



The Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles

TO: The Rt. Rev. John Harvey Taylor, the Rev. Canon Melissa McCarthy,
the Rev. Susan Stanton, Canon Andy Tomat

FROM: Canon Richard Zevnik, Chancellor

DATE: October 20, 2022

SUBJECT: Authority Under EDLA Constitution and Canons for Imposition of Assessments
on Parishes and Missions for Funding of the Mission Share Fund, and
Authority to Impose Penalties on Parishes and Missions in Arrears of Payment
of Assessments

Authority presently exists under the EDLA Constitution and Canons for imposition by EDLA of assessments on parishes and missions for purposes of funding the Mission Share Fund. These are: EDLA Constitution Article XXI, Sec. 45; Canon XXVII, Sec. 27.01. These provide:

“ARTICLE XXI
ASSESSMENTS
CONVENTION CAN LEVY ASSESSMENTS
45.

Convention shall have the power to raise money by levying assessments on the Parishes and Missions of this Diocese to pay the regular expenses of this Diocese, and for such other purposes as the Convention may from time to time approve and direct. Such assessments, if levied, shall be paid into the Mission Share Fund. Convention shall also have the power to impose such penalty as may be deemed fit for failure to pay such assessments when levied.”

“CANON XV
TO REPORT TO DIOCESAN COUNCIL MONTHLY
15.04

The Treasurer of the Diocese shall report to Diocesan Council monthly on the status of the Mission Share Fund of the Diocese.”

“CANON XXVII
PARISHES AND MISSIONS TO PAY MONTHLY
27.03

The Treasurer of each Parish and Mission of this Diocese shall pay to the Treasurer of the Diocese one-twelfth of its Share not later than the twenty-fifth of each month.”

There are presently some ambiguities in the Canons, specifically Canon 15.04, in that it presently refers to “assessment or pledge.” This should be clarified by amendment. Further, while Canon XXVII, Sec. 27.03 uses “shall pay,” there is no express enforcement mechanism provided for in the Canons, nor are consequences of not paying assessments spelled out. These also are matters for consideration for a\mendment or addition to the Canons. Of course, any amendment to the Canons would have to be adopted by Diocesan Convention in accordance with the Constitution and Canons.

What may be an appropriate enforcement mechanism and/or penalties should be determined by the Bishop in consultation with the Treasurer, Chief Financial Officer, and Diocesan Council, if not also the Standing Committee and the Corporation of the Diocese.

I have been provided with a copy of the Diocese of California’s assessment appeals process. I see little or nothing objectionable about it, however, adoption of a similar policy by EDLA would properly be subject to amendment of the Canons to so provide, again, in accordance with the procedures for amendment of the Canons by Diocesan Convention.

I suggest that Canon XV, Sec. 15.04 be amended to define “assessments” as that percent of a Parish’s or Mission’s net operating income determined by the Bishop in consultation with Diocesan Council due to be paid annually, and that “pledges” be defined as such sums in excess of a Parish’s or Mission’s assessment (as defined above) that a Parish or Mission may voluntarily agree to contribute.