



Cofradia del Sto. Niño de Cebu (Since 1565)

Basilica Minore Del Santo
Nino De Cebu
Mother Chapter

COFRADIA DEL STO.
NIÑO DE CEBU -
CONSTITUTION AND
BY-LAWS



Article 1. – The religious association hereby established shall be officially known as **Cofradia del Santo Nino de Cebu.**



What is Cofradia?

The official lay confraternity of the Basilica Minore del Sto. Niño de Cebu, whose primary mission is to spread the devotion to the Holy Child in the image of Señor Sto. Niño.

The worship of Our Lord is universal. The devotion to the Santo Niño is a Filipino modality, national in its spirits and characteristics. To live this devotion in all its richness and efficacy and to have it spread through the entire country, to every church, to every family, to every Filipino, is the purpose and main reason of the Cofradia.



Article 2. – The formal objectives of the Cofradia shall be the following:



VISION AND GOAL

- To help promote and propagate the devotion to the Holy Child Jesus throughout the Philippines, that our people may receive the graces they need to preserve and keep vital the Catholic faith in our country;



VISION AND GOAL

- To sanctify its members and their families through the devotion to Santo Niño, a sincere practice of their faith, frequent reception of the Sacraments, charitable works and social apostolate;



VISION AND GOAL

- To promote mutual assistance and cooperation among the membership of the Cofradia;



VISION AND GOAL

- To engage the Cofradia in religious and civic community activities, for the upliftment of our people. The various Chapters may further include other specific objectives in their Statutes, consonant with the objectives of the Cofradia.



Article 3. – The insignia of the Cofradia shall be a medal with the image of Santo Nino embossed on it.



Article 4. – The seal of the Cofradia shall be a circular or oval stamp with the image of Santo Nino embossed in the center and the words: “Cofradia del Santo Nino de Cebu” surrounding the image.



Article 5. – The banner of the Cofradia shall be the one prescribed and issued by the National Board of Directors.



CHAPTER II – MEMBERSHIP



Article 6. – Any Catholic, at least thirteen (13) years old may be admitted to membership in the Cofradia, provided that he/she is desirous to live in conformity with the principles and tenets of Christian morality, and not a member of an illicit sect or unlawful organization.



Two Kinds of Membership

Regular or active members are those who comply with all the duties and obligations as prescribed in the Constitution and By-Laws as well as the statutes of the Cofradia, and enjoy the corresponding rights and privileges.

Auxiliary members are those devotees of Santo Nino who would like to wear the insignia of the Cofradia upon paying the registration fee. They cannot vote nor can be elected to any position of the Cofradia.



Article 7. – The membership application, after thorough investigation and screening by the Committee on Membership, shall be endorsed for approval and forwarded to the Spiritual Director for confirmation. The new member shall be installed and conferred with the insignia of the Cofradia by the Spiritual Director or his duly authorized representative.



Generally, the application for membership in the Cofradia shall go through the following procedure:

1. The applicant is given the application form by the Chapter Secretary or any designated or available officer;
2. The applicant submits the duly-accomplished application form together with the other requirements that may be prescribed by the Cofradia to the Chapter Secretary or the Chapter Office staff;
3. The application and all enclosures are evaluated and if necessary verified by the Chapter officers;
4. The applicant is scheduled for an interview by the Committee on Membership;



5. If the recommendation is favorable, the application is recommended and endorsed by the Committee on Membership to the Chapter Spiritual Director;
6. If the application is not accepted, the applicant shall be informed accordingly in writing by the Chapter Secretary and noted by the Chapter President;
7. If the application is approved by the Chapter Spiritual Director, the applicant shall be informed accordingly in writing by the Chapter Secretary and noted by the Chapter President;
8. The applicant shall be installed by the Chapter Spiritual Director as a Cofradia member in a simple and appropriate ceremony;
9. The admission of the applicant shall be reported in writing to the National Executive Officers, attaching therewith the photocopies of the approved application and other pertinent papers.



