

Constitution of the Australian Catholic Theological Association

as Revised at Annual General Meeting, 5 July 2014

ARTICLE 1: THE NAME

The full name of the association shall be:

THE AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC THEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION¹

Preamble:

“Sacred Theology has a relationship with the magisterium of the Church and with the whole community of Christians. It functions primarily as a mediator in some way between the faith of the Church and its magisterium. Sacred Theology is concerned with recognising how the Christian community translates its faith into practice, and with appreciating those insights, expressions, those questions and tendencies which the Holy Spirit promotes among the people of God. By appropriate scientific methods, theology ought to examine this faith as it is practised and formulated, so that it may conform to the work of God and the doctrinal traditions handed on faithfully by the Church in order to propose solutions to those questions which arise from its encounter with daily life, with history and with humanity’s striving after truth. In this way theology will assist the magisterium always to enlighten and guide the Church – a magisterium which is never above the word of God but its servant.”

Paul VI, Address to an International Conference on the Theology of Vatican II,
1 October 1966; AAS, 58 (1966) 892.

ARTICLE II: THE AIMS

The aims of the association shall be:

- 2.1 To foster research in theology within the context of the Catholic tradition. This shall include but not be limited to Systematic Theology, Fundamental Theology, Moral Theology, Historical Theology, Biblical Theology and Practical Theology.
- 2.2 To promote the dialogue between Christian faith and Australian society.
- 2.3 To be a forum for theological conversation among its members and to assist their professional development as theologians.
- 2.4 To assist members to promote theological formation and education in their respective faculties, departments, colleges and schools.
- 2.5 To give appropriate support to any member who may be accused of doctrinal error
- 2.6 To cooperate with the Australian Bishops’ Conference and other appropriate bodies in responding to doctrinal and other related issues that arise from time to time.

¹ Abbreviation, ACTA.

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- 2.7 To take up issues facing the church and society and to make recommendations as it sees fit to the appropriate people or groups.

ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

3.1 Members:

- 3.1.1 A person may be considered for membership of the association who is a Catholic holding an appropriate postgraduate degree in theology AND is currently teaching theology at tertiary level or is actively involved in theological scholarship.
- 3.1.2 A member enjoys all the rights and duties contained in this Constitution and its By-Laws.
- 3.1.3 To become a member a person shall:
- ♦ be nominated by a current member of the Association;
 - ♦ have their application considered by the executive of the Association;
 - ♦ be proposed to the annual general meeting by the executive of the Association;
 - ♦ be approved by a majority vote of the members present at the annual general meeting.

3.2 Associate Members:

- 3.2.1 The executive may invite to be an associate member any Catholic who is currently undertaking a research degree in theology and would seek full membership at a later date.
- 3.2.2 The executive may also invite to be an associate member a person who is currently engaged in teaching theology at a tertiary level, and where scholarly exchange with Catholic theologians would be mutually beneficial
- 3.2.3 An associate member is not eligible to hold office in the Association, but may participate fully in the annual Conference and may be present at the annual general meeting.

3.3 Life Members of the Australian Catholic Theological Association:

- 3.3.1 The award of Life Member is made in recognition of outstanding service to the Australian Catholic Theological Association.

