

The role of the Chair of the House of Laity of Synod

The role of Chair of the Diocesan House of Laity appears in the legislation for the Diocesan Synod (the 1969 Synodical Government Measure). The Chair is elected by the Synod's lay members and is the formal representative of the laity in the Diocese. Because the Chair is not a paid employee s(he) has a certain independence that enables him/her to speak with a special freedom. The statutory duties are few but the Chair has a right to be informed and the responsibility/privilege to advise and warn. The following are some of the aspects of the role in this Diocese in recent years.

The Synodical Role

- The Diocesan Bishop is President of the Diocesan Synod, with two Vice-Presidents who are the Chairs of the Houses of Laity and Clergy
- It is the Bishop's prerogative to delegate the chairing of the meetings to the Vice-Presidents
- The DLC convenes and chairs meetings of the House of Laity
- Ex-officio member of Bishop's Council
- Ex-officio member of the Synod Agenda Planning Group (3 times per year)
- Ex-officio member of the Vacancy in See Committee

The Diocesan Role

- To support and work closely with the Bishop
- To speak "the laity voice" where necessary and appropriate
- To encourage lay participation at all levels of diocesan life
- To work with the Deanery Lay Chairs in order to consult and inform in both directions
- To meet with the Bishop and the Clergy Chair as needed during the year to discuss matters of current concern
- To liaise and consult confidentially with the Clergy Chair

The National Role

- To meet with other Diocesan Lay Chairs, nationally and regionally.
- To offer the lay perspective to national consultations of church matters.