



THE FOUNDATIONAL TEXTS OF THE HUMANISTIC CATHOLIC CHURCH

Foundation Edition for Legal, Ecclesial, and Liturgical Use

Primaatial See: Ketchikan, Alaska

Sole Founder and First Presiding Bishop: The Most Reverend Robert Horwath

Instrument of Foundation, Constitution, Bylaws, Canons, Humanistic Roman Missal, Book of Blessings, Priest's Book of Rites and Blessings, and Ordinal.

Core rule: Traditional Form, Humanistic Substance.

Humanistic Catholicism is Catholicism without God: the total external Catholic package of rites, ceremonies, vestments, orders, parishes, dioceses, feasts, fasts, sacramentals, and pastoral offices is retained, while direct address to a deity is removed from the prayers and replaced by language of humanity, creation, solidarity, conscience, memory, and service.

Prepared as a 50-page founding and liturgical master document

Legal and Editorial Note

This Foundation Edition is an ecclesiastical and organizational draft for the Humanistic Catholic Church. It is designed to help the Founder and First Presiding Bishop form a coherent church body, articulate its doctrine and discipline, and prepare material that may support Alaska religious corporation formation and national ministry planning.

This document is not legal advice, tax advice, or a substitute for filing with the State of Alaska, obtaining an EIN, maintaining records, or consulting counsel. It includes legal-readiness clauses because Alaska recognizes religious corporations and corporation-sole succession. Before filing, the Church should compare its final articles with the current Alaska Division of Corporations form and with counsel's advice.

This text intentionally uses original wording. It preserves the Catholic external grammar but does not reproduce the Roman Missal, the Roman Ritual, the Book of Blessings, or any copyrighted liturgical book verbatim. It is a humanistic Catholic liturgical family text for this Church alone.

Where this book uses familiar Catholic names such as Mass, Eucharist, Baptism, Confirmation, Penance, Anointing, Matrimony, Holy Orders, saint, altar, chalice, paten, chrism, bishop, priest, deacon, parish, diocese, and see, those terms are received as cultural, ritual, historical, and ecclesial terms within Humanistic Catholicism.

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Instrument of Foundation and Creation

IN THE NAME OF HUMANITY, CREATION, MEMORY, AND SOLIDARITY, I, Bishop Robert Horwath, serving as sole Founder and First Presiding Bishop, hereby issue this Instrument of Foundation and Creation of the Humanistic Catholic Church.

Whereas the Catholic tradition possesses a profound ritual, psychological, communal, aesthetic, and cultural power through its ancient rites, sacramental signs, calendar, vesture, music, incense, bells, gestures, sacred seasons, fasts, feasts, and visible orders of ministry;

Whereas many persons continue to need the full Catholic external world while no longer professing theistic belief, supernatural dogma, or devotional prayer to a deity;

Whereas Humanistic Catholicism receives the Catholic ritual inheritance as a treasury of human meaning, memory, beauty, discipline, moral formation, and public service;

Therefore I formally establish the Humanistic Catholic Church as a church of traditional Catholic form and humanistic substance. The Primatial See is Ketchikan, Alaska. The Church shall be governed by a Corporation Sole, by its Constitution, Canons, Bylaws, Missal, Book of Rites, Book of Blessings, Ordinal, and lawful decrees of the Presiding Bishop.

The founding maxim is: the externals remain; the prayers are humanized; the community is the visible sacrament of solidarity.

Articles for Corporation Sole

Article 1. Name. The name of the religious corporation shall be Humanistic Catholic Church, Corporation Sole, or another name approved by the Presiding Bishop and accepted by the State of Alaska.

Article 2. Religious Purpose. The corporation is formed for religious, charitable, educational, liturgical, pastoral, cultural, and public worship purposes; for acquiring, holding, managing, and disposing of church property; and for promoting Humanistic Catholic worship, rites, ceremonies, moral formation, and works of solidarity.

Article 3. Ecclesiastical Office. The person executing the articles holds the ecclesiastical title of Presiding Bishop, also called the Primate, Bishop of the Primatial See, and Corporation Sole.

Article 4. Primatial See. The principal ecclesiastical see is Ketchikan, Alaska. The registered office, mailing address, and agent for service of process shall be supplied on the state filing and maintained continuously.

Article 5. Property Value. The estimated value of church property at formation shall be stated in the filed articles. If no property has yet been acquired, the articles may state a nominal or actual value according to counsel's advice and state requirements.

Article 6. Corporate Seal. The seal shall read: Humanistic Catholic Church - Primatial See of Ketchikan - Traditional Form, Humanistic Substance. The seal may include a cross, mitre, keys, chalice, book, or creation motif as cultural and ecclesial symbols.

Article 7. Succession. Upon death, resignation, incapacity, removal, or canonical transfer of the Presiding Bishop, the successor in office succeeds as Corporation Sole and is vested with the ecclesiastical and property authority of the office, subject to law and these canons.

Constitution and Papal Ecclesiology

Article I. Identity. The Humanistic Catholic Church is an independent Humanistic Catholic church. It is not the Roman Catholic Church, is not subject to the Holy See, and does not claim civil or canonical affiliation with any existing Catholic denomination. It receives the visible Catholic grammar as its ritual heritage.

Article II. Papal-Type Ecclesiology. The visible unity of this Church is located in the office of the Presiding Bishop. The Presiding Bishop is the supreme legislator, judge, liturgical guardian, chief pastor, chief teacher, and ordinary of the Primatial See.

Article III. Corporation Sole. The civil form of the Church shall be Corporation Sole where lawful. This civil form expresses the ecclesial principle that one office holds continuity of mission, property, governance, and public identity for the benefit of the whole Church.

Article IV. Supreme Authority. The Presiding Bishop may promulgate canons, issue decrees, erect or suppress parishes and dioceses, appoint and remove clergy, approve rites, define doctrine, regulate records, and grant dispensations.

Article V. Consultation. The Presiding Bishop may establish councils, curial offices, advisory boards, tribunals, or synods. Such bodies are consultative unless a written decree grants limited delegated authority. No council can override the Presiding Bishop in matters of doctrine, liturgy, ordination, property, or corporate succession.

Article VI. Irreformable Core. The core identity - Catholic external form, humanistic substance, seven sacraments in humanistic interpretation, open participation, and primatial corporation-sole government - may not be abolished except by the Presiding Bishop or lawful successor.

Bylaws of the Church

Section 1. Offices. The central offices are the Presiding Bishop, Vicar General, Chancellor, Registrar, Treasurer, Director of Formation, and such other offices as the Presiding Bishop establishes.

Section 2. Membership. Members include communicant members, baptized members, confirmed members, clergy, religious workers, lay ministers, parish members, online members, and supporters. Participation in the rites is the ordinary sign of belonging. Formal enrollment may be recorded by parish or central registry.

Section 3. Meetings. The Presiding Bishop may convene a General Assembly, clergy conference, diocesan gathering, parish assembly, or advisory council. Electronic meetings, video participation, and written consent are permitted.

Section 4. Finances. All funds are held for religious, charitable, educational, and liturgical purposes. No net earnings shall inure to private individuals. Reasonable compensation, reimbursement, housing, professional services, and clergy support may be paid when approved and documented.

Section 5. Records. The Church shall maintain registers of baptism, confirmation, Eucharistic participation, penance records only where pastorally appropriate and confidential, anointing, matrimony, holy orders, blessings, parish erection, clergy status, appointments, transfers, removals, and corporate succession.

Section 6. Amendments. The Presiding Bishop may amend bylaws by signed decree. Amendments affecting filed articles shall be filed with the State of Alaska if required by law.

National Establishment and Compliance

The Church may operate nationally through online ministry, missions, parishes, dioceses, chaplaincies, educational programs, pastoral care, and public worship. The Church's Alaska formation creates its central juridical body; additional state registrations may be required where the Church owns property, employs staff, solicits charitable contributions, opens accounts, or maintains permanent local operations.

Each state may have separate rules concerning foreign nonprofit registration, charitable solicitation, clergy marriage authority, property ownership, sales tax, employment, insurance, child protection, privacy, and fundraising. No parish or diocese may represent itself as civilly incorporated or tax-exempt beyond what is true.

The Church shall seek an Employer Identification Number. It may choose to rely on automatic church tax-exempt treatment if qualified, or may seek IRS recognition for donor assurance. The Church shall remain organized and operated for exempt religious, charitable, educational, and public worship purposes.

The Church shall not endorse or oppose candidates for public office in the name of the Church. Legislative advocacy shall never become a substantial part of its activities. Clergy may speak as private citizens but must not confuse personal politics with corporate church action.

National expansion must preserve one public standard: all missions and parishes are Humanistic Catholic, externally Catholic in rite, humanistic in theological address, and subject to the Presiding Bishop.

Theology of Humanistic Catholicism

Humanistic Catholicism is Catholicism without God. It keeps the Catholic house, the Catholic room, the Catholic language of rites, the Catholic vesture, the Catholic offices, the Catholic sacraments by name and sign, and the Catholic rhythm of feasts and fasts. It removes direct prayer to a deity and reorients the language toward humanity, creation, conscience, memory, solidarity, justice, mercy, and service.

The sacred, in this Church, is the depth of human encounter when a community gathers with reverence, symbol, beauty, discipline, grief, joy, confession, bread, wine, water, oil, vows, touch, song, incense, silence, and moral seriousness. What was once named as supernatural grace is received here as transformative human presence and communal formation.

Jesus of Nazareth is honored as the central historical and ritual figure of the Catholic inheritance: a teacher of table fellowship, mercy, courage, forgiveness, solidarity with the poor, and resistance to cruelty. Saints are honored as archetypes of courage, creativity, conscience, and costly love.

Creation is not treated as a distant abstraction. It is the earth, water, fire, air, bodies, food, seasons, animals, forests, sea, weather, birth, aging, and death. The rites train the community to handle creation with gratitude and responsibility.

The Church's doctrine can be summarized: the human person has inherent dignity; the gathered community can heal and form conscience; ritual can carry truth even where supernatural claims are not made; and beauty can teach solidarity.

The Seven Sacraments in Humanistic Context

The seven sacraments are retained in name, external form, ritual logic, ministers, matter, and ceremonial dignity. They are interpreted as primary human rites of belonging, maturity, table fellowship, moral repair, embodied care, covenant, and ordered service.

Baptism is the rite of belonging and new public identity. Water signifies birth, cleansing, creation, vulnerability, and entry into the visible community.

Confirmation is the rite of strengthening and adult commitment. Laying on of hands and chrism signify maturity, courage, conscience, and readiness to live the values of the Church.

Eucharist is the central rite of table fellowship. Bread and wine or grape juice signify memory, shared life, gratitude, sacrifice, companionship, and the real presence of the gathered human community around the table of Jesus.

Penance and Reconciliation is the rite of truth-telling and repair. Confession, counsel, satisfaction, and reconciliation restore moral clarity and communal trust.

Anointing of the Sick is the rite of embodied comfort. Oil, touch, silence, and presence affirm dignity amid illness, fear, frailty, disability, or approaching death.

Matrimony is the rite of covenant. Consent, vows, rings, blessing, and public witness bind two persons in mutual fidelity and care.

Holy Orders is the rite of public ministry. Laying on of hands, vesting, and the delivery of instruments entrust a person with diaconal service, priestly presidency, or episcopal governance.

Ecclesiastical Government

The Church is governed as one visible communion under the Presiding Bishop. This is not a congregational, synodal, or federal system. Councils may advise, but unity is maintained through the primatial office.

The Presiding Bishop may govern by constitution, canon, decree, *motu proprio*, rescript, appointment letter, liturgical mandate, pastoral instruction, or judgment. Decrees are effective upon signature unless a later effective date is stated.

The Curia may include: Vicar General for governance; Chancellor for canonical records; Registrar for sacraments and certificates; Treasurer for finances; Promoter of Justice for discipline; Director of Formation for clergy training; Master of Ceremonies for worship; and Archivist for historical preservation.

Dioceses are territorial, online, personal, or missionary jurisdictions erected by decree. A diocese may be governed by a diocesan bishop, apostolic administrator, vicar, or the Presiding Bishop directly.

Parishes are stable communities. Missions are emerging communities. Chaplaincies serve hospitals, online groups, prisons, recovery communities, schools, boats, homes, or special populations.

All ecclesiastical authority exists for public worship, pastoral care, moral formation, rites, education, solidarity, and the protection of the Church's humanistic Catholic identity.

Parishes, Missions, and Dioceses

A parish is erected by written decree naming its title, location or online identity, pastor or administrator, register keeper, permitted rites, and relation to a diocese or the Primatial See.

A mission is an approved worshipping community that has not yet become a parish. Missions may celebrate Mass, catechesis, blessings, funerals, pastoral rites, and community gatherings according to authorization.

A diocese is a larger jurisdiction of parishes, missions, clergy, and ministries. A diocese may be geographic, personal, online, or missionary. Its bishop governs in communion with and under the Presiding Bishop.

Parishes and dioceses may not alienate property, incur debt, change legal identity, alter doctrine, ordain clergy, or modify liturgy without written authorization. Local finances may be locally administered under transparent reporting and canonical accountability.

A parish may have a parish council, finance council, worship committee, safeguarding officer, registrar, catechists, lector coordinator, altar guild, outreach chair, and online ministry team. These offices serve the liturgy and pastoral mission; they do not become a separate sovereignty.

Every parish altar is a humanistic Catholic table of memory and solidarity. The altar should be dignified, clean, clothed, candle-lit when possible, and treated with the customary reverence of the rite.

Clergy, Lay Ministries, and Formation

The ordained orders are deacon, priest, and bishop. The lay ministries include lector, acolyte, altar server, catechist, cantor, extraordinary minister of communion, parish visitor, sacristan, registrar, chaplain assistant, and such other ministries as the Presiding Bishop approves.

A deacon is ordained for service, proclamation, charity, assistance at the altar, care of the marginalized, and public works of solidarity. A deacon may baptize, witness marriages where authorized by civil law and church mandate, preach when licensed, assist at Mass, expose the signs of care, and lead blessings permitted to deacons.

A priest is ordained to preside at Mass, preach, baptize, confirm when delegated, hear penance, anoint the sick, witness matrimony, bless, teach, pastor, and administer a parish or mission.

A bishop is consecrated to govern, ordain, confirm, consecrate chrism, erect parishes and dioceses, guard the rite, preserve succession, and serve as a visible sign of unity.

Formation shall include Humanistic Catholic theology, ethics, pastoral care, liturgy, rubrics, trauma awareness, safeguarding, church law, records, public leadership, interfaith sensitivity, and the history of Catholic rites.

No one has a right to ordination. Holy Orders are conferred for the needs of the Church, after examination, discernment, and mandate.

Code of Canons: General Norms

Canon 1. The Humanistic Catholic Church is a church of Catholic external form and humanistic substance.

Canon 2. The Presiding Bishop is the supreme ecclesiastical authority and the Corporation Sole.

Canon 3. The authentic interpretation of constitution, canon, rite, rubric, title, or custom belongs to the Presiding Bishop.

Canon 4. Customs contrary to the core rule have no force unless expressly approved by the Presiding Bishop.

Canon 5. The official liturgical language is English. Latin, Greek, Spanish, Indigenous languages, and other languages may be used pastorally, provided the humanistic meaning is preserved.

Canon 6. No cleric or minister may claim affiliation with the Roman Catholic Church, the Holy See, or another body unless such affiliation is legally and ecclesiastically true.

Canon 7. The Church welcomes people regardless of religious background, belief status, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, race, disability, social history, poverty, incarceration history, or online-only participation.

Canon 8. The Church protects freedom of conscience. No member is required to profess supernatural belief. No member may be mocked for theistic, agnostic, atheist, or uncertain belief when participating respectfully.

Code of Canons: Sacraments and Worship

Canon 9. The seven sacraments are retained: Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Penance, Anointing of the Sick, Matrimony, and Holy Orders.

Canon 10. Rites shall keep Catholic external structure: vestments, processions, candles, incense, holy water, oil, altar, vessels, gestures, feasts, fasts, blessings, and sacramental names.

Canon 11. Direct address to a deity shall be removed from official prayers. Prayers shall be addressed to the assembly, conscience, humanity, creation, memory, peace, or the values embodied by the rite.

Canon 12. The Eucharist shall use bread and wine, with grape juice always permitted for inclusion and sobriety. Gluten-free bread and nonalcoholic elements may be provided pastorally.

Canon 13. The ordinary minister of Mass is a priest or bishop. Deacons assist. Lay leaders may lead a liturgy of the word, communion from elements previously set apart according to local law, or a table fellowship without presiding as priest.

Canon 14. All communicants who approach reverently may receive. No person is to be denied because of baptismal status, belief status, gender, sexuality, marital status, disability, poverty, imprisonment, or doubt.

Canon 15. Sacramental records must be accurate, confidential where appropriate, and preserved in the central registry or parish registry.

Code of Canons: Property, Finance, and Records

Canon 16. Property is held for the benefit of the Church, public worship, religious rites, education, charity, and solidarity. No property may be used for private enrichment.

Canon 17. The Corporation Sole may acquire, hold, convey, mortgage, lease, maintain, and dispose of property where lawful and necessary for the Church's purposes.

Canon 18. Parish property is administered locally only to the extent authorized by written decree, trust instrument, deed, articles, local law, or contract. The Presiding Bishop retains canonical oversight.

Canon 19. Financial records shall include income, gifts, offerings, grants, reimbursements, compensation, property, restricted funds, and designated funds. Public reports may summarize without violating privacy.

Canon 20. The Registrar shall maintain sacramental and ministerial records: baptisms, confirmations, first Eucharists, regular communicants, penance guidelines, anointings, marriages, ordinations, installations, blessings, funerals, appointments, removals, and parish decrees.

Canon 21. Certificates are ecclesiastical documents. They may be beautiful, medieval, Catholic in style, sealed, signed by the Presiding Bishop or delegate, and filed in duplicate.

Canon 22. Digital signatures, scanned seals, video records, and online forms are valid for internal church records unless civil law requires another form.

General Rubrics for All Rites

1. The minister shall prepare the place with dignity. A clean cloth, candles, cross or humanistic Catholic emblem, book, water, oil, bread, wine, grape juice, vessels, incense, flowers, and seasonal symbols may be used.
2. The proper vesture is worn: alb and stole for most rites; chasuble for Mass; cope for processions and solemn blessings; dalmatic for a deacon when available; cassock, surplice, and stole for choir-dress rites; mitre, ring, pectoral cross, and crozier for a bishop.
3. The sign of the cross is retained as a Catholic cultural and ritual sign. In this Church it signifies the body, memory, suffering, courage, and service of the human community.
4. Incense signifies reverence, memory, and the elevation of attention. Bells mark ritual focus. Holy water signifies creation, cleansing, and belonging. Oil signifies care, dignity, strength, and consecrated service.
5. Silence is never filler. It is a rubric. The minister shall allow real silence after readings, confession, laying on of hands, anointing, vows, and communion.
6. The words printed in bold in a service book are said aloud. Bracketed text is rubric. The minister may adapt pastoral addresses but not the essential form of a sacrament without permission.
7. Online rites may be celebrated where authorized, provided there is real-time participation, visible elements when required, and a record of the rite. Baptism ordinarily requires physical pouring or immersion by the minister or delegated person.

Liturgical Year: Feasts and Fasts

The Church keeps the familiar Catholic calendar as ritual architecture: Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Holy Week, the Paschal Triduum, Easter, Ascension, Pentecost, Ordinary Time, feasts of Mary as historical and cultural memorials, apostles, martyrs, doctors, saints, All Saints, All Souls, Christ the King as a humanistic memorial of the reign of justice, and local patrons.

Advent forms hope, patience, ethical vigilance, and care for those waiting in darkness. Christmas honors birth, vulnerability, family, shelter, and the historical memory of Jesus. Epiphany honors insight, journey, and the dignity of all peoples.

Lent is a season of examination, fasting, repair, simplicity, solidarity with the poor, and truthful self-knowledge. Ash Wednesday uses ashes as a sign of mortality. Holy Week dramatizes courage, betrayal, service, execution, grief, and the stubborn hope of the community.

Easter is the season of renewed life, not as supernatural proof, but as the human refusal to let cruelty have the final word. Pentecost honors speech, courage, and the birth of public mission.

Fasts may include food, spending, cruelty, waste, gossip, addiction, screen excess, or indifference. Feasts must include hospitality, art, music, rest, gratitude, and remembrance.

Saints are remembered as human witnesses. Their images, relics, medals, and feasts are permitted as signs of memory, not objects of supernatural petition.

Humanistic Roman Missal: Order of Mass I

[The entrance chant begins. The priest, deacon, servers, lector, and ministers process. The altar is revered with a bow or kiss. Incense may be used.]

Priest: Peace be with you.

People: And with our shared humanity.

Priest: In the sign of the cross, in the memory of Jesus, in the dignity of the human person, and in reverence for creation, let us begin.

[All make the sign of the cross.]

Penitential Act.

Priest: We gather with truth. Let us name our failures, not to be crushed by shame, but to become capable of repair.

People: I confess before this community that I have failed in thought, word, deed, and neglect. Through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault, I have wounded others, ignored suffering, and turned from responsibility. I ask this community for patience, accountability, and companionship as I seek amendment of life.

Priest: May honesty open the way to repair. May mercy strengthen justice. May this community walk with all who seek a new beginning.

Kyrie.

Cantor: Kyrie, eleison. People: Kyrie, eleison.

Cantor: Christe, eleison. People: Christe, eleison.

Cantor: Kyrie, eleison. People: Kyrie, eleison.

Humanistic Roman Missal: Order of Mass II

Gloria, on appointed days.

People: Glory to humanity in its courage, and peace to all who labor for compassion. We praise the light of conscience, we bless the labor of hands, we honor creation, we give thanks for beauty, truth, and mercy. You who lift the poor, heal the wounded, welcome the outcast, and break bread with strangers, teach us the way of justice and peace. Amen.

Collect of the Day.

Priest: Let us gather our intentions. [Silence.] Creation surrounds us, memory carries us, and community forms us. On this day, may we receive wisdom, practice courage, and leave this place ready to serve. Amen.

Liturgy of the Word.

[Readings are proclaimed from Scripture, saints, ethical witnesses, poetry, human rights texts, or approved sources. When a Gospel is read, candles and incense may accompany it.]

Reader: A reading for the wisdom of the Church.

People: Thanks be to the community of witnesses.

Deacon or Priest: The Gospel memory of Jesus according to the appointed text.

People: Glory to the path of compassion.

[After the Gospel.]

Minister: The memory of Jesus and the wisdom of the Church.

People: Praise to the courage that lives among us.

[Homily follows. The homily must interpret the text, the season, and human responsibility.]

Humanistic Roman Missal: Order of Mass III

Profession of Humanistic Catholic Commitment.

People: We believe in the inherent dignity of every human person. We believe in the power of community to form conscience, heal wounds, and call forth courage. We believe in the communion of saints as the living memory of all who practiced mercy and justice. We believe in forgiveness with accountability, in love with truth, in creation as our common home, and in the table where no one is owned and no one is cast away.

Universal Prayer.

Deacon or Reader: For the Church, that its rites may form courageous and compassionate people, let us respond: Make us instruments of solidarity.

People: Make us instruments of solidarity.

For the earth, waters, animals, forests, seas, cities, and homes threatened by neglect or greed, let us respond.

For the sick, isolated, imprisoned, poor, grieving, addicted, homeless, and afraid, let us respond.

For those who have been wounded by religion, family, state, or community, let us respond.

For the dead, whose names we carry, and for the living, whose burdens we share, let us respond.

Priest: Receive these intentions, O gathered community, and turn them into service. Amen.

Offertory.

[Bread, wine, grape juice, offerings, and signs of service are brought to the altar. The gifts, altar, priest, and people may be incensed.]

Eucharistic Prayer A

Priest: Blessed is the earth that brings forth grain and grape. Blessed are the hands that plant, harvest, mill, bake, press, pour, and set this table. Through creation and human labor, this bread and this cup become for us signs of life, memory, and shared responsibility.

People: Blessed be creation and the work of human hands.

Priest: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them in courage and gratitude.

Priest: Let us give thanks.

People: It is right to give thanks and to live responsibly.

Preface.

Priest: It is truly right and just, our duty and our joy, to give thanks for creation, for human courage, for the saints of memory, for the table of Jesus, and for every act of mercy that resists despair. Therefore with all who have sung before us, with martyrs of conscience, healers, teachers, workers, parents, children, artists, and all seekers of justice, we sing:

Sanctus.

People: Holy, holy, holy, the human family called to compassion. Heaven and earth are full of the work of creation. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of justice. Hosanna in the highest.

[Bells may be rung. The priest extends hands over the gifts.]

Priest: Set apart these gifts by our common intention, that bread and cup may become the sign of the body given, the life shared, and the covenant renewed.

Eucharistic Prayer B and Communion

Institution Narrative.

Priest: We remember Jesus of Nazareth, who welcomed the outcast and ate with sinners. On the night before he was handed over to violence, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to his friends, saying: Take this, all of you, and eat of it: this is my body, given for you.

[The host is elevated. Bells may be rung. The priest genuflects or bows.]

Priest: In a similar way, when supper was ended, he took the cup, gave it to his friends, and said: Take this, all of you, and drink from it: this is the cup of my blood, the covenant of love, poured out for many. Do this in memory of me.

[The cup is elevated. Bells may be rung. The priest genuflects or bows.]

Memorial Acclamation.

People: We remember his table. We proclaim his courage. We carry his work into the world.

Prayer after the Memorial.

Priest: As we share this bread and cup, make us one body in compassion. Let no one hunger for dignity. Let no one be exiled from mercy. Let our dead be remembered, our living be strengthened, and our community become what it celebrates.

Doxology.

Priest: Through memory, with courage, and in solidarity, all honor is given to humanity and creation, now and in every generation.

People: Amen.

Communion Rite. The people may sing the Pater Noster in humanistic form: Our humanity, bound to creation, hallowed be dignity. Let justice come, let compassion be done, in our homes as in our common life. Give us this day our daily bread. Forgive us our wrongs as we repair the wrongs done to others. Lead us not into cruelty, but deliver us from despair. Amen.

Priest: Behold the bread of fellowship. Behold the cup of shared life. Blessed are all who come to this table.

People: We come with humility, dignity, and hope.

Seasonal and Ritual Masses

Advent Mass. Use violet or blue vestments. Candles are lighted. The collect emphasizes waiting, hope, and ethical vigilance. The dismissal sends the people to notice those who wait in poverty, illness, prison, grief, or fear.

Christmas Mass. Use white or gold vestments. A crèche may be displayed as a cultural and historical sign. The homily should honor birth, shelter, migration, family, and the vulnerability of every child.

Ash Wednesday. Use violet vestments. Ashes are blessed as a sign of mortality. Formula: Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return; live this day with truth and mercy.

Palm Sunday. Palms are blessed as signs of peaceful courage. A procession may be held. The Passion is read as a drama of violence, betrayal, political fear, courage, grief, and memory.

Holy Thursday. The washing of feet is retained. The altar of repose may become a place of silence, not supernatural reservation. The rite emphasizes service, table fellowship, and companionship in anguish.

Good Friday. A cross may be venerated as the sign of executed innocence and human cruelty. The solemn intercessions are prayed for the wounded world.

Easter. Use white or gold. Fire, water, bells, flowers, and song return. The proclamation: cruelty does not own the final word.

Funeral Mass. White, black, or violet may be used. The Eucharist celebrates memory, grief, gratitude, and the communal duty to accompany mourners.

Wedding Mass. White or festive vestments may be used. The Eucharist becomes the first table of the couple's public covenant.

Rite of Baptism

[The font is prepared with water. A candle, white garment, oil, and register are placed nearby. The minister wears alb and stole, or cope for solemn baptism.]

Reception.

Minister: What name is given?

Parents, sponsor, or candidate: N.

Minister: N., the community receives you with joy. Water has carried life from the beginning of creation. Today it becomes the sign of your belonging among us.

Renunciations and Commitments.

Minister: Do you reject cruelty, contempt, and indifference?

Candidate/Sponsors: I do.

Minister: Do you commit yourself to dignity, mercy, truth, and solidarity?

Candidate/Sponsors: I do.

Blessing of Water.

Minister: We set apart this water, source of life, sign of cleansing, memory of rivers and rain, womb and sea. May it mark N. as beloved by this community and responsible within creation.

Baptism.

[The minister pours water three times or immerses the candidate.]

Minister: N., I baptize you in the sign of human dignity, in the memory of Jesus, and in the fellowship of this Church.

Anointing.

Minister: N., be sealed with the oil of dignity and courage.

White Garment.

Minister: Receive this garment as a sign of new belonging.

Candle.

Minister: Receive this light. Guard it with conscience and share it with others.

Conclusion.

People: We welcome you into the Humanistic Catholic Church.

Rite of Confirmation

[The bishop presides, wearing mitre and carrying crozier. Chrism is prepared. Candidates stand before the bishop with sponsors.]

Presentation.

Pastor: Bishop, I present these candidates for Confirmation in the Humanistic Catholic Church.

Bishop: Have they been formed in the way of dignity, conscience, creation, and solidarity?

Pastor: They have been so formed.

Renewal of Commitment.

Bishop: Do you choose to live as mature members of this Church, honoring its rites and serving humanity?

Candidates: I do.

Bishop: Do you accept the discipline of conscience, the work of repair, and the call to protect the vulnerable?

Candidates: I do.

Laying on of Hands.

[The bishop extends hands over all candidates.]

Bishop: May courage rest upon you, wisdom guide you, patience strengthen you, and solidarity make you faithful in service.

Anointing with Chrism.

[The bishop anoints each forehead with chrism in the sign of the cross.]

Bishop: N., be sealed with the chrism of maturity, courage, and humanistic Catholic commitment.

Candidate: Amen.

Peace.

Bishop: Peace be with you.

Candidate: And with your shared humanity.

Conclusion.

Bishop: Confirmed by this community, go forward as witnesses of dignity, creation, and justice.

Rite of Eucharist Outside Mass

This rite is used for the sick, homebound, online gatherings where authorized, small communities, and pastoral visits when Mass is not celebrated.

[A corporal, candle, cross or emblem, and vessel with bread and cup are prepared. If elements were set apart at Mass, they are handled reverently. If this is a table fellowship rather than Communion from Mass, it shall be announced as such.]

Greeting.

Minister: Peace be with this house and all who dwell here.

Reading.

[A brief reading from the Gospel memory of Jesus, a saint, or approved source is read.]

Minister: At every table where dignity is honored and no one is excluded, the memory of Jesus becomes visible among us.

Confession.

People: We confess our failures and ask for strength to repair what we can.

The Humanistic Our Father may be said.

Invitation.

Minister: This is the bread of fellowship and the cup of shared life. Receive and become what you receive: a body of compassion.

Distribution.

Minister: The bread of shared humanity. The cup of courage and memory.

Prayer after Communion.

Minister: May this communion strengthen the sick, comfort the lonely, reconcile the estranged, and bind us again to creation and to one another. Amen.

Dismissal.

Minister: Go in peace to love and serve humanity.

Rite of Penance and Reconciliation

[The rite may be private, face-to-face, behind a screen, by video where pastorally necessary, or communal with individual counsel. The priest wears a purple stole.]

Greeting.

Priest: Peace be with you. You are safe to speak truth here.

Penitent: I come seeking honesty, repair, and reconciliation.

Reading.

Priest: A brief text may be read: Let truth be spoken without cruelty, and mercy practiced without evasion.

Confession.

[The penitent confesses wrongs, omissions, harms, compulsions, resentments, fears, and patterns needing repair.]

Counsel.

Priest: The priest listens, asks clarifying questions, distinguishes guilt from shame, names concrete harm, and helps the penitent form a path of amendment. The priest may never exploit the vulnerability of the penitent.

Act of Contrition.

Penitent: I acknowledge the wrong I have done and the good I have failed to do. I accept responsibility without despair. I seek to repair what can be repaired, to learn what must be learned, and to walk in truth.

Rite of Reconciliation.

Priest: By the authority of this Church, and in the presence of human mercy joined to accountability, I declare you reconciled to the path of repair. Go in peace, complete your act of restitution, and begin again.

Penitent: Amen.

Penance.

A penance must be concrete, proportionate, non-abusive, and oriented toward repair: apology, restitution, service, treatment, recovery support, prayerful silence, written reflection, or reconciliation where safe.

Rite of Anointing of the Sick

[The priest or bishop wears a purple or white stole. Oil of the Sick is prepared. The rite may occur in hospital, home, parish, hospice, prison, or online with delegated touch when necessary.]

Greeting.

Priest: Peace be with you in body, mind, and spirit.

Sick Person: And with your shared humanity.

Litany.

Minister: For courage in fear. People: Be near through this community.

Minister: For dignity in weakness. People: Be near through this community.

Minister: For wisdom among caregivers. People: Be near through this community.

Laying on of Hands.

[The priest lays hands silently on the head, or extends hands if touch is not possible.]

Anointing.

[The priest anoints the forehead and hands.]

Priest: Through this holy anointing, may this community surround you with care, may your dignity be protected, may fear be eased, and may strength be found for this hour.

If death is near:

Priest: N., you have belonged among us. Your life is not erased. May those who love you keep vigil with tenderness, and may your memory be carried in peace.

Communion may follow.

Conclusion.

Priest: Let this room be a place of gentleness. Let every caregiver act with patience. Let every decision honor dignity. Amen.

Rite of Matrimony

[The priest or deacon wears white or festive vesture. Rings are prepared. Civil requirements must be observed. The rite is open to couples according to conscience, dignity, and the laws of the place.]

Opening.

Minister: We gather to witness the covenant of N. and N. Love becomes public today, not as private feeling alone, but as a promise of fidelity, mutual care, truth, and shared life.

Questions.

Minister: Have you come freely and without coercion to enter this covenant?

Couple: We have.

Minister: Will you honor each other in joy and hardship, health and sickness, strength and weakness, conflict and reconciliation?

Couple: We will.

Consent.

Each says: I, N., take you, N., as my spouse. I promise to be faithful to you, to honor your dignity, to speak truth with tenderness, to seek repair when I fail, and to share life with you from this day forward.

Rings.

Minister: May these rings be signs of a covenant freely chosen and faithfully renewed.

Each says: N., receive this ring as a sign of my love and my promise.

Nuptial Blessing.

Minister: May your home be a school of patience, a shelter of peace, a table of hospitality, and a witness to faithful love. May creation teach you seasons, may community support you, and may your covenant serve the common good.

Declaration.

Minister: Before this community, I recognize your covenant and pronounce you married according to the rite of this Church and the law where applicable.

Holy Orders: Theology and General Rubrics

Holy Orders are retained as deacon, priest, and bishop. In Humanistic Catholicism, ordination does not create a supernatural ontological caste. It publicly entrusts a person with a stable office, ritual authority, pastoral responsibility, and accountability within the Church.

The essential signs are presentation, examination, promise of obedience and service, litany, prostration where appropriate, laying on of hands, consecratory or ordaining declaration, vesting, delivery of instruments, kiss or sign of peace, and entry into ministry.

The bishop is ordinary minister of Holy Orders. A priest or deacon cannot ordain. Episcopal consecration is performed by the Presiding Bishop or by bishops mandated by the Presiding Bishop.

Candidates must be examined for maturity, doctrine, humanistic Catholic identity, safeguarding, emotional stability, pastoral skill, and willingness to obey the Church's canons. Academic requirements may be set by decree. Mission exceptions may be granted by the Presiding Bishop.

The ordination liturgy may use incense, candles, mitre, crozier, vestments, Litany of the Saints, oil, chalice, paten, book of rites, stole, dalmatic, chasuble, ring, and mandate. Saints are invoked as historical companions and archetypes, not supernatural intercessors.

All ordinations must be recorded in the central registry with date, place, minister, witnesses, mandate, and certificate.

Ordination of a Deacon

[After the Gospel, the candidate is called.]

Presenter: Most Reverend Bishop, the Church asks you to ordain N. to the diaconate.

Bishop: Do you judge this candidate worthy?

Presenter: After inquiry among the people and those responsible for formation, I testify that this candidate has been found worthy.

Election.

Bishop: Relying on the testimony of the community and the needs of the Church, we choose N. for the Order of Deacon.

People: Thanks be to the community of witnesses.

Examination.

Bishop: Will you serve the poor, the marginalized, the sick, the imprisoned, and the forgotten?

Candidate: I will.

Bishop: Will you assist at the altar, proclaim the Gospel memory, teach the way of dignity, and obey the lawful authority of this Church?

Candidate: I will.

Promise of Obedience.

[The candidate places hands between the bishop's hands.]

Candidate: I promise respect and obedience to you and your successors according to the canons of this Church.

Litany and Prostration.

[The candidate lies prostrate while the saints are named as witnesses of courage.]

Laying on of Hands.

[The bishop lays hands in silence.]

Ordaining Declaration.

Bishop: N., we set you apart as Deacon in the Humanistic Catholic Church. Take up the ministry of service, charity, proclamation, and the table of solidarity.

Vesting.

[The deacon is vested with stole and dalmatic.]

Delivery of Gospel Book.

Bishop: Receive the Gospel memory. Believe what you read, teach what you believe, and practice what you teach.

Ordination of a Priest

Presentation and Election follow the form for a deacon, adapted for priesthood.

Examination.

Bishop: Will you preside faithfully at the Eucharist, lead the rites, preach with courage, hear penance with discretion, anoint the sick with tenderness, and pastor the people without exploitation?

Candidate: I will.

Bishop: Will you maintain the humanistic Catholic identity of this Church, preserving Catholic external form while removing direct deity-addressed prayer from official rites?

Candidate: I will.

Promise of Obedience.

Candidate: I promise respect and obedience to you and your successors according to the canons of this Church.

Litany and Prostration.

[The candidate lies prostrate. The community chants the Litany of the Saints as historical witnesses: Mary of Nazareth, Joseph, Peter, Paul, Mary Magdalene, Francis, Clare, Oscar Romero, Dorothy Day, and local witnesses of justice.]

Laying on of Hands.

[The bishop lays hands on the candidate's head in silence. Priests present also lay hands.]

Ordaining Declaration.

Bishop: N., we set you apart as Priest in the Humanistic Catholic Church. Preside at the table, reconcile the wounded, bless creation, guard dignity, and form the people in the way of solidarity.

Anointing of Hands.

Bishop: May these hands handle bread, cup, oil, water, book, and human sorrow with reverence.

Vesting.

[The priest is vested with stole and chasuble.]

Delivery of Chalice and Paten.

Bishop: Receive the gifts of the people. Understand what you do, imitate the courage you celebrate, and conform your life to the table you serve.

Consecration of a Bishop

[The mandate of the Presiding Bishop is read. Bishops, priests, deacons, ministers, and people gather. The bishop-elect lies prostrate during the litany.]

Presentation.

Presenter: Most Reverend Presiding Bishop, the Church asks you to consecrate N. to the episcopate.

Presiding Bishop: Let the mandate be read.

[The mandate is read aloud and shown to the people.]

Examination.

Presiding Bishop: Will you guard the unity of this Church under the Presiding Bishop and uphold its humanistic Catholic doctrine?

Bishop-elect: I will.

Presiding Bishop: Will you ordain only with mandate, govern without tyranny, correct without cruelty, and protect the vulnerable?

Bishop-elect: I will.

Presiding Bishop: Will you preserve the Catholic external form of the rites, ceremonies, feasts, fasts, vestments, sacramentals, parishes, dioceses, and orders entrusted to this Church?

Bishop-elect: I will.

Laying on of Hands.

[The Presiding Bishop lays hands in silence. Co-consecrating bishops do the same.]

Book Over the Head.

[The book of the rites may be held over the bishop-elect as a sign of governance under the Church's law.]

Consecratory Declaration.

Presiding Bishop: N., we set you apart as Bishop in the Humanistic Catholic Church. Guard the rite, teach the doctrine, ordain ministers, strengthen communities, and serve as a visible sign of unity.

Investiture.

[Ring, mitre, and crozier are given.]

Ring: Receive the ring of fidelity to the Church.

Mitre: Receive the mitre, sign of responsibility and vigilance.

Crozier: Receive the crozier. Guide without domination; correct without contempt; lead in service.

Installation of the Presiding Bishop

This rite is used for the Founder at the first public establishment of the Church and for every lawful successor in the Corporation Sole.

[The cathedra or presiding chair is prepared. The corporate seal, book of canons, missal, crozier, ring, mitre, and articles of incorporation are placed near the altar.]

Chancellor: The Humanistic Catholic Church receives N. as Presiding Bishop, Primate, Bishop of the Primatial See, and Corporation Sole.

Profession.

Presiding Bishop: I accept the office entrusted to me. I will preserve Humanistic Catholicism as Catholicism without God: traditional in external form, humanistic in substance, open in welcome, disciplined in rite, and steadfast in service.

Oath of Office.

Presiding Bishop: I will guard the Constitution, Canons, Bylaws, Missal, Book of Rites, Book of Blessings, and Ordinal. I will hold church property for the mission of worship, education, charity, and solidarity. I will appoint ministers with prudence, correct abuses, and preserve unity.

Enthronement.

[The Presiding Bishop is seated. The crozier is given.]

Chancellor: Behold the Presiding Bishop of the Humanistic Catholic Church.

People: May this office serve dignity, creation, memory, and solidarity.

Succession Certificate.

The Chancellor shall prepare a certificate of commission, election, appointment, or succession for recording where required by law, especially in any recording district where the Corporation Sole owns real property.

Lay Ministries and Parish Officers

Lay ministries are true ecclesial ministries. They do not require ordination but are instituted, commissioned, or appointed for the service of worship and community.

Lector. Proclaims readings, prepares texts, and trains readers. Rite: Receive the book of wisdom. Let your voice serve clarity and courage.

Acolyte. Serves altar, candles, vessels, processions, and communion. Rite: Receive this candle and this vessel. Serve the table with reverence.

Catechist. Teaches doctrine, rites, ethics, and formation. Rite: Receive the catechism and teach with patience.

Extraordinary Minister of Communion. Assists with distribution and pastoral communion. Rite: Receive this vessel for the table of solidarity.

Sacristan. Cares for vestments, vessels, books, candles, oils, water, incense, and sacred space. Rite: Receive the keys and care for the signs of the Church.

Registrar. Keeps sacramental and parish records. Rite: Receive the register and seal. Record faithfully what the Church celebrates.

Parish Visitor. Visits sick, isolated, grieving, homebound, imprisoned, and online members. Rite: Receive this stole or badge of service; carry presence without intrusion.

Installation Formula.

Presider: N., we appoint you to the ministry of [title]. Serve faithfully, protect the vulnerable, respect confidentiality, and honor the rites of this Church.

Book of Blessings: Principles

A blessing in Humanistic Catholicism is a rite of dedication, gratitude, protection, memory, and moral intention. Blessings do not claim to manipulate supernatural power. They set apart persons, places, objects, seasons, and works for dignity, creation, peace, and service.

Lay people may bless meals, homes, children, friends, journeys, animals, classrooms, workplaces, and objects of personal devotion. Clergy bless publicly in the name of the Church and bless sacramental matter, liturgical objects, church spaces, and solemn occasions.

The external Catholic form is retained: sign of the cross, holy water, incense, candles, book, stole, cope, procession, litany, formula, and final dismissal. The internal address is humanistic.

General Form of Blessing.

1. Greeting: Peace be with this person/place/object and with all who gather here.
2. Reading or Memory: A brief text is read.
3. Intention: The minister names what is being blessed and why.
4. Sign: Water, incense, touch, candle, oil, or sign of the cross is used.
5. Formula: We dedicate, bless, and set apart N. for dignity, creation, memory, and service.
6. Dismissal: Go in peace to love and serve humanity.

Blessings should be beautiful but never superstitious, coercive, or manipulative.

Blessings of Persons and Families

Blessing of a Child.

[The minister may place a hand gently on the child's head.]

Minister: N., may you grow in safety, curiosity, kindness, courage, and joy. May the adults around you protect your dignity and teach you love without fear.

Blessing of Parents or Guardians.

