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## **PART ONE**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

The ministry of diocesan priests is both joyous and challenging. Through the Sacrament of Holy Orders, the priest is changed in the depth of his being, to resemble Jesus, the Great High Priest, who died and rose for the salvation of all. Through the same Sacrament, the priest shares in Jesus' role as Head and Shepherd of the Church. As Pope John Paul II has written:

In the Church and on behalf of the Church, priests are a sacramental representation of Jesus Christ, the Head and Shepherd, authoritatively proclaiming His Word, repeating His acts of forgiveness and His offer of salvation, particularly in Baptism, Penance and the Eucharist, showing his loving concern to the point of a total gift of self for the flock...In a word, priests exist and act in order to proclaim the Gospel to the world and to build up the Church in the name and person of Christ, the Head and Shepherd. (Pastores Dabo Vobis, 15).

Since each priest speaks and acts in the name and person of Christ, he must grow ever more conscious of his responsibility to exercise genuine pastoral charity. His life must mirror Christ's generous love—His loving obedience to the Father and His redeeming love for the human family. There are abundant daily opportunities for a priest to touch the lives he serves with Christ's truth and love.

So many priests attest to the joy they experience in proclaiming the Word, celebrating the Sacraments and entering into the lives of their parishioners. Further, the priest's style of life must also be a living proclamation of Jesus who was poor, chaste, and obedient. In this way, the priest is equipped to help those he is called to serve to open their hearts widely to the Gospel of Christ.

In order to fulfill such a demanding ministry, the priest must possess a wide range of sound human qualities, a solid and ongoing intellectual formation, and a deep spirituality—a living relationship to Christ. The priest's interior life must develop through daily and sustained prayer, the daily celebration of Mass, the regular reception of the Sacrament of Penance, and sound spiritual direction. Although every baptized person is called to holiness, the priest is called to a specific vocation to holiness. He is called to nurture his specific relationship with Jesus as Head and Shepherd of the Church precisely so that he can lead those he serves to genuine holiness of life.

### **B. IMPLEMENTATION**

The implementation of this Priest Personnel Policy occurs on the date indicated in the decree of the Archbishop who alone has the competency for the correct interpretation and alteration of the policy.

## **PART TWO**

### **SECRETARIAT FOR MINISTERIAL LEADERSHIP, OFFICES RELATED TO PRIESTS, PRIEST PERSONNEL BOARD**

#### **A. SECRETARY FOR MINISTERIAL LEADERSHIP**

The Secretary for Ministerial Leadership reports to the Archbishop.

His responsibilities within the Secretariat for Ministerial Leadership include implementing those aspects of archdiocesan planning and policy specifically relevant to this secretariat. He is responsible for the general coordination of work of the offices in this secretariat. These include the Office of Clergy Personnel, the Office for Continuing Formation for Priests, the Office for Priest Formation and Vocations, the Office of Pastoral Care of Priests, the Office of the Permanent Diaconate, and the Delegate for Consecrated Life. He is to convene regular meetings with office heads individually and as a group. He is also to review and recommend for approval the budgets of all offices within the secretariat.

The Secretary for Ministerial Leadership, as the Archbