

## PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE –Script for workshop

- ❖ What is **Parliamentary Procedure**? It is the name given to the tradition of rules and customs that has grown up in the civilized world for dealing with problems that arise during meetings. Parliamentary Authority is the book of rules the group uses to govern its meeting procedures. Until I started my studies into this, I did not realize there are various versions of parliamentary procedure out there on the market. Just go to website and type in pp and many different versions come up. I just always thought there is one – Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised commonly abbreviated RONR.
- ❖ So, I would like to give you a **brief history** - Although originally derived from practices in the English Parliament, PP as it exists in America today has gradually evolved a little differently. Henry Martyn Robert, who was an engineer and retired from the U.S. Army had great influence on the development of this as we know it today. He first published his Robert’s Rules of Order in 1876 while a major in the Army in 176 pages which he felt was simple enough for all to use. However, he started to receive questions which were not clearly answered in the book so he began to revise. And now his grandson Henry M. Robert III is among team chosen to continue the updating and revision of the book. This manual is now in its 11<sup>th</sup> Edition under the title of Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised and contains 669 pages of text, plus tables and index. This edition supersedes all earlier editions as the parliamentary authority in organizations. Older editions have significant differences in the rules they contain and in page and section references. Because Robert’s Rules of Order has been in use for so long, some of the earliest editions are no longer protected by copyright and hence have been republished and revised by different individuals. Some even have the titles “modern edition” and “twenty-first edition” but these are not official, updated version. So in CDA our Bylaws state Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised is the parliamentary authority. Article XX, page 49. The average person does not have to know this complete book to function and chair a meeting, just the basics is necessary, which I will attempt to cover today in our short workshop. For me, who is studying to be a registered parliamentarian, I found comfort in the fact that it states, it is

impossible to remember all that is included in the book; however, the fact that you can find the answers quickly is what is needed. I completed my first step which is to become a member of NAP by passing my first exam. Now I'm studying in the big book.

- ❖ **WHY?** 1) To protect the right to participate; 2) To protect the right to make motions; 3) To protect the right to debate; 4) To protect the right to vote. Protecting people's rights is basis for PP. A prime value is that it provides processes through which an organization, large or small, can effectively work out satisfactory solutions to the greatest number of questions in the least amount of time. It keeps order and makes meetings run smoothly when everyone is in agreement. It allows the group to get the business done and resolve any issues that may arise along the way.
- ❖ **NOW**, have you ever attended a meeting like this?? Not in Catholic Daughters? Right? But it doesn't have to be like this if we just try to work together to make decisions for the good of the order. Too many people may try to talk at once. Some may not be able to get a word in edgewise. People may wander off the subject Or may have even lost sight of what the proper subject is. So, to prevent this, one person needs to be in control usually the chair or regent as in CDA. She may appoint a parliamentarian if she so chooses but the regent must keep order at her meeting. Which brings us to the next slide.....
- ❖ **WHO ENFORCES?** Who do you think enforces the rules? Is it the parliamentarian or the chair/regent?  
It is the chair/regent in our organization who enforces the rules. She may get advice from the parliamentarian but the chair enforces the rules. The parliamentarian's role is purely advisory. ONLY the chair, not the parliamentarian, can rule on the proper application of the rules.
- ❖ **WHERE SHOULD WE USE?**
- ❖ **FIRST OF ALL – AT OUR LOCAL COURT MEETINGS** – How many of you have an appointed Parliamentarian? We need to use pp at every court meeting every time we meet for the reasons stated earlier.
- ❖ **AND THEN AT CONVENTIONS** - like our state and national conventions where we have over 600 delegates in attendance and maybe 100 of these delegates want to be able to talk and express their opinions. Right??

**How do we get to speak at a meeting?** You can raise your hand or stand up and wait to be recognized. When the chair designates you to be the next speaker, you make a motion. This same procedure is used in debate. So,

- ❖ **What is a motion?** It is a formal proposal by a member, in a meeting, that the group take certain action. You have an idea or proposal on a topic that you would like the group to consider, so you make a motion. When you are authorized to speak, you are said to “have the floor.” When finished, you sit down, and thus “yield the floor.”
- ❖ **TYPES OF MOTIONS....**There are so many different types of motions one could spend days just attempting to explain all of them. I will touch on the ones that are common to us in the local courts and used in the local courts and during conventions, particularly the national convention. I don't hear them so much at state conventions as we usually don't have as many amendments and resolutions to discuss.
- ❖ **MAIN** – First of all, there is a main motion. It is one whose introduction brings business before an assembly. There should be no debate on a matter before a motion has been made. Okay, I will repeat, there is no debate on a matter before a motion has been made. Not even the little groups visiting in the back of the room. So, Only one main motion may be before the assembly for action at a time. I think we all know how to make a motion and if not, there is a form in your convention bag to use here at convention or at your own court meetings. A motion must be seconded in order to be considered by the group. WHY? Because it shows that at least two members want the proposal considered. It does not, and I stress, DOES NOT mean that the person that seconded agrees with the motion. If there is no second, the motion dies for lack of a second. And you do not have to be recognized nor stand to second a motion. Main motions are debatable and subject to amendment which require a majority vote to pass. What's a majority? One over half. Then the debate begins to discuss whether the proposed action should or should not be taken. Will discuss rules of debate on another slide.
- ❖ **The next motion is a SUBSIDIARY MOTION** – Subsidiary motions assist the assembly in treating or disposing of a main motion ( and sometimes other motions.) If an embarrassing main motion has been brought up, a member can propose to get rid of this question without

bringing it to a direct vote, by moving to **Postpone Indefinitely** or postpone till next meeting. Also **Lay on the Table** –which means it is set aside temporarily without setting a time for resuming consideration, but with the provision that it can be taken up again whenever a majority decides to do so. A main motion may also be **amended** which always occurs at national conventions when we are dealing with the amendments to the bylaws. Or it can be **referred** to committee which also happened at last national convention when considering the name change of our organization. Another subsidiary motion is to move the **Previous Question** which brings the motion to an immediate vote without any further discussion. This is also a common motion to make that is used at conventions. All of these are considered subsidiary or secondary motions. And need another hour to go into detail.

❖ **Then we have the Privileged Motion** – Unlike subsidiary motions, privileged motions do not relate to the pending business at hand. They have to do with special matters of immediate and overriding importance, which, without debate, should be allowed to interrupt the consideration of anything else. Such as, if you feel the program or order of business is not being followed, a member can make a **Call for the Orders of the Day**, to enforce the schedule. Another motion can be **Raise a question of privilege**, which permits a member to interrupt pending business to state an urgent request such as noise around making it hard to hear, inadequate ventilation. **Recess and adjourn** are both privileged motions.

❖ **Then we go to Incidental Motions** – There are many types of these motions which are uncommon for us to use in our local court meetings. However, there are a few which I will explain which we use at conventions. If you want to look up the incidental motions in the BIG Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised 11<sup>th</sup> Edition which I call the big black book --- Chapter VIII deals with these motions. Page 247.....

Incidental Motions relate, in different ways, to the pending business at hand. Actually in our local courts, I don’t feel we get into these; however, I will briefly explain a few: **Point of order** – For example, if the chair is stating the question on a motion that has not been seconded, then a member can call out immediately point of order. Or if a member notices a breach of the rules, he can call out immediately point of order. And

point to be made here is that the question of order must be raised promptly at the time the breach occurs. After debate on a motion has begun, no matter how clearly out of order the motion may be – it is too late to call for a point of order. **Appeal** –The assembly delegates to the presiding officer the authority and duty to make necessary rulings on questions of parliamentary law; however, if two members feel the chair’s decision is not correct, they have the right to Appeal from her decision on such a question. Members have no right to criticize a ruling of the chair unless they appeal from her decision. **Suspend the Rules** – When an assembly wishes to do something during a meeting that it cannot do without violating one or more of its regular rules, it can adopt a motion to Suspend the Rules provided it does not conflict with the organization’s bylaws. This would apply to Standing Rules of a court. **Objection to the Consideration of a Question** – When a main motion has been made and a member believes that it would do harm for the motion to even be discussed in the meeting, she can raise an Objection to the Consideration of a Question. Don’t know that I have ever heard this one used. **Division of a Question** – When a motion relating to a single subject contains several parts, each of which is capable of standing as a complete proposition if the others are removed, the parts can be separated and considered independently by adoption of the motion for Division of a Question. (simply put, divide the question). **Consideration by Paragraph** - If a main motion is in the form of a resolution or document containing several paragraphs or sections which could be most efficiently handled by opening each paragraph or section one at a time, then a motion can be proposed for Consideration by Paragraph. Not a common motion to hear. Now here is one we are more familiar with – **Division of the Assembly** –If a member feels the results of a voice vote or even a vote by show of hands is not correct, he can demand a division of the assembly. Then the chair will usually order a count by standing vote. However, if a member feels the division of the assembly is inconclusive and the chair neglected to order a count, then a member can move that a vote be taken (a) by ballot; (b) by roll call, or (c) by a counted standing vote. These are called **Motions Relating to Methods of Voting and the Polls** – There are several other types of **Requests and Inquiries** that a member can make in connection with business pending,

such as **Parliamentary Inquiry, Request for Information or Point of Information as we know it Request for permission to withdraw or modify a motion, to read papers, to be excused from a duty or any other privilege.** (Page 131 in brief or pg 293 in Black Book)

- ❖ **Motions that bring a question again before an assembly** – There are several different motions that can be used such as **Take from the Table**, Which refers to a matter that had earlier been laid on the table, **Rescind, Repeal, Amend Something Previously Adopted, Reconsider.** Sometimes either after reflection or because we learn of new facts, you may decide that the group made an incorrect decision or decide to do it differently or the group had decided not to pursue a motion that had been adopted earlier. The above motions that I listed can be made but they do have limitations as to who can make them or time limits involved. Okay lets start with the motion to reconsider – It can only be made by a member who voted on the winning side or if the motion was defeated then by someone who voted for defeat. Anyone can second the motion. And it can only be made on the same day/meeting on which the original vote was taken. Or in the case of a convention where we convene for 3 days, during the convention sessions. Only a negative outcome on a motion can be reconsidered, but not a vote in the affirmative. So now the meeting is over and we decide about changing a decision and it is too late to reconsider , we can rescind the motion at the very next meeting. A person can make the motion to rescind regardless of how she voted on the original motion and there is no time limit on making the motion. However, previous notice must be given of an intent to make a motion to rescind so members are alerted ahead of time to this fact. And previous notice may be made in two ways – either by announcing at a meeting immediately preceding the meeting at which the motion is to be made OR by having the secretary include notice of intent in the call of the meeting. (written notice of time and place of next meeting.) OR we can amend something previously adopted. For example, a court voted to donate \$1000 to a charity and after meeting is over and careful consideration given to the budget and funds, one decides that's too much money to donate, this is when you make a motion to amend something

previously adopted regardless of how you voted on original motion; however, previous notice must be given as in the case to reconsider.

❖ Moving forward as I said earlier, we could talk about motions for days, but a motion has been made and is on the floor, so we need to discuss

❖ **RULES FOR DEBATE –**

❖ **Speech Limits in Debate** – You may speak in debate twice on any debatable motion on the same day for up to ten minutes. However, if the standing rules have set other limits, then that has to be adhered to. You can increase or decrease the time or the number of times someone can speak by making a Motion to Limit or Extend the Limits of Debate. This requires a 2/3 vote.

❖ **Preference in Recognition** – As a rule, the maker of the motion is the first to speak on it immediately after the chair has stated the motion. The chair then recognizes the person who rises first after the previous speaker has finished and sat down. You should not signal, wave your hand, etc. that you want to speak next. You **MUST** wait until the person speaking finishes and sits down. Also, even tho one can speak on a motion two times in the same day, someone who has not yet spoken on it has preference over anyone who has already spoken. **AND** the chair needs to alternate between the pro and con speakers. So if there has just been a speech in favor, the next speaker who is against it has preference over someone else.

