



Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions

Representing Roman Catholic Diocesan Offices of Worship and Liturgical Commissions throughout the United States and supporting the liturgical apostolate.

Article III National Process

Article III.1 Purpose

Since the FDLC is a federation of local commissions/offices of worship, its agenda is determined by the grassroots needs and priorities of its membership. Needs and priorities, however, may differ from region to region as well as from diocese to diocese. Some issues may be important everywhere, whereas others may be important in only one or a few regions or dioceses. The National Process is the means to surface, share, and discern such issues on various levels of concern. The specific purpose of the National Process is:

- To help each diocese and region determine and clarify its own priorities and articulate those ideas and projects to which it is committed;
- To allow the same to happen on the national level, and to commit the national resources of the FDLC to the priorities which have been discerned.

The process is intended to be collegial and deeply Christian. Priorities and statements to which people are committed are not determined in a "win-lose" fashion, but in a spirit of mutual respect and collaboration with that willingness to compromise which collaboration sometimes entails.

Article III.2 Sources for Input

The National Process encompasses a two prong approach which utilizes four sources of opportunities for input:

III.2.1 Diocese

Issues shared within the diocese itself;

III.2.2 Region

Issues shared between dioceses at the regional level;

III.2.3 Board

Issues arising from the FDLC Board and its standing committees.
Issues shared at these levels may result in the formulation of Position Statements.

III.2.4 Membership Gathered at the National Meeting

Issues arising from the inter-regional table discussions following each plenary session.
Issues that arise at this level are formulated by the National Process Committee from the process described below in articles III.3.1 through III.3.10

Article III.3 The Fruit of the Interregional Discussions

- III. 3.1 After each plenary session the membership seated at assigned interregional tables are invited to discuss and analyze the presentation in the light of two factors.
- How does what the speaker has presented apply to your ministry/region/ diocese? What are the pastoral implications of what has been presented by the speaker?
 - Are there any issues flowing from your discussion that the members of the FDLC could address as a region or as a national organization?
- III. 3.2 The issues raised are recorded by a table facilitator an assigned regional representative or someone appointed by the National Process Committee.

- III. 3.3 The issues recorded are the collated with the help of the hosting region under the direction of the National Process Committee. The collated report is given to each member for discussion in their next regional caucus.
- III. 3.4 Each caucused region is requested to work with the issues and/or strategies from the interregional tables with the goal of prioritizing them in light of their feasibility and the region's level of commitment to particular issues and/or strategies that arise.
- III. 3.5 These regional results are then given back to the National Process Committee for further collation. The process of collation at this stage is based on similarity between various issues and/or strategies and frequency of particular types of issues and/or strategies.
- III. 3.6 The results of this work are presented to the membership at the final business session.
- III. 3.7 During the final business session the membership, seated at regional tables, is presented both in oral and written format with the results or fruits of their interregional and regional discussions. These fruits are pared down by the National Process Committee and their delegated associates to a "top three" list of issues and/or
- III. 3.8 After the presentation by a member of the National Process Committee regions are given a reasonable amount of time to discuss the issues and/or strategies concentrating on two points.
- Is there anything coming for this discussion that can be of use and/or done either for or in your diocese and/or region?
 - Of what has been presented are there any issues and/or strategies that you would want to be placed on the agenda of the next Board of Directors meeting?
- III. 3.9 After a period of regional table discussion the Chair for this portion of the Business Meeting calls the membership to order and invites members to address any of the issues and/or strategies with the purpose of trying to discern whether or not there is a consensus from the group on a particular issue(s) and/or strategy(ies).
- III. 3.10 Issues and/or strategies that receive reasonable consensus are forwarded to the Board of Directors for consideration and/or action.

Article III.4 Formulation of Position Statements

III.4.1 Nature

Position statements are a call to a particular action. They are to address only one topic in as simple a form as possible. They may be preceded by a preamble detailing the reasons for the action that is called for, but this preamble is not the subject of the voting at the business sessions. Achieving consensus on its highest priority will require discipline on the part of the members of the region. Regional concerns which do not receive the full consensus of the region may be submitted to the appropriate standing committee of the Board as a possible subject for its position statement.

III.4.2 Directed Toward a Specific Group

Position statements are addressed to one of the following:

- the FDLC Board of Directors for assignment to a standing committee (Eucharist and Liturgical Year; Prayer; Sacraments; Liturgical Arts and Music; Ministries; National Process; Executive).or to an ad hoc committee;
- the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy;
- diocesan liturgical commissions/offices of worship. When position statements are directed to local commissions/offices of worship, responsibility for their implementation rests completely on the local level. A positive vote by a member commission on a position statement so directed represents a pledge of commitment by this commission to implement this statement in its own diocese. No action is required of the FDLC or the BCDW by such statements.

III.4.3 Number

Each region may submit one position statement which should reflect a consensus of the commissions of the region after input from all the regional commissions. Regional position statements should be developed in the Spring and the completed texts forwarded to the National Process Facilitator on or before the date designated. Forms for this purpose should be distributed to the senior representative from each region by the National Process Facilitator early in March. The FDLC Board as a whole and its individual standing committees may also submit one position statement each.

III.4.4 Alternatives

Regions may always request an FDLC standing committee to consider a particular issue as a topic for a position statement to be presented by that committee. This may be done, for example, when a concern does not receive the full consensus of a region or when a region has already formulated the one position statement to which it is entitled. Such concerns may also be brought to the hearing session which deals with resolutions of immediate concern.

III.4.5 Procedures

During the winter and early spring each region is invited to formulate a position statement. The position statements (regional, from standing committees, and from the Board as a whole) are gathered together and collated by the National Process Facilitator. The Facilitator arranges these statements as well as any other statements submitted to the FDLC Board or its committees according to broad categories.

The National Process Facilitator in collaboration with the FDLC Executive Director is responsible for forwarding the texts of position statements to the primary and secondary liaison persons of all active FDLC member commissions so that their members may discuss the statements and make recommendations for voting to their representatives at the meeting.

To aid the regions in discussing the statements, the sponsoring region is requested to submit a thorough explanation of its position statement to the National Process Facilitator, to be distributed to all the regions along with the position statements in time for their adequate study and preparation. This explanation should include a statement of the context for the position statement (if possible, more detailed than the preamble), supporting theological, ecclesial and/or liturgical arguments, and a bibliography or list of references for further study.

The statements are also included in the *FDLC Newsletter* and in the Program Book for national meeting. The position statements as they appear in the Program Book form the official texts for the Business Sessions of the national meeting. During the meeting there will be opportunities for regional caucusing during which each region may review the position statements for purposes of clarification.

III.4.6 Contact with the BCDW

The BCDW and FDLC, co-sponsor the National Meeting of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions. If, during their formulation, the Position Statements warrant consultation, individual regions may consult with the BCDW secretariat by fax, phone or letter for suggestions or clarifications, if they so choose.

Bishops' Committee on Divine Worship Secretariat
3211 Fourth Street, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20017-1194
202 541 3060 (Phone)
202 541 3088 (Fax)

Copies of the formulated Position Statements are also sent to the BCDW secretariat by the National Process Facilitator.

Article III.5 Formulation Executive Committee Resolutions

III.5.1 Nature

If a person or group feels that some issue must be brought to the floor of the National Meeting and cannot wait until the following year, they may present their concern to the Executive Committee at the Executive Committee Hearing Session.

III.5.2 Process for Presenting Executive Committee Resolutions

Executive Committee Resolutions must be presented during the Executive Committee Hearing Session, which will meet prior to the first Business Session and be facilitated by the Chair of the FDLC Board of Directors. If the Executive Committee determines that the matter should be brought to the floor for a vote, it shall compose a resolution (ECR—Executive Committee Resolution) to present to the delegates for voting. Votes shall be tallied in the same manner as for position statements.

If more than three ECR's are presented, the Executive Committee will determine a method of prioritizing the resolutions and limiting the number of ECR's to three. These statements, including their preambles, will be voted upon in the usual manner after the delegates vote on all the position statements.

Article III.6 Business Sessions

A major portion of the meeting is devoted to the business sessions of the FDLC. These sessions are part of the National Process.

