Section 5. The constitutions and canons of the Diocese of West Texas, and of The Episcopal Church, are expressly made integral and paramount parts of the bylaws of each incorporated parish, now existing or hereafter created, in the Diocese, and such constitutions and canons have priority over provisions of any parish bylaws that conflict with, or are inconsistent with, such constitutions and canons.

Section 6. Every parish in this Diocese is an integral and subordinate unit of the Episcopal Church and of the Diocese of West Texas, and the consents of the Bishop and the Episcopal Church Corporation of the Diocese shall be required to any amendment of the articles of incorporation of a parish corporation, to any sale of all, or substantially all, assets of a parish corporation, and to any dissolution of a parish corporation.

CANON 19

The Parish Vestry

Section 1. Each parish shall elect a vestry consisting of not less than three and not more than 18 members, who shall be communicants entitled to vote at the parish meeting. Tenure shall be for a period of three years or until their successors are elected, and one-third of the members of the vestry shall be elected annually. Elections shall be by a majority vote of the valid votes cast for each office. Each communicant shall have one vote on each ballot for each office or position to be filled.

When more than two persons are nominated for a single office, or when two or more persons are to be elected on the same ballot and there are more nominees than twice the number of offices or positions to be filled, and if upon the first ballot there is no majority of the votes cast for one or more of the offices to be filled, a second ballot shall be cast. The nominees, on each ballot shall be candidates receiving the highest number of votes cast on the preceding ballot not to exceed twice the number of the offices remaining to be filled: Except in the case of a tie vote in the last place, in which event the candidates receiving the tie vote shall also be candidates in the next succeeding ballot. Similarly, ballots shall be cast until all offices shall be filled. Vacancies on a vestry occurring during the year may be filled by a majority of the members of the vestry present at a regular meeting.

Section 2. No member of the vestry after serving on a vestry for a full term or eighteen (18) months or more of an unexpired term shall be eligible to serve again on the same vestry for a full year after such service.

Section 3. From the members of the vestry so elected the rector shall annually appoint a senior warden and the vestry shall annually elect a junior warden and a secretary. If there be no rector, the vestry shall elect both wardens. The vestry shall
annually elect from the communicant membership a treasurer of the parish, who may or may not be a member of the vestry. The vestry may also elect a parish chancellor from the communicant membership, who shall be the legal adviser of the parish. In the absence of the rector, the senior warden or, in his/her absence, the junior warden shall be in charge of the parish.

Section 4. It shall be the duty of the vestry to elect a rector; to cooperate with him/her for the spiritual welfare of his/her cure; to see that he/she is properly supported, and that his/her salary is paid with regularity and punctuality; to make provision for the payment of the Diocesan Apportionment and the Church Pension Fund Assessments; to make and execute all contracts for the erection, furnishings and preservation of the church edifice and other church properties; to comply with the Canons of the Church in regard to surety bonds and audits; to provide out of the funds of the parish a sufficient supply of vestments and books to be used in public worship, and also the elements for the celebration of the Holy Communion; to maintain order and decorum during the time of public worship; to make proper provision for sacred music, subject to the control of the rector; and generally as constituted agents of the parish to transact all temporal business. The above referenced audits, which are directed by the Canons of the Episcopal Church, if not completed by the congregation, may, at the direction of the Executive Board, be overseen by the Diocesan Finance Committee.

Section 5. It shall be the duty of every member of the vestry to attend regularly the meetings of the vestry.

In the event a member of the vestry shall fail for a period of six months to attend vestry meetings, the vestry shall give written notice to such member of the vestry that failure to attend the next regular meeting shall be evidence of inability or lack of desire to serve. In such case, if said member of the vestry does not attend the next meeting, the vestry shall declare the office vacant and notify said member of the vestry of their action.

Section 6. It shall be the duty of the wardens to keep watch over the church property and to see that sextons and other employees of the parish perform their duties. When the office of rector becomes vacant, it shall be their duty to give notice thereof immediately to the Bishop.

Section 7. It shall be the duty of the secretary of the vestry to take charge of the records of the vestry and to keep correct minutes of the proceedings of all vestry meetings, and to deliver the same to his/her successor. Immediately after the first meeting of the vestry following the annual election, the secretary shall certify to the Bishop the names and addresses of the officers of the parish and other members of the vestry.

