

1 Saint Nicholas Orthodox Church

2 Parish By-Laws

3 I. NAME

4 The name of this parish is Saint Nicholas Orthodox Church of Portland, Oregon.

5 II. PURPOSE

6 The purpose of this parish is to establish a community of faithful Orthodox Christian believers to
7 be “the Body of Christ; everyone being members of it” (1 Corinthians 12:27); consecrated to the
8 glory of God; committed to living in fellowship with one another and with God on the basis of
9 sound Christian theology, morality and spirituality; dedicated to promoting the word and mission
10 of Jesus Christ; devoted to serving God and man in accordance with the mind and heart of Jesus
11 Christ; and in agreement with the doctrine and teaching of the Orthodox Church in America.

12 III. GOVERNING STATUTE

13 The parish and its administration are subject to the Statute of the Orthodox Church in America
14 (hereinafter referred to as the Statute), as adopted by the Second All-American Council on
15 October 19-21, 1971, and as amended at any subsequent All-American Councils.

16 IV. DIOCESAN AUTHORITY

17 The term “Diocesan Authority” is used in these By-Laws to designate the bishop or archbishop
18 of the Diocese of San Francisco and the Western United States of the Orthodox Church in
19 America, under whose jurisdiction this parish remains.

20 V. THE RECTOR

21 The head of this parish is the Rector, a duly appointed priest who represents the Diocesan
22 Authority. The Rector is entrusted by the Diocesan Authority to be the spiritual father and
23 teacher of his flock within this parish, and to be the celebrant of the liturgical worship of the
24 Church. He is the spiritual father for the whole life and activities of this parish, its spiritual
25 growth and enlightenment, its Orthodoxy and moral progress. All activities in this parish shall
26 be initiated with his knowledge, approval and blessing; nether should he do anything pertaining
27 to this parish without the knowledge of his parishioners and representatives elected by them, so
28 that always and everywhere there may be unity, mutual trust, cooperation and love. To be free

29 from material preoccupations and wholly committed to his sacred ministry, the Rector shall be
30 compensated by a salary and other remunerations to be established by the Parish Council, fitting
31 his high calling, to be clearly agreed upon at the time of his appointment, and which shall be
32 increased from time to time, in accordance with the spirit of the Clergy Compensation Guide
33 provided by the Chancery Office of the Orthodox Church in America. Every year the Rector is
34 entitled to a vacation with full compensation. He shall be authorized to participate in the
35 disbursement of parish funds as a co-signatory with other Council members. When the Rector is
36 assigned to this parish, compensation for his moving expenses shall be determined by the Parish
37 Council. The Rector may retire from active service only with the permission of the Diocesan
38 Authority.

39 VI. PARISHIONERS

40 By virtue of their Baptism and Chrismation, parishioners are members of the Body of Christ, and
41 must strive to live in accordance with their high calling (cf. Ephesians 4:1). Parishioners enjoy
42 the privilege and responsibility of participating in the Sacramental Mysteries of this parish, and if
43 over 18 years of age, also enjoy the privileges and responsibilities of participating in all regular,
44 general and special meetings. They also enjoy the privileges and responsibilities of being
45 nominated for election to the Parish Council. A parishioner must comply with the Statute of the
46 Orthodox Church in America, and these Parish By-Laws. A parishioner should be substantially
47 involved in the life of this parish. He/she should regularly attend the liturgical services,
48 participate regularly and frequently in the sacramental life (and at the most minimal, annual
49 participation in the Sacramental Mysteries of Confession and Holy Communion in this parish
50 church), and devote his/her time and God-given talents toward the continuous growth of the
51 Orthodox faith and witness in this parish. A parishioner over 18 years of age must provide
52 financial support for the Church. He/she must at least fulfill the financial obligation annually -
53 as set by the Parish Council. Included in this obligation is the assessment established by the
54 Diocese together with the assessment established by the Orthodox Church in America. No one
55 can be a parishioner if he/she betrays the teachings of the Orthodox Church or leads a life, or acts
56 in a manner condemned by the Holy Canons of the Church as incompatible with the name
57 Orthodox Christian.

58 VII. THE PARISH MEETING

59 The Parish Meetings shall be held on dates fixed by the Parish Council. Each year at least two
60 Parish Meetings are to be held: The Annual Parish Meeting in February, before the beginning of
61 Great Lent, and The Semi-Annual Parish Meeting in September.

62 The Rector of the Parish will preside at all Parish Meetings. In his absence, another member of
63 the Parish Council will preside.

64 A quorum for Parish Meetings shall be 25% of those who are designated as parishioners.

65 Regular or special Parish Meetings shall be called by the Rector by notifying the parishioners in
66 good standing of the agenda by mail, two weeks before the meeting date, in addition to a verbal
67 announcement at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy on each of the three consecutive Sundays
68 previous to the Meeting itself.

69 Subjects for consideration at the Annual Parish Meeting prior to Lent are: 1) election of
70 candidates for membership on the Parish Council; 2) the report of the Treasurer as to the receipt
71 and expenditure of parish funds; 3) the reports of all parish organizations and groups, including
72 the Auditor's written report; 4) the approval of the proposed budget for the parish; 5) considering
73 and authorizing the purchase of real property; 6) consideration of construction and/or capital
74 repairs to the church building, other buildings and properties; 7) consideration and action relative
75 to other matters affecting the general welfare of the parish.

76 Subjects for consideration at the September Semi-Annual Parish Meeting are: 1) simple half-
77 year reports from the Rector, Treasurer, Council, organizations and groups; 2) consideration of
78 other matters affecting the general welfare of the parish.

79 The resolutions and decisions passed by Parish Meetings shall be binding on the parishioners.
80 These shall be signed by the Rector, the Council Elder, and the Recording Secretary. Copies of
81 all minutes shall be sent to the District Dean, the Diocesan Authority, the Diocesan Chancellor
82 and the Rector within 5 days of the Meeting. Resolutions and decisions shall take effect only
83 with the approval of the Diocesan Authority. However, if no disapproval has been received
84 within 15 days of the Meeting, all decisions shall be considered approved. Included in all
85 minutes shall be a list of those parishioners present at the Meeting.

86 In an emergency, the Parish Council may take action on matters reserved for the Parish Meeting,
87 provided that the parish be informed of such action on the following Sunday by oral and written
88 announcement according to the procedure found in Section VII, Paragraph 4.

89 VIII. THE PARISH COUNCIL

90 The Parish Council shall consist of the Rector and seven members elected by the Parish Meeting.
91 Members of the Parish Council shall serve for three years, with two new members and one
92 alternate being elected each year. New members of the Parish Council shall begin their term of
93 office when they are sworn in after the Divine Liturgy on the Sunday following their election.
94 No individual shall hold office for more than two consecutive terms, nor shall any individual
95 hold more than one office on the Council at any given time.

96 The officers of the Parish council shall consist of the Rector, ex officio; the Elder; the Assistant
97 Elder; the Recording Secretary; the Treasurer and two other Council members; and one
98 Alternate.

99 Candidates for election to the Parish Council must have been members in good standing (cf.
100 Section VI, above) for at least six months prior to election.

101 The primary duty of the Parish Council is to assist the Rector to serve the Orthodox Church, to
102 defend its truth and to work for its spiritual as well as material progress. Members of the Parish
103 Council shall be familiar with the Statute of the Orthodox Church in America, and with all other
104 instructions or regulations issued by lawful ecclesiastical authority. It must be remembered that
105 the parish is first the Body of Christ in this locale, and as such, there can never be any
106 administrative separation of “spiritual” and “material” matters. Members of the Parish Council
107 must always bear in mind that in all their actions, they are doing God’s work, no matter what
108 form or appearance it may take.

109 All members of the Parish Council shall attend all meetings. Any member who is absent for
110 three consecutive meetings without just cause shall be asked to resign. Anyone failing to notify
111 the Rector of his or her unexpected absence shall be considered absent without just cause. Any
112 Parish Council member who ceases to be an active member, or ceases to be a member in good
113 standing is considered as having resigned.

114 Members of the Parish Council shall be expected to attend two retreats/workshops per year.
115 They shall be expected to accept the responsibility of giving proper direction to the life of the
116 parish. They shall be prepared to serve on one commission of responsibility, as outlined below.
117 Finally, they shall accept the Biblical principle of proportionate giving as the norm for Christian
118 life and witness.

119 Any parishioners may attend the meetings of the Parish Council upon verbal request to the
120 Rector or the Parish Council, or upon invitation of the Rector or the Parish Council. However,
121 he or she shall not be entitled to vote. He/she may participate in discussion only if invited to do
122 so by the Rector or the Parish Council.

123 Should a Parish Council member, a parish organization or committee member, cease to be a
124 member in good standing, he/she shall be asked to resign from his/her position by the Rector in
125 writing.

126 The quorum for the Parish Council meetings shall consist of the Rector and four or the seven
127 Council members elected by the Parish Meeting.

128 The Parish Council shall prepare the agenda for the Parish Meeting. It may make
129 recommendations for or against any item on the agenda for this Meeting.

130 The Parish Council Nominating Committee shall consist of the Rector, the Elder, and the
131 Assistant Elder. Their recommendations are subject to the approval of the Parish Council and
132 finally to the Parish Meeting.

133 Vacancies in the Parish Council may be filled at any Parish Meeting. Under such circumstances,
134 the Alternate shall fill the term of office immediately, and another Alternate shall be elected by
135 the Parish Meeting, as stated above. Should more than three vacancies occur on the Parish
136 Council at one time, a special Parish Meeting must be called to fill these vacancies.

137 The Parish Council may not authorize an expenditure exceeding \$2,000 without calling a
138 General Parish Meeting.

139 IX. DUTIES OF OFFICERS

140 The Rector of the Parish shall preside over the Parish Council. He shall convene meetings of the

141 Parish Council, guide its discussions, and see to the carrying-out of its decisions. The Rector
142 shall have final authority over the Christian Education program as well as have final authority in
143 guiding the work of the Parish Council. He shall keep exact metrical records and all other
144 records as may be required by the Diocesan and Civil Authorities. He shall report to the
145 Diocesan Authority in accordance with the established diocesan procedures.

146 The Elder of the parish presides over the Parish Council in the absence of the Rector. He/she is
147 responsible for supervising the receipt and expenditure of parish funds under the administrative
148 control of the Treasurer. He/she administers the Parish Council regarding duty rosters and work
149 schedules (see Section X, Paragraph 1, below). The Elder assists the Rector in implementing and
150 executing decisions of the parish and the Parish Council, and shall be authorized to participate in
151 the disbursement of parish funds as a co-signatory with the Treasurer and the Rector.

152 Assistant elder, as required, and in his/her absence, assumes the Elder's office. He/she prepares
153 the slate of those parishioners desiring election to the Parish Council.

154 The Treasurer, under the supervision of the Elder, is responsible for maintaining and controlling
155 all financial systems necessary for the needs of the parish. The Treasurer receives and banks all
156 monies collected (being also responsible for counting all monies received by the parish). He/she
157 is responsible for all bookkeeping records and accounts and makes all records available for audit.
158 He/she drafts checks to cover parish expenditures. (All checks shall be signed by any two of the
159 following: Rector, Elder, Treasurer, Recording Secretary.) The Treasurer prepares annual
160 financial reports for the parish, monthly reports for the Parish Council, and prepares the annual
161 budget documents for the Annual Parish Meeting. He/she reports and discloses all financial
162 information required in accordance with federal, state, and local government inquiries. The
163 Treasurer keeps a list of all parishioners who are in good standing, recording tithes, donations,
164 and gifts of each in the account books. He/she advises the parishioners of their status of financial
165 obligations and deficiencies. Finally, the Treasurer provides materials necessary to maintain the
166 envelope system.

167 The Recording Secretary keeps records of minutes of all Parish meetings and Parish Council
168 meetings, certifying these by signature. He/she advises members of the Parish Council of Parish
169 Council Meetings. He/she manages correspondence of the Parish Council.

170 The Alternate shall replace any member of the Parish Council who resigns or is unable to fulfill
171 their term, following approval of the Parish Council. He/she shall fulfill the rest of the term of
172 any Parish Council member resigning in the middle of his/her term.

173 X. RESPONSIBILITIES IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE

174 The Parish Council may form such committees for the implementation of programs and events as
175 it deems necessary to aid the life of the parish. Included in these are: A) candlestand supplies;
176 B) church cleaning scheduling and oversight; C) maintenance of church grounds; D) supplies
177 and equipment for maintenance of church building and properties; E) mission and stewardship
178 drives; F) designated gift drives; G) community and special events; H) parish bookstore; etc.

179 Members of the Parish Council are automatically the Trustees of the parish, and will perform all
180 civil actions on behalf of the parish.

181 XI. PARISH PROPERTY

182 The parish or parish corporation is the sole owner of all parish property, assets, and funds. In
183 administering them, however, the parishioners and officers elected by them must always
184 remember the religious nature, purposes and goals of the parish, and act as trustees of God's, not
185 man's, property. The parish, as the whole Church, serves God and cares for God's work in the
186 world, and all decisions concerning parish property must be inspired by that care and by the
187 spiritual needs of the Church.

188 The ecclesiastical property, both donated directly, or purchased from funds donated to the parish,
189 cannot, while held by the parish, be used for any purpose other than ecclesiastical.

190 The real property of the parish is acquired, expanded, or decreased only through an act of a
191 Parish Meeting, with the added condition that an agreement of 2/3 of the parishioners in good
192 standing present at that Meeting is necessary for enactment, and with the further provision that
193 abstentions will not be used in the calculation of the number of parishioners in good standing.

194 If the parish is abolished, its property is disposed of following the provisions of the parish By-
195 Laws. If no such provisions exist, the property is at the disposition of the Diocesan Authority.
196 In all cases, the sacred and untouchable items: the Holy Antimension, the Tabernacle, and the
197 Sacred Vessels, must be surrendered to the Diocesan Authority.

198 XII. AMENDMENTS

199 These By-Laws may be amended by a 2/3 majority vote of the parishioners in good standing
200 present at a Parish Meeting. Texts of all proposed amendments shall be provided in sufficient
201 time (preferably at the time for the written notification of the Parish Meeting), but no later than
202 one week before the Meeting itself. No amendment approved under this section shall be
203 effective until 60 days have expired from the date of the Parish Meeting. If, during that period,
204 1/4 of the parishioners in good standing sign a petition of disapproval, the amendment shall not
205 go into effect until such amendment shall be approved by a 3/4 vote at a subsequent Meeting
206 called for the purpose of considering such amendment. All amendments, changes, or additions
207 so adopted shall be subject to the approval of the Diocesan Authority, as stated in Section VII,
208 Paragraph 7, above.