

**THE STATUTES
FOR THE ORGANISATION AND FUNCTIONING OF THE
ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH
GENERAL STIPULATIONS**

Article 1 – The Romanian Orthodox Church is the community of the Orthodox Christians, clergy, monks and lay, canonically constituted in parishes and monasteries in the eparchies of the Romanian Patriarchy inside and outside the Romanian frontiers, which witness God in the Holy Trinity, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, based on the Holy Scripture, liturgical services and canonical order.

Article 2 – (1) The Romanian Orthodox Church, of apostolic origin, is and remains in communion and dogmatic, liturgical and canonical unity with the universal Orthodox Church.

(2) The Romanian Orthodox Church is autocephalous and unitary in her organisation and pastoral, missionary and administrative work.

Article 3 – (1) The Romanian Orthodox Church has a synodal hierarchic leadership, according to the teaching and canons of the Orthodox Church and to her historical tradition.

(2) The Romanian Orthodox Church is administrated autonomously through her own representative bodies, made up of clergy and lay, according to the competent church authority.

Article 4 – (1) The Romanian Orthodox Church is autonomous in regard to the State and other institutions.

(2) The Romanian Orthodox Church establishes relations of dialogue and cooperation with the State and with various institutions for accomplishing her pastoral, spiritual-cultural, educational and social-charitable mission.

Article 5 – (1) The Romanian Orthodox Church comprises the Orthodox Christians both from the country and from abroad, as well as those canonically received in her communities.

(2) The Romanian Orthodox Church is national and in majority according to her apostolic age, tradition, number of faithful and her special contribution to the life of the Romanian people. The Romanian Orthodox Church is the Church of the Romanian nation.

**Part I
Organisation**

Article 6 – (1) The Romanian Orthodox Church is organised as Patriarchy, with the title of the “**Romanian Patriarchy**”.

(2) The Romanian Patriarchy comprises eparchies (Archdioceses and Dioceses) grouped in Metropolitan Sees, as well as some other units inside and outside the Romanian frontiers, as follows:

A. Inside the Romanian frontiers:

I. – Metropolitan See of Muntenia and Dobruđea comprises:

1. Archdiocese of Bucharest, seated in Bucharest city
2. Archdiocese of Tomis, seated in Constanța city
3. Archdiocese of Târgoviște, seated in Târgoviște
4. Diocese of Argeș and Muscel, seated in Curtea de Argeș city
5. Diocese of Buzău and Vrancea, seated in Buzău city
6. Diocese of Lower Danube, seated in Galati city
7. Diocese of Slobozia and Călărași, seated in Slobozia city
8. Diocese of Alexandria and Teleorman, seated in Alexandria city
9. Diocese of Giurgiu, seated in Giurgiu city
10. Diocese of Tulcea, seated in Tulcea city

II. – Metropolitan See of Moldova and Bucovina comprises:

11. Archdiocese of Iași, seated in Iași
12. Archdiocese of Suceava and Rădăuți, seated in Suceava city
13. Diocese of Roman, seated in Roman city
14. Diocese of Huși, seated in Huși city

III. - Metropolitan See of Transylvania comprises:

15. Archdiocese of Sibiu, seated in Sibiu city
16. Diocese of Covasna and Harghita, seated in Miercurea Ciuc city

IV. – Metropolitan See of Cluj, Alba, Crișana and Maramureș comprises:

17. Archdiocese of Vad, Feleac and Cluj, seated in Cluj-Napoca city
18. Archdiocese of Alba Iulia, seated in Alba Iulia
19. Romanian Orthodox Diocese of Oradea, seated in Oradea
20. Romanian Orthodox Diocese of Maramureș and Sătmar, seated in Baia Mare city
21. Diocese of Sălaj, seated in Zalău city

V. Metropolitan See of Oltenia comprises:

22. Archdiocese of Craiova, seated in Craiova city

23. Diocese of Ramnic, seated in Ramnicu Valcea
24. Diocese of Severin and Strehaiia, seated in Drobeta-Turnu Severin city
25. Diocese of Slatina, seated in Slatina

VI. – Metropolitan See of Banat comprises:

26. Archdiocese of Timișoara seated in Timișoara city
27. Diocese of Arad, Ienopole, Hălmagiu and Hunedoara, seated in Arad city
28. Diocese of Caransebeș, seated in Caransebeș city
29. Diocese Dacia Felix, with the administrative headquarters in Vârșeț
30. Romanian Orthodox Diocese in Hungary, seated in Gyula

VII. Units directly dependent on the Romanian Patriarchy:

Ukrainian Orthodox Vicarage seated in Sighetul Marmăției city

B. *Outside the Romanian frontiers:*

I. Metropolitan See of Bessarabia, autonomous and of old style comprises:

31. Archdiocese of Chisinau, seated in Chișinău city
32. Diocese of Bălți (former of Hotin), seated in Bălți city
33. Diocese of South Bessarabia (former Cetatea Albă-Ismail), seated in Cantemir city
34. Orthodox Diocese of Dubăsari and All Transnistria (former Romanian Orthodox Mission in Transnistria) seated in Dubăsari

II. Romanian Orthodox Metropolitan See for Western and Meridional Europe comprises:

35. Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese for Western Europe seated in Paris
36. Romanian Orthodox Diocese of Italy, seated in Rome
37. Romanian Orthodox Diocese of Spain and Portugal, seated in Madrid

III. Romanian Orthodox Metropolitan See of Germany, Central and North Europe comprises:

38. Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese of Germany, seated in Nürnberg
39. Romanian Orthodox Diocese of North Europe, seated in Stockholm

IV. (40) Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese of the two Americas, seated in Chicago

- V. (41) **Romanian Orthodox Diocese of Australia and New Zealand**, seated in Melbourne
- VI. **Representations of the Romanian Patriarchy:** Romanian Settlements at the Holy Places (Jerusalem, Jordan and Jericho), Romanian Orthodox Parish at Sofia (Bulgaria), Representation of the Romanian Patriarchy at the European Institutions (Brussels)
- VII. **Romanian Orthodox Units which keep spiritual and cultural relations with the Romanian Patriarchy:** Romanian Settlements at Holy Mount Athos (Prodromu, Lacu and so on).

Article 7 – (1) Setting up, dissolution, territorial change and change of the titles of the Metropolitan Sees, Archdioceses and Dioceses are done through the decrees of the Holy Synod taking into account the pastoral-missionary requirements and the administrative-territorial organisation of the state.

(2) The title of the Metropolitans, Archbishops and Bishops is that of the Metropolitan See or of the eparchy in which they serve. The title of Assistant Bishop to the Patriarch, of Assistant Bishop and of Assistant Hierarch is established by the Holy Synod, following the proposal of the Patriarch for the Assistant Bishops to the Patriarch and of the Diocesan Bishop for the Assistant Bishops and Assistant Hierarchs.

(3) The eparchial hierarchs of certain hierarchic sees with a recognised historical past and pastoral-missionary, administrative and cultural-national importance, who distinguished themselves through long special service in the Church, can receive, following the proposal of the Patriarch submitted after consulting the Holy Synod, ranks with personal title, of honourable metropolitan if they are archbishops, and of honourable archbishop if they are bishops, while the eparchy keeps its canonical and administrative place established in the diptychs of the Romanian Orthodox Church. The old Dioceses can become Archdioceses on basis of good motivation.

(4) The members of the Holy Synod granted personal honourable ranks would be included on the list of the members of the Holy Synod and remembered at the religious services after Metropolitans, respectively, after the Archbishops in the administrative order of the Romanian Orthodox Church.

(5) The successors in the sees of the archbishops and bishops who received personal honourable ranks do not take over the right to use these ranks.

(6) The decrees taken on basis of paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of the present article will be conveyed to the competent ministry.

Article 8 – (1) The canonical and pastoral organisation of the Romanian Orthodox faithful abroad is ensured by the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church.

(2) The Dioceses, Archdioceses, Metropolitan Sees and some other church units abroad are organised and function according to their own statutes, approved by the Holy Synod, in accordance with the Statutes for the Organisation and Functioning of the Romanian Orthodox Church.

Chapter I

Central organisation

Article 9 – At the central level of the Romanian Orthodox Church there are:

I. Central deliberative bodies:

- A. The Holy Synod
- B. Standing Synod
- C. Church National Assembly

II. Central executive bodies:

- A. The Patriarch
- B. Church National Council
- C. Standing Church National Council

III. Central administrative bodies

- A. Holy Synod Office
- B. Patriarchal Administration

Common stipulations

Article 10 – (1) The church central deliberative and executive bodies are validly constituted with the presence of at least two thirds of their members and, usually, take decrees with half and one votes of the members present.

(2) The validation or invalidation of the mandates of the clergy or lay members elected is done by the Church National Assembly.

(3) The convocation of the central deliberative bodies, with the daily order mentioned, is done by the President, at least 14 days before the date scheduled for the meeting, and in exceptional cases as soon as possible.

(4) The President opens and closes the working sessions of the central deliberative and executive bodies.

(5) The report of every working session of the central deliberative and executive bodies is signed by the assigned President and Secretaries.

(6) The decrees of the central deliberative and executive bodies are compulsory for the entire Romanian Orthodox Church.

Chapter I

Central deliberative bodies

A. The Holy Synod

Article 11 – The Holy Synod is the highest authority of the Romanian Orthodox Church, in all its fields of activity.

Article 12 – (1) The Holy Synod is made up of: Patriarch and all Metropolitans, Archbishops, Eparchial Bishops, Assistant Bishops to the Patriarch, Assistant Bishops and Assistant Hierarchs employed. The Hierarchs employed have to unfold their activity in synodal cooperation, obeying the decrees and stipulations of the present Statutes. The hierarchs retired have to keep the synodal canonical discipline.

(2) The Patriarch is the President of the Holy Synod. In case the Patriarch is absent, the president of the Holy Synod is, the Metropolitan of Moldova and Bucovina, Metropolitan of Transylvania, Metropolitan of Cluj, Alba, Crişana and Maramureş, Metropolitan of Oltenia, Metropolitan of Banat, the other Metropolitans, Archbishops or Bishops according to the canonical order of the eparchies of the Romanian Patriarchy (diptychs),

(3) The Secretary of the Holy Synod is one of the Assistant Bishops to the Patriarch assigned by the plenary session, following the proposal of the Patriarch.

Article 13 – The Holy Synod meets every year in at least two working sessions, in spring and autumn, and in extraordinary meetings any time is needed. The Holy Synod can meet in solemn meetings, too.

Article 14 – The attributions of the Holy Synod are the following:

a. Keeps the dogmatic, liturgical and canonical unity of the Romanian Orthodox Church, as well as the communion with the entire Orthodox Church

b. examines any dogmatic, liturgical, canonical and pastoral-missionary issue, which they solve according to the teaching of the Orthodox Church and decides upon the church issue of any kind in accordance with the Holy Canons;

c. decides upon the consecration of the Holy Great Myrrh, according to the pastoral-missionary needs of the Romanian Orthodox Church;

d. decides upon the canonisation of the saints and releases the Tomos for the proclamation of the canonisation;

e. expresses the official position of the Romanian Orthodox Church on the normative projects and acts of the State concerning the activity of the religious cults, the theological and religious education, social and religious assistance, national cultural patrimony, especially the church one, as well as on some other field of religious and social interest;

f. approves, with majority of two thirds of the number of those present, the Statutes for the Organisation and Functioning of the Romanian Orthodox Church and decides upon its modification;

g. approves the church rules issued in accordance with the present Statutes;

h. initiates and approves agreements and partnerships with the States and some other institutions in fields of church general interest;

i. examines the official position of the Romanian Orthodox Church in matters of general interest of the society;

j. approves, with a majority of two thirds of the those present, the setting up, dissolution, territorial modification and change of the name of eparchies and Metropolitan sees belonging to the Romanian Patriarchy;

k. approves the statutes of the eparchies, Metropolitan Sees and of some other church units abroad;

l. elects, with two thirds votes of those present, the Patriarch, and with half plus one votes of those present the Metropolitans, Archbishops and eparchial Bishops for the eparchies belonging to the Romanian Patriarchy;

m. elects, with half plus one votes of all those present, the Assistant Bishops to the Patriarch, the Assistant Bishops and the Assistant Hierarchs;

n. issues the Grammata for the enthronement of the Patriarch;

- o. decides the retirement of the hierarchs and their rights;
- p. decides, with two thirds majority of all members, the sending to canonical judgement of the members accused of infringing the church discipline and teaching;
- q. approves or rejects, in principle, the appeal of the clergy concerning defrocking and decides upon their requests of forgiveness, with the previous approval of the Diocesan Bishop;
- r. guides and supervises the activity of the deliberative and executive bodies of the Diocese, Archdiocese, Metropolitan Sees and Patriarchy to unfold according to the statutory stipulations and church regulations;
- s. initiates and promotes the brotherly inter-Orthodox relations, relations of dialogue and inter-Christian and inter-religious cooperation from a national and international point of view;
- t. approves the norms concerning the organisation and functioning of the units of university and pre-university education, as well as those concerning the teaching of religion in the state, private and confessional schools. They establish the norms of the confessional education at all levels, as well as the programmes for the catechisation of the young and adults;
- u. they approve the norms of the missionary-pastoral activity and those for promoting the religious and moral life of the clergy;
- v. establishes the norms of the activity and social-charitable assistance for the entire Romanian Orthodox Church and approves the steps for the religious organisation and assistance in the army, prisons, hospitals, children hostels and old people's homes, social centres for the disadvantaged persons etc.
- w. decides the setting up, organisation and dissolution of the church foundations with national character constituted and conducted by the Romanian Orthodox Church; gives or withdraws the blessing (approval) concerning the setting up, organisation and dissolution of the Orthodox associations and foundations of the Romanian Patriarchy having their own leadership and activating in its eparchies;
- x. initiates, authorises and supervises the translation, correction, editing and distribution of the Holy Scriptures, printing and distribution of the books of rite, of the church calendar, of the manuals of theology and religion; supervises the works of architecture, painting, sculpture and other forms of Orthodox church art and takes the appropriate measures in case of diversion;
- y. approves every year the setting up and distribution of the Central Missionary Fund; allots special funds and establishes their way of constitution and destination;

z. interprets the statutory or regulations stipulations, in final and compulsory form, for all the church bodies.

Article 15 – (1) The Holy Synod elects four synodal Commissions from among its members, to study and formulate the issues to be submitted for deliberation.

(2) Every Commission is presided by a Metropolitan, with a reporter. The other Metropolitans are co-presidents of the Commissions to which the Holy Synod assigns them.

(3) The Commissions of the Holy Synods are the following:

- a. The Pastoral, Monastic and Social Commission
- b. The Theological, Liturgical and Didactical Commission
- c. The Canonical, Juridical and Disciplinary Commission
- d. Commission for External Communities, Inter-Orthodox and Inter-Religious Relations

(4) The Holy Synod decides if one issue must be examined in common by two or several Commissions

(5) For certain issues, with permanent or temporary character, the Holy Synod decides to set up special sub-commissions affiliated to one of the four Commissions. The sub-commissions can include hierarchs from some other commissions too, as well as theology professors, clergy, monks, lay, experts in the field tackled, according to the example of the sub-commission for the canonisation of the Romanian saints.

Article 16 – The Holy Synod can invite theology professors, clergy, monks, lay people, experts in the fields tackled for consulting.

C. Standing Synod

Article 17 – (1) The Standing Synod is the central deliberative body functioning during the meeting of the Holy Synod, when the importance of certain issues imposes their examination.

(2) The Standing Synod is made up of the Patriarch and of all the Metropolitans employed at the eparchies in the country and abroad. The Standing Synod also includes three other eparchial hierarchs (1 Archbishop and 2 Bishops) assigned every year by the Holy Synod.

(3) The President of the Standing Synod is the Patriarch. In case the Patriarch is absent, the meetings are chaired in the order mentioned at Article 12, paragraph 2, of the present Statutes.

(4) The Standing Synod is convened by its President every time is needed, with the daily agenda mentioned.

(5) The Secretary of the Holy Synod is the Secretary of the Standing Synod, too.

(6) The Standing Synod takes valid decrees by consensus or by half plus one votes of the members present.

(7) The stipulations of **Article 16** of the present Statutes are also valid for the meetings of the Standing Synod.

Article 18 – (1) The Standing Synod exerts the attributions stipulated by **Article 14, letters e, i, r, t and x**, during the period between the meetings of the Holy Synod.

(2) Following the application of the Patriarch or of its members, the Standing Synod examines and formulates proposals concerning the problems to be debated by the Holy Synod;

(3) The Standing Synod exerts any other attributions that the Holy Synod ascribes through Statutes or Regulations;

(4) The Standing Synod informs the Holy Synod of the decrees taken during the period between its meetings.

C. Church National Assembly

Article 19 – The Church National Assembly is the central deliberative body of the Romanian Orthodox Church, for the administrative, social, cultural, economical and patrimonial fields.

Article 20 – (1) The Church National Assembly is made up of three representatives of every eparchy, one clergy and 2 lay persons, delegated by the Eparchial Assemblies, for four years time. They can be delegated for two mandates at last.

(2) The hierarchs of the Holy Synod participate in the sessions of the Church National Assembly.

(3) The President of the Church National Assembly is the Patriarch. In case the Patriarch is absent, the meetings are chaired in the order mentioned in Article 12, paragraph 2 of the Statutes.

(4) The decrees of the Church National Assembly become executory after ratified by the Holy Synod.

Article 21 – The Church National Assembly meets once a year in a working session, and every time in case of need. The Church National Assembly meets in solemn meetings, too.

Article 22 – The attributions of the Church National Assembly are the following:

- a. It supports the rights and activity of the Romanian Orthodox Church;

- b. It approves the regulations for applying the present Statutes concerning the fields of activity the Holy Synod entrusts to its competence;
- c. It elects the members of the Church National Council, following the proposal of the Patriarch;
- d. It adopts general steps for supporting the cultural, social-charitable, economical and foundational centres of the Church;
- e. It establishes the means of assistance of the church central bodies and institutions;
- f. It examines and approves the annual general Report of the Church National Council concerning the activity within the Romanian Orthodox Church and decides the steps to be taken for the good development of the church life;
- g. It approves the budgetary execution budget and the financial balance sheet of the Patriarchal Administration, of the Bible Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church and of the church central institutions;
- h. It approves the general budget of the Patriarchal Administration, of the Bible Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church and of the church central institutions;
- i. It approves unitary steps for the administration of the real estate and movable goods, owned or only used by the religious units of the entire Romanian Orthodox Church, as well as of the foundational ones;
- j. It approves the social, cultural, educational and communication projects;
- k. It establishes the means of assistance for the Romanians living abroad;
- l. It exerts any other attributions entrusted by the Statutes, through the church regulations or by the Holy Synod.

Article 23 – (1) In order to study the issues and formulate the proposals to be submitted to deliberation, the Assembly elects, at the beginning of every four-year mandate, out of its members, both clergy and lay, four Standing Working Commissions, with one president, one vice-president and reporter assigned in plenary, following the proposal of the President. The Commissions of the Church National Assembly are the following:

- a. The administrative-juridical and validation Commission,
- b. The social and media communications Commission,
- c. The Cultural Educational Commission,

- d. The Economical, Budgetary, and Real Estate (church property) Commission
- e. The Commission for the Orthodox Romanians abroad.
 - (2) Clerical and lay representatives of the Romanian eparchies from abroad can be invited too, to the working sessions of the Commission for the Orthodox Romanians abroad, when the agenda imposes that.
 - (3) Following the convocation of the President, the Commissions of the Church National Assembly can meet between its sessions, according to necessity.

Chapter II

Central Executive Bodies

A. The Patriarch

Article 24 – The Patriarch is the Primate among the Hierarchs of the Romanian Orthodox Church and the President of the central deliberative and executive church bodies.

Article 25 – (1) The Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church is the Archbishop of Bucharest and the Metropolitan of Muntenia and Dobrugea.

(2) His title is: **“His Beatitude (N), Archbishop of Bucharest, Metropolitan of Muntenia and Dobrugea, Locum Tenens of the Throne of Caesarea of Cappadocia and Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church or the Patriarch of Romania”**

(3) According to the Holy Canons, to the pan-Orthodox tradition and practice of the Romanian Orthodox Church, the Patriarch is remembered at the religious services by the Metropolitans, the Metropolitans are remembered by the suphagan hierarchs, and the Archbishops and Bishops are remembered by the servant priests.

(4) The Patriarch wears, as distinctive insignia: a cross and two encolpion, white vestments; cassock, sakkos, kamelaykon, and kamelavkion with cross.

(5) The Patriarch exerts the rights and accomplishes the missions stipulated by the holy canons, by the present Statutes and by the church regulations.

Articles 26 – The Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church has the following attributions:

- a. Convenes and chairs the central deliberative and executive bodies and supervises the implementation of their decrees;

- b. Takes the measures needed, according to the decrees of the Holy Synod, for preparing and consecrating the Holy Great Myrrh at the Romanian Patriarchy;
- c. Represents the Romanian Patriarchy in the relations with the public central and local authorities, in justice and towards third parts, either personally or through delegates;
- d. Represents the Romanian Orthodox Church in the relations with the other sister Orthodox Churches, either personally or through delegates;
- e. Represents, either personal or through delegates, the Romanian Orthodox Church in the relations with the other Christian Churches, inter-Christian organisations, religious and inter-religious organisations, both in the country and abroad;
- f. Addresses pastoral letters to the entire Romanian Orthodox Church, with the approval of the Holy Synod or of the Standing Synod;
- g. Pays brotherly visits to the hierarchs of the Romanian Orthodox Church, to their eparchies;
- h. He supervises the implementation of the statutory stipulations for filling in the vacant eparchies;
- i. Presides the Holy Synod for electing the Romanian Orthodox Metropolitans in the country and abroad;
- j. Ordains together with the other hierarchs and enthrones the Metropolitans;
- k. Issues the Grammata for enthroning the Metropolitans in the country and abroad;
- l. Appoints the Metropolitans locum tenens in the case of vacancy at the Metropolitan sees;
- m. Gives brotherly advice to the hierarchs of the Romanian Orthodox eparchies from the country and abroad and reconciles the possible disagreements between them;
- n. Examines, within the Standing Synod, the complains against the hierarchs, and conveys the result to the Holy Synod;
- o. After consulting the Standing Synod, proposes candidates for the position of Assistant Bishop to the Patriarch and presides over their election;
- p. Appoints, maintains and dismisses through a meeting of the plenary session of the Church National Council, the leadership staff, as well as the other categories of clerical and lay staff employed at the Holy Synod Office, Patriarchal Administration, Bible and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, as well as the staff of the other central church institutions;
- q. Confirms and dissolves the Eparchial Assemblies by Patriarchal Decree;

r. Exerts the right of devolution in the Metropolitan Sees for re-establishing the canonical and administrative order;

s. According to the Orthodox tradition, he has the right to set up patriarchal branches and to lead them through his delegates, within the limits of the competences established through Patriarchal decree, informing the Diocesan Bishop about this;

t. Exerts any attributions stipulated by the Holy Canons, by the present Statutes, by the church regulations or entrusted by the Holy Synod;

Article 27 – In order to ensure the current activity, the Patriarch has the Patriarchal Office at his disposal, coordinated by a Patriarchal Counsellor, with the staff appointed, as well as the related departments: Secretary Office, Registration Office, Archives, Library, etc.

B. Church National Council

Article 28 – The Church National Council is a central executive body of the Holy Synod and of the Church National Assembly.

Article 29 – (1) The Church National Council is met - following the convocation of the President – at least twice a year or any time is needed.

(2) The Church National Council is made up of 12 members of the Church National Assembly, one clergy and one lay person representing each Metropolitan See of the country, assigned for four years time for two mandates at last.

(3) The President of the Church National Council is the Patriarch, and in case of absence his proxy, according to the stipulations of Article 12, paragraph 2, of the present Statutes. The members of the Holy Synod can participate in the Council meetings, with deliberative vote.

(4) The Assistant Bishops to the Patriarch are lawful members of the Church National Council, with deliberative vote.

(5) The Administrative Patriarchal Vicar, Patriarchal Counsellors and the general church inspector are permanent members of the Church National Council, with consulting vote.

(6) The Church National Council takes valid decrees by consensus or with half plus one vote of the members present.

(7) The coordinator counsellor of the Patriarchal Office is the secretary of these meetings, and in case of his absence, one of the patriarchal counsellors appointed by the Patriarch.

Article 30 – During the period between the meetings of the Church National Assembly, the Church National Council exerts the attributions

provided by **Article 22, letters a, d and e**, as well as the following attributions:

a. Drafts the annual report concerning the general activity of the Romanian Orthodox Church;

b. Drafts the budgetary account and the financial balance sheet of the Patriarchal Administration, of the Bible and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church and of the other church central institutions;

c. Drafts the general budget of the Patriarchal Administration, of the Bible and Mission of the Romanian Orthodox Church and of the other central church institution;

d. Approves the activity plan of the Editorial Office, of the Printing House and of the Workshops of the Bible and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church;

e. Decides upon the way of administering the real estate and movable goods of the Patriarchal Administration, of the Bible and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, of the other central church institutions and of the central church foundations;

f. Decides upon conveying with any title of the usage or property over the real estate of the Patriarchy (sale or exchange), as well as over the tasks or servitudes of the Patriarchy property, but for the sacred goods, which are inalienable, with the observance of the statutory, regulative and legal stipulations;

g. Exerts any attributions given through the Statutes, regulations or decrees of the Holy Synod, Permanent Synod or of the Church National Assembly.

C. Standing Committee of the Church National Council

Article 31 – (1) The Standing Committee of the Church National Council functions between the meetings of the Church National Council as central executive body.

(2) It is made up of the Patriarch, as president, of the Assistant Bishops to the Patriarch, Patriarchal Administrative Vicar, patriarchal counsellors and of the church general inspector, as members, and takes valid decrees through the consensus of all the members present.

(3) Following the decree of the Patriarch, the Standing Committee of the Church National Council can be chaired by one of the Assistant Bishops to the Patriarch. In this case, the report of the meeting session is submitted to

the approval of the Patriarch. The decrees taken can be implemented only after confirmed in writing by the Patriarch.

Article 32 – The Standing Committee of the Church National Council chaired by the Patriarch, exerts the attributions of the Church National Council, but for those stipulated in Article 30, letter f, during the period between its meetings, as well as the following tasks:

a. Examines any church, missionary-pastoral, cultural, social, administrative, economical-financial issue within the debates of the central deliberative and executive bodies and makes statutory proposals;

b. Examines and drafts the annual reports on the activity of the church central institutions;

c. Presents and works out the annual reports on the activity of the central church institutions;

d. Presents for final approval the draft of the annual general budget of the central church institutions;

e. Drafts the annual plans for the activity of the church central institutions;

f. Analyses and submits proposals to the Church National Council concerning the administration of the real estate and movable goods of the central church institutions and of the central church foundations;

g. Administrates the Central Missionary Fund within the limits of the budget approved by the Holy Synod and presents, every year, to the Holy Synod, the account for budgetary execution;

h. Administrates the funds specially set up at the level of the Patriarchal Administration according to their destination and within the limits of the amounts raised, informing annually the Holy Synod about their situation;

i. Approves the projects of investment within the limits of the budget of the Patriarchal Administration, of the Bible and Mission Institution of the Romanian Orthodox Church, and of the other church central institutions;

j. Intervenes with the central and local public authorities as well as with some other institutions for getting support for the inner and international activity organised by the Romanian Patriarchy through the central church institutions, as well as for getting some other support from the state budget or from the local budgets allotted to the Church, in general, or to the units of cult inside or outside the Romanian boundaries;

k. Decides upon the acceptance of donations, legacies, sponsorships and purchasing in favour of the Romanian Patriarchy for its central institutions.

Article 33 – (1) The Standing Committee of the Church National Council meets when convened by the President, or any time is needed.

(2) The Coordinating Counsellor of the Patriarchal Office, or in his absence, one of the other Patriarchal counsellors, appointed by the President, drafts the report of the Standing Committee of the meetings of the Standing Committee of the Church National Council.

Article 34 – The decrees of the Standing Committee of the Church National Council are implemented by the Holy Synod Office and by the other church central institutions as well.

Chapter II Central Administrative Bodies

Article 35 (1) The Patriarch is assisted by the:

- A. Holy Synod Office
- B. Patriarchal Administration

when exerting his executive tasks as President of the central deliberative and executive bodies, as well as Primate of the Romanian Orthodox Church.

(2) Following the decree of the Patriarch, the Holy Synod Office, the departments of the Patriarchal Administration and the other church central institutions are coordinated by the Assistant Bishops to the Patriarch or by a delegate of the Patriarch.

(3) The Assistant Bishops to the Patriarch are elected by the Holy Synod according to the stipulations of Article 131 of the present Statutes, having been assimilated in their rights to be remembered and honoured with the eparchial bishops.

(4) The Assistant Bishops to the Patriarch accomplish the tasks delegated to them, by the Patriarch, by presidential decree.

A. Holy Synod Office

Article 36 – (1) The Holy Synod is a central administrative body of the Holy Synod, of the Standing Synod, of the Church National Assembly, of the Patriarch, of the Church National Council and of its Standing Committee.

(2) The Holy Synod Secretary coordinates, through patriarchal decree, the Holy Synod Office, with the Administrative Patriarchal Vicar and the respective Patriarchal Counsellor, as collaborators.

(3) The Administrative Patriarchal Vicar and the Patriarchal Counsellor of the Holy Synod Office, conducted by the Assistant Bishop to the Patriarch, prepare the convening of the central deliberative and executive church bodies, as well as the works submitted to their examination.

(4) The Holy Synod Office collaborates, keeps and preserves the reports of the working sessions of the church central bodies to be published in the “Biserica Ortodoxă Română” Magazine, conveys the decree adopted to the eparchial centres and supervises their implementation, but for those entrusted to the competence of the Departments of the Patriarchal Administration stipulated in Article 37 of the present Statutes or to some other church central institutions.

(5) Drafts the letters of the church central bodies and of their President to the central public authorities on themes concerning the religious life within the Romanian Orthodox Church.

(6) Drafts and submits for approval the Patriarchal Decrees concerning the attributions of the leadership staff within the Holy Synod Office as well as from the other church central institutions.

(7) Centralises the data concerning the fields of the religious life within the Romanian Patriarchy to be registered and published in the church press.

(8) The Holy Synod Office keeps the seal of the Holy Synod.

(9) In order to accomplish its attributions, as central administrative body, the Holy Synod Office has the following branches: the Canonical-Juridical Office, Secretariat Office, Register Office and Archives, Personnel Office – Human resources, Holy Synod Office and others, of which activity is coordinated by the Administrative Patriarchal Vicar.

B. Patriarchal Administration

Article 37 – (1) The Patriarchal Administration, as central administrative body is also charged with the study and drafting of the reports concerning the church issues up to the central deliberative and executive bodies, through the following specialised administrative bodies:

- a. The Technological – Educational Department
- b. The Social-Charitable Department

- c. The Economical-Financial Department (with the following branches: Bookkeeping, Technique, Commission for Church Painting)
- d. The Cultural Patrimony Department
- e. The Real Estate Department
- f. Department for Foreign Church and Inter-religious Relations
- g. Department for External Communities
- h. Department for Communications and Public Relation
- i. Body for Inspection and Control (audit)

(2) Other Departments and branches can be set up within the Patriarchal Administration as a result of the decree taken by the Standing Commission of the Church National Council.

(3) The Assistant Bishops to the Patriarch coordinate the Departments of the Patriarchal Administration cooperating with the patriarchal counsellors and the specialised inspectors.

(4) The Patriarchal Administration studies the specific church problems in the competence of the central deliberative and executive bodies, through the specialised administrative departments and through the respective branches, and communicates their decrees to the eparchial centres and supervises their implementation.

Article 38 – (1) The inspection and control body is made up of:

a. One church general inspector, with general attributions of control and reporter to the Canonical, Juridical and Discipline Commission of the Holy Synod for forgiveness requests in cases of defrocking that the eparchial consistories applied to some clergy for good.

b. The inspectors for the university and pre-university theological education (Faculties of Theology, Theological Seminaries and Schools for church singers);

c. The inspectors for financial administrative control (audit), out of whom one has juridical studies.

(2) Members of the Group of inspection and control (audit) unfold their activity following the Patriarch's order, according to the attributions provided by the Statutes, by the church regulations, as well as by the legislation in force.

Article 39 – (1) The patriarchal administrative vicar, the patriarchal counsellors and the patriarchal inspectors are appointed and dismissed according to the conditions of **Article 28, letter p** of the present Statutes, having been elected from among the doctor priests, the master courses graduates, the graduates of theology or of some other specialised courses, with special competences and with no canonical juridical impediments. The

clergy of the church central institutions can be appointed directly parish priests by the Patriarch (without examination).

(2) The patriarchal administrative vicar, patriarchal counsellors and patriarchal inspectors are fixed, by patriarchal decree, the area of activity and attributions within the Departments they coordinate, as members of the Standing Commission of the Church National Council or as guests.

(3) The patriarchal administrative vicar and the patriarchal counsellors take part in the meetings of the central deliberative and executive church bodies, with consulting vote, and with deliberative vote in the meetings of the Standing Committee of the Church National Council.

Chapter II

Local organisation

Article 40 – (1) The component units of the Romanian Orthodox Church, organised as Patriarchy, are the following:

- a. the parish
- b. monastery
- c. deanery
- d. vicarage
- e. eparchy (Archdiocese and Diocese)
- f. Metropolitan see

(2) According to the stipulations of the present Statutes, each of the component units of the Church, is entitled to lead and administrate itself autonomously from another component unit of the same rank and to participate, through its elected representatives, clergy and lay – in the case of the parishes and eparches – in the works of the higher component units.

(3) The way of constitution and functioning of the component units of the local bodies of the same degree is identical for the entire Romanian Orthodox Church.

On the juridical statutes

Article 41 – (1) The Patriarchy, metropolitan see, archdiocese, diocese, vicarage, deanery, monastery and parish are legal persons with private right and public utility, with the rights and obligations stipulated by the present Statutes.

(2) These legal persons are entitled to two unique codes of fiscal registration, both for the non-profit activity and for the economical one.

Article 42 - The setting up and dissolution of the component units of the Romanian Orthodox Church is conveyed for the registration of the competent ministry.

Chapter I

A. Parish

Article 43 – The parish is the community of the Orthodox Christians, both clergy and lay, placed in a certain territory and subordinated to the eparchial centre from a canonical, juridical, administrative and patrimonial point of view, headed by a parish priest appointed by the Hierarch of the respective eparchy (archbishop or bishop).

Article 44 – The setting up, organisation, change of the territorial limits or dissolution of a parish is approved by the Eparchial Council, taking into account the missionary and pastoral needs in the territory.

Article 45 – The faithful of the parish have rights as: to benefit of charitable assistance, to elect and be elected in the parochial bodies, to enjoy a charitable help, according to possibilities; and duties as: to sustain, strengthen and witness the faith of the Orthodox Church; to live according to the teaching of the Orthodox faith; to participate in the religious services; to have the Holy Sacraments; to fulfil acts of Christian mercy; to maintain and to help the Church and her servants.

Article 46 – (1) The community of the faithful who cannot sustain a parish with their own means, can join, by decree of the Standing Committee of the Eparchial Council, a neighbour community, with which they make the parish. In this case, the joining community is called branch, and its members have the same rights as the members of the community they join.

(2) Following the decree of the Standing Committee of the Eparchial Council, the parishes with higher economic income help the poor parishes with a small number of faithful.

Article 47 – (1) Taking into account the mission-pastoral conditions and the number of faithful, the material possibilities, as well as their placement in the urban or rural areas, the parishes of the eparchies of the Romanian Orthodox Church are divided into three categories, according to the criteria established by the eparchial councils.

(2) The classification of the parishes into categories is approved by the Standing Committee of the Eparchial Council, based on the report including the official statistic data (number of faithful, material conditions, geographic area, average age etc.).

Article 48 – (1) During the period of their activity in the parish, the priests and deacons have to live in the parochial houses, wherever they exist, or in rented houses, and are entitled to use a certain plot of land free of charge, the property of the parish, approved by the Eparchial Council.

(2) In order to ensure a stable presence of the priest (priests) in the parish, where there is no parochial house, this one will be built, and if there are no conditions for building, the Parochial Council will take measures for purchasing a house existent or for paying the rent of the priest's dwelling place, till a new parochial house is built.

(3) In the case of the new parishes and churches, the Parochial Councils will include in the budget, initiate and sustain, the building of parochial houses as dwelling place of the servants of the Holy Altar.

B. The Parish Priest

Article 49 – (1) The Parish priest, as delegate of the Hierarch, is the spiritual shepherd of the faithful in a parish, while in the administrative activity he is the leader of the parochial administration and president of the Parochial Assembly, of the Parochial Council, and of the Parochial Committee.

(2) The appointment or revocation of the parish priest is done by the Hierarch in the meeting of the Standing Committee of the Eparchial Council, taking into account the quality of the activity unfolded.

(3) Due to administrative, missionary and disciplinary reasons, the Diocesan Bishop can entrust the parochial office to the other servant priests too, within a meeting of the Standing Committee of the Eparchial Council.

Article 50 – The parish priest exerts the following tasks within the three fold priestly service: teaching, consecrating and pastoral-missionary:

a. He celebrates the Divine Liturgy and other church services on Sundays, feasts and other days of the week, delivering the sermon; celebrates the Holy Sacraments and religious services; catechises children, young people and adults according to the stipulations of the Eparchial Centre and ensures the daily access into the place of worship, according to the programme displayed at the church entrance;

b. He implements all the stipulations of the present Statutes, of the church regulations and of the church central bodies related to the parish;

c. He implements the decrees of the eparchial bodies and the provisions of the church high authority (archpriest, bishop and archbishop) related to the parochial life;

d. He drafts and implements the provisions of the annual programme of the pastoral-missionary, social-charitable and administrative activity, letting the Eparchial Centre and the faithful know about the results of the activity unfolded in this regard;

e. He represents the parish in the court, with the written consent of the Hierarch, with the local authorities and third parts, either personally or through delegates. The clergy of the parishes can also appear in the court with the previous written consent of the Hierarch, by virtue of the oath of subordination towards the Diocesan Bishop sworn in at the ordination. So can the monks appear in court, by virtue of the monastic vote of obedience, only with the previous written consent of the Diocesan Bishop, in case of personal interest, too.

f. He convenes and chairs the Parochial Assembly, Parochial Assembly and the Parochial Council:

g. He implements the decrees of the Parochial Assembly and Parochial Council;

h. He keeps the record of all parishioners;

i. He keeps the daily record of the baptised, wedded and deceased in the parish in special registers and issues baptism and wedding certificates;

j. He administrates the patrimony of the parish according to the decrees of the Parochial Assembly and of the Parochial Council and controls the administration of the cultural, social-charitable and church foundational goods in the parish;

k. He drafts and keeps the daily record of the inventory of the parish goods, of any kind, the library, as well as the parish archives. He keeps the parish seal as long as he is a parish priest.

Article 51 – (1) Besides the parish priest, a parish can have one or several servant priests and deacons appointed by the Diocesan Bishop in a meeting of the Standing Committee of the Eparchial Council. The number of the servants in the parish is established according to the local pastoral-missionary needs ascertained by the parish leadership.

(2) The parish priest, servant priests and deacons, as well as the lay church personnel have to live in the parish.

Article 52 – (1) At the parishes with several servant priests, these ones are equal in their rights and sacramental, teaching and pastoral-missionary duties. The Diocesan Bishop can entrust the dignity of parish priest to the most diligent of them, in order to intensify the parochial activity.

(2) Every servant priest has a well-defined area within the parish, approved by the Hierarch on the basis of the report drafted by the delegates of the Eparchial Centre.

(3) The priests and deacons, the teaching staff in the theological education and those teaching religion, the students in theology, as well as the catechists who graduated the School for religious singers, have the pastoral and missionary duty to catechise in the parishes they serve or live in, in one accord with the parish priest, according to the norms established by the Holy Synod and the Eparchial Centres.

(4) The priests, deacons and church singers have the rights and duties stipulated in the Holy Canons, in the present Statutes, in the church regulations and in the decrees of the Eparchial Centre.

Article 53 – (1) Several parishes (10 – 15) within a Deanery make up a Missionary Circle for developing pastoral-missionary, cultural and social church activity.

(2) The Diocesan Bishop delegates one of the priests as coordinator of the Missionary Circle.

C. Parochial Assembly

Article 54 – (1) The deliberative body of the parish is the Parochial Assembly.

(2) The Parochial Assembly is made up of the major faithful of the parish, men and women, who prove their affection for the Orthodox Church, for her teaching of faith and her institutions, through their faith, deeds and moral conduct.

(3) The President of the Parochial Assembly is the parish priest, and in his absence, the priest delegated by the archpriest from among the servant priests of the parish or from a neighbouring parish. In case the Archpriest or a priest delegated by the Parochial Assembly participates in the Assembly, he will chair the meeting.

(4) The active priests and deacons of a parish, as well as the retired priest living in the territory of the respective parish are members of the Parochial Assembly.

Article 55 – (1) The Parochial Assembly has the following tasks:

- a. to elect the members of the Parochial Council and of the Parochial Committee;
- b. to approve the activity report of the Parochial Council;
- c. to approve the activity report of the Parochial Committee;
- d. to approve the annual budget of the parish;

- e. to take decrees on the building, repairing, restoring and maintaining the church, the parochial house and some other buildings of the parish as well;
- f. to initiate fund raisings for church, cultural or social-charitable purposes and establish the norms for completing the financial resources the parish needs;
- g. to establish the quantum of the volunteer contribution according to the needs of the parish, following the proposal of the Parochial Council;
- h. to examine and complete the annual report on the entire activity of the parish
- i. to approve, every year, the account of execution and the financial balance sheet of the parish;
- j. to submit proposals to be approved by the Eparchial Council, concerning the transmission of any title of usage or property over the parochial real estate (sale, buying, renting, exchange etc.) as well as the tasks to be executed or servitudes of the parochial goods, but for the sacred goods, which cannot be alienated;
- k. to approve steps for administering the real estate and movable goods, supervising the good maintenance of the church, cultural, social-charitable and foundational buildings;

(2) The decrees of the Parochial Assembly concerning the attributions mentioned under **letters d, e, i and j** become valid only after the Eparchial Council verifies and approves them.

Article 56 – (1) The Parochial Assembly meets in ordinary session once a year, during the first trimester of the year, and in extraordinary session any time is needed.

(2) The Parochial Assembly is convened by the President, at least one week before the date of the meeting, letting the archpriest know about it. In case that is not possible or the parish priest is not willing to do it, the Parochial Assembly is convened and chaired by the Archpriest, on behalf of the Diocesan Bishop.

(3) The convocation will mention the place, date and hour of the Assembly, as well as the issues to be discussed and the parish priest will read it in the church after the Divine Liturgy and place it on the church door.

Article 57 – (1) The Parochial Assembly is valid in the presence of the parish priest or of the priest delegated by the Eparchial Centre and of at

least one tenth of the total members registered in the list of the Assembly members.

(2) If the number of members needed for holding the Assembly is not met at the date scheduled, the Assembly will take place next Sunday, with no other convocation, when the Assembly is valid with the number of members present, out of which two thirds of the members of the Parochial Council cannot miss.

Article 58 – (1) The Parochial Assembly takes valid decrees with the vote of half plus one of the members present.

(2) The works and decrees of the Parochial Assembly are registered in a file of the Assembly reports.

(3) The decrees of the Parochial Assembly can be contested at the Standing Committee of the Eparchial Council only by the members of the Parochial Assembly registered and present at the meeting of the Parochial Assembly, which adopted the decree contested.

(4) The contestations are presented within 14 week-days since the day of the meeting, to the deanery, which will register them and submit them, at the same time with their consent, to the Standing Committee of the Eparchial Council.

D. Parochial Council

Article 59 – (1) The Parochial Council is the executive body of the Parochial Assembly. It is the Parochial Assembly that elects the members of the Parochial Council from among its members – 7, 9 or 12 members – according to the category of the parish, as well as 2-4 proxies.

(2) The members of the Parochial Council and the proxies too, people of age, are elected for four years time, are volunteers, and can be re-elected.

(3) The members of the same family, as well as the spiritual relatives (god-parents and god-children) cannot be elected members of the Parochial Council at the same time.

(4) The legal members of the Parochial Council, with deliberative vote, are: the parish priest as president, the other priests and deacons, active servants of the parish, as well as the first singer (cantor) of the respective parish church.

Article 60 – The Standing Committee of the Eparchial Council can revoke the members of the Parochial Council who act against the Church, following the justified request of the parish priest, approved by the Archpriest, or the observation by the high church authority. The members revoked cannot be re-elected in the Parochial Council for five years.

Article 61 – (1) Besides the tasks stipulated in Article 55, **letters a, b, c, d, e, i and j**, the Parochial Council exerts the attributions of the Parochial Assembly, when this is not met, as well as the following attributions:

a. Appoints a delegate out of the members of the Parochial Assembly for electing the lay members of the Eparchial Assembly, in the respective constituency;

b. Drafts the parochial budget and follows its administration;

c. Drafts the report on the execution account and the financial balance sheet of the parish;

d. Drafts the annual report concerning the activity of the Parochial Council, which it presents to the parochial Assembly for approval;

e. Appoints two censors for the annual financial justification of the finances of the Parochial Committee;

f. Receives and verifies the annual financial justification of the finances of the Parochial Committee;

g. Approves the proposals of the parish priest concerning the endowment of the church with vestments, icons, religious objects and books needed for the religious service, and of the parochial institutions (cultural, social, foundational), as well as the allocation of the funds needed.

h. Takes care that the parish church should be provided with candles, chandeliers, objects and books of rite, as well as with books of spiritual education only from the Eparchial Centre, in order to support the missionary activity of the respective eparchy;

i. Wherever there are several servants of the altar, another priest, not the parish priest, is entrusted, with written order, with the items to be sold in the church and their administration.

(2) The decrees taken on the provisions of paragraphs I, **letters a, e and i** of the present article are conveyed to the archpriest for approval.

Article 62 – (1) The Parochial Council meets every month or at least once a trimester.

(2) The parish priest convenes the meeting at least one week before the meeting date, presenting the issues in the agenda.

(3) The Parochial Council is legally met with the presence of three quarters of its members and takes valid decrees with the vote of two thirds of the members present.

(4) The works and decrees of the Parochial Council are registered in report of the council's meetings.

(5) The decrees of the Parochial Council are valid for all the faithful of the parish.

(6) The possible contestations against the Council's decrees can be presented to the archpriest in 14 days at last, who has to present them, with his approval, to the Standing Committee of the Eparchial Council, in 5 days at last.

Article 63 – The Parochial Council delegates one or two members who assist the parish priest in the correct and efficient administration of the parochial goods, as trustees. The names of the trustees are communicated to the Deanery for approval in one of its working sessions.

E. Administration of the parochial goods

Article 64 – (1) The parish priest is the administrator of the entire real estate and movable goods together with the Parochial Council, under the control of the Eparchial Centre, and is responsible from a canonical-disciplinary and church-administrative point of view to the Council, and to the civil courts for the wrong administration and finance of the church estate, on the basis of the civil and penal legislation.

(2) When some of the financial tasks have been delegated to another priest or deacon serving in the parish, according to the stipulations of **Article 61, letter i**, of the present Statutes, this one is responsible from a canonical-disciplinary, church-administrative, civil and penal point of view for the administration of the goods entrusted.

(3) The annual approval of the finances does not spare the parish priest, priest or deacon entrusted with the financial task of the possible wrong administration discovered later on.

Article 65 – The parish priest, as administrator of the parish goods, has the following tasks:

a. To administrate correctly the real estate and movable goods of the parish, of the cultural, social and foundational institutions, as well as the parochial funds on the basis of bookkeeping registers, of finance and inventory;

b. To take measures for safe keeping the precious goods and documents of the parish;

c. To keep the register of income and expense;

d. To present to the Parochial Council, at the end of the year, a report on the cultural, social and foundational incomes and expenses;

e. To take care and measures, together with the other servant priests and trustees, designed to maintain, repair and restore the parochial buildings, the cultural, social-philanthropic and foundational institutions of the

parochial house, parochial yard and cemetery, as well as the other parochial goods; to build or buy a parochial house where possible;

f. To list, together with the other servant priests and trustees, in the registers of the parish and of the central and local authorities, the real estate and movable goods of the parish, their good administration, as well as to draft and keep their property documents according to the statutory stipulations, to the church regulations, and to the decrees of the central and eparchial church bodies. One legalised copy of the property documents of the parish goods will be kept at the Deanery and at the Eparchial Centre.

g. To get the amounts due to the parish according to the Parochial Assembly and to pay the current fees.

F. Parochial Committee

Article 66 – (1) The Parochial Committee is the church parochial body functioning under the chairmanship of the parish priest. The members of the Parochial Committee are elected by the Parochial Assembly. The Parochial Committee has a double number of members compared to that of the Parochial Council.

(2) The Parochial Committee is made up of people of age of the parish community, on volunteer principle.

(3) The Parochial Committee is chaired by the parish priest assisted by a Leadership Body made up of the programmes coordinator, secretary and cashier.

(4) The Parochial Committee has stipulations and its own bookkeeping within the parochial budget for the activity unfolded using the same bank account under the control of the parish priest, and justifies it every year to the Parochial Council. The Parochial Council appoints two censors for the financial control of the Parochial Council.

(5) The revocation of the members of the Parochial Committee is done according to the procedure stipulated for the members of the Parochial Council, in **Article 60**, of the present Statutes.

Article 67 – (1) The Parochial Committee has five departments, each of them run by a coordinator appointed by the Executive Board.

(2) The Departments of the Parochial Committee have the following tasks:

a. The Social Department:

1. It cooperates permanently with the social workers of the parish, deanery and Eparchial Centre;

2. It coopts the social worker from the local city hall into the Parochial Committee, for collaboration, or invites him to the committee meetings, according to case;

3. It collaborates with the medical units and supports various health programmes;

4. It assists the poor, orphans, widows and old people;

5. It supports the social integration of the prisoners released from prisons;

6. It supports the social reinsertion of the institutionalised youth who left the placement centres when 18 years old;

7. It cooperates with NGO-s in the conditions of the church legislation in force;

8. It supports the maternal assistance programme and the national adoptions;

9. It promotes and supports the parish social-charitable programmes; it promotes and supports the parish social-charitable programmes; it supports and maintains the parish social canteen.

10. It cooperates permanently with the missionary priests employed in the health system, prisons and army, old people's homes, orphanages, etc;

11. It raises aids, with the approval of the high church authority, in cases of emergence and supports the setting up of a financial fund for such situations;

12. It supports the programmes for preventing and eradicating violence in the family, for combating the trafficking in persons, drugs, and so on, as well as grants spiritual and material assistance to the families with the parents gone abroad to work, study or emigrated forever.

b. Missionary Service:

1. It cooperates with some other parishes, monasteries and father confessors in the area;

2. It promotes the spreading and reading of the Holy Scripture and of the spiritual books, with the recommendation of the parish priest;

3. It supports the parish priest in the organisation of the missionary activity, in order to have better knowledge, preservation and consolidation of the Orthodox faith;

4. It assists with the organisation of the church dedication day and of some other religious manifestations and supports the acquiring of audio-visual material with religious character;

5. It organises missionary visits to hospitals, prisons, and centres for protecting children, old people and families in distress;

6. It is always in touch with the Orthodox church associations in the territory of the parish and of the eparchy;

7. It identifies and supports the persons unstable from a religious point of view, in order to strengthen their faith and participation in the church life;

8. It helps the Parochial Council in the fund raising for the Central Missionary Fund, for the Philanthropy Fund and for some special funds in case of emergency;

c. The cultural department

1. Initiates and supports the acquirement and distribution of the books of rite, icons, small crosses and books of spiritual elevation for the faithful and for the parish library;

2. Encourage the community members to read the books and magazines of the parish library, to listen to the Orthodox radio programmes and to watch the Orthodox TV programmes;

3. Encourages, together with the religion professors, the pupils' participation in the Divine Liturgy as well as in other religious services, and cultural-educational activity which promote the Orthodox Christian faith;

4. Supports the setting up of chapels in the schools within the parish;

5. Organises the festivities related to the great church and national feasts mentioned in the church annual calendar;

6. Supports the omofon chanting and the church chorus;

7. Organises festivities related to the preservation and promotion of the traditions, folklore and specific local and national cultural features;

8. Sets up and grants scholarships of study and aids to the worthy pupils, and for those with low income;

9. Organises, with the support of the professors and donors, extra free classes for the poor pupils in the parish;

10. Engages the intelligentsia in the parish in the activity designed to promote the Orthodox faith and Romanian culture.

d. Youth Department

1. It recommends the religious books to the youth and encourages the publication of a parochial publication;

2. It invites cultural personalities to the conferences addressed to the youth;
3. It organises youth meetings, with hierarchs, priests, theology professors as guests;
4. It gives books to the remarkable students in the community, coming from social protection institutions or families with disadvantaged social milieu,
5. It supports the parish priest to accomplish the decrees of the Holy Synod or of the Diocesan Bishop concerning the issues related to education of the school students of any age;
6. It organises pilgrimages, trips and youth camps with Christian character.

e. Administrative department

1. It takes care of the endowment and bedecking of the church, as well as of the parochial cemetery;
 2. It maintains the monuments of the Heroes and of the road- side shrines in the Romanian territory;
 3. It maintains the church court, the green spaces and the precincts of the church (parochial house, refectory, belfry, chapel, museum etc.)
- Article 68** – The parishes can cooperate with the church association and foundation branches set up with the approval of the Holy Synod or with the blessing of the Diocesan Bishop.

Section II

A. Deanery

- Article 69** – (1) The Deanery is an administrative church unit, which comprises several parishes ascribed to the territory of the same eparchy.
- (2) The setting up, dissolution, delimitation and change of the territorial surface of the deaneries are approved by the Eparchial Assembly, following the proposal of the Eparchial Council, taking into account the local pastoral – missionary needs, as well as the placement of the parishes and branches in a certain geographical area.
- (3) Each deanery has an administrative chancellery, in which the clerical and non-clerical staff functions, according to the competence granted through the Statutes and through the church regulations,
- (4) The clerical and non-clerical administrative staff in the deanery office are appointed by the Diocesan Bishop, in a meeting of the Standing

Eparchial Council, based on a list of several candidates interviewed beforehand at the Eparchial Seat.

B. The Archpriest

Article 70 – (1) The Archpriest is the priest running the deanery and the administrative office of the deanery, on behalf of the Diocesan Bishop.

(2) The Archpriest is appointed or reconfirmed by the Diocesan Bishop for four years time, during a working session of the Standing Eparchial Council, taking into account the following criteria: the general graduation mark of the Faculty of Theology to be at least 8,50; five years at least as a priest; no juridical-canonical impediments and special liturgical, pastoral-administrative, missionary, cultural and social activity.

(3) The Diocesan Bishop can revoke the archpriest in a working session of the Standing Eparchial Council for inadequate activity or misbehaviour.

Article 71 – The Archpriest has the following tasks practiced within the mandate, on behalf of the Diocesan Bishop;

a. Guides, coordinates and supervises the church activity of the parishes and branches in the deanery;

b. Inspects, at least once a year, the parishes, branches and social settlements in the deanery, learning about the quality of the religious, moral and social life of the parishioners. Verifies the bookkeeping registers, the archive and library, the state of the church, of the church buildings, of the cemeteries and of some other church goods;

c. Writes down, in the parish inspection register the detailed report on the findings ascertained. One copy is submitted to the Eparchial Centre, with report and proposals, and the third copy is kept at the deanery;

d. Supervises and guides the catechetical, pastoral-missionary, cultural and social-philanthropic activity of the priests, so that it should unfold according to the church regulations, with the decrees of the Holy Synod and with the eparchial bodies;

e. Drafts and submits every year to the Standing Eparchial Council the situation of the real estate and movable goods of the parishes and branches within the deanery;

f. Supervises in due time the conveying of the commands and decrees of the high church authorities to the church units and staff within the deanery and supervises their implementation;

g. Makes suggestions to the Diocesan Bishop concerning the locum tenens for the vacancies created: priests, deacons and church singers;

h. Approves up to eight free days of their legal leave to the priests and deacons, providing the parish with another priest or deacon, and informing the Eparchial Centre about this;

i. Approves the leave of the non-clerical staff from parishes and deanery, and submits the schedule of the non-clerical staff leaves to the Eparchial Centre;

j. Drafts an annual general report on the entire church life of the deanery, which he submits to the Diocesan Bishop and makes it known to the priests in the deanery at the first administrative conference of every year;

k. Confirms all the works of the parochial bodies to be submitted to the approval of the eparchial offices;

l. Sustains the accusation in the trials at the Deanery Disciplinary Consistory;

m. Coordinates, supervises and is responsible for the activity of the administrative Secretariat of the deanery, in accordance with the statutes and regulatory stipulations, with the orders of the eparchial leadership and with the norms of the civil legislation in force.

n. Drafts a pastoral-missionary and financial report every trimester concerning the activity of the deanery, which he submits to the Standing Eparchial Council for approval.

o. Drafts the annual budget of the deanery and submits it to the Standing Eparchial Council for approval;

p. Submits to the Locum Hierarch proposals regarding the award of various ranks and distinctions to the remarkable clergy;

q. Accomplishes any attributions entrusted by the eparchial bodies or by the Diocesan Bishop for the good development of the church life;

Article 72 – The Archpriest is, within his deanery, the official representative of the Eparchial Centre to the local public authorities and to the third parts and accomplishes all the tasks entrusted to him through the present Statutes, the church regulations as well as through any other decrees in force. In this capacity he works with the approval of the Diocesan Bishop whom he informs, beforehand, of the respective issues.

Section III **(Ukrainian Orthodox) Vicarage**

Article 73 – (1) The Vicarage is an administrative church unit with special pastoral-missionary regime, which comprises several deaneries, parishes and monasteries, subordinated directly to the Romanian Patriarchy.

(2) The organisation and work of the Vicarage is made on the basis of its own regulation approved by the Holy Synod, following the proposal of the Patriarch, communicated to the responsible ministry;

(3) The Leader of the Vicarage and its archpriests are appointed by the Patriarch from among the priests employed at the Vicarage according to the same stipulations provided for the clerical staff running the eparchies;

(4) The appointment, transfer and punishment of the clerical and non-clerical staff from the church units within the Vicarage is made by the Patriarch, following the proposal of the leader of the Vicarage, after consulting with the Diocesan Bishop;

(5) In order to provide the good development of the sacramental, teaching, pastoral-missionary and social-philanthropic activity within the Vicarage, the Patriarch can brotherly appeal to the Diocesan Bishop of the eparchies where the church units of the Vicarage function.

(6) The clerical leadership staff, the clerical and non-clerical staff within the Vicarage enjoy the same rights and duties as the similar staff at the eparchies, according the stipulations of the present Statute.

(7) The church units within the Vicarage receive the Antimins, the Holy Great Myrrh and the pastoral letters from the Romanian Patriarchy.

Section IV The Monastery

Article 74 – (1) The Monastery is a community of monks or nuns who decided on their own accord, to live their life in refrainment, poverty and obedience.

(2) The skete and metokion function subordinated to the monastery established by the Diocesan Bishop or, directly, by the Eparchial Centre.

(3) The Eparchial Cathedral has the canonical statutes of a monastery.

(4) The Monastery depends directly on the Diocesan Bishop, who is its canonical leader, according to the stipulations of **Article 79, paragraph 1**, of the present Statutes.

Article 75 – (1) The setting up, dissolution and change of the monk monasteries into convents or of the convents into monk monasteries, as well as the raising of the sketes to the rank of monasteries are approved by the Metropolitan Synod following the motivated proposal of the hierarchs of the suffragan eparchies, after attentive detailed estimation of the reasons, of the presence of the material basis and of the necessary monastic personnel, as well as of the local missionary circumstances.

(2) The setting up, dissolution and change of the sketes and metokions inhabited by monks into sketes and metokions inhabited by nuns or of the sketes and metokions inhabited by nuns into sketes and metokions inhabited by monks are approved by the Diocesan Bishop, and communicated to the Eparchial Council.

(3) No founder, donator or benefactor has any right of property, usage or interference in the running, administration and spiritual life, of the monastery, skete or metokion given to be used through consecration.

Article 76 – According to its destination, every monastery or skete is obliged, through its leadership bodies:

a. To establish its programme of activity so as its place should become a place of distinguished spiritual life, of Christian virtues, of pious participation in the religious services, of spiritual edification, both for the inhabitants of the monastery and for those who come to pray there;

b. To participate in actions suited to the holiness of the place, both for the benefit of the inhabitants and of the faithful, proving through good deeds, their love for the monastic community, for the Church and for the people;

c. To see that all the monks and nuns, with vocation for study, should have the blessing of the hierarch to study at the theological institutions in the eparchy or in the neighbouring ones;

d. According to its material means, the monastery or skete must help the eparchy and all its institutions, after the request of the Eparchial Centre, and to sustain the social-philanthropic settlements;

e. To have candles and other religious items from the Eparchial Centre;

f. To provide the monks or nuns adequate conditions of common life.

Article 77 – Having had the approval of the Diocesan Bishop, the monasteries can host:

a. Pre-university theological schools: theological seminaries for preparing the monastic staff in the field of social assistance, of religious education and of restoring the church patrimony;

b. Religious courses approved by the Diocesan Bishop, for the monastic spiritual guidance of the monastic staff;

c. Courses of arts and handicrafts, as well as workshops in the field of painting and iconography, glass painting and religious mosaic, sculpture, embroidery, weaving church cloth and vestments, church silvery, metals and enamels, dressmaking, carpet weaving and other such preoccupations compatible with the monastic life approved by the Diocesan Bishop, so as

the monastic staff has to work within these fields, wherever they are organised, besides the monastic duties;

Article 78 – (1) The admittance into the monastery of those who wish to live the monastic life, is done with the written application of the candidate, with the recommendation of the father confessor and of the abbot/abbess, of the parents or legal tutors.

(2) The minimum age for being received in the monastery, as an apprentice, is 18. The younger ones, but no younger than 16, must have the written accord of their parents or legal tutors. It is forbidden too, to receive in monasticism people with family responsibilities or penal trials.

(3) The tonsuring into monasticism is done, with the approval of the Diocesan Bishop, after three years of canonical examination and living in the monastery. The exemption from this rule can be done only by the Diocesan Bishop for urgent missionary reasons.

(4) The ordination of the monks as hierodeacons and hieromonks is done with the approval of the Diocesan Bishop, only after they graduated a theological school (Seminary or Faculty) and passed the capacity examination;

(5) All the monks (nuns) in a monastery (skete), the pensioners too, irrespective of their previous ranks and dignities, will obey the monastic orders, common for the entire community.

A. Leadership of the monastery

Article 79 – (1) The Diocesan Bishop is the canonical leader of the monasteries, sketes and metokions in his eparchy. The leadership of the monastery is provided, through a delegation on behalf of the Diocesan Bishop, by the abbot/abbess for a monastery, by the trustee for a skete, and by the monk (nun) especially assigned as administrator for the metokion.

(2) The abbot/abbess and the trustee are appointed directly by the Diocesan Bishop from among the more remarkable monks, with a good monastic life, intense spiritual activity, theological studies or, in the monasteries with a larger number of monks, from among the first three candidates appointed by the community, based on the qualities mentioned above, in case the Diocesan Bishop is willing to make a choice;

(3) The abbot is assisted in his leadership attributions by: the monastic community, Spiritual and Teaching Council, Economic Council and by the Disciplinary Council (judgement)

(4) Having had the written approval of the Diocesan Bishop, the abbot represents the monastery in the court, with the local authorities and third

parts, either personally or through the delegates entitled, in accordance with the stipulations of **Article 50, letter e**, of the present Statutes.

Article 80 – If a retired hierarch lives in a monastery, he may be appointed abbot, with the approval of the Diocesan Bishop. In case he is not appointed abbot, the leadership of the monastery has to provide him with all the facilities needed for his living and give him the honour proper to his hierarchic dignity.

Article 81 – (1) The monastic ranks are the following: brother (apprentice), rasophor and monk, for men, and the sister, rasophor and nun, for women.

(2) The monastic ranks are: archdeacon, singelos, protosingelos and archimandrite, in the case of monks and cross bearing abbess (stavrophor) for nuns.

(3) The archimandrite rank is awarded by the Diocesan Bishop, with the approval of the Holy Synod.

Article 82 – (1) The Diocesan Bishops will take the necessary steps for organising, at least once a year, the synaxes (consultations) of the abbots and abbesses and of the trustees in the eparchies they serve, in order to analyse the specific problems, to promote the exchange of spiritual and administrative experience and to adopt adequate steps for improving the monastic life and discipline. The monastery father confessors can be also invited to these monastic eparchial synaxes if necessary.

(2) At least every three years, metropolitan monastic synaxes will be organised with the abbots/abbesses and trustees of the respective metropolitan sees, with the participation of the hierarchs of the Metropolitan Synod, in order to examine certain specific aspects of the monastic life in the respective areas, where the father confessors of the monasteries can be invited too, if necessary.

Article 83 – The stipulations included in the present Statutes are common and compulsory for the monasteries, sketes and metokions of monks and nuns, within the eparchies belonging to the Romanian Patriarchy.

Section V

A. The Eparchy (Archdiocese and Diocese)

Article 84 – (1) The Eparchies are church units made up of a certain number of parishes, grouped in deaneries, as well as of the monasteries placed in a certain territory. Institutions of theological and confessional education, as well as social-philanthropic ones can function within the eparchies.

(2) The Eparchies are Archdioceses or Dioceses, headed by an Archbishop or Bishop.

(3) No eparchy can have, set up or administrate religious units within the territory of another eparchy.

Article 85 – The leadership bodies of the eparchy are the following: the Diocesan Bishop (Archbishop or Eparchial Bishop), Eparchial Assembly as deliberative body, Eparchial Council and the Standing Eparchial Council as executive bodies.

B. The Diocesan Bishop (Eparchial Archbishop or Bishop)

Article 86 – (1) The Diocesan Bishop practices his entire service in his eparchy, in communion with the Holy Synod.

(2) The Diocesan Bishop practices his right to run the eparchy from the moment of his enthronement and reception of the Grammatta from his canonical Metropolitan, or from the Patriarch in the case of the Metropolitan.

Article 87 – (1) During the vacancy, the Archbishop or Bishop Locum tenens fulfils all the prerogatives of the titular, but for the change of the eparchial structures and alienation or change of the usage of the church property.

(2) The Archbishop, Bishop, Assistant Bishop and Assistant Hierarch wears the monastic uniform (cassock, sakkos and kamelaykion), cross, encolpion and walking staff.

Article 88 – The Diocesan Bishop (Archbishop or Bishop) practices the following attributions:

a. Practices the teaching service, servant of the Holy Sacraments and shepherd of his eparchy;

b. Runs the eparchy in accordance with the stipulations of the Holy Canons, of the State and church regulations, as well as with the decrees of the Holy Synod;

c. Supervises the implementation within his eparchy of the decrees taken by the deliberative and executive central and eparchial bodies;

d. Supervises the good development of the church life in the eparchy, of its bodies and institutions;

e. Convenes and presides the deliberative and executive bodies of the eparchy, as well as the conferences and meetings of the priests and the synaxes of the monastic staff;

f. Represents the eparchy in the relations with the central and local public authorities, in the court and to third parties, either personally or through delegates;

g. Represents the eparchy in the relations with the other religious cults recognised in the eparchy territory, in accordance with the decrees of the Holy Synod;

h. Pays often canonical and pastoral visits within the Eparchy;

i. Submits to the Holy Synod the annual report on the pastoral missionary and social philanthropic activity within the eparchy;

j. Gives the Holy Antimis and the Holy Great Myrrh received from the Romanian Patriarchy to all the places of worship in his eparchy;

k. After consulting the Metropolitan Synod, he proposes candidates for the dignity of Assistant Bishop to the Archdiocese and Assistant Hierarch to the Dioceses;

m. Ordains clergy and sees that the vacant parishes should be filled in due time, with the observance of the church canonical statutory and regulatory stipulations;

n. Appoints, transfers and revokes church clerical and non-clerical staff during a meeting of the Standing Eparchial Council, with the observance of the church norms in force;

o. Awards distinctions and church ranks to the priests and deacons in the eparchy, as well as to the monastic personnel, with the observance of the church statutory and regulatory stipulations;

p. Gives or withdraws the blessing for the appointment of the didactic staff teaching Religion in the public or private education, for employing the didactic personnel and the leadership personnel in the confessional schools and in the institutes of theological pre-university and university education, in his eparchy;

q. Releases the Canonical Card following the written application of the Romanian Orthodox hierarch who accepts to receive a priest in his eparchy, and in case of passing into the canonical jurisdiction of another Orthodox Church, the respective priest must get the approval of the Patriarch;

r. Gives church exemptions for marriage and re-marriage to the lay faithful, in the limit of the canonical stipulations;

s. Gives the legal leave to the clerical and non-clerical staff in the eparchial administration, to the archpriests, to the clerical staff at the parishes, as well as to the monastic staff for health reasons;

t. Appoints the president of the Eparchial Consistory from among the three members elected by the Eparchial Assembly and approves the defenders in the Eparchial Consistory;

u. Approves or rejects with good reason the sentences issued by the Eparchial Consistory;

v. Ensures the discipline of the clergy and of the other categories of the staff in his eparchy, directly or through the competent bodies;

w. Receives complains against the clerical and non-clerical staff in the eparchial administration, from deaneries and parishes, as well as against the monastic staff, and takes suitable measures according to the canonical, statutory and regulatory stipulations.

x. In case of serious guiltiness, he can stop the clerical staff in his eparchy from the celebration of the religious service and have the case examined.

y. He can apply the punishment of disciplinary transfer to the priest, through hierarchic decree, if he sees that the respective priest influences badly the parochial life.

z. Fulfils any other attributions ascribed to him through the holy canons or decrees of the Holy Synod.

Article 89 – The Diocesan Bishop fulfils the rights and the duties stipulated by the Holy Canons, by the present Statute and by the church regulations.

C. The Eparchial Assembly

Article 90 – The Eparchial Assembly is the deliberative body for all the administrative, cultural, social/philanthropic, economic and patrimonial issues of the eparchy.

Article 91 – (1) The Eparchial Assembly is made up of the representatives elected of the clergy and faithful, in proportion of one third clergy and two thirds lay, with a moral and religious life worthy of a Christian faithful, who stood as candidates with the blessing of the Diocesan Bishop. In case of activity contrary to the Church, the Eparchial Assembly revoked their mandates following the proposal of the Diocesan Bishop.

(2) The lay members of the Eparchial Assembly are elected from among the delegates of the Parochial Councils, constituted in lay electoral colleges, on constituencies.

(3) The clergy members in the Eparchial Assembly are elected from among all the priests and deacons employed, constituted in priestly electoral colleges, on constituencies.

(4) The members of the Eparchial Assembly, clergy and lay, are elected for four years. They can be elected for two mandates at last.

(5) The number of the members elected of the Eparchial Assembly is 30.

(6) The President of the Eparchial Assembly is the Archbishop or Bishop, and in case of vacancy, the locum tenens assigned canonically and statutory.

(7) The Assistant Bishop or the Assistant Hierarch is a lawful member of the Eparchial Assembly, with deliberative vote.

