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P. O. P. P.
Points on Parliamentary Procedure

“I make a motion...” or should it be “I move....?” “I need to ask a question, should I do it now or later?” “I would like our Court to donate some money to a very worthy cause, what should I do?” We’ve all heard questions similar to these at one time or another. Many of our members are hesitant to participate in court meetings because they are not comfortable with parliamentary procedure. Many of our court meetings are not productive because we do not use parliamentary procedure to provide an avenue for active discussion and decision-making.

Points on Parliamentary Procedure

When used, **P. O. P. P.** is one of the most effective “tools” that can be used by regents, officers, and members of the Catholic Daughters.

Depending on the level of skills that members have, courts can use simple, informal, and formal parliamentary procedures to navigate and to facilitate decision-making.

Parliamentary Procedure refers to “the rules of democracy-that is, the commonly accepted way in which a group of people come together, present and discuss possible courses of action, and make decisions.

Fundamentally, parliamentary procedure defines how groups, no matter how formal or informal, can most effectively make decisions in a fair, consistent manner and make good use of everyone’s time.

Motion- A motion is a request that something be done or that something is the opinion or wish of the group. Only one motion should be placed before the group at one time. It is debatable and amendable. A motion should be stated as “I move to....” or “I move that....”

Second- Someone from the group must “second” the motion or agree to the motion so that it can be discussed. If the motion is coming from a committee, it does not need a “second.”

Discussion- The motion “on the floor” is discussed by all members, addressing the pros and the cons, etc. The person making the motion cannot argue against the motion.

Re-state the Motion- The Regent or presiding officer re-states the motion before the group votes.

Vote-The group votes by voice-aye/no; by show of hands; by standing; by secret ballot; or by roll call vote.

Classification of Motions

Motions may be classified as: **Main Motions; Incidental Motions; Privileged Motions; and Subsidiary Motions.**

“Incidental How? Privileged When? And, Subsidiary Who?” “What in the world are you talking about?”

Main Motions

Main Motion is a motion, of any particular subject, made to bring before the Court for its consideration. It takes precedence of nothing. That is, it cannot be made when any other question is before the Court. Main Motions yield to all Incidental, Privileged, and Subsidiary Motions. Main motions are debatable and are subject to amendment. Main motions can be subdivided into Original Main Motions and Incidental Main Motions.

Original Main Motions are those which bring before the Court some new subject, generally in the form of a resolution, upon which action by the Court is desired. Incidental Main Motions are those main motions that are incidental to, or relate to the business of the Court, or its past or future action, as, a committee’s report on a resolution referred to it. A motion to accept or adopt the report of a standing committee upon a subject not referred to it is an original main motion. But a motion to adopt or accept a report that was referred to the committee is an incidental main motion. The only difference between the two classes of main motions is that an objection to consider the motion cannot be applied to an incidental main motion. A two-thirds vote can sustain an original motion from consideration.

Incidental Main Motions

Accept or Adopt a Report upon a subject referred to a committee
Adjourn at, or to, a future time
Adjourn, if qualified in any way, or to adjourn when the effect is to dissolve the assembly with no provision for its reconvening
Appoint the Time and Place for the next meeting, if introduced when no business is pending
Amend the Constitution, By-laws, Standing Rules or Resolutions, etc. already adopted
Ratify or Confirm action taken
Rescind or Repeal action taken

Incidental Motions

Incidental Motions are motions that arise out of another question which is pending, and, therefore, takes precedence and must be decided before the question out of which they arise; or, they are incidental to question that has just been pending and should be decided before any other business is taken up. For the most part, they are not debatable and cannot be amended, except where they relate to the division of a question, or to the method of considering a question, or methods of voting, or to the time when nominations or the poll shall be closed. Incidental motions take precedence of subsidiary motions.

The following list comprises most of the Incidental Motions that may arise. Remember: Incidental motions to object to the consideration of a question cannot be made while a subsidiary motion is pending, as the objection is only legitimate against an original main motion just after it is stated, before it has been debated or there has been any subsidiary motion stated.

Incidental Motions

Question of Order and Appeal
Suspensions of the Rules
Objections to the Consideration of a Question
Division of a Question
Division of the Assembly and Motions relating to Method of Voting or to Closing or Reopening the Nominations
Motions relating to Methods of Making, or to Closing or to Reopening Nominations
Request growing out of Business Pending or that has just been pending; as, a Parliamentary Inquiry, a Request for Information, for Leave to Withdraw a Motion, to Read Papers, to be Excused from a Duty, or for any other Privilege

Subsidiary Motions

Subsidiary Motions are such as are applied to other motions for the purpose of most appropriately disposing of them. By means of a subsidiary motion, the original motion may be modified, or action postponed, or it may be referred to a committee to investigate and report, etc. They may be applied to any main motion and when made, they supersede the main motion and must be decided before the main motion can be acted upon. Subsidiary motions, except to lay on the table, the previous question, and postpone indefinitely, may be amended.

The following list of subsidiary motions is arranged in the order of their precedence, the first one having the highest rank.

Subsidiary Motions

Lay on the Table
The Previous Question
Limit or Extend Limits of Debate
Postpone Definitely or to a Certain Time
Commit or Refer, or Recommit
Amend
Postpone Indefinitely

Privileged Motions

Privileged Motions are such as, while not relating to the pending question, are of so great importance as to require them to take precedence of all questions, and, on account of this high privilege, they are not debatable.

They cannot have any subsidiary motion applied to them, except the motions to fix the time to which to adjourn, and to take a recess, which may be amended. But after the Court has actually taken up the orders of the day or question of privileges, debate and amendment are permitted. These motions are as follows, being arranged in order of precedence.

Fix the Time to which to Adjourn (if made while another question is pending)
Adjourn (If unqualified and if it does not have the effect to dissolve the assembly)
Take a Recess (if made when another question is pending)
Raise a Question of Privilege
Call for the Order of the Day

Some Main and Unclassified Motions. Two main motions (to rescind and to ratify) and several motions which cannot be classified but are in common use are as follows:

Take from the Table
Reconsider
Rescind
Renewal of a Motion
Ratify
Dilatory, Absurd or Frivolous Motion
Call of the House

The best way to learn parliamentary procedure is to use the process. Plan a Mock Meeting. Have members make motions, amend them, and vote on them. Have members make Incidental, Subsidiary and Privileged Motions. Identify and discuss “which is which” and of course, refer to Roberts Rules of Order.

References:

Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised