devotion and honor to the Holy Name of Jesus.

Induct members to the Confraternity using the official Induction Ceremony. Have existing members renew their promises using the official ceremony available in the official Book of Ceremonies of the Holy Name Society. This is available from NAHNS – visit nahns.com for details.

These are some of the steps that will put your Holy Name Society firmly on the path to Spiritual Renewal!

Official Ceremonies

There are several important Ceremonies that all parish Holy Name Societies should have available. These ceremonies are for Erecting a parish Holy Name Society, Installation of Officers, Inducting Professed Members into the Confraternity, Renewal of Promises for Professed Members and a ceremony for Consecration to the Most Holy Name of Jesus. These ceremonies are available in a special book from the NAHNS, visit nahns.com for details on how to obtain copies.

Erecting a Parish Holy Name Society

Prior to inducting members into a parish Holy Name Society the Society must be chartered properly to the Dominican Order in the Dominican Province that has jurisdiction over

the (Arch)Diocese the parish is located. Once the parish Society is chartered, the following documents are used to properly erect the Society. Two forms are provided for the ceremony - one for erecting the Society during Mass and one during Morning or Evening Prayer.

Induction Ceremony – Professed Members

In order to become a Professed Member in the Confraternity, special promises made before God and fellow members is required by the novice. This ceremony consists of Scripture Reading, Prayers honoring the Holy Name of Jesus, Promises, Blessing and Presentation of the Society's Ignitia, and Prayers for the Intentions of the Pope.

Two different formats of the Ceremony are available, one for during Mass and one for during Morning or Evening prayer.

The names of all new members must be written into the Official Society Register and the Register must be signed and dated by the Pastor or his designate for the members to be properly admitted into the Confraternity. This is a canonical requirement for membership in the Confraternity. The Official Society Register Book is available from the NAHNS. Visit nahns.com for details.

Installation of Officers

Since success of a Holy Name Society depends upon how well the officers perform their respective duties, it is recommended that officers should be inducted into their new office via an Installation Ceremony. The Installation Ceremony should be led by the Pastor or Spiritual Moderator; or in the case of (Arch)Diocesan Officers, the installation could be performed by the bishop/archbishop.

The installation ceremony should be conducted in the Church as part of a Special Mass or immediately after a Special Mass of the Confraternity.

If the installation ceremony is being used for an existing parish Holy Name Society the ceremony begins with the official discharge of responsibilities of the current officers.

The new officers are then called by name to affirm their responsibilities as officers. The ceremony can be completed during Mass following the homily.

Installation of New Officers of the Leadership Board includes the recitation of the Holy Name Pledge.

National Association of the Holy Name Society

The National Association of Holy Name Society (NAHNS) was formed on February 1, 1970 when the Dominican Order formally transferred governance and organization of the Confraternity to the lay members of the Holy Name Society in the United States and Canada.

All Archdiocesan and Diocesan Holy Name Unions, Federations or Associations are encouraged to join the National Association - to work together in fraternal charity to promote honor, reverence and devotion to the Most Holy Name of Jesus. Its organization is basically simple: each Union which acts with ecclesiastical approval and is not in arrears in dues has one vote in the Association as do the voting members of the Leadership Board (per Constitution and Bylaws ratified September 22, 2011).

The association has a network of Regional Vice Presidents who attempt to strengthen existing Holy Name Societies, start new parish Societies and Diocesan Unions, and take many other steps for the glory of the Sacred Name of Jesus Christ.

The NAHNS Exists to:

- Promote reverence for the Name of the Most Holy Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and to praise and venerate the Most Holy Names of God.
- Promote sanctification of Holy Name Members by the frequent reception of the sacraments and by faithful correspondence with the grace of their state of life;
- Foster observance of the promises in the Holy Name Pledge;
- Cooperate with the hierarchy of the Holy Catholic Church in its collegiate unity with our Holy Father, the Pope;
- Cooperate with the National Spiritual Director and the Archdiocesan and Diocesan Unions, Federations and Associations in the United States and Canada;
- Promote the founding and strengthening of Archdiocesan and Diocesan Unions, Federations, Vicariates and Associations;
- Provide a means of effective communications and coordination among Archdiocesan and Diocesan

Unions, Federations, Vicariates and Associations throughout the United States, Puerto Rico, Philippines and Canada;

- Publish, manage and distribute materials that promote devotion to the Most Holy Name of Jesus and membership in the Holy Name Society;
- Publicly proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the Power of His Most Holy Name and in His Name foster meaningful spiritual programs and perform spiritual and corporal works of mercy;

The National Association is limited to the United States and Canada, but it keeps in touch with Holy Name members around the world. A good way to keep up with all Holy Name activities is to subscribe to the Newsletter either in paper or electronic format.

[About the Holy Name Society](#)

The Confraternity of the Most Holy Names of God and Jesus (Holy Name Society) promotes reverence for the Sacred Names of God and Jesus Christ, obedience and loyalty to the Magisterium of the Catholic Church, and the personal sanctification and holiness of its members. Members are called to contribute to the evangelization mission of the Church and to make perpetual acts of reverence and love for our Lord and Savior. The apostolate of the society is to assist in parish ministries by performing the Corporal Works of Mercy: to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, give drink to the thirsty, shelter to the homeless, tend the sick, visit those in prison, and bury the dead; as well as the Spiritual Works of Mercy: to convert sinners, instruct the ignorant,

counsel the wayward, comfort the sorrowing, bear adversity patiently, forgive offenses, and pray for the living and the dead.

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