III.6.1 Chairperson of the Business Sessions

The Chairperson of the Business Sessions is appointed by the National Process Facilitator.

III.6.2 Credentials for Voting

The following norms govern eligibility to vote:

- a. Each active (dues paying for the current year) FDLC member diocese is entitled to two voting representatives;
- b. these representatives must be members of and duly authorized by the diocese on behalf of which they vote.

III.6.3 Credentials Committee

In case of any disputes concerning the voting status of a particular delegate or diocese, the National Process Facilitator, the chair of the business sessions, and the FDLC Executive Director will act as a credentials committee to resolve the issue.

III.6.4 Discussion

During the business sessions there will be an adequate period of time for discussing each position statement and Executive Committee Resolution. During this period all participants in the meeting, unless otherwise stated in these Guidelines (see Section VI), may share their thoughts and comments on any aspect of the item under discussion. Business Sessions are concluded by the evening of the last full day of the meeting.

III.6.5 Amendments

Position statements and resolutions of immediate concern may be amended according to established parliamentary procedure. All amendments will be carefully recorded so that the final wording of these statements and resolutions is accurate.

III.6.6 Voting Procedure**III.6.6.1 Number of Voting Delegates**

At each business session the number of voting delegates from each region will be recorded on a form provided for this purpose.

III.6.6.2 Ballots

The ballots will identify the region and contain yes, no, and abstain.

III.6.6.3 Invalid Ballots

Each delegate will indicate his or her name and diocese on the ballot. Failure to do so will invalidate the ballot.

III.6.6.4 Tallying

After the voting sessions, the results of the voting will be counted, and the total number of points received by any position statement or resolution of immediate concern will be divided by the total number of persons voting. To receive the endorsement of a meeting a position statement or Executive Committee resolution must receive 2/3 yes votes of the total yes/no votes cast. If more than 20% of the votes cast are abstentions, the position statement fails.

III.6.6.5 Challenges

Any challenge to the balloting procedure must be received by the National Process Facilitator no later than December 1 of the same year. The challenge will then be referred to the FDLC Parliamentarian for resolution. If no challenge has been received by this date, the ballots will be destroyed.

Article III.7 Implementation**III.7.1 Responsibilities of the FDLC Board****III.7.1.1 Implementation**

To oversee the implementation of position statements that have received the endorsement of the meeting;

To review actions taken to fulfill a statement

To declare by a formal vote that a position statement is complete. (In the absence of this vote, a position statement remains unfinished business of the Board of Directors.)

III.7.1.2 Communication

To communicate to the membership the completion of a position statement, giving a full accounting in the *FDLC Newsletter* of all actions taken to fulfill the statement.

To communicate, if necessary, resolutions of immediate concern to those affected by them.

III.7.2 Responsibilities of the FDLC Chair**III.7.2.1 Report**

To report on the disposition of position statements from the preceding meeting as part of his or her annual report at each national meeting;

III.7.3 Responsibilities of the FDLC Executive Director**III.7.3.1 Publicize**

To publicize through a press release the position statements (with preambles) and Executive Committee resolutions (with preambles) that have been endorsed by the meeting;

III.7.3.2 Newsletter

To print in the FDLC Newsletter the official text of each position statements (with preambles) and Executive Committee resolutions (with preambles), together with their degrees of endorsement, which passed at the meeting.

III.7.3.3 BCDW

To provide the BCDW with a copy of the official text of each position statements (with preambles) and Executive Committee resolutions (with preambles), together with their degrees of endorsement, which passed at the meeting.

III.7.4 Fact Sheet on the National Process

1. Each Position Statement is presented on the Floor of the National Meeting for discussion.

2. After discussion of each Statement a vote is taken. Each member diocese is permitted two votes.

3. The voting provides for the following categories:

yes

no

abstain

4. Position Statements are addressed to a particular group, usually some Committee of the FDLC or the FDLC Board; the Bishops Committee on the Liturgy or the local Commissions and Worship Offices.
5. Position Statements receiving 2/3 yes votes of the total yes/no votes cast. are considered to have received the endorsement of the National Meeting and will be turned over for action to the body to whom the Position Statement is addressed.
6. Support for a Position Statement addressed to diocesan Commissions or Worship Offices indicates the personal commitment of the diocese voting to implement that Position Statement.
7. Diocesan or Regional Concerns which did not achieve sufficient support to become Position Statements may be presented at the Hearing Sessions of the Standing Committees of the FDLC during the National Meeting.
8. Executive Committee Resolutions will be discussed on the floor and voted upon the same way that Position Statements are voted upon, but they must receive a commitment of 2/3 yes votes of the total yes/no votes cast to pass.
9. Those Executive Committee Resolutions which pass will be communicated to the BCDW, published with their preambles in the FDLC Newsletter and distributed to other groups affected directly by the Resolution.
10. Items to be Voted at Business Sessions.

A. **Position Statements:**

Maximum=1 per region and 1 per Standing Committee of the Board of Directors

B. **Executive Committee Resolutions:**

Maximum=3

11. Numbering System.

Items are numbered by the National Process Facilitator in the order in which they will be considered, e.g.,— 2003/1, 2003/2, etc. Those passed are numbered in such a way as to indicate type (PS or ECR) year (2001), sequence within the ones passed (A, B, etc.), and vote. In this way there is no need for slashes or separation marks. Thus, for example, PS 2003 A 122-4 and ECR 2003 B 88-15.

III.7.5 Floor Action Procedures: Position Statements and Resolutions of Immediate Concern

III.7.5.1 Before Introduction to the Assembly

- A. Before introduction to the assembly, Position Statements (i.e. "items") remain the exclusive property of the authoring region, while Executive Committee Resolutions remain the exclusive property of the Executive Committee.
- B. Ample time is provided before the first business session and regions are encouraged to engage in consultation with other regions for dialogue and revision of items.
- C. The wording of any item may be changed in any way deemed appropriate by the authoring region before introduction to the floor.

III.7.5.2 Floor Action

III.7.5.2.1 Privileged Motion

- A. Each author presents the item as a privileged motion.
- B. The author who makes the motion of introduction reads the motion (with preamble) and briefly explains its origin and purpose. The author also takes questions of clarification from the floor.
- C. Once an item has been introduced to the assembly it becomes the shared property of the authoring region and the assembly.

- D. Following the motion of introduction, the item is automatically tabled to a time certain (i.e. discussion and voting are postponed until all items have been introduced to the assembly).

III.7.5.2.2 Discussion

- A. As each item is removed from the table for discussion the author of the item is invited to make preliminary comments. The author then remains at the microphone for responses to inquiries.
- B. Amendments
 - a.) Amendments deemed “friendly” by the authoring region are accepted as proposed.
 - b.) Formal amendments, requiring a motion, second, and simple majority, may be made at any time.
- A. Motions to Table
 - a.) Successful motions to table to a time certain place an item at a later point in the agenda to be determined by the chair.
 - b.) Successful motions to table an item place it on the table until such a time as the assembly removes it by a simple majority. Motions remaining on the table at the end of the National Meeting are defeated.

III.7.5.2.3 Rules of Order

All questions of order not covered in this handbook that pertain to the business session time which handle the formal Position Statements shall be determined by *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised*.

III.7.6 The Voting Process

1. All are asked to remember that the first resource of FDLC is ourselves, the members, first of all.
2. Regional representatives pass out ballots.
3. Fill out Item number using year and two digit number from 01, 02, etc.
4. Fill out Region number using two digit number from “01” through “12”.
5. Fill in name and diocese. Please write as clearly as possible while of course preserving the unique and distinctive features of handwriting and signature.
6. Circle the vote which you wish to cast.
 - yes
 - no
 - abstain

III.7.7 Filling out the Regional Tally Envelopes

1. Already has first three lines filled out.
 - Position Statement Number.
 - Region Number.
 - Ballots Received Initially.
2. Then fill in any additional ballots received using two digit numbers from 01, 02, etc. If zero, then use double zero.
3. Then Total Ballots Received line is filled in.
4. Then Votes Cast line is filled in.
5. Then the *Ballots Unused or Spoiled* line is filled in.
6. Then total of two lines below asterisks is taken and this should agree with the line above as marked by arrow.
7. Finally the Regional Representative signs the envelope and seals it and gives it to the page to return to the tellers.