Rights and Duties of the Members

Article 8. All members of the Cofradia shall have the following rights and duties:



Rights of the members:

1. To vote at all meetings of their respective assemblies;
2. To be elected to any office, provided that the member has been of good standing for at least one year prior to the election. A member of good standing is one who has not incurred three (3) consecutive unexcused absences during the regular meetings and had fully paid the monthly membership dues.



Rights of the members:

3. To take part in any deliberation concerning issues of the Cofradia;
4. To be informed of all substantial matters concerning the Cofradia;
5. To have a Mass offered by the Cofradia for his/her eternal rest upon his/her demise; and
6. To enjoy all other rights in the membership



Duties of the members:

1. To be as good Christians, strong in faith and exemplary in their charity towards their neighbors;
2. To recite at least once daily the Our Father, the Hail Mary and the Creed, in honor of Santo Nino;
3. To attend regularly the Friday novena in Honor of Santo Niño and must wear the prescribed yellow uniform;



Duties of the members:

4. To attend regularly the liturgical services of the Cofradia and the meetings of the assembly, and to participate with regularity in the activities of the Cofradia;
5. To wear the insignia of the Cofradia whenever attending any of its activities;
6. To extend moral, financial and spiritual support to co-members in distress;



Duties of the members:

7. To be involved in social apostolate work, particularly for and among the children, helping individually and collaborating with institutions that provide spiritual and financial support for the orphans, the sick and the less privileged;
8. To pay religiously the monthly membership dues and fees;
9. To obey and defend the constitution and by-laws of the Cofradia, as well as to follow the policies and guidelines of the National Board of Directors; and
10. To fulfill all other obligations inherent in the membership.



CHAPTER III – ORGANIZATION



Article 9. – The organizational structure of the Cofradia shall consist of two levels: (1) the National Board of Directors composed of all Chapter Presidents , and (2) the Chapters (Mother Chapter and Local Chapters) in different Augustinian-run churches, educational institutions, social action centers and NGOs, as well as in non-Augustinian parishes, centers and institutions.



Article 10. – The National Board of Directors is the highest governing body of the Cofradia. It is composed of all Chapter Presidents who shall have the following National Officers:

Chairman/National Spiritual Director
(ex-officio)

President (ex officio)

Vice President for Luzon

Vice President for Visayas

Vice President for Mindanao

Vice President for International

Secretary (ex officio)

Treasurer (ex officio)

Auditor (ex officio)



Functions of the National Spiritual Director

Article 11. – The National Spiritual Director is the Chief Executive Officer of the Cofradia, and his functions are:

1. To convene and preside at all meetings, regular or special, of the National Board of Directors.
2. To issue Certificates of Recognition and Affiliation to duly organized chapters. These certificates shall be countersigned by the National Secretary
3. To exercise supervision over the chapters regarding all matters affecting Cofradia activities.
4. To perform such other functions as are inherent to the effective management of the National Office and as the National Board of Directors may delegate or authorize.



Powers of the National Board of Directors

Article 12. – The National Board of Directors shall have the following powers:

1. To determine and issue policies and directives for the entire Cofradia
2. To adopt, revise, amend and ratify the constitution and by-laws of the Cofradia.
3. To issue guidelines for all administrative and operative policies of the Cofradia.
4. To review and evaluate the periodic reports of the Treasurer and Auditor.
5. To create any committee, special or standing, as may be necessary or required, and to delegate to these committees certain functions of the National Board of Directors which the latter may deem fit and proper.
6. To exercise such other acts and powers as may be deemed necessary and as may be directed by the general membership of the Cofradia.



Meetings of the National Board of Directors

Article 13. – The National Board of Directors shall convene at least once a year during National Convention and whenever the Chairman or the President may deem it necessary. One-third (1/3) attendance of the members of the National Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum to validly proceed with the meeting and to decide and exercise the powers of the National Board of Directors.



Headquarters of the National Board of Directors

Article 14. – The headquarters of the National Board of Directors is located at the Basilica Minore del Sto. Nino de Cebu in Cebu City, Philippines.