Minister: May patience be given room in your home. May fatigue not destroy tenderness. May you ask for help when needed and give this child a world wider than fear.

Blessing of an Elder.

Minister: N., your years carry memory. May this community honor your story, protect your dignity, and receive the wisdom you choose to share.

Blessing of a Pregnant Person or Expectant Family.

Minister: May creation's hidden work be honored in you. May your body be respected, your fears heard, your care protected, and your family surrounded with practical help.

Blessing of an LGBTQ+ Person or Family.

Minister: N., your dignity is not conditional. May this Church be a place where your name, love, body, story, and conscience are treated with reverence.

Blessing of a Person in Grief.

Minister: May grief be given room. May memory become gentle. May this community sit with you without hurry and carry what is too heavy to carry alone.

Blessing of a Birthday or Anniversary.

Minister: We mark this day with gratitude. May the next year deepen wisdom, friendship, health, and service.

Blessings of Home, Work, Journey, and Animals

Blessing of a Home.

[The minister traces the sign of the cross on the doorframe with holy water.]

Minister: A house is built of materials; a home is built of safety, truth, food, rest, laughter, forgiveness, and welcome. We dedicate this home to peace. May its doors open to kindness and close against cruelty.

Blessing of a Meal.

Leader: We honor creation, soil, water, sun, animal life, plant life, workers, cooks, and all who made this table possible. May this food strengthen us to serve.

Blessing for a Journey.

Minister: May the road teach you humility, the weather teach you patience, strangers teach you courtesy, and return teach you gratitude. Travel in safety and come home with wisdom.

Blessing of a Workplace.

Minister: May this place honor labor without exploitation, leadership without arrogance, profit without greed, and service without contempt.

Blessing of a Boat, Vehicle, or Aircraft.

Minister: We dedicate this vessel of travel to safety, responsibility, sober judgment, and care for every passenger and passerby.

Blessing of Animals.

Minister: Creation speaks through creatures who share our homes, work, grief, and joy. May this animal be treated with gentleness, proper care, food, shelter, and respect.

Blessing of a Classroom.

Minister: May questions be welcomed, mistakes become learning, and every student be treated as a person of dignity.

Blessings of Sacramentals and Liturgical Objects

Blessing of a Cross.

Priest: We dedicate this cross as a sign of suffering faced without denial, cruelty resisted without surrender, and solidarity with all who are wounded.

Blessing of a Rosary or Beads.

Priest: We set apart these beads for meditation, memory, breath, grief, gratitude, and disciplined compassion.

Blessing of a Medal or Image of a Saint.

Priest: We dedicate this image of N. as a sign of human courage. May all who look upon it remember that a life can become a witness.

Blessing of Vestments.

Priest: We dedicate these garments for the service of the rites. May all who wear them put aside ego and clothe themselves in responsibility.

Blessing of Chalice and Paten.

Priest: We set apart this chalice and paten for the bread of fellowship and the cup of shared life. May they never be used for exclusion or vanity.

Blessing of Candles.

Priest: We dedicate these candles as signs of attention, warmth, vigilance, and hope.

Blessing of Incense.

Priest: We set apart this incense to mark reverence, memory, mourning, celebration, and the elevation of human attention.

Blessing of a Bible, Missal, or Book of Rites.

Priest: We dedicate this book to wisdom, careful speech, disciplined worship, and the formation of conscience.

Seasonal Blessings: Ashes, Palms, Fire, Candles, Water

Blessing of Ashes.

[Ashes are placed in a vessel. The priest wears violet.]

Priest: We set apart these ashes, signs of mortality, consequence, and truth. May those marked by them remember the shortness of life and the urgency of mercy.

Formula: Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return; live this day with truth and mercy.

Blessing of Palms.

Priest: We dedicate these branches as signs of public courage and peaceful resistance. May we carry them without hypocrisy and follow them with works of justice.

Blessing of the New Fire.

[At Easter Vigil or another approved rite.]

Priest: We bless this fire, sign of warmth, danger, purification, memory, and renewed life. May it kindle courage in a weary people.

Blessing of the Paschal Candle.

Priest: We dedicate this candle as the great light of the season. May its flame call us from despair into renewed service.

Blessing of Candlemas Candles.

Priest: We bless these candles for homes and hearts that need gentleness in darkness.

Blessing of Holy Water.

Priest: We set apart this water, rain and river, womb and sea, cleansing and life. May it remind us of belonging to creation and responsibility to one another.

Sprinkling Formula: Be renewed in dignity, cleansed for repair, and awakened to creation.

Priest's Book of Rites: Church, Altar, Oils, Vessels

Dedication of a Church or Chapel.

[The bishop enters in procession, sprinkles the people and walls, incenses the altar, and lights candles.]

Bishop: We dedicate this house for Humanistic Catholic worship: for Mass, baptism, confirmation, penance, anointing, marriage, ordination, mourning, learning, music, silence, and service.

Dedication of an Altar.

[The altar is sprinkled, anointed with oil as a sign of consecrated service, incensed, clothed, and lighted.]

Bishop: We set apart this altar as the table of memory and solidarity. May no one be humiliated here. May bread and cup form a people of mercy.

Blessing of Oils.

[The bishop blesses the Oil of the Sick, Oil of Catechumens, and Chrism.]

Oil of the Sick: May this oil carry comfort, touch, and dignity to bodies in need.

Oil of Catechumens: May this oil strengthen those preparing for belonging and commitment.

Chrism: May this fragrant oil mark maturity, ministry, courage, and public responsibility.

Blessing of Bells.

Bishop: We dedicate this bell to call the community, mark grief, announce joy, and awaken conscience.

Blessing of a Confessional or Reconciliation Room.

Priest: May this place protect truth, confidentiality, accountability, and healing.

Funerals, Vigils, and Committal

Humanistic Catholic funerals retain Catholic external form: vigil, funeral Mass or funeral liturgy, incense, pall, holy water, candles, procession, commendation, and committal. The meaning is memory, grief, gratitude, dignity, and accompaniment.

Vigil.

Minister: We gather in the night of grief to keep memory from being lonely. Let stories be spoken, tears be honored, and silence be allowed.

Sprinkling of the Body or Urn.

Minister: With this water we remember N.'s belonging to creation and to this human family.

Placing of the Pall.

Minister: This cloth covers all distinctions. In death, dignity remains.

Incensation.

Minister: Let this incense honor memory, grief, and the body that carried a human life.

Commendation.

Minister: N., we commend your memory to those who loved you, your body to creation, and your story to the mercy of this community. You are not erased.

Committal.

Minister: Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust. We return what creation lent, and we keep what love has taught.

Prayer for Mourners.

Minister: May grief find companions, practical help, food, rest, patience, and time. May no mourner be rushed into false comfort.

Pastoral Rites for Recovery, Peace, and Reconciliation

Rite for Recovery.

Minister: N., recovery is not shame. It is courage practiced one day at a time. We bless your honesty, your supports, your treatment, your meetings, your boundaries, and your refusal to give up.

Rite after Estrangement.

Minister: Where reconciliation is safe, may truth and apology open a path. Where reconciliation is unsafe, may boundaries protect dignity and peace.

Rite for Release from Shame.

Minister: Shame says you are the worst thing you have done or the worst thing done to you. This community says your dignity remains, and repair is possible.

Rite for Victims of Violence.

Minister: We believe you. We honor your survival. We will not force forgiveness, silence, or return to danger. May protection, justice, care, and chosen family surround you.

Rite for Public Lament.

[Used after disasters, war, violence, injustice, or local tragedy.]

Minister: We refuse numbness. We name the dead, the wounded, the displaced, and the frightened. We commit ourselves to relief, truth, and the repair of public life.

Rite for Blessing Online Members.

Minister: Distance does not erase belonging. Through screen, voice, word, bread, candle, and care, you are seen by this community.

Registers, Certificates, and Seals

The Registrar shall maintain central and local registers. Required fields ordinarily include full name, date, place, rite, minister, witnesses or sponsors, parish or mission, certificate number, notes, and signature or digital verification.

Baptism Register: name, date of birth if given, date and place of baptism, minister, sponsors, parents or guardians if applicable, and certificate number.

Confirmation Register: name, date, bishop or delegated priest, sponsor, parish, and certificate number.

Eucharist Register: first communion when recorded; communicant membership; online or in-person participation when useful for membership records.

Marriage Register: names, date, place, minister, witnesses, civil license status where applicable, and certificate number.

Holy Orders Register: candidate, order, date, place, ordaining bishop, mandate, witnesses, lineage record if maintained, and certificate number.

Blessings Register: solemn blessings of homes, churches, altars, oils, bells, vessels, animals, public rites, and other blessings as directed.

Certificate Style. Certificates may use medieval Catholic design: border, seal, calligraphy-style signature, vesting imagery, cross, chalice, mitre, crozier, keys, and creation motifs. A facsimile signature of the Presiding Bishop may be used when authorized.

Seal Rule. The seal authenticates records but does not replace truth. A false certificate is a grave disciplinary offense.

Safeguarding, Ethics, and Discipline

The Church shall protect children, vulnerable adults, penitents, parishioners, online participants, candidates, employees, volunteers, and clergy from abuse, coercion, exploitation, harassment, and retaliation.

No minister may use office to obtain sex, money, housing, gifts, secrecy, obedience, political support, or personal control from a person under pastoral care. Spiritual or ritual language may not be used to manipulate conscience.

Clergy shall maintain boundaries in confession, counseling, anointing, online ministry, home visits, and formation. When pastoral care becomes clinical, legal, financial, or medical in nature, referral to qualified professionals is required.

Mandatory reporting laws shall be obeyed. Confidentiality does not protect ongoing abuse, credible threats, or legal reporting duties. Confession practices must be reviewed under applicable law in each jurisdiction.

Discipline may include admonition, required training, supervision, restriction of faculties, removal from office, suspension, deposition, laicization, or referral to civil authorities.

Due process shall include notice, opportunity to respond, record of decision, and appeal or review where the Presiding Bishop permits. The Presiding Bishop may impose immediate temporary restrictions to protect persons or the Church.

The Church's beauty must never become a hiding place for harm.

Sample Articles and Corporate Resolutions

Resolution 1. Establishment. I, Bishop Robert Horwath, hereby establish the Humanistic Catholic Church as an independent religious body with its Primatial See in Ketchikan, Alaska, organized under a Corporation Sole model where accepted by civil authority.

Resolution 2. Adoption of Foundational Texts. The Constitution, Bylaws, Canons, Humanistic Roman Missal, Book of Rites, Book of Blessings, Priest's Book of Rites and Blessings, and Ordinal are adopted as the initial law and liturgical books of the Church.

Resolution 3. Corporate Seal. The seal of the Church is approved as described in the Articles and may be graphically rendered by the Presiding Bishop or delegate.

Resolution 4. Registered Agent. The Presiding Bishop shall designate and maintain a registered agent or service-of-process contact according to Alaska law and any other jurisdiction in which the Church registers.

Resolution 5. Banking and EIN. The Presiding Bishop or delegate is authorized to obtain an EIN, open accounts, receive gifts, pay lawful expenses, and maintain financial records for religious and charitable purposes.

Resolution 6. National Ministry. The Church may establish online ministries, parishes, missions, dioceses, chaplaincies, education programs, and charitable works throughout the United States, subject to state and federal compliance.

Resolution 7. Ratification. All actions taken in good faith to organize, file, publish, register, and launch the Church are ratified when consistent with this Foundation Edition.

National Expansion Checklist

Before public launch:

- Finalize name availability in Alaska and desired domain/social media handles.
- Prepare Alaska religious corporation articles with required information: name, purpose, property value, title of executing officer, and agent for service of process.
- Prepare seal impression or graphic as required by current practice.
- File with the Alaska Division of Corporations and retain stamped articles.
- Obtain EIN from IRS.
- Open church bank account; adopt finance controls and recordkeeping policy.
- Decide whether to seek IRS determination or rely on church exemption treatment after counsel review.
- Adopt safeguarding policy before ministry to minors or vulnerable adults.
- Adopt clergy application, background check, formation, and credentialing process.
- Create official registers and certificate numbering system.
- Publish affiliation disclaimer: independent Humanistic Catholic Church; not Roman Catholic; not affiliated with the Holy See.

Before operating in another state:

- Review foreign nonprofit registration rules.
- Review charitable solicitation registration rules.
- Review marriage-officiant rules for clergy.
- Review employment, insurance, property, and tax duties.
- Appoint local clergy only by written mandate.
- Require parish financial and sacramental reports.
- Keep one national doctrine, one rite, one registry, and one primatial authority.

Execution and Ratification

By this act, the Humanistic Catholic Church receives its founding legal, theological, canonical, and liturgical framework. This Foundation Edition may be printed, signed, sealed, and placed in the archives of the Primatial See.

The Founder may sign below to ratify the instrument as the initial master document of the Church. Later corrections, additions, and expanded liturgical books may be issued by decree without invalidating this founding text.

Ratification Formula.

I, Bishop Robert Horwath, Sole Founder and First Presiding Bishop of the Humanistic Catholic Church, do hereby establish, adopt, and promulgate these Foundational Texts for the government, worship, rites, ceremonies, sacraments, blessings, records, and public mission of this Church.

Given at the Primatial See of Ketchikan, Alaska, on the date written below.

Signature: _____

The Most Reverend Robert Horwath

Presiding Bishop, Primate, and Corporation Sole

Date: _____

Seal: [Affix or print the seal of the Humanistic Catholic Church]

Witness: _____

Office/Title: _____

Attestation of Registrar or Chancellor: _____

Source Notes and Closing Charge

Legal source notes for review: Alaska law recognizes religious corporations for church or religious society property, religion, charity, education, and public worship. Alaska religious corporation articles must include the name, purpose, estimated property value, title of the person executing the articles, and agent for service of process. Alaska also provides corporate powers, biennial reporting, and succession rules for a person incorporated as corporation sole. IRS guidance states that churches may qualify under section 501(c)(3), that churches are not required to file Form 1023 to be recognized as exempt, and that the IRS looks at a combination of characteristics such as distinct legal existence, creed and worship, ecclesiastical government, doctrine and discipline, ordained ministers, literature, regular services, and schools or formation.

Editorial source note: This Foundation Edition expands the prior Humanistic Catholic Church master document supplied for revision. It preserves that document's founding elements: Ketchikan as Primatial See, Bishop Robert Horwath as sole founder and first presiding bishop, the rule of traditional form and humanistic substance, seven sacraments, Catholic externals, and a humanistic Roman-style missal, blessings book, rites book, and ordinal.

Closing Charge.

Let the Church be beautiful without deception, Catholic in form without false affiliation, humanistic without contempt, disciplined without cruelty, inclusive without confusion, and solemn without superstition. Let every altar become a table of dignity. Let every rite become a school of compassion. Let every minister remember that the purpose of office is service. Let every member know: they belong at the table.