III.7.8 Credentials for Voting at National Meetings

1. It is the responsibility of the regional representatives to see that the distribution of ballots among the delegates of their respective regions conforms to the regulations of the FDLC Bylaws.

2. The regional representative must verify that those casting ballots are duly delegated by their respective liturgical commissions or worship offices to vote.
3. For each business session at the National Meeting the regional representative will record the number of voting delegates from his/her respective region. A form for this purpose will be provided by the National Process Facilitator.
4. When voting, each delegate will indicate his/her name and (arch)diocese on the ballot. Failure to do so will invalidate the ballot.
5. The National Process Facilitator, the Chair of the Business Sessions, and the Executive Director of the FDLC will form a credentials committee to resolve any disputes concerning the voting status of a particular delegate or (arch)diocese at the National Meeting.
6. Any challenge or protest concerning the balloting procedure at a National Meeting must be received by the FDLC National Office by December 1 of that same year. If no challenge has been submitted, the ballots may be destroyed on that day.

Article III.8 The National Process Facilitator

The National Process is carried out under the direction of the National Process Facilitator who is appointed by the Chair of the FDLC Board to both facilitate the national process and to chair the National Process Committee for ongoing refinement of the national process. The National Process Facilitator has the following responsibilities which pertain to the National Meeting in particular:

III.8.1 Tasks of the National Process Facilitator

Timeline Code

BM	Before National Meeting begins
DM	During National Meeting
PM	Post Meeting

1. Obtain from the FDLC National Office any updates on names and addresses of regional representatives. BM-8 months
2. With an introductory letter mail position statement forms and information to all regional representatives. BM-8 months
3. After receipt of position statements submitted by the FDLC regions, contact the chairs of all FDLC Standing Committees to determine whether these committees wish to submit any position statements (one from each committee and one from the Board as a whole). BM-4 months
4. If necessary, edit (as to grammar, spelling, etc.) position statements and arrange them according to broad categories. Number position statements as follows: 2003/1, 2003/2, 2003/3, etc. BM-4 months
5. The National Process Facilitator or the National Office will email (if necessary send by Post) amended or revised position statements to the dioceses. BM-4 months
6. With an attached cover memo email (if necessary send by Post) one copy of the position statements to the primary and secondary liaison persons of each FDLC diocese with active status and to the BCDW Secretariat. BM-4 months
7. Appoint the Chair of the Business Sessions. BM-4 months
8. With the Executive Director see to the inclusion of the position statements, procedure for Resolutions of Immediate Concern, the name of the Chair of the Business Sessions, and other voting information in the meeting's Program Book; BM-4 months
9. If necessary email (if necessary send by Post) information regarding the process for the introduction of Executive Committee Resolutions (ECR's) to the FDLC

- Chair or his/her delegate on the Executive Committee who will handle such resolutions should they arise at the national meeting. BM–1 month
10. Serve as a member of the meeting's credentials committee; DM
 11. Confer with the Chair of the Business Sessions as to details of the Business Sessions. DM–1st day
 12. Train and supervise runners for the business sessions. DM
 13. At each business session distribute to regional representatives a form for recording the number of voting representatives from his or her region.. DM
 14. Obtain from the FDLC Chair the Executive Committee Resolutions 24 hours prior to the final business session so both copies can be made and distributed to the membership and appropriate time can be set aside for such ECR's if necessary. DM
 15. Assist the Chair of the Business Sessions in keeping track of all amendments to position statement and resolutions of immediate concern. DM
 16. See to the distribution and, as necessary, collection of all ballots and other forms during the business sessions; together with the Chair of the Business Sessions supervise the counting of the ballots. DM
 17. Present a summary of the voting. DM
 18. Provide the FDLC National Office the percentages of of votes cast in the three categories or YES, NO, ABSTAIN. DM
 19. Transmit all ballots back to the National Office at the conclusion of the final business session to be retained until December 1st of the year of the meeting. If no challenge to the voting procedure has been received by that date, the National Office shall destroy all ballots. PM