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- 3.3.2 The award of Life Membership confers honorary membership of ACTA (i.e., no membership fees will be required).
- 3.4 Fellows of the Australian Catholic Theological Association:
 - 3.4.1 The award of Fellow is the highest honour the Australian Catholic Theological Association may bestow on an individual and is awarded in recognition of outstanding contribution over a sustained period to theological scholarship and exemplary service to the discipline of theology and the Church.
 - 3.4.2 The number of Fellows of the Association will not normally exceed 10% of the number of full members of the Association.
 - 3.4.3 The award of Fellow will confer honorary life membership of ACTA (i.e., no membership fees will be required).
 - 3.4.4 Those awarded the honour of Fellow will be entitled to cite this honour in their publications and curriculum vitae.
- 3.5 Nominations for the award of Life Member or Fellow:
 - 3.5.1 A nomination for the award of Life Member or Fellow of ACTA must be forwarded to the Secretary of ACTA at least 12 weeks before the Annual General Meeting.
 - 3.5.2 Nominations will be reviewed by the Executive or a Nominations Committee established by the Executive, and, if approved by the Executive/Nominations Committee, will be proposed by the Executive/Nominations Committee to the Annual General Meeting of ACTA.
 - 3.5.3 Nominations must be made in writing on an official ACTA Nomination form. The nomination must be proposed by a financial full member of the Association and seconded by a financial full member of the Association.
 - 3.5.4 Normally there would be at most one or two awards each year.

ARTICLE IV: ADMINISTRATION

- 4.1 The ultimate authority in this association shall reside in the members duly assembled in general meeting, for which a month's notice has been given. Ten members or one-third of the membership, whichever is the less, shall constitute a quorum.
- 4.2 Between general meetings this association shall be governed by an executive board consisting of a president, a vice-president and a secretary.
- 4.3 There shall also be a treasurer. The treasurer need not be a member of the Association. The person is appointed by the executive board.

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- 4.4 The executive board shall meet at least at the time of the annual general meeting. The president may call meetings of the executive board at other times.
- 4.5 The duties of the president shall be:
- 4.5.1 to act as the chief executive officer of the association;
 - 4.5.2 to preside at general meetings and at meetings of the executive board;
 - 4.5.3 to communicate with the appropriate representative of the episcopal conference.
- 4.6 The duties of the vice-president shall be:
- 4.6.1 to assist the president in his/her duties;
 - 4.6.2 to act as a substitute for the president in the latter's absence from a general meeting or from a meeting of the executive board.
- 4.7 The duties of the secretary shall be:
- 4.7.1 to record the minutes of the meetings of the executive board and to keep the records and papers of the association;
 - 4.7.2 to conduct the correspondence and ordinary administrative affairs of the association according to the instructions of the executive board;
 - 4.7.3 to issue official communications to members at the direction of the president;
 - 4.7.4 to record the minutes of general meetings.
- 4.8 The duties of the treasurer shall be:
- 4.8.1 to receive the funds of the Association and make the disbursements as provided for by the By-Laws, the executive board, or a general meeting;
 - 4.8.2 to submit to the annual general meeting a financial statement of the income and expenses of the association;
 - 4.8.2 to submit on request a financial statement to the members of the executive board.
- 4.9 The president, vice-president and secretary shall be elected by secret ballot at the annual general meeting; they shall take office at the end of the business meeting at which they are elected and shall serve for approximately one year.
- 4.10 If the position of president falls vacant between annual general meetings, the vice-president shall become the president; if the position of vice-president becomes vacant, the president shall, after consulting the other member of the executive, choose someone to fill the vacancy.

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ARTICLE V: ACTIVITIES

- 5.1 General meetings of the association shall be held annually. The meetings shall usually consist of a section or sections devoted to theology, and a section devoted to the business of the association.

ARTICLE VI: CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

- 6.1 Motions to change the constitution should be in the hands of the president at least a month before a general meeting, and such motions shall require a two-thirds majority.
- 6.2 Motions to add, delete or change by-laws may be moved without notice at a general meeting and requires a simple majority.

THE AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC THEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION BY-LAWS

1. Members of the association shall pay as annual fee an amount determined from time to time by the Annual General Meeting.
2. Those who do not pay fees for two consecutive years will automatically lose membership.
3. Those who allow membership to lapse and who wish to rejoin may be nominated and pay the membership fee as new members.
4. Special interest groups, such as moral theology, may be formed within ACTA. These groups must be ratified by the ACTA executive, have a membership of at least 10 full members, and have a convener appointed to liaise with the ACTA Executive.