❖ **Stick to the Subject** – Your speech must relate to the motion under consideration which is called **GERMANE**. It must have bearing on whether the pending motion should or should not be adopted.

❖ **Debate Issues, not personalities** – I think this is self explanatory. You may speak for or against the idea of a motion, but must avoid personalities. Under no circumstances can you attach or question the motives of another member.

❖ **Formalities That Avoid Personalities** – Remember to always address the chair when you are speaking and this will decrease the danger that debate will become personal. You don't say, "Janice, that argument you just made is ridiculous." Instead you might say, "Worthy Regent, the last speaker's final point really does not make sense." Even when you want to ask the treasurer how much money is in the treasury, one addresses the

chair “Worthy Regent, would the treasurer please tell us how much money the court has left in the treasury.”

- ❖ **Close Debate immediately** - Many times, members will not just want to limit debate, but to close it altogether. The motion to close debate is called *the motion for the Previous Question*. It must be voted on and requires a 2/3 vote to pass and is not debatable. This is a common motion to make.
- ❖ **ARE YOU READY FOR THE QUESTION?** - When debate is finished, the regent moves on and asks if the members are ready for the question. The regent then rereads the motion so everyone is clear on what they are voting on and then calls for the vote. Votes can be taken by different methods. The most common is a voice vote, which I failed to include on this slide, so please add.
- ❖ **Standing Vote** – When a 2/3 vote is required, not a majority, the chair should take a standing vote. Or
- ❖ **Show of Hands** – Is commonly used in small groups instead of voice or standing vote.
- ❖ **Counted Vote** – When the chair is unsure of results, they will request a counted vote. And then the one we are all too familiar with, the
- ❖ **Ballot Vote** – I think we all know what this is.  
When the vote is completed, the regent announces the results
  - 1) Reporting which side “has it”;
  - 2) Declaring the motion is adopted or lost; and
  - 3) Indicating the effect of the vote
  - 4) Announcing the next item of business, if any.
- ❖ **AMENDMENTS** –When a group is debating a motion and someone feels the proposal can be improved if it is changed in some way, you can propose an amendment. Amendments can be made in various ways and should say exactly where in the main motion the change is to be made and precisely what words to use. Remember, a vote on an amendment does not decide the outcome of the main motion. An amendment must be voted on first, and after adoption, the main motion is voted on as amended. Please always write amendments to a motion unless it is simple, but definitely eliminates confusion. These are the three types of amendments for simple word changes. Because of time restraints, I will not elaborate on each.



❖ **Insert or Add Words**

❖ **Strike Out Words or**

❖ **Strike Out and Insert Words**

❖ **AMENDING PARAGRAPHS** – Just as there are 3 forms of amendments that apply to words, there are also 3 forms of amendments that apply to whole paragraphs that parallel the 3 forms of amendments for words.

❖ **Insert or Add A Paragraph**

❖ **Strike Out a Paragraph or**

❖ **Substitute.**

❖ **Parliamentary Procedures** – Today I have covered a few simple rules relating to parliamentary procedure. The best way to learn the procedures is to use the process. And it is definitely a good idea for all to at least have the Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised in Brief. Robert’s Rules Association also maintains a website, at [www.robertsrules.com](http://www.robertsrules.com) . They maintain a “Question and Answer Forum” that one may post queries and conduct discussion about any aspect of parliamentary procedures.

So I know that all of your meetings will run smoothly from now on without any issues. Right????

❖ **QUOTE – BY HENRY M. ROBERT** - *In a land where perhaps most persons are members of one or more societies, some knowledge of parliamentary procedure may be justly regarded as a necessary part of the education of every man and woman.....*

❖ **REFERENCES –**

- 1) Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised 11<sup>th</sup> Edition;
- 2) National Association of Parliamentarians;
- 3) Catholic Daughters of the Americas Bylaws;
- 4) Tools of the Trade;

And your last page is a Robert’s Rules Cheat Sheet giving you the proper terminology for motions and other information. (Available on website)

Also, each court received this quick reference guide from State this past term which can be used in your local courts and if you attended the national convention last year, you will have this yellow reference guide.

These are Good tools to take to the meetings.