Cofradia del Sto. Nino de Cebu –
Mother Chapter

Article 15. – The Cofradia del Sto. Nino de Cebu – Mother Chapter shall have the following Executive Officers:

Spiritual Director (ex-officio)

President

Vice President

Secretary

Treasurer

Auditor



Meetings of the Executive Officers

Article 16. – The Executive Officers shall meet regularly once a month and whenever the President may deem it necessary, or upon motion of at least three Officers.



Term of Office of the Executive Officers

Article 17. – The Executive Officers shall hold office for a term of two (2) years., In case of vacancy due to incapacity, death or resignation, a special election shall be called to elect a successor.



The Local Chapters

Article 18.. – The chapters are the living and practical embodiment of the Cofradia at the local level. As a corporate structure, the chapters shall function through the following:

The Assembly

The Executive Officers

Article 19. – Chapters shall be created in every province, town or parish, especially those run by the Augustinians of the Province of Sto. Nino de Cebu, Philippines.



The Assembly: Composition and Functions

Article 20. – Composition and Functions of the Assembly:

- a) The Assembly shall be composed of all the qualified members of the chapter;
- b) It shall elect the Executive Officers; and
- c) It shall meet at least once a month, after prior due notice in writing, to discuss all matters of importance pertaining to the Cofradia. For both general and special meetings, one third (1/3) attendance shall constitute a quorum.



The Executive Officers: Composition

Article 21. – The Executive Officers of the local chapter shall be composed of the following:

Spiritual Director (ex-officio)

President

Vice President

Secretary

Treasurer

Auditor



Functions and Duties of the Executive Officers



The Spiritual Director

Article 22. – The Rector of the Basilica Minore del Santo Nino de Cebu automatically becomes the Spiritual Director of the Mother Chapter. For the other chapters, the Spiritual Directors are the respective Parish Priests, Chaplains, or designated Augustinians in Augustinian centers and institutions.



The Spiritual Director

The Spiritual Director shall:

Be an “ex-officio” officer of the chapter;

Exercise general supervision over the chapter;

Install new members, after their applications have been endorsed by the Committee on Membership and approved by the President; and

Make final decisions regarding all spiritual, religious and liturgical matters, even as his prudent judgment shall be sought regarding all matters pertaining to the functions of the chapter.



The President

Article 23. – The President of the chapter shall:

1. Preside at all regular and special meetings of the chapter;
2. Call for special meetings of the Assembly and the Executive Officers whenever he deems it necessary;
3. Prepare the agenda for the meetings;
4. Sign the official correspondence of the chapter;



The President

5. Authorize and approve disbursements if funds of the chapter;
6. Exercise, in collaboration with the Spiritual Director, general supervision and direction over the Officers and members of the chapter; and
7. Exercise such other powers and perform such other duties as may be necessary to carry through the objectives of the Cofradia, as well as implement whatever policies may be promulgated by the National Board of Directors.



The Vice President

Article 24. – The Vice President shall:

1. Assume the office of the President should the President-elect be prevented to do so for whatever reason(s), provided that in such case, he/she will hold office only until a new President shall be elected in a special meeting held for the purpose.
2. Assume the office of the President for the unexpired term of the latter in the event of a prolonged vacancy in such office;



The Vice President

3. Exercise the powers and perform the duties of the President in the event of temporary absence, disability or incapacity of the latter; and
4. Exercise such other powers and perform such other duties as may be entrusted or authorized to him by the President.



The Secretary

Article 25. – The Secretary shall:

1. Keep complete records of the names and addresses of the present members of the chapter and of the applicants for membership, as well as files of other information relevant to the chapter;
2. Provide the National Board of Directors a complete updated list/directory of all the members of the chapter;
3. Keep the National Board of Directors informed of the chapter's activities by furnishing it with copies of its minutes of meetings;



The Secretary

4. Take charge of the chapter's correspondence and keep a systematic file of all its records;
5. Send out notification of the regular and special meetings; and
6. Take down the minutes of the regular and special meetings of the chapter.



The Treasurer

Article 26. – The Treasurer shall:

1. Keep custody of the funds and other properties of the chapter;
2. See to it that fees and other financial dues are promptly collected;
3. Keep a complete accounting of all receipts and disbursements of the chapter



The Treasurer

4. Make bank withdrawals, in joint signature with that of the Spiritual Director or of the President or Vice President;
5. Remit to the National Treasurer the annual contribution of the chapter;
6. Submit a monthly report of the finances of the chapter to the Assembly or at any time that the President may deemed it necessary.



The Auditor

Article 27. – The Auditor shall:

1. Audit the books and records of the chapter;
2. Certify the reports of the Treasurer before submitting them to the Executive Officers and the Assembly; and
3. Exercise such other powers and perform such other duties as may be directed or authorized by the President.



Meetings of the Executive Officers

Article 28. – The Executive Officers shall meet regularly at least once a month. They shall hold special meetings whenever the President may deem it convenient and necessary, or upon motion of least three (3) Officers. Attendance of at least three (3) Officers shall be sufficient to constitute a quorum.



Term of Office

Article 29. – The Executive Officers shall hold office for two (2) years, unless they are disqualified or removed from office, and until their successors shall be duly elected and sworn in.



CHAPTER IV – ELECTIONS



Article 30. – The election of the Executive Officers for all the chapters shall take place every two (2) years on the month preceding the National Convention, or at any other dated determined by the particular chapters during the general meeting of the Assembly called for the purpose.



Article 31. – A three-man Committee on Elections, composed of the Spiritual Director, or his representative, and two (2) credible members of the chapter, shall supervise the conduct of the election and shall have the following functions and duties:

To set up rules and regulations for smooth and orderly election;

To screen the qualifications of the candidates;

To witness the election, canvass the results, and declare officially the names of the Officers-elect; and

To submit these names to the Spiritual Director.



Article 32. – All elections, whether regular or special, shall be conducted by secret ballot under the principle of “one person, one vote”. Only members who are present during the conduct of the election shall be entitled to cast their votes.

Article 33. – The Executive Officers shall be elected for a term of two (2) years, and may be re-elected to the same position for one more consecutive two-year term

Article 34. – An officer who has served for two consecutive terms may, after the lapse of one term, be elected to any position with the privilege of one re-election.



Article 35. – Any member may be elected to the position of Executive Officer, provided that he/she:

Is a Roman Catholic;

Has been an active member in good standing for at least one year prior to the lection;

Knows the constitution and by-laws of the chapter and, in particular, the rights and duties of the position for which he is a candidate; and

Is willing and ready to take up the position voluntarily and without remuneration.



Article 36. – All incumbent Officers shall not hold any position, whether elected or appointed, in any other mandated organization of the Basilica Minore del Santo Nino de Cebu.



CHAPTER V –
DISQUALIFICATIONS



Disqualification of a Member

Article 37. – A member may be dismissed from the Cofradia by the Spiritual Director, upon recommendation of the Committee on Membership and concurred by the President, on any if the following grounds:

1. Conviction of a crime involving moral turpitude;



Disqualification of a Member

2. Public denial of a formal doctrinal tenet or teaching of the Catholic Church;
3. Culpable violation of the Cofradia's constitution and by-Laws or of the directives of the National Board of Directors; and
4. Intentional negligence or non-compliance with his/her duties and obligations as a member.



Disqualification of an Executive Officer

Article 38. – Any Executive Officer may be removed from his/her position on any or all of the grounds specified in the preceding article, or for unexcused absences from five (5) consecutive meetings during his/her term of office.