Article 92 – The attributions of the Eparchial Assembly are the following:

a. Sustains the interests and rights of the Church and of the eparchy, according to the canonical, statutory and regulatory stipulations.

b. Supervises the observation, within the eparchy, of the provisions with unitary character stipulated by the Statutes, by the church regulations and by the decrees of the central church bodies concerning the administration of the real estate and property of the cult units all over the eparchy, as well as of some other patrimonial, cultural and trustee goods of these units;

c. Sustains the cultural, social-philanthropic and economical institutions of the eparchy;

d. Approves the setting up, dissolution and territorial delimitation of the deaneries, following the proposal of the Eparchial Council;

e. Delegates a clergyman and two lay people, from among the members of the Assembly, as eparchial representatives, in the Church National Assembly;

f. Elects the members of the Eparchial Council, following the proposal of the Diocesan Bishop;

g. Elects the three members of the Eparchial Consistory and the two proxies, following the proposal of the Diocesan Bishop;

h. Appoints, following the proposal of the Diocesan Bishop, one, two or three clergy, as members of the Metropolitan Consistory;

i. Approves the general report drafted by the Eparchial Council and takes measures for the good development of the eparchy activity;

j. Approves the account for budgetary execution and the financial balance sheet of the eparchy, of its institutions and foundations, as well as measures for insuring the church assets;

k. Approves the general budget of the eparchy, of the eparchial institutions and foundations;

l. Decides upon the way of administrating the assets of the eparchy, as well as of the eparchial institutions and foundations, in accordance with the legal provisions in force;

m. Executes any other attributions given through the present Statutes and church regulations;

Article 93 – (1) The Eparchial Assembly meets in annual working session during the first trimester of the year, as well as in extraordinary meetings any time is needed.

(2) The Eparchial Assembly is convened by the president, with the daily agenda mentioned, at least 14 days before the date scheduled for the meeting, and in exceptional cases, as soon as possible;

(3) The Eparchial Assembly is statutory constituted with the presence of two thirds of its members and takes valid decrees with half plus one of the votes of the present members;

(4) The report of the Eparchial Assembly session is signed by the President and by the Assembly Secretaries and kept at the Eparchy Secretary Office.

Article 94 – In order to study and formulate the proposals on the issues to be discussed, the Assembly elects, at the beginning of every four year mandate, five Working Commissions, from among the clergy and lay members, who will have a president and a reporter from among their bosom, assigned in the plenum, following the proposal of the President. The Commissions of the Eparchial Assembly are the following:

- a. Church-administrative Commission,
- b. Cultural and educational Commission,
- c. Economical, Budgetary and Patrimony Commission,
- d. Social-Philanthropic Commission,
- e. Organisational, Juridical Commission and for Validation

D. Eparchial Council

Article 95 – The Eparchial Council is the executive body of the Eparchial Assembly, responsible for the church administrative, cultural, social-philanthropic, economic, patrimonial and foundational issues of the entire eparchy.

Article 96 – (1) The Eparchial Council is made up of 9 members, 3 clergy and 6 lay people, elected for four years by the Eparchial Assembly from among its members. They can be elected for at last two mandates. In case of activity contrary to the Church, the Eparchial Assembly revokes their mandates following the proposal of the Diocesan Bishop.

(2) The President of the Eparchial Council is the Diocesan Bishop, and in case of vacancy, the proxy assigned canonically and statutory.

(3) The Assistant Bishop or the Assistant Hierarch is a lawful member of the Eparchial Council, with deliberative vote.

(4) The meetings of the Eparchial Council can be chaired by the Assistant Bishop too, by the Assistant Hierarch respectively, on behalf of the Diocesan Bishop. In this case, the session report is submitted to the Diocesan Bishop, for approval.

(5) The eparchial Administrative vicar, eparchial counsellors, eparchial inspector, eparchial secretary and the chief accountant are permanent members of the Eparchial Council, with consulting vote. The leaders of the theological education institutions in the eparchy participate in the session as guests.

(6) The eparchial secretary is also secretary of the Eparchial Council and drafts the report of the working session.

Article 97 – (1) The Eparchial Council is met following the convocation of the President twice a year, or any time is needed.

(2) The Eparchial Council is legally constituted with the presence of at least two thirds of its members and takes decrees with half plus one votes of the present members.

Article 98 –The Eparchial Council fulfils the attributes of the Eparchial Assembly during the period between its sessions mentioned in **Article 92, letters a, b, c and l**, as well as the following attributes:

a. Drafts the annual report on the activity of the departments of the Eparchial Administration, of the eparchial institutions and foundations;

b. Drafts and presents to the Eparchial Assembly the account of budgetary execution and the financial balance sheet of the eparchy, of its institutions and foundations and proposes measures for insuring the church goods;

c. Drafts the annual general budget of the eparchy, of its institutions and foundations;

d. Proposes the Eparchial Assembly the setting up, dissolution and territorial delimitation of the deaneries;

e. Approves the setting up, dissolution and territorial delimitation of the parishes, as well as the changing of the branches into parishes;

f. Supports the catechisation of the children, youth and adults and takes measures for getting the material means needed for sustaining the cultural and religious educational programmes in the eparchy;

g. Supervises the good development of the institutions of theological education and of the confessional schools in the eparchy, in accordance with the statutory stipulations and church regulations;

h. Sets up, organises and supervises the activity of the eparchial printing house, of the workshops producing candles, religious vestments and rite objects, as well as the activity of the shops selling these products and those purchased from the Printing Press and Workshops of the Bible and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church;

i. Approves the setting up, organisation and dissolution of the local church associations and foundations functioning within the eparchy, as well as the activity, within the territory of the eparchy, of the church branch associations and foundations set up with the approval of the Holy Synod;

j. Decides upon the setting up of eparchial funds designed to assist the poor parishes, to grant scholarships to the young people studying in educational institutions, as well as to support the local programmes of social-philanthropic and cultural-missionary assistance;

k. Decides upon the transference with any title of the usage or property over the real estate of the church units in the eparchy (sale, purchasing, renting, exchange etc.), as well as over the entailment with tasks or servitudes of the goods of these units, but for the sacred goods, which are inalienable;

l. In case of alienation (sale, donation etc.) of the real estate of the Eparchial Centre (buildings or terrains), the Eparchial Council proposes the Eparchial Assembly statutory solutions, for approval. The solutions concerning the alienation become valid only after the Metropolitan Synod approves them.

m. Administrates the real estate and movable goods of the eparchy, of the eparchial institutions and foundations, in accordance with the decrees of the Eparchial Assembly;

n. Verifies and approves the annual report concerning the situation of the real estate and movable goods making the property or usage of the cult units in the eparchy (inventory, physic state etc.);

o. Verifies the observance of the church statutory and regulatory stipulations concerning the elections of lay and clergy members in the church deliberative and executive bodies;

p. Confirms, suspends or dissolves the Parochial Councils, following both the information conveyed by the priest and the motivated proposal of the archpriest, setting up interim commissions till the election of new parochial bodies;

q. Verifies, approves, rejects or changes the decrees of the parochial bodies in accordance with the stipulations of **Article 55, paragraph 2**, in the present Statutes;

r. Fulfils any attributions provided to him through Statutes, regulations or decrees of the church central bodies and the Eparchial Assembly.

Article 99 – The decrees of the Eparchial Assembly, of the Eparchial Council and of the Standing Eparchial Council become executory after the Diocesan Bishop confirm them in writing. In case they are not confirmed, the Diocesan Bishop disposes the re-discussion of the issue.

E. Standing Eparchial Council

Article 100 – The Standing Eparchial Council functions between the meetings of the Eparchial Council.

Article 101 – (1) The Standing Eparchial Council is made up of the Diocesan Bishop, as president, Assistant Bishop or Assistant Hierarchy, administrative eparchial vicar, eparchial counsellors, eparchial inspector, eparchial secretary, exarch, juridical counsellor and chief accountant, as members. In case of vacancy, the proxy assigned canonically and statutory presides.

(2) The Standing Eparchial Council is met following the convocation of the Diocesan Bishop or any time is needed.

(3) The Standing Eparchial Council can be chaired, on behalf of the Diocesan Bishop, by the Assistant Bishop, Assistant Hierarchy, eparchial administrative vicar or by one of the eparchial counsellors.

(4) The eparchial secretary is also the secretary of the Standing sessions and drafts the proceedings report.

(5) The decrees of the Standing Eparchial Council are taken with the vote of the majority of the present members and are implemented by the Departments of the Eparchial Administration, according to the competences granted through the Statutes and church regulations.

Article 102 - The Standing Eparchial Council implements the attributions of the Eparchial Council during the period between its meetings, but for those stipulated in **Article 98, letters a, b, c, k, n and q**, as well as for the following attributions:

a. Examines and defines the annual reports concerning the activity of the departments of the Eparchial Administration, and of the eparchial institutions and foundations;

b. Analyses and defines the budgetary execution account and the financial balance sheet of the eparchy, and of its institutions and foundations;

c. Presents the draft of the general budget of the eparchy, as well as of its institutions and foundations, to the Eparchial Council to the verified and confirmed;

d. Submits proposals concerning the activity plan of the eparchial publishing and printing houses, as well as of the eparchial and monastic workshops;

e. Approves the categories of classification of the parishes, in accordance with the stipulations of **Article 47, paragraphs 1 and 2** of the present Statutes;

f. Submits proposals to the Eparchial Council concerning the administration of the real estate and movable goods of the eparchy, of the eparchial institutions and foundations;

g. Approves the setting up and organisation of institutions with economic character, with or without legal personality, distinct from the eparchy or from the units in its jurisdiction, in order to sustain the pastoral missionary activity and the social philanthropic ones, according to the present Statutes, to the church regulations and legislation in force;

h. Administrates the funds of the eparchy, of the eparchial institutions and foundations designed to assist the poor parishes, to grant scholarships to the young people studying in the educational institutions, as well as to support the local programmes of social philanthropic and cultural missionary assistance.

i. Approves the investment projects within the limits of the annual budget of the eparchy;

j. Intervenes with the central and local public authorities to get support for sustaining the pastoral missionary, cultural and social philanthropic activity of the eparchy and of its units, for restoring the church monuments, as well as for building new churches in the eparchy;

k. Approves the budget projects and the accounts for budgetary execution of the deaneries, parishes and monasteries;

l. Drafts the report to the Eparchial Council concerning the inventory of the deaneries, parishes and monasteries;

m. Examines and approves the donations, sponsorships and testaments made for the benefit of the eparchy, in accordance with the legislation in force;

n. Decides upon the contests submitted against the decrees of the parochial bodies;

o. Fulfils any attributions given through the Statutes, regulations or decrees of the Eparchial Assembly and of the Eparchial Consistory.

F. Eparchial Administration and Eparchial Office

Article 103 – When fulfilling his attributions, the Diocesan Bishop is assisted by the Assistant Bishop or Assistant Hierarchy, Eparchial Administration and the Eparchial Office.

Article 104 – The Assistant Bishops and Assistant Hierarchs are members of the eparchial deliberative and executive bodies, having, within the Eparchial Administration, the attributes delegated to them, through decree, by the Diocesan Bishops, with the agreement of the Holy Synod. They also have titles, approved by the Holy Synod, related to the respective eparchies or special titles, according to case, decided by the Holy Synod.

Article 105 – (1) The eparchial administrative vicar, eparchial counsellors, eparchial inspector and eparchial secretary are appointed for four years time; they are reconfirmed and revoked by the Diocesan Bishop in a working session of the Standing Eparchial Council, taking into account the following criteria: the general mark in theology at least 8,50; degree II at least; no canonical or juridical impediments and special liturgical, pastoral administrative, missionary and cultural activity.

(2) The eparchial administrative vicar, eparchial counsellors, eparchial inspector and the eparchial secretary have attributions established, by decree, by the Diocesan Bishop. They participate in the Eparchial Assembly, with no right to vote, and in the meetings of the Standing Eparchial Council, with deliberative vote. The clergy in the Eparchial Administration can be appointed servant priests to parishes, directly, by the Diocesan Bishop (with no contest).

Article 106 – (1) The Eparchial Administration implements the decrees of the central and eparchial deliberative and executive bodies, through the following departments of activity:

- a. Church-Administrative Department
- b. Department for education and youth activity
- c. Cultural and Media Communication Department
- d. Social-Philanthropic and Missionary Department
- e. Economical Financial Department
- f. Department for Patrimony and Church Constructions
- g. Department for the monasteries exarchate

(2) The Standing Eparchial Council can set up some other departments in accordance with the local pastoral and administrative needs;

(3) Within the Departments of the Eparchial Administration the following sections and divisions can function: library, museum, personnel office, bookkeeping, technical, editorial office, printing press, workshops, as well as some other ones, according to the local specific needs.

(4) The Eparchial Administration is run by the Diocesan Bishop, assisted by the Assistant Hierarch, together with the eparchial administrative vicar and the eparchial counsellors.

Article 107 – (1) The Eparchial Office prepares the works of the eparchial deliberative and executive bodies together with the departments of the Eparchial Administration and implements their decrees.

(2) The Eparchial office has the following sections and divisions: the Diocesan Bishop Office, Secretary Office, Register Office, Archives, Canonical Juridical Office, Group of inspection and control, Office for communications and relations with the public.

Article 108 – (1) Specialised personnel, clergy and non-clergy, are employed in the Eparchial Administration and Office. They are appointed, transferred and revoked by the Diocesan Bishop in a meeting of the Standing Eparchial Council.

(2) The eparchial counsellors and the specialised staff study and draft reports on the issues to be debated by the eparchial deliberative bodies or resolved by the Diocesan Bishop.

Article 109 (1) – The Group of Inspection and control of the Diocesan Bishop is made up of the following personnel, appointed by the Diocesan Bishop, in a working session of the Standing Eparchial Council:

a. One church eparchial inspector, appointed in accordance with **Article 105, paragraph 1** of the present Statute, with general attributions of control and accuser in the Eparchial Consistory;

b. The Exarch of the monasteries appointed from among the archimandrites or protosingelos, with general attributions of guidance, inspection, control at monasteries and reporter for monasteries issues. This one can also run the Exarch Department for the monasteries;

c. Inspectors for financial and administrative (audit) control, one of them with juridical studies;

(2) The members of the Group of inspection and control unfold their activity following the Diocesan Bishop's order, according to the attributions established in the Statutes, in the church regulations and in the legislation in force.

Section VI

A. Metropolitan See

Article 110 – (1) Canonically and administratively the Dioceses and Archdioceses are grouped in Metropolitan Sees.

(2) The Metropolitan Sees inside the country and outside it are headed by a Metropolitan.

B. The Metropolitan Synod Organisation and Attributions

Article 111 – (1) The Metropolitan, together with the Archbishops, Bishops, as well as with the Assistant Bishops and Assistant Hierarchs from the suffragan eparchies make up the Metropolitan Synod.

(2) The Metropolitan Synod coordinates the common activity of the eparchies within the Metropolitan See, in the limits mentioned in the Holy Canons, as well as in the statutory and regulatory norms in force.

(3) The Metropolitan Synod sees that the Orthodox faith, liturgical unity and canonical discipline of the clergy and monks and the brotherly inter-aid among eparchies should be defended and promoted within the Metropolitan See.

(4) The Metropolitan Synods can meet in common meetings in order to work out and apply plans of permanent cooperation at pastoral-missionary, social-philanthropic and cultural level of regional interest, about which they will inform the Holy Synod in writing.

Article 112 – (1) The Metropolitan Synod is convened by the Metropolitan in any case of need. In case of vacancy, the Patriarch or the hierarch canonically and statutory appointed presides.

(2) The Metropolitan Synod takes decrees with the vote of half plus one of the present members.

(3) The works of the Metropolitan Synod are prepared by the clerical personnel leaders, respectively by the eparchial counsellor and eparchial secretary, appointed by the Metropolitan, while the decrees adopted are kept separately in the archives of the Metropolitan See, together with the meetings reports.

Article 113 – Besides the attributions mentioned above, the Metropolitan Synod has the following attributions:

a. Proposes the Holy Synod the setting up of new eparchies or the territorial change of the present ones;

b. Analyses and approves the requests expressed by the suffragan eparchies concerning the canonisation of saints, projects of liturgical texts

and icons for worshipping them and submits its proposals to the Holy Synod;

c. Approves the themes of the courses for the professional degrees of the clerical personnel, Final Degree and Degree II, organised by the high educational institutions in the Metropolitan See and approved by the Holy Synod;

d. Approves the proposals of the Diocesan Bishops of the suffragan eparchies for electing the Assisting Bishops and Assistant Hierarchs by the Holy Synod;

e. Approves the setting up, dissolution and change of the monasteries for monks into convents for nuns or of the convents for nuns into monasteries for monks, as well as the raising of the sketes to the rank of monasteries, according to Article 75, paragraph 1 in the present Statutes;

f. Receives and examines the appeals of the defrocked clergy by an Eparchial Consistory within the Metropolitan See;

g. Admits or rejects, in principle, the appeals, on the basis of the report and of the proposals - canonically and juridically motivated - of the church administrative counsellor from the metropolitan centre;

h. In case of admission, in principle, of the appeal, it sends the cause to be judged by the Metropolitan Consistory;

i. Validates and invalidates the decrees of the Eparchial Assemblies within the Metropolitan See concerning the alienation of the eparchial real estate (buildings and terrains).

j. Fulfils any other attributions entrusted through the Holy Canons, through the present Statutes and the church regulations or through decrees of the Holy Synod.

C. The Metropolitan

Article 114 – (1) The Metropolitan is the canonical leader of a Metropolitan See, implements the rights and fulfils the tasks stipulated by the Holy Canons, by the church tradition and by the present Statutes.

(2) The title of the Metropolitan is that of the Archdiocese he serves and of the Metropolitan See he leads.

(3) He wears as distinctive insignia a cross on the kulyon, with black kamelaykion.

