



Society of Mary

North West Ward of Our Lady of Victories



*Revision endorsed by the Annual General Meeting on
Sunday 6th May 2012.*

*A new Preamble had been added, and changes affected
Clause C, Clause F, Clause G and Clause K.*

Constitution

*First adopted 16th May 2010
Revision adopted 6th May 2012*

Preamble: The Society of Mary is an Anglican Society with members around the world. It sprang from two similar societies, the Confraternity of Our Lady (founded 1880) and the League of Our Lady (founded 1901), which united in 1931 to form the Society of Mary. The Society is dedicated to the glory of God and in honour of the Holy Incarnation, and will welcome into membership any like-minded people whether they are Anglican or members of another Christian denomination.

The Society has these Objects:

1. To love and honour the Blessed Virgin Mary.
2. To spread devotion to her in reparation for past neglect and misunderstanding and in the cause of Christian Unity.
3. To take Mary as a model in purity, personal relationships and family life.

Members agree to be bound by the following rules:

1. Members shall keep a Rule of Life, which will include such special devotions as the Angelus, the Rosary, the Litany and Anthems of Our Lady.
2. They will pray for departed members of the Society and offer Mass for them.
3. They will take part in the Mass on the principal Feasts of Our Lady.
4. They will engage in apostolic and pastoral work, according to opportunity, under the guidance of the local Ward Officers and the General Council.

Where there are sufficient members in one place or area, they may combine to form a Ward, with a priest as Superior and an elected Secretary. They can organise regular services, meetings and many other activities. This document constitutes a Ward of the Society of Mary in the North West of England.

A Name: The name of the Association is
“The Society of Mary - The North West Ward of Our Lady of Victories”
 (“the Ward”)

B Administration: Subject to the matters set out below the Ward and its property shall be administered and managed in accordance with this constitution by the members of the Ward Committee, constituted by clause H of this constitution (“the Ward Committee”)

C Objects: The Ward’s objects (“the Objects”) are

1. To love and honour Mary.
2. To spread devotion to her in reparation for past neglect and misunderstanding and in the cause of Christian Unity.
3. To take Mary as a model in purity, personal relationships and family life.

The Society is dedicated to the glory of God and in honour of the Holy Incarnation, under the invocation of Our Lady, Help of Christians, with the following rules:

1. Members shall keep a Rule of Life, which will include such special devotions as the Angelus, the Rosary, the Litany and Anthems of Our Lady.
2. To pray for departed members of the Society and offer Mass for them.
3. To take part in the Mass on the principal Feasts of Our Lady.
4. To engage in apostolic and pastoral work, according to opportunity, under the guidance of the local Ward Officers and the General Council.

The Ward is constituted as a local association of members of the Society of Mary.

D Powers: In furtherance of the objects but not otherwise the Ward Committee may exercise the following powers:

1. power to raise funds and to invite and receive contributions provided that in raising funds the Ward Committee shall not undertake any substantial permanent trading activities and shall conform to any requirements of the law;
2. power to buy, take on lease or in exchange any property necessary for the achievement of the objects and to maintain and equip it for use;
3. power subject to any consents required by law to sell, lease or dispose of all or any part of the property of the Ward;
4. power subject to any consents required by law to borrow money and to charge all or any part of the property of the Ward with repayment of the money so borrowed;
5. power to co-operate with other charities, voluntary bodies and statutory authorities operating in furtherance of the objects or of similar charitable purposes and to exchange information and advice with them;
6. power to establish or support any charitable trusts, associations or institutions formed for all or any of the objects;
7. power to appoint and constitute such advisory committees as the Ward Committee may think fit;
8. power to do all such other lawful things as are necessary for the achievement of the objects.

E Membership: Membership of the Ward shall be open to any person over the age of 18 years interested in furthering the objects and who has paid the annual subscription laid down from time to time by the Ward Committee.
Every member shall have one vote.

The Ward Committee may by unanimous vote and for good reason terminate the membership of any individual: Provided that the individual concerned shall have the right to be heard by the Ward Committee, accompanied by a friend, before a final decision is made.

F Honorary Officers: At the annual general meeting of the Ward the members shall elect from amongst themselves a secretary and a treasurer, who shall hold office for one year from the conclusion of that meeting.

The Ward shall also appoint a Priest/Deacon Chaplain for each of the Dioceses forming part of the North-West Ward: Blackburn, Liverpool, Manchester and Chester. The Ward Chaplains shall serve for a four year period. One chaplain shall retire each year, and the order of retirement shall normally be: Chaplain for Blackburn, Chaplain for Liverpool, Chaplain for Manchester, Chaplain for Chester.

Additionally, all Ordained members of the Ward shall appoint from their number a Ward Superior who shall serve for a term of four years and who shall be eligible for re-election at the end of that term. Should the Ward Superior be an existing Ward Chaplain then a replacement Ward Chaplain shall be co-opted for the remainder of the year.

The Ward Superior shall act as Chairman of the Ward Committee.

G Ward Committee:

1. The Ward Committee shall consist of fifteen members:- the Ward Superior, and the Ward Chaplains *ex officio*; in addition there shall be the Secretary, the Treasurer and eight General Members – lay or ordained - who shall be elected at the annual general meeting and who shall hold office for one year from the conclusion of that meeting;
2. The Ward Committee may in addition appoint not more than three co-opted members but so that no-one may be appointed as a co-opted member if, as a result, more than one third of the members of the Ward Committee would be co-opted members. Each appointment of a co-opted member shall be made at a special meeting of the Ward Committee and shall take effect from the end of that meeting unless the appointment is to fill a place which has not then been vacated in which case the appointment shall run from the date when the post becomes vacant.
3. All the General Members of the Ward Committee shall retire from office together at the end of the annual general meeting next after the date on which they came into office but they may be re-elected or re-appointed.
4. The proceedings of the Ward Committee shall not be invalidated by any vacancy among their number or by any failure to appoint or any defect in the appointment or qualification of a member.
5. Nobody shall be appointed as a member of the Ward Committee who is aged under 18 or who would if appointed be disqualified under the provisions of the following clause.

H Determination of Membership of Ward Committee: A member of the Ward Committee shall cease to hold office if he or she:

1. is disqualified from acting as a member of the Ward Committee by virtue of behaviour that is contrary to section 72 of the Charities Act 1993 (or any statutory re-enactment or modification of that provision);
2. becomes incapable by reason of mental disorder, illness or injury of managing and administering his or her own affairs;
3. is absent without the permission of the Ward Committee from all their meetings held within a period of six months and the Ward Committee resolve that his or her office be vacated; or
4. notifies to the Ward Committee a wish to resign (but only if at least three members of the Ward Committee will remain in office when the notice of resignation is to take effect).

I Ward Committee Members not to be personally interested: no member of the Ward Committee shall acquire any interest in property belonging to the Ward (otherwise than as a trustee for the Ward) or receive remuneration or be interested (otherwise than as a member of the Ward Committee) in any contract entered into by the Ward Committee.

J Meetings and proceedings of the Ward Committee:

1. The Ward Committee shall hold at least two ordinary meetings each year. A special meeting may be called at any time by the chairman or by any four members of the Ward Committee upon not less than 14 days notice being given to the other members of the Ward Committee of the matters to be discussed but if the matters include an appointment of a co-opted member then not less than 21 days notice must be given.
2. The Ward Superior shall act as chairman at meetings of the Ward Committee. If the Ward Superior is absent from any meeting, the members of the Ward Committee present shall choose one of their number to be chairman of the meeting before any other business is transacted.
3. There shall be a quorum when at least one third of the number of members of the Ward Committee for the time being or five members of the Ward Committee, whichever is the greater, are present at a meeting.
4. Every matter shall be determined by a majority of votes of the members of the Ward Committee present and voting on the question but in the case of equality of votes the chairman of the meeting shall have a second or casting vote.
5. The Ward Committee shall keep minutes, in books kept for the purpose, of the proceedings at meetings of the Ward Committee and any sub-committee.
6. The Ward Committee may from time to time make and alter rules for the conduct of their business, the summoning and conduct of their meetings and the custody of documents. No rule may be made which is inconsistent with this constitution.
7. The Ward Committee may appoint one or more sub-committees consisting of three or more members of the Ward Committee for the purpose of making any inquiry or supervising or performing any function or duty which in the opinion of the Ward Committee would be more conveniently undertaken or carried out by a sub-committee: provided that all acts and proceedings of any such sub-committee shall be fully and promptly reported to the Ward Committee.

K Receipts and expenditure:

1. The funds of the Ward, including all donations contributions and bequests, shall be paid into an account operated by the Ward Committee in the name of the Ward at such bank as the Ward Committee shall from time to time decide. Three members of the Ward Committee shall be appointed as signatories of the bank account with cheques requiring the signatures of two of the three authorised signatories.
2. The funds belonging to the Ward shall be applied only in furthering the objects.
3. No member of the Ward Committee shall spend or authorise the spending of more than £50 without the prior agreement of the Ward Committee.

L Property: A register shall be kept by the Secretary of all property owned by or entrusted to the Ward with any additions or deletions to that register only being made following the recording of the addition/deletion in the minutes of the Ward Committee and the date of that addition/deletion being noted in the register of property. The register shall be available for inspection at the Annual General Meeting.

M Accounts: The Ward Committee shall follow the guidance of the Charities Act 1993 (or any statutory re-enactment or modification of that Act) with regard to:

1. the keeping of accounting records for the Ward;
2. the preparation of annual statements of account for the Ward;
3. the auditing or independent examination of the statements of accounts of the Ward; and
4. the transmission of the statements of account of the Ward to the National Council.

N Annual Report: The Ward Committee shall follow the guidance of the Charities Act 1993 (or any statutory re-enactment or modification of that Act) with regard to the preparation of an annual report and accounts and any other requirements laid upon it from the General Council of the Society of Mary.

O Annual General Meeting:

1. There shall be an annual general meeting of the Ward which shall be held in the month of May in each year or as soon as practicable thereafter.
2. Every annual general meeting shall be called by the Ward Committee. The Secretary shall give at least 21 days notice of the annual general meeting to all the members of the Ward. All the members of the Ward shall be entitled to attend and vote at the meeting.
3. Before any other business is transacted at the first annual general meeting the persons present shall appoint a chairman of the meeting. The chairman shall be the chairman of subsequent annual general meetings, but if he or she is not present, before any other business is transacted, the persons present shall appoint a chairman of the meeting.
4. The Ward Committee shall present to each annual general meeting the report and accounts of the Ward for the preceding year.
5. Nominations for election to the Ward Committee must be made by members of the Ward in writing and must be in the hands of the secretary of the Ward Committee at least 14 days before the annual general meeting. Should nominations exceed vacancies, election shall be by ballot.

- P Special General Meetings:** The Ward Committee may call a special general meeting of the Ward at any time. If at least ten members request such a meeting in writing stating the business to be considered the secretary shall call such a meeting. At least 21 days notice must be given. The notice must state the business to be discussed.
- R Procedure at General Meetings:**
1. The secretary or other person specially appointed by the Ward Committee shall keep a full record of proceedings at every general meeting of the Ward.
 2. There shall be a quorum when at least one tenth of the number of members of the Ward for the time being or ten members of the Ward, whichever is the greater, are present at any general meeting.
- S Notices:** Any notice required to be served on any member of the Ward shall be in writing and shall be served by the secretary or the Ward Committee on any member either personally or by sending it through the post in a prepaid letter addressed to such member at his or her last known address in the United Kingdom, and any letter so sent shall be deemed to have been received within 10 days of posting.
- T Alterations to the Constitution:** The Constitution may be altered by a resolution passed by not less than two thirds of the members present and voting at a general meeting. The notice of the general meeting must include notice of the resolution, setting out the terms of the alteration proposed.
- U Dissolution:** If the Ward Committee decides that it is necessary or advisable to dissolve the Ward it shall call a meeting of all members of the Ward, of which not less than 21 days notice (stating the terms of the resolution to be proposed) shall be given. If the proposal is confirmed by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting the Ward Committee shall have power to realise any assets held by or on behalf of the Ward. Any assets remaining after the satisfaction of any proper debts and liabilities shall be given or transferred to the national council of the Society of Mary.
A copy of the statement of accounts, or account and statement, for the final accounting period of the Ward must be sent to the National Council of the Society of Mary.