CHAPTER VI –
MEMBERSHIP FEES,
ANNUAL AND OTHER
DUES, FUNDS AND
PROPERTY



Article 39. – All members shall pay promptly the membership fees and other annual dues stipulated by their respective chapters. The Executive Officers may impose fines and penalties



Article 40. – All funds shall be deposited in a banking institution selected by the Executive Officers, and withdrawals shall be made over the joint signatures of any two of the following officers: the Spiritual Director, the President, the Vice President and the Treasurer



CHAPTER VII –
AMENDMENTS AND
REVISION OF THE
CONSTITUTION AND
BY-LAWS



Amendments and Revisions

Article 41. – Any amendments, changes in or revisions of this Constitution and By-Laws may be effected for cause only by the National Board of Directors, and shall be in force only upon approval by the National Spiritual Director.

Effectivity

Article 42. – This Constitution and By-Laws of the Cofradia del Santo Nino de Cebu shall take effect upon ratification by the members of the National Board of Directors and approved by the National Spiritual Director.



APPENDIX

As a means to achieve its objectives, the Cofradia has adopted a general program of activities and practices which shall be followed and implemented by all the chapters, with allowances for the circumstances of place and available facilities. Each chapter may add other activities and practices proper to the place, provided they are in consonance with the nature and objectives of the Cofradia.



Celebration and Devotions



A.) Feast of the Santo Niño

The annual feast in honor of Santo Niño shall generally be celebrated on the third Sunday of January and shall mark the highlight of the yearly activities of the Cofradia. Consequently, no efforts shall be spared to make this celebration a success. Ideally, the celebration ought to be held in close relation with all other activities of the Cofradia.



B) Commemoration of the discovery of the image of Santo Niño (KAPLAG FIESTA)

The commemoration of the discovery of the image of Santo Niño shall be celebrated on April 28 with appropriate religious, social and civic activities.



C.) The Perpetual Novena

Attendance to, or recitation of, the Novena every Friday shall be mandatory for every member of the Cofradia.



D.) The “Visita Domiciliaria” (Home Visit)

The objective of this traditional practice of the Cofradia is to strengthen the devotion to Santo Niño within the family, as well as to foster inter-family relations in the sharing of the same devotion.



E.) The Town Visit

The Town Visit is designed to bring the devotion to Santo Niño to the people in order to awaken and strengthen their faith and devotion and to prepare the way toward establishing new chapters of the Cofradia everywhere in our country.

Only those chapters commissioned by the National Board of Directors shall undertake this project. These chapters shall formulate the guidelines and directives to carry out the program subject to the approval of the National Spiritual Director. They will present to the National Board of Directors an annual report on the Holy Visits undertaken. Only the Manila Chapter is commissioned to undertake the Holy Visits in Luzon area



F.) The Pilgrimage to the Santo Niño Shrine in Cebu

The Pilgrimage to the Santo Niño Shrine in Cebu is highly commendable for both the individual members and the chapters.



SOCIAL ACTION

Excellent as they are and commendable, the purely spiritual and devotional objectives would hardly justify the functions of the Cofradia in our time, given the social consciousness and concerns of the Church. For this reason, the Cofradia del Santo Niño de Cebu must explore ways and means that are ever beneficial to the people as regards their welfare and their urgent needs.



In particular, and in honor of and service to the Santo Niño, the Cofradia shall place special emphasis on sponsoring and providing aid to social and charitable institutions for children, such as orphanages, hospitals, refuge training centers, etc., channelling every year some of the available funds for these purposes, even as each members is hereby enjoined to take to heart this most laudable form of help to the children of God who need assistance.



Procedures in forming and/or Organizing a New Chapter



1.) A letter of application signed by at least fifteen (15) persons who had signified their willingness to be active members of the Cofradia and the duly accomplished application forms and other necessary requirements shall be sent to the National Spiritual Director, together with a written recommendation from the parish priest in whose parish the chapter is located ;

2.) Upon approval of the organization of the new chapter, the petitioners become members of the Cofradia.



3.) Elections for the Executive Officers shall follow at a scheduled date.

4.) Oath-taking of the newly-elected Officers and the enthronement of the Santo Niño Image in the headquarters of the chapters should take place with certain solemnity and festivity. It is suggested that the National Spiritual Director be invited to the occasion. He may, however, delegate this honor to a representative.



**THANK YOU AND
GOD BLESS
EVERYONE!!!**