(4) The Metropolitan has the following attributions:

a. Convenes and chairs the Metropolitan Synod;

b. Chairs the meeting of the Holy Synod for the election of the suffragan Archbishops and Bishops;

c. Ordains, together with the other hierarchs, the suffragan Archbishops and Bishops, as well as the Assistant Bishops and Assistant Hierarchs from the eparchies in the Metropolitan Sees, together with their Diocesan Bishops;

d. Issues the Grammata for the enthronement of the suffragan Archbishops and Bishops and enthrones them;

e. Appoints Archbishops and Bishops locum tenens, in case of vacancy, to the suffragan eparchies;

f. Pays brotherly visits to the Archbishops and Bishops in the Metropolitan See;

g. Convenes the Synaxes (consultations) of the abbots and father confessors from the monasteries in the suffragan eparchies, at least once three years;

h. Chairs the Zone Commissions of Church Painting;

i. Receives the information concerning the Archbishops, Bishops, Assistant Bishops and Assistant Hierarchs from the eparchies in Metropolitan See and disposes, after consulting the Patriarch, their examination in the Standing Synod and informs the Holy Synod of the results;

j. Issues the Metropolitan Decree for constituting the Metropolitan Consistory, made up of the members (3-5 titular and 2 proxy) delegated by the suffragan Eparchial Assemblies, according to **Article 92, letter h** and appoints one president from among them.

k. Fulfils any other attributions provided by the Holy Canons, by the present Statutes and by the church regulations or by the decrees of the Holy Synod.

Part II

On the clergy

Chapter I

Theological Education for Preparing the Clergy.

Teaching Religion. Confessional Schools

Article 115 – (1) The training of the church staff of all categories is done in the following units of religious education integrated in the pre-university and university education;

a. Schools for religious singers (Schools for arts and handicraft)

b. High School Theological Seminaries

c. Faculties of Theology

(2) In accordance with her specific needs, the Romanian Orthodox Church can organize her own units of theological education, of scientific-theological research and of professional formation according to the church regulations.

(3) The institutions of theological education are designed to train the ordained personnel, the religion professors, some other experts necessary for the religious and social activity of the Church, as well as those willing to have theological formation, according to law, to the present Statutes and to the church regulations.

Article 116 – (1) The pre-university theological units of education integrated in the state education, the Schools for religious singers and the high school theological Seminaries are set up by the eparchies where they will function, with the approval of the Metropolitan Synods and of the Holy Synod, according to the law.

(2) The plans and curriculum for the pre-university theological education are established by the Holy Synod, according to the legal stipulations.

Article 117 – (1) The units of university theological education, respectively the Faculties of Theology, are set up by the eparchies on whose territory they will function, with the approval of the Holy Synod, in accordance with the law.

(2) The plans and programmes for university theological education are worked out by the educational institutions, approved by the Metropolitan Synods and by the Holy Synods, according to the law.

Article 118 – (1) The way of organisation and functioning, the profiles and specialisations, the confirmation of the diplomas acquired abroad, the admission and duration of the courses of theological pre-university and university education are established through the general regulations and decrees of the Holy Synod, in accordance with the law.

(2) The teaching staff and the leadership of the units of theological education integrated in the state education are recognised by the competent Ministry, according to law and to the protocols concluded between the Romanian Orthodox Church and the competent Ministry, with the previous agreement of the Diocesan Bishop of the eparchy where they are employed. The clerical teaching staff can function at parish too, with the approval of the Diocesan Bishop.

(3) The units of theological pre-university and university education are in the canonical jurisdiction of the Holy Synod and of the Diocesan Bishop, administratively subordinated to the competent authorities and institutions provided by law.

(4) The inspection of the theological educational units and the financial control of the goods of the theological educational units which belong to the Church is done through the authorised bodies in whose territory they function, with the observance both of the statutory stipulations and of the church regulations.

(5) The admittance of the candidates into the theological education of all degrees is done only with the blessing of the Diocesan Bishop.

Article 119 – (1) The eparchies are responsible for teaching religion in the state, private and confessional education, in their own placement centres, as well as in those organised by public and private institutions.

(2) The plan and programmes for teaching religion are approved by the Holy Synod.

(3) The teaching staff, who teach religion in the state or private educational system, are appointed with the approval of the Diocesan Bishop of every eparchy.

(4) The parish priest, together with the religion teacher, is responsible for the religious assistance in the educational units within every eparchy.

(5) In case one member of the teaching staff, who teaches religion, either clergy or lay, diverges from the doctrine and moral of the Church, the Diocesan Bishop can withdraw his approval for teaching religion, after examination, which fact brings about the annulment of his employment contract. This disposition is also valid for the teaching staff employed in the theological pre-university, university and confessional education.

Article 120 – Having had the agreement of the Diocesan Bishop, the eparchies and the related cult units are entitled to set up and administrate various forms of confessional education of all levels, profiles and specialisations, in accordance with the stipulations of the present Statute, with the church regulations and the law.

Article 121 – (1) The Holy Synod approves the applications of the Faculties of Theology, accompanied by the agreement of the university senates, for organising the doctorate in theology, according to law.

(2) The Holy Synod approves and communicates to the competent ministry, for approval, which are the Faculties of Theology attested to organise courses and exams for training and awarding the professional and didactic degrees II and I to the clerical personnel and to the teaching staff who teach Religion, or theological objects of study in the pre-university theological education.

Chapter II **XXX**

Recruitment of the church personnel

Section I

Appointment of the church staff to parishes

Article 122 – The religious singers and readers are recruited, as a rule, from among the graduates of the Schools for religious singers. They are appointed by the Diocesan Bishop, following the proposal of the parish priest and of the Parochial Council, in a meeting of the Standing Eparchial Council. They can be punished or revoked for disciplinary reasons.

Article 123 – (1) The servant priests and deacons are recruited from among the doctors, graduates of the master courses and graduates of the Faculties of Theology, specialised in Pastoral Theology, who passed the exam for priestly capacity.

(2) The priests and deacons are appointed at a parish by the Diocesan Bishop, in a meeting of the Standing Eparchial Council, with the observance of the statutory stipulations and church regulations.

(3) The appointment and transfer of the priests and deacons to parishes are done through contest, with the exceptions mentioned in Article 39, paragraph 1, **Article 105, paragraph 2, Article 124, paragraph 4, and Article 125, paragraph 3.**

(4) In order to be appointed, the candidates to the priest and deacon positions must satisfy the canonical and statutory stipulations, as well as the church regulations.

(5) The cheirothemia of readers and ipodeacons and the ordination of the deacons and priests are done only for an altar within the eparchy.

(6) In a parish, the frequent presence of the married clergy or of those from monasteries outside the parish, for pastoral and missionary activities, is allowed only with the approval of the Diocesan Bishop.

(7) The relation between the clerical staff and the Eparchial Centre implies the service and mission assumed on one's own accord, according to the public solemn statement read and signed by every candidate before being ordained priest. To start with the pastoral activity they were ordained for, the church staff receive a Decree from the Diocesan Bishop mentioning the rights and duties they are to have.

(8) The priests, deacons and monks are not allowed to set up, be members of or take part in associations, foundations or organisations of any sort, without having the blessing of the Diocesan Bishop.

(9) In the Romanian Orthodox Church, the dignity of a priest, deacon and monk is not compatible with the practice of any personal activity (private) with economic, financial and commercial character contrary to the Christian morals and interests of the Church.

Article 124 – (1) At the parishes in the urban areas (residential towns and cities), the priests are appointed by contest, from among the doctors, graduates of the master courses and of the Faculties of Theology. They must have at least five years service within the clergy and to have passed the exam for being selected for the urban parishes.

(2) At the parishes in the rural areas (communes and villages), the priests and deacons are appointed by contest, from among the graduates of the master courses and of the Theological Faculties, who have passed the exam for priestly capacity. In the case of the priests who ask to be transferred, they must have at least five years since their last transfer.

(3) In case some of the parishes in the rural areas have no candidates to meet the requirements stipulated in the previous paragraph, graduates of the seminary may be appointed, who have passed the capacity examination.

(4) In case of urgent missionary situation in the urban or rural areas, the Diocesan Bishop may appoint or transfer a priest to a vacant post without contest.

Article 125 – (1) After passing the exams for the professional degrees: Final, II and I, the priests and deacons are entitled to run for or ask to be transferred to higher level parishes.

(2) The doctors in theology, master graduates, theology graduates, graduates of high school Theological Seminary, theological readers and ipodeacons cannot have cheirothelia or ordination in another eparchy without having the documents for canonical release from the eparchy they belong to.

(3) The clerical and non-clerical staff from monasteries, or from the episcopal, archiepiscopal, metropolitan and patriarchal cathedrals are appointed directly by the Diocesan Bishops (without contest).

Section II

Election of the hierarchs in the Romanian Orthodox Church

Article 126 – (1) The election of the Patriarch, Metropolitan, Archbishop and Eparchial Bishop is done by secret vote, by the Holy Synod, after consulting the clergy and lay in the church bodies, in 60 days at last since the vacancy is declared for the respective dignity.

(2) When a hierarch is elected, the Holy Synod is statutorily constituted with the presence of three quarters of its members and elects with the votes of two thirds of the total number of the present members.

(3) The Holy Synod meeting for electing the Patriarch, Metropolitan, Archbishop and Eparchial Bishop can take place after fulfilling the

consulting procedure stipulated by **Article 127, paragraphs 2, 3 and 4, Article 129, paragraphs 2,3,4 and 5 and Article 130, paragraphs 2, 3, 4 and 5** of the present Statutes.

A. Election of the Patriarch

Article 127 – (1) Any Metropolitan, Archbishop and Eparchial Bishop employed, Romanian citizen, doctor or graduate of theology who imposed himself in the life of the Church and society through pure life, theological culture, ecclesiastic dignity, missionary zeal and household sense, can be elected for the Patriarch dignity and responsibility.

(2) In order to elect the Patriarch, the Holy Synod, chaired by the metropolitan with the oldest hierarchic service, establish, through open consultation followed by consulting secret vote, a list of three candidates from among the eligible Diocesan Bishops, with motivation for every proposal.

(3) The Standing Synod, consults on behalf of the Holy Synod, in a special meeting, the clergy and lay members in the Church National Assembly, as well as the members of the Eparchial Assembly of the Archdiocese of Bucharest. Also present at the meeting is a dean of a Faculty of Theology and one director of a theological seminary from every Metropolitan See, assigned by the Metropolitan after consulting the suffragan hierarchs, with the dean and director representing the Archdiocese of Bucharest also present. The consultation takes place at the headquarters of the Romanian Patriarchy, at the date the Patriarch locum tenens establishes together with the Standing Synod.

(4) During the Consultation, the list of candidates for electing the Patriarch, presented by the Standing Synod, can be completed, through open consultation, followed by secret consulting vote, with two names from among the other eligible Diocesan Bishops. After the consulting vote, the list presented by the Standing Synod, completed with the first two Diocesan Bishops eligible who got most of the votes, will be presented to the Holy Synod.

Article 128 – (1) The works of the Holy Synod for electing the Patriarch are opened by the Patriarch locum tenens and presided by the eparchial hierarch with the oldest hierarchic service, in the dyptica order, from among the eparchial metropolitans, archbishops and bishops, as results from the Holy Register of the hierarchs' ordinations.

(2) In order to have good voting during the meeting, the meeting President is assisted, as trustful men, by the first two Assistant Bishops or

Assistant Hierarchs with the oldest ordination as hierarchs. These four people make up the Office.

(3) The two assistants of the Chairman show the empty urns to all those present. Every vote comprises, in order, the names of the candidates nominated after the consultations within the Holy Synod and in the Church National Assembly, completed according to the stipulations of **Article 127, paragraph 3.**

(4) Following the appeal of the meeting secretary, every voter receives a voting bulletin, kisses the Holy Gospel, and marks on the bulletin, with fear of God, the name of the one whom he thinks worthy to be elected. Before leaving the booth, every voter folds the bulletin in four, so as the stamp should be outside,

(5) Then, every voter casts the vote into the urn.

(6) The voting is compulsory. The bulletins not marked, wrongly marked, or with additions, are considered null.

(7) The president counts the votes, passing them from one urn into another. The number of the votes must be equal with that of the voters present.

(8) The President unfolds every vote from the second urn and shows it to the two assistants, reads loudly the name marked and puts it in the first urn. Meanwhile, the Secretary writes down on a list the votes under the respective names, read by the President.

(9) The Secretary, after verifying if the sum of the votes is equal to that of the bulletins, signs the list and gives it to the President. This one reads it loudly and then signs it together with the two assistants.

(10) The Patriarch of Romania becomes the candidate who received the votes of two thirds of the total number of those present. If none of the candidates got the necessary number of votes, a second ballot is organised, with the participation of the first two candidates who got the largest number of votes. The candidate who has got two thirds of the votes of all those present will be elected. The voting is repeated until one of the candidates gets the majority of two thirds of the total number of the members present.

(11) The result of the elections is written down in a report to which the votes expressed are enclosed. The President announces solemnly the name of the person elected, and then the meeting chairing is handed over to the Patriarch locum tenens to close it.

B. Election of the Metropolitan

Article 129 – (1) Eligible for the service, dignity and responsibility of Metropolitan is any hierarch, member of the Holy Synod, starting from the vacant eparchy, who is a doctor in or graduate of Theology and distinguished through pure life, theological culture, ecclesiastic dignity, missionary zeal and household sense. The list of the eligible hierarchs is drafted in the dyptica order, decreasingly, starting from the vacant eparchy.

(2) In order to elect the Metropolitan, the Metropolitan Synod, chaired by the Patriarch of Romania or by the locum tenens established canonically and statutory, establishes, through open consultation, followed by secret consultative vote, a list of two candidates of the eligible hierarchs, with the motivation of every choice.

(3) After the consultation stipulated in the previous paragraph, the Metropolitan Synod consults, in a special meeting, the members of the Eparchial Assembly of the vacant eparchy as well as the clergy and lay members of the other eparchies of the respective Metropolitan See, delegated to the Church National Assembly. Also present at the meeting is a dean of a Faculty of Theology and a director of a Theological Seminary within the Metropolitan See, assigned by the Patriarch of Romania or by the Metropolitan locum tenens after consulting the suffragan hierarchs. The consultation takes place at the headquarters of the vacant Metropolitan See, at the date scheduled by the Patriarch of Romania, with the consent of the members of the Metropolitan Synod.

(4) The list of candidates for electing the Metropolitan, drafted by the Metropolitan Synod, can be completed, through open consultation followed by secret consultative vote, with two names from among the eligible hierarchs who got most of the votes. The list drafted by the Metropolitan Synod, completed after consulting the clergy and lay members mentioned in the previous paragraph will be submitted to the Holy Synod together with a report.

(5) After receiving the list, the Holy Synod can dispose its completion with two candidates, eligible hierarchs, assigned by secret vote by its plenary session, who got most of the votes.

(6) The proceedings of the Holy Synod for electing the Metropolitan are chaired by the Patriarch of Romania.

(7) In order to elect the Metropolitan, the bulletin vote will comprise, in order, the names of the eligible hierarchs proposed by secret consulting vote by the Metropolitan Synod, by the clergy and lay people participating in the Assembly, as well as by the Holy Synod.

(8) The election of the Metropolitan by the Holy Synod takes place in accordance with the way of voting mentioned at **Article 129, paragraphs 2-9**, with the adequate adaptations.

(9) Metropolitan will be the candidate who gets the votes of half plus one of the total present members. If none of the candidates got the necessary number of votes, a new voting is organised, with the participation of the first two candidates who got the largest number of votes. Elected will be the candidate who received half plus one of the votes of those present. In case of parity, the lots will decide.

(10) The result of the election is written down in a report enclosed to the votes expressed. The President announces solemnly the name of the elected one, and then closes the meeting.

C. The Election of the Eparchial Archbishop and Bishop

Article 130 – (1) Eligible for the service, dignity and responsibility of eparchial Archbishop and Bishop is any hierarch, member of the Holy Synod, starting from the vacant eparchy, as well as any widow priest by decease, who meets the canonical requirements, is a doctor or graduate in theology and distinguished himself through pure life, theological culture, ecclesiastic dignity, missionary zeal and household sense. The list of the eligible hierarchs is drafted in the dyptica order, decreasingly, starting with the vacant eparchy.

(2) In order to elect the Eparchial Archbishop and Bishop, the Metropolitan Synod, presided by the local Metropolitan establishes, after open consultation followed by secret consulting vote, a list of two candidates, eligible hierarchs or some other hierarchs who meet the stipulations mentioned in the previous paragraph, with motivation for every proposal.

(3) The Metropolitan Synod consults, in special meeting, the clergy and lay members of the Eparchial Assembly of the vacant eparchy, with the participation of a dean and a director from the institutions of theological education within the eparchy, appointed by the Metropolitan. The consultation takes place at the Metropolitan headquarters, at the date the Metropolitan establishes in consensus with the hierarchs of the respective Metropolitan See, informing the Patriarch of Romania.

(4) The list of candidates for electing the eparchial Archbishop and Bishop, drafted by the Metropolitan Synod, can be filled in, through open consultation followed by secret consultative vote, with two names from among the eligible hierarchs or from some other persons who meet the

requirements stipulated in **paragraph 1** and got most of the votes. The list drafted by the Metropolitan Synod, completed after consulting the clergy and lay people mentioned at the previous paragraph, will be submitted to the Holy Synod with a report.

(5) While receiving the list of the candidates for the election of eparchial Archbishop and Bishop, the Holy Synod, can dispose its filling in with two candidates, eligible hierarchs or clergy who are not hierarchs, appointed by the plenary session, through open consultation followed by secret consulting vote, from among those who got most of the votes.

(6) In the case of the candidates registered on the list, who are not hierarchs, the Holy Synod disposes their canonical examination.

(7) The proceedings of the Holy Synod for electing the eparchial Archbishop are open and closed by the Patriarch of Romania and presided by the local Metropolitan.

(8) In order to elect the eparchial Archbishop and Bishop by the Holy Synod, the voting bulletin will comprise, in the order of the dyptica and church ranks, the names of the candidates proposed through secret consulting vote by the Metropolitan Synod, as well as by the Holy Synod.

(9) The election of the eparchial Archbishop and Bishop by the Holy Synod takes place in accordance with the way of voting stipulated in **Article 128, paragraphs 2-9**, with the adequate adaptations.

(10) The candidate who got the votes of half plus one of the total number of the present members becomes eparchial Archbishop or Bishop. If none of the candidates met the necessary number of votes, a new voting is organised, with the participation of the first two candidates who got the largest number of votes. The candidate who got half plus one of the total number of the present members is elected. In case of parity, the lots will decide.

(11) The result of the election is mentioned in a report enclosed to the votes expressed. The President solemnly announces the name of the elected one and hands over the meeting running to the Patriarch of Romania.

D. The election of the Assistant Bishops to the Patriarch, of the Assistant Bishop and of the Assistant Hierarchs

Article 131 – (1) The election of the Assistant Bishops to the Patriarch, of the Assistant Bishops and Assistant Hierarchs, is done by the Holy Synod, with the votes of half plus one of the total present members. So, the Patriarch, Metropolitans, Archbishops and Bishops can propose one or several candidates.

(2) The Assistant Bishops to the Patriarch are elected, through secret vote, by the Holy Synod, following the proposal of the Patriarch expressed in consultation with the Standing Synod.

(3) The Assistant Bishops and the Assistant Hierarchs from the eparchies are elected, by secret vote, by the Holy Synod, following the proposal of the Diocesan Bishop expressed after consulting the Metropolitan Synod.

(4) The candidates for the position of Assistant Bishop to the Patriarch and Assistant Hierarch must meet the requirements stipulated in **Article 130, paragraph 1** of the present Statutes, while those who are not hierarchs are submitted to the canonical examination stipulated in **Article 130, paragraph 6**.

(5) The Holy Synod meeting for electing the Assistant Bishop to the Patriarch and Assistant Hierarch is presided by the Patriarch. The election is held according to **Article 128, paragraphs 2-9**, with the adequate adaptations.

(6) If the respective candidate proposed does not get the votes of half plus one of the total present members, the eparchial hierarch proposes a new candidate, in another meeting, for whose election the procedure stipulated in the previous article will be applied.

E. Election of the hierarchs for the Romanian Orthodox Eparchies Abroad

Article 132 – (1) The election of the Metropolitans, Archbishops and Bishops for the Romanian Orthodox eparchies abroad is done by the Holy Synod out of one or two candidates proposed by the Eparchial Assembly of the vacant eparchy, in accordance with their statutes for organisation and functioning approved by the Holy Synod. In case the Eparchial Assembly proposes only one candidate, who is not elected by the Holy Synod, the Eparchial Assembly will propose the Holy Synod the second candidate.

(2) In case of setting up a new eparchy, the local metropolitan or the delegate of the Holy Synod will proceed to the organisation of the new eparchies, as well as to drafting the statutes of the respective eparchies, informing the Romanian Patriarchy about the stage of his mission.

(3) The Assistant Bishops and Assistant Hierarchs from the Romanian Orthodox eparchies abroad are elected, by secret vote, by the Holy Synod, following the proposal of the Diocesan Bishop, made after consulting the eparchial bodies mentioned in their own statutes of organisation and

functioning approved by the Holy Synod and in accordance with the provisions of the present Statutes.

F. Ordination and enthronement

Article 133 – (1) The enthronement is done according to the canonical order and customs of the Romanian Orthodox Church. The names of the elected ones are communicated to the President of Romania, to the Prime Minister and to the authorised Minister. The enthronement of the eparchial hierarchs abroad will be communicated to the main civil and church authorities in the respective countries.

(2) The enthronement Grammata is issued by the Holy Synod for the Patriarch of Romania, by the Patriarch of Romania for metropolitans and by the Metropolitan for the suffragan Archbishops and Bishops. For the Assistant Bishops to the Patriarch, Assistant Bishops and Assistant Hierarchs, the President of the Holy Synod will issue a confirmation Act.

(3) In case the elected one is not a hierarch, he will be ordained by the local Metropolitan together with at least two other Hierarchs, and only then will receive the enthronement Grammata or the confirmation Act, according to case.

Section III On vacancies

Article 134 – (1) In case of vacancy of the position of Patriarch of Romania, locum tenens will be the first hierarch in the order established by Article 12, paragraph 2, of the present Statutes; in case this one is unavailable or refuses, the next one will be locum tenens, and so on.

(2) In case of vacancy of the position of eparchial Metropolitan, Archbishop and Bishop, the Patriarch of Romania for Metropolitans and the Metropolitans for the suffragan eparchies, will appoint proxies till the enthronement of the new titular.

(3) During the vacancy, the Patriarch, eparchial Metropolitan, Archbishop and Bishop locum tenens resolves only the issues of the vacant eparchy, of the Patriarchal Administration respectively, in the case of the Patriarch locum tenens, with no right to make any changes in the church laws and structures or to change the destination of the church goods.

(4) In case of vacancies at parishes and monasteries, the Diocesan Bishops will take measures to ensure the substitution till the appointment of the new titular persons.

Chapter III

Section I

Religious Assistance in the Romanian Orthodox Church

Article 135 – (1) The Romanian Orthodox Church is responsible, through her eparchies, to ensure the religious assistance and the church personnel needed for unfolding it in parishes, in the army, prisons, medical units, social centres and educational units, according to law, to the protocols or agreements concluded with the public authorities or with other legal persons.

(2) The general norms of religious assistance in these units, with unitary character in the entire Romanian Orthodox Church, are approved by the Holy Synod, with the observance of the legal stipulations.

(3) The clerical personnel in these fields are recruited, with the approval of the Diocesan Bishop, from among the doctors, graduates of the master courses and of theology, with the observance of church statutory stipulations and regulations, in accordance with the law,

(4) The pastoral-missionary and canonical disciplinary jurisdiction guidance of the clerical personnel in these units is practiced exclusively by the eparchies where the respective priests are employed.

Article 136 – (1) The clerical personnel who provide the religious assistance in the units mentioned in **Article 135, paragraph 1**, are appointed, transferred and revoked with the agreement of the eparchy and of the employing unit, with the observation of the statutory stipulations and church regulations, in accordance with the law.

(2) The priests, deacons and religious singers from parishes must ensure religious assistance to all categories of faithful in the army, prisons, hospitals, social centres and educational units within their parishes, any time they are asked to.

Section II

Social assistance in the Romanian Orthodox Church

Article 137 – (1) The system of social assistance of the Romanian Orthodox Church is integrated and functions within its administrative

organisational structures or in the social philanthropic organisations she patronises.

(2) The Romanian Orthodox Church provides social services, accredited in accordance with the legislation in force, through her local and central components (Parish, Monastery, Deanery, Vicarage, Eparchy, Metropolitan See and Patriarchy), as well as through the NGO-s functioning with the approval of the competent church authorities.

(3) The staff who unfold their activity in the social assistance centres of the Church are recruited, first of all, from among the graduates of the Faculties of Theology, branch of social theology.

(4) The beneficiaries of the social services provided within the Romanian Orthodox Church are persons, groups and communities in distress, with no discrimination against.

(5) The providers of social services within the Romanian Orthodox Church, mentioned at **paragraph 2**, unfold their social activity in their own name or through partnerships with the specialised institutions of the state, of the local administration or of the NGO-s.

Article 138 – (1) The strategy and plans of activity in the field of church social assistance are approved by the Holy Synod, and at the eparchies level, by the Eparchial Councils.

(2) The Social-Philanthropic Department, which functions both at the level of the Patriarchal Administration and at that of the eparchies, works out the strategy and the plan of activity in the field of church social assistance.

Article 139 – (1) The places of worship in the institutions mentioned in **Article 135, paragraph 1**, in the present Statutes function, as a rule, as cult sub-units (chapels), with or without legal status, allocated to the Deaneries in whose territory they function.

(2) The eparchies will regulate the administrative juridical statutes of these cult units through the agreements concluded with the institutes where they function and which they administrate, in accordance with the stipulations of **Article 183, paragraph 2**, of the present Statutes.

(3) The funds needed for the social activity are provided from the resources of the social services providers, from the state and local budgets, from donations and sponsorships acquired in accordance with the law, from public subscriptions, from non-reimbursable funds, as well as from incomes coming from any other sources not against the legislation in force or stipulations of the present Statutes.

Section III

On clergy conferences

Article 140 – (1) The priests and deacons, as well as those from monasteries, are obliged to take part in the semestral – spring and autumn - Pastoral Missionary Conferences, as well as in the monthly administrative Conferences, as a permanent form of professional training, after graduating a theological school.

(2) The semestral Pastoral-Missionary Conferences and the monthly Administrative Conferences have theoretical and practical character for achieving the following purposes:

- a. Defence of the teaching of faith and of the Orthodox morals
- b. Permanent improvement in the liturgical and church-administrative field
- c. Improving and refreshing the basic theological knowledge
- d. Improvement as preachers and father confessors
- e. Strengthening of the cooperation and solidarity among parishes
- f. Promoting new methods in the pastoral missionary activity
- g. Good command of the present issues of the Christian life and searching of adequate solutions

(3) The theme of the former semestral Pastoral Missionary Conferences, with unitary character for the entire Romanian Orthodox Church, is established every year by the Holy Synod, while for the latter one, the theme is established by every eparchy according to the local pastoral missionary needs.

(4) The essays presented within the semestral Pastoral Missionary Conferences, positively appreciated by the Eparchial Centre, can be published in the eparchial magazines.

Article 141 - (1) The dates and way of organisation of the semestral Pastoral-Missionary Conferences are established by every Eparchial Centre.

(2) The administrative conferences are organised every month, in every deanery, by every eparchy with the themes focused on subjects of local pastoral missionary, spiritual liturgical and administrative interest, as well as on economical financial aspects, a.s.o.

Article 142 – In order to improve the professional performance and have better knowledge of the present issues of the general and local church activity, the Eparchial Centres organise every year, in every deanery, conferences of the religious singers and church readers.

Article 143 – The semestral Pastoral Missionary Conferences, monthly Administrative Conferences and Conferences of the religious singers and church readers will be chaired by the Diocesan Bishop or by his delegate.

Section IV Church Distinctions

Article 144 – The married priests can be awarded the following church honourable ranks for special activity in the church life, from a liturgical, didactic, pastoral missionary, cultural publishing, municipal activity or administrative economical point of view:

- a. Sachelar
- b. Iconom
- c. Iconom stavrofor

Article 145 – (1) The Diocesan Bishop awards the rank of sachelar to the priests with rich church activity. The sachelar wears a blue girdle as distinctive insignia.

(2) The Diocesan Bishop awards the rank of iconom during a Standing meeting of the Eparchial Council, to the sachelar priests, with remarkable activity. The iconom wears a red girdle as distinctive insignia, and an epigonation at the religious services.

(3) The Diocesan Bishop awards the rank of stavrofor during a meeting of the Standing Eparchial Council, to the iconom priests with exceptional church activity. The iconom stavrofor wears a pectoral cross, red girdle and epigonation at the religious services.

(4) The Diocesan Bishop can award the married deacons the archdeacon rank for long special activity, with the right to wear a pectoral cross.

(5) In case of serious infractions, the Diocesan Bishop can withdraw these distinctions either directly or following a consistorial decree.

Article 146 – (1) During their practice in this position, the archpriests wear a pectoral cross, red girdle and kulyon, and an epigonation at the religious services, as distinctive insignia.

(2) The eparchial administrative vicar, eparchial counsellors and eparchial inspectors in leading positions within the eparchy, as well as the inspectors in leading positions within the Romanian Patriarchy, wear pectoral cross, cyclamen girdle and kulyon, during their service in these positions.

(3) The patriarchal administrative vicar, as well as the patriarchal counsellors and the church general inspector from the Romanian Patriarchy,

wears pectoral cross, violet girdle and kulyon during the service in such positions.

(4) The members of the teaching staff in the theological pre-university and university education can be rewarded with ranks awarded by the Diocesan Bishop for their activity.

Article 147 – (1) The Patriarch awards the “**Patriarchal Cross**” for clergy and lay, with Grammata, for long worthy activity in the pastoral-missionary, church-administrative, didactic-educational and social-philanthropic field, following the proposal of the Diocesan Bishops.

(2) Archiepiscopal and Episcopal distinctions can be awarded for the same purpose, at the level of the eparchies, by decree of the Standing Eparchial Council, according to the rank of the eparchy that institutes them, and metropolitan distinctions at the Metropolitan Sees.

Chapter IV

Discipline of the clergy

Article 148 – (1) The disciplinary and church judgement instances for the married clergy, priests and deacons employed and retired, as well as for religious singers, as regards the doctrinal, moral, canonical and disciplinary issues are the following:

A. Judgement on the merits:

- a. Archpriest Disciplinary Consistory
- b. Eparchial Consistory

B. Appeal judgement:

The Metropolitan Consistory, for the appeal requests approved, in principle, by the Metropolitan synod and Holy Synod.

(2) The bodies that approve the appeal applications are the following:

a. The Metropolitan Synod can admit or reject, in principle, the appeals for the cases of degradation from rank, sentenced by an Eparchial Consistory;

b. The Holy Synod, which admits or rejects, in principle, the appeals in the cases of defrocking, sentenced by an Eparchial Consistory.

Article 149 – (1) There is a Deanery Disciplinary Consistory within every deanery.

(2) The Deanery Disciplinary Consistory has a clergy president and three members, out of whom two are lay, appointed for four years, by a Diocesan Bishop, out of the priests of the deanery, doctors, graduates of the master courses or of the Theological Faculty, or who have at least degree II

and canonical knowledge, as well as one member from among the religious singers.

(3) When only the cases of the priests are judged, the singer representative does not participate.

Article 150 – (1) The Deanery Disciplinary Consistory functions as disciplinary and judgement instance for the religious singers and as reconciliation body for the disagreements occurred among the church personnel, as well as between the parishioners and priest.

(2) If the parts have not declared reconciled through the sentence given by the Deanery Disciplinary Consistory, the case is transferred, in the long run, to the Eparchial Consistory.

(3) The decrees of the Deanery Disciplinary Consistory concerning the religious singers are final after they are approved by the Diocesan Bishop and cannot be attacked in an appeal at the Eparchial Consistory, but for those which dismiss them.

Article 151 – (1) The Eparchial Consistory functions in every Diocese and Archdiocese and is made up of three titular members and two proxy members. The members of the Consistory are priests, with at least degree II, doctors, graduates of the master courses or of the Faculty of Theology, with canonical and juridical knowledge.

(2) The members of the Eparchial Consistory are elected by the Eparchial Assembly, for four years, following the proposal of the Diocesan Bishop.

(3) The President of the Eparchial Consistory is appointed by the Diocesan Bishop from among its members.

(4) The Consistory has a registrar appointed by the Diocesan Bishop, following the proposal of the President.

(5) The Eparchial Monastic Consistory functions in every eparchy, made up of 3-5 members appointed by the Diocesan Bishop, for judging the causes of the monastic personnel received from the Diocesan Bishop or from the Judgement Commissions of the monasteries, with the agreement of the Diocesan Bishop.

Article 152 – The decrees of the Eparchial Consistory approved by the Diocesan Bishop become final and executory.

Article 153 – (1) Besides every Metropolitan See there is the Metropolitan Consistory as judgement instance of the appeals approved, in principle, by the Metropolitan Synod or by the Holy Synod.

(2) The Metropolitan Consistory is made up of 3-6 titular members and 2 proxies, priests appointed by the Metropolitan from among the priests appointed by the Eparchial Assemblies of the suffragan eparchies, different

from those appointed in the Eparchial Consistories, with the implementation of the stipulations provided at **Article 151, paragraph 1** of the present Statutes.

(3) The President of the Metropolitan Synod is appointed by the metropolitan from among its members, the registrar having been appointed by the Metropolitan also from among the clergy in the administration of his eparchy.

(4) The Metropolitan Consistory takes final executory decrees, through their approval by the local Metropolitan.

Article 154 – (1) The Metropolitan Synod, as body, which approves the appeal applications, debates under the chairmanship of the local Metropolitan.

(2) The Metropolitan Synod receives and examines the appeals of the priests defrocked by an Eparchial Consistory within the Metropolitan See. The appeals admitted, in principle, by the Metropolitan Synod, are sent to the Metropolitan Consistory to be judged and the sentence approved by the Metropolitan.

Article 155 – The Holy Synod, as body that approves the appeal applications, receives and examines the appeals of the clergy defrocked by an Eparchial Consistory. The appeals approved, in principle, by the Holy Synod, are sent to the Metropolitan Consistory to be judged and the sentence is approved by the Patriarch.

Article 156 – (1) The decrees of the eparchial disciplinary and judgement instances become executory only after they are invested with executor formula by the Diocesan Bishop.

(2) The decrees of the instances of appeal become executory after they are approved by the Metropolitan or Patriarch, according to case.

(3) The Holy Synod approves or rejects, with the approval of the local Diocesan Bishop, the forgiveness requests of those punished with defrocking, which remained final after appeal.

(4) The Metropolitan Synod approves or rejects, with the approval of the Diocesan Bishop, the forgiveness applications of the priests punished with deposing from priesthood rank, which remained final after appeal.

(5) The decrees of the disciplinary and judgement instances are applied by the church authorities invested for the purpose.

(6) Following the autonomy of the cults ensured by law and the competence specific, the instances of church judgement resolve the problems of inner discipline, while the sentences of the church instances at all levels cannot be attacked in the civil instances.

Article 157 – The Holy Synod is the only instance of canonical judgement of its members for any sort of infraction of the teaching and discipline of the Church.

Article 158 – In case of pastoral emergence, the Diocesan Bishop can decide, according to the Holy Canons, disciplinary punishments for the religious staff in the eparchy.

Article 159 – The church personnel sent to the church disciplinary and judgement instances as accused, can be assisted, in front of all church instances, by a church accredited defender, chosen by the accused.

Article 160 – The well-motivated applications for revising the defrocking sentences, accompanied by the necessary documents, will be addressed to the Patriarch, as President of the Holy Synod, who will send them to the competent Metropolitan Consistory to be judged again.

Part III

Church Institutions with Missionary Purpose

Article 161 – The following branches function in the Romanian Orthodox Church, as missionary institutions:

- A. The Bible and Missionary Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church with distinct patrimony, with the following departments: Editorial Office, Printing Press and Workshops, at the central level of the Patriarchy;
- B. Media institutions: radio and television stations, Press Offices, News Agencies, daily and periodical publications, etc-. at the level of the Romanian Patriarchy and of the eparchies;
- C. Mutual Aid House of the clergy and church employees, of every eparchy

A. Bible and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church

Article 162 – (1) The Bible and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church is headed by the Patriarch, while its activity is coordinated by one of the Assistant Bishops to the Patriarch, having been administrated by the Standing Church National Council.

(2) The products of the Bible and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church are distributed to the eparchies, parishes, monasteries and faithful through the church eparchial shops.

(3) The Publishing house of the Bible and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church has exclusivity for editing, printing and spreading the Holy Scripture, the religious books and theology textbooks, printed only with the approval of the Holy Synod.

Article 163 – The eparchies can organise editorial offices and printing houses, as well as workshops for producing icons, cloths, vestments, carpets, candles etc., in order to meet the needs of the religious units in the eparchy.

Article 164 – The Holy Synod approves every year the church calendar based on the text drafted by the Holy Synod Office, printed by the Printing Press of the Bible and Mission Institute and by the eparchial printing houses, with the observance of the copyright, while the distribution is done in the terms established every year by the Holy Synod only within every eparchy.

Article 165 – The Bible and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church, as well as the eparchies with their own printing presses and workshops, are obliged to take the necessary measures for observing the legal stipulations in force concerning the exclusive right of the Church to produce and turn to good account the objects and goods needed for the religious activity.

Article 166 – In order to sustain the pastoral-missionary, cultural-educational and social-philanthropic activity, the Romanian Orthodox Church can unfold economical activity through her religious units.

B. Media Institutions

Article 167 – Media Institutions can function at the level of the Romanian Patriarchy, under the direct supervision of the Diocesan Bishop (radio and television stations, press offices, news agencies, daily and periodical publications etc), whose activity is approved by the competent church bodies, in accordance with the law.

C. Mutual Aid House of the Clergy and church employees

Article 168 – The mutual aid houses of the clergy and church employees in eparchies are designed to grant loans and aids to their members, at their request, while their activity will take place according to their own regulations.

Part IV Various stipulations

A. Stipulations concerning the church patrimony

Article 169 – The total goods belonging to the parishes, sketes, monasteries deaneries, vicarages, dioceses, archdioceses, metropolitan sees and to the patriarchy, to the associations and foundations set up by the Church, the funds assigned to church purposes, as well as the fortunes of the foundational churches, make up the church patrimony which belongs to the Romanian Orthodox Church, its regime having been established by the present Statutes. The goods used are also part of the church patrimony, having been managed in accordance with the documents of their acquirement and with the present Statutes.

Article 170 – (1) From the point of view of its usage, the church patrimony comprises sacred and common goods.

(2) The sacred goods, namely those which after consecration are designed directly and exclusively to the rite, are inalienable, exempted from seizure and imprescriptible. The property over the sacred goods belongs exclusively to the church, and the cession of their usage can be granted to up to three years, with possible renewal.

(3) Sacred goods are those which after consecration or blessing are assigned to the divine rite, such as: the places of worship (cathedrals, churches, chapels, etc.), church objects and vestments, the books of rite, cemeteries, etc.

(4) The following goods are assimilated to the sacred goods and enjoy the same juridical regime: the parochial house, the parochial and monastic hearth, the precincts of the eparchial headquarters, of the patriarchal headquarters, the diocesan bishop's residence, the monastery and skete cells, precious assets, those with artistic historic value, or due to the material they are made of, such as: paintings, sculptures, artistic weavings, miniatures, rare books, documents, works of precious materials etc.

(5) The common goods are those designed to maintain the church, her servants, the charitable activity and social work, as well as the other purposes of the Church.

(6) The common goods designed to maintain the church and the church servants, the cultural works, social and philanthropic ones, as well as to fulfil the other purposes of the Church are: the church school buildings, church administration buildings, religious museums, cultural settlements and institutions, philanthropic and economical ones, agricultural terrains, forests, meadows, vineyards, orchards, gardens, patrimonial rights, claims, social parts, shares, funds, bearer securities, cash wealth etc.

(7) Agricultural terrains (planted acreage, meadow, commons, orchard, etc.) and the forests of the cult units of the Romanian Orthodox Church will be used according to the dispositions established by the competent church bodies.

(8) The general and compulsory norms concerning the insurance of the goods of the church units within the Romanian Patriarchy are approved by the Holy Synod.

(9) The Metropolitan Synod establishes the affiliation of a good to the category of the sacred goods, in case of doubt.

(10) The transfer with any title of the usage or property over the real estate belonging to the parishes, monasteries, deaneries and to other church institutions with or without legal personality within the eparchy (sale, purchase, rent, exchange etc.) as well as the entailment and servitudes of these goods stipulated in paragraphs 6 and 7 is approved by the Eparchial Council, while the alienation of the real estate (buildings and terrains) of the Eparchial Centre is established by the Metropolitan Synod.

(11) In order to fulfil certain pastoral-missionary objectives and social-philanthropic ones at the eparchial level, through the approval of the Eparchial Assemblies, some of the properties of the parishes and monasteries can be managed in a unitary solitary way by the eparchial body assigned for the purpose.

Article 171 (1) – The archive funds and the libraries of the monasteries, parishes, deaneries, Dioceses, Archdioceses, Metropolitan Sees and Patriarchy are their exclusive property, cannot be alienated, entailed or sued and have the juridical regime of the private archives and libraries.

(2) The organization and functioning of the archive funds and libraries of the church administrative units is done in accordance with the statutory stipulations and church regulations as well as with the legal norms in force.

Article 172 – In case of dissolution of a cult unity or of a foundational church, the property of its entire patrimony is conveyed to a higher hierarchic unit, which will dispose of it as the owner of the entire respective church patrimony. The church patrimony with no owner is ascribed to the eparchy in whose territorial jurisdiction it is.

Article 173 – The patrimony of the church foundations and associations with legal personality constituted by the Church is their property and are managed by the Church within the limits and provisions of the constitutive documents and according to the stipulations of the present Statutes.

Article 174 – The assets acquired in any way – contributions, donations, successions, testamentary stipulations – as well as any other goods making the patrimony of the component units of the Romanian Orthodox Church, both in the country and abroad, cannot be claimed later on.

Article 175 – (1) The Romanian Orthodox Church and her component parts can possess assets abroad of which situation is regulated in accordance with her own statutory provisions and regulations as well as with the legislation of the states in whose territory the respective properties are.

(2) The situation of the church assets or similar ones from abroad, making the property of the Romanian state entrusted to the administration of the Romanian Orthodox eparchies abroad and to their units, will be regulated, at their request, through bilateral agreements between the Romanian Patriarchy, the interested unit and the Romanian State.

Article 176 – (1) The acquirement, alienation, entailment and administration of the church patrimony, the financial control and verification are done in accordance with the statutory stipulations and regulations in force. The final form of these documents is the one approved by the Eparchial Council, by the Metropolitan Synod respectively.

(2) In case the alienation of some church goods is approved, the Orthodox church units have the pre-emption right.

(3) The juridical documents related to the goods of the church patrimony, concluded without obeying the stipulations of the present Statutes are absolutely null.

1. Dispositions concerning the church buildings and cemeteries

I. Church buildings

Article 177 – The churches are:

- a. parochial and branches
- b. cemetery churches
- c. foundational
- d. isolated
- e. chapel
- f. cathedrals
- g. monastery churches
- h. churches abroad
- i. in the army, prisons, medical units, social centres, educational units etc.

Article 178 – (1) The parochial churches are the property of the parish, are integrated in the eparchial patrimony and stay under the jurisdiction and control of the authority. If there are several churches in a parish, the Diocesan Bishop nominates the most important of them as parochial church.

(2) In the eparchial residential cities as well as in the county residential cities, the Diocesan Bishop will designate the cathedral. Wherever there is an Assistant Bishop or Assistant Hierarch, the Diocesan Bishop will ascribe him a church to serve.

(3) The following constructions are considered annexes of the place of worship with the same juridical regime: belfry, parochial office, blessed water font, funeral chapel, parochial house with its annexes, eparchial, monastic or parochial museum, precincts for burning candles, church place for selling candles, religious objects and books, the road side shrine, the storehouse for keeping various objects of rite, the social-philanthropic centre, monastic pilgrims' house, cell, refectory, any precinct for unfolding the activity with church-administrative character, the residence of the Diocesan Bishop, as well as other such places. A centre with social philanthropic character is the children hostel, the old people's home, social canteen or any other precincts assigned to similar activity.

Article 179 – The cemetery churches are managed by the parishes, monasteries, and deaneries or are directly dependent on the Eparchial Centre.

Article 180 – (1) The foundational churches, based on foundational papers are run by the Diocesan Bishop or by his delegate in accordance with the foundational documents. They are under the jurisdiction and control of the authority of the Archdiocese and Diocese from a religious, administrative-patrimonial and financial point of view, just like the parish churches, with the same rights and duties to the eparchy.

(2) The church authorities will always have the foundational documents of these churches in accordance with the stipulations of the present Statutes. If not, the church, with all her real estate and movable goods, passes under the administration of the eparchy.

(3) If a social-philanthropic association or foundation or church cultural one is dissolved, all its patrimony passes under the property of the eparchy in whose territory it is.

Article 181 – A church, as soon as it is consecrated, passes under the property of the eparchy, with all its terrain and buildings, submitted to the stipulations of the present Statutes, taking into account the foundational

documents. The possible testamentary stipulations contrary to the Statutes will be considered null.

Article 182 – (1) The isolated churches located on a place with no human settlement on it belong to the eparchy on whose territory they are and are administrated by the respective eparchy.

(2) The churches and historical monuments with religious character also belong to the eparchy on whose territory they are and are administrated by the respective eparchy.

Article 183 – (1) The chapels of the eparchial residences are under the direct authority of the Diocesan Bishop, while the monastery chapels are under the authority of the monastery to which they belong.

(2) The chapels and churches within the military units, from prisons, medical units, social centres, educational units as well as from some other institutions are directly dependent on the Diocesan Bishop, are allocated to the deaneries in whose territory they function and cannot be used otherwise but as places of worship of the Romanian Orthodox Church.

Article 184 – The churches of any kind can be established on a terrain property of the church or granted for the purpose, on basis of the applications or documents submitted to the Eparchial Centre, only with the approval of the Diocesan Bishop, no matter if they are new, re-built or changed from another building.

Article 185 – (1) The Cult units can ask and receive funds from the authorities of the public central and local administration in view of building, repairing, conserving and maintaining the places of worship, in accordance with the law.

(2) As for the places of worship and church buildings belonging to the national cultural patrimony, the state authorities can undertake restoration and maintenance works, after previously consulting the eparchies in whose territories they function.

II. Parochial and monastic cemeteries

Article 186 – (1) Every parish and monastery is entitled to possess or set up at least one cemetery, for burying the deceased faithful, which is the property of the parish or of the monastery.

(2) The parochial and monastic cemetery, as sacred goods designed exclusively and directly to the rite, cannot be sued, are imprescriptible and cannot be alienated, changed, entailed or sequestered.

Article 187 – (1) The cemetery is managed by the Parochial Council, the monastic or deanery cemetery, under the periodic control of the Eparchial Centre.

(2) At the parish, the cemetery is supervised by the parish priest, by the trustee and by the Parochial Council, while at the monastery, by the abbot (abbess), who must take care of its enclosure and maintaining.

(3) The grave granted remains in the property of the parish or monastery, while the right of granting cannot be sold by the titular, as it can be transmitted only by succession to the spouse or relatives up to the 4th degree.

(4) The places of burial can be also granted for temporary or free usage by the decree of the parochial and monastic bodies.

(5) The prices and fees for granting and maintaining the places of burial in the parochial and monastic cemeteries, as well as for the services specific for the cemetery will be established by the Parochial Council or by the Economical Council of the monastery and they will not exceed the prices paid at the public local administration of the same kind.

(6) It is forbidden to condition the celebration of the funeral service to payment of any fee established by the priest or by the Parochial Council.

Article 188 – The new parochial and monastic cemeteries are set up with the approval of the Eparchial Council, in accordance with the legal stipulations in force.

C. Stipulations concerning the religious expenses and the state assistance

Article 189 – The expenses for maintaining and functioning the cult units, as well as for new repairs and constructions, will be covered from the volunteer contributions of the faithful, from the incomes of the cult units through their own activity as well as from contributions from the state budget, from the budget of the local public administration and of some other institutions, according to law.

Article 190 – The wages of the leading church staff, as well as of the cleric and non-cleric staff are provided according to the general norms in force in the Romanian Orthodox Church, though contributions from the budget of the cult units, from that of the local public administrations and of some other institutions, in accordance with the law.

Article 191 – (1) The cult units of the Romanian Orthodox Church in the country and abroad may ask for financial assistance from the Romanian Patriarchy, as well as for subventions from the local budgets for supporting

some pastoral, spiritual-cultural, social and urbanistic partnerships in accordance with the law.

(2) The activity of the cult units of the Romanian Orthodox Church, as provider of social services, is recognised and supported by the state, for which purpose partnerships and agreements can be concluded according to the law.

D. Stipulations concerning the right of succession of the hierarchs and monks

Article 192 – The eparchies have successional vocation over the goods of their hierarchs.

Article 193 – All the goods the monks and nuns brought with them or donated when entering monasticism, as well as those acquired in any way during their living in the monastery, remain in the possession of the monastery and cannot be claimed later on.

Article 194 – The Holy Synod will regulate the rights of the pensioned or retired hierarchs, in accordance with the statutory stipulations and church regulations.

E. Stipulations concerning the eparchial arms and seals

Article 195 – The Romanian Patriarchy has its own flag described as follows: rectangular shaped, the width equal to 2/3 of its length, white background, with the arms of the Patriarchy in the middle.

Article 196 – (1) The arms of the Patriarchy, as well as the arms of the Metropolitan Sees, of the Archdioceses and Dioceses in the country and abroad are approved by the Holy Synod.

(2) The arms of the Metropolitan See are the identical with the arms of the residential Archdiocese.

Article 197 – (1) Every eparchy has its own seal on which the arms are represented, surrounded by its name listed at **Article 6** in the present Statutes.

(2) The Seal of the Metropolitan See is identical with the seal of the Archdiocese where it has the residence.

(3) The Holy Synod has a seal kept by the Holy Synod Office which is applied on the documents signed by the Patriarch as President of the central deliberative, executive and administrative documents, on the Synodal Tomoses, on Grammatas as well as on the Synodal and Patriarchal Documents.

(4) The central deliberative organisms and the Bible and Mission Institute of the Romanian Orthodox Church with their departments, the Eparchial Administration and the Eparchial Office with their administrative departments, deaneries, parishes and monasteries have their own seals, with the approval of the high church authorities.

G. Stipulations concerning the Official Bulletin and the church central magazines

Article 198 (1) – The Romanian Patriarchy publishes the following church central magazines and periodicals: “The Romanian Orthodox Church”, Official Bulletin of the Romanian Patriarchy, “Ortodoxia” for the inter-Orthodox, inter-confessional and inter-religious theological issues; “Studii teologice” magazine of the Faculties of Orthodox Theology; “Vestitorul Ortodoxiei” magazine; “Chemarea crediței” magazine and “Ziarul lumina” daily newspaper.

(2) Subscription to the church central magazines mentioned at the previous paragraph is compulsory for all the cult units of the Romanian Patriarchy.

G. Stipulations concerning the incompatibilities in the leading bodies

Article 199 – In the entire Romanian Orthodox Church nobody can be at the same time:

- a. Member of the Eparchial Council and of the Eparchial Consistory
- b. Eparchial administrative vicar, eparchial counsellor, eparchial inspector, archpriest and member of the church consistories;
- c. Eparchial administrative vicar, eparchial counsellor, eparchial inspector, eparchial secretary, archpriest and member of the church consistories;
- d. The persons related to one another or to the respective Diocesan Bishop, till the fourth degree of relationship and till the second of in-laws;
- e. Employee in the church administration and control and member of the church disciplinary bodies.

Article 200 – No priest, deacon or married clergyman, member of a church deliberative, executive, administrative, control and church discipline body, can take part in resolving the following causes:

- a. his own case or those who can cause them damage or personal gain;
- b. their relatives' causes, till the fourth degree of relationship, or till the second of in-laws;
- c. the causes of their parents or adopted children, as well as the causes of those under their trusteeship or guardianship;
- d. the causes where they were witnesses, procurators, experts or of those whom they investigated;
- e. the causes they decided upon in previous cases.

Final stipulations

Article 201 – (1) The present Statutes, approved by the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church, on the basis of the general principles and stipulations included in the Holy Canons of the Orthodox Church, in order to establish the ways in which the Romanian Patriarchy regulates, leads and manages its religious, pastoral-missionary, cultural-educational, social-philanthropic, foundational and patrimonial activity, is and remains compulsory for the entire Romanian Orthodox Church in the country and abroad.

(2) The Statutes for the organisation and functioning of the Romanian Orthodox Church is applied through specific regulations of activity with the same canonical and juridical authority as that of the present Statutes. The Regulations specific to various fields of activity of the Church are approved by the Holy Synod.

Article 202 – The Holy Synod approves and changes the present Statutes with two thirds of the number of the members present.

Article 203 – The Holy Synod approved the present Statutes for the organisation and functioning of the Romanian Orthodox Church on 28 November 2007 and it comes in force after it is published in the Official Bulletin of the Governmental Decree for its recognition.

Article 204 – On the date the present Statutes for the organisation and functioning of the Romanian Orthodox Church comes in force, the old Statutes voted by the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church of 19-20 October 1948, recognised through Decree no. 233 of 23 February 1949 by the Presidium of the Great National Assembly with all its further completions and contrary stipulations are abrogated.

Article 205 – Until drafting and approving the new regulations, the stipulations of the present regulations remain in force, whenever they do not contravene to the present Statutes.