Section 8. It shall be the duty of the treasurer of the parish to take charge of all
funds collected for the purposes of the parish, and to disburse the same under the
direction of the vestry, provided that the treasurer shall promptly pay over to the
rector the communion alms as provided by the canons of the Church, and to the
Bishop the open offering at the time of the Bishop's official visitation for
confirmation. The treasurer shall keep full and accurate accounts, in a system of
bookkeeping approved by the vestry, of all finances and financial transactions of the
parish. The treasurer shall make an annual report thereof on and in accordance with
the standard parochial report form authorized by the General Convention, and shall
transmit the same to the rector or, if there be no rector, to the senior warden at least
one week prior to the annual Council.

Section 9.
(a) Meetings of the vestry shall be held at least once every two months at such
time, place and frequency as the vestry itself shall determine at its first meeting
of each calendar year. A special meeting may be held at any time at the call of
the rector, or of the vestry officer of senior authority if there be no rector,
provided that due notice shall be given to each member. In case there has been
no meeting of the vestry for a period of two months, then one of the wardens or
any three members may call such a meeting, provided that the rector and all
members of the vestry are duly notified.
(b) The rector or, in his/her absence, the vestry officer of senior authority shall
preside at the meeting of the vestry.
(c) A quorum of the vestry shall consist of a majority of the lay members of the
vestry.

CANON 20
Congregational Records and Reports

Section 1. It shall be the duty of every minister-in-charge of a congregation to
maintain an accurate permanent record of the baptisms, confirmations, marriages,
burials, baptized persons and communicant membership of the congregation, and to
record all occasions of public worship and official acts within the same.

Section 2.
(a) It shall be the duty of every minister-in-charge of a congregation, with the
cooperation of the treasurer, to submit to the Bishop a complete report form
authorized by the General Convention, on or before the earlier occurring date
of the following:
   (1) At least three days prior to the Annual Council; or
   (2) The first day of February.
(b) The following persons shall be classified as "Domicile Unknown"
or "In Community but Inactive" and shall be included as communicant losses
in the annual parochial report:
   (1) any communicant who has permanently moved from the city or vicinity
of the congregation to a distant point and, so far is known to the
minister-in-charge, is not a communicant of the congregation in good standing as defined in the General Constitution and General Canons of the Church;
(2) any communicant living in the community and, so far as is known to the minister-in-charge, is not a member of the congregation in good standing as defined in the General Constitution and General Canons of the Church;
(3) any communicant who for a period of one year cannot be found and, so far as is known to the minister-in-charge, is not a communicant of the congregation in good standing as defined in the General Constitution and General Canons of the Church;
(4) any communicant who has communicated to the minister-in-charge desire to be classified as inactive.
(c) It shall be the duty of every minister-in-charge of a congregation to maintain a record of inactive members.

Section 3. A communicant of this Church changing, by removal or otherwise, connection with a congregation shall secure a letter of transfer from the minister-in-charge of the congregation in which such communicant was last enrolled. The minister-in-charge of a congregation into which a communicant removes shall not record the name on the parish list until such letter of transfer shall be delivered or a satisfactory reason given why such a letter cannot be obtained.

Section 4. If there be no minister-in-charge, the Senior Warden of a parish (or in the absence of the Senior Warden, the Junior Warden) or the Bishop's Warden of a mission shall discharge the duties of the minister-in-charge stated in this canon.

CANON 21

Alienation or Encumbrance of Real Estate

No real property, consecrated or unconsecrated, of any congregation, institution or other diocesan body, shall be alienated or encumbered by the vestry, bishop's committee, trustees, board or other body authorized to hold, manage or administer the same without the consent of the Episcopal Church Corporation in West Texas; and no such property that is consecrated shall be alienated or encumbered unless the previous consent of the Bishop acting with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee of the Diocese, is also obtained.

CANON 22

Electon of a Bishop

Section 1. The election of a Bishop, a Bishop Coadjutor, or a Suffragan Bishop shall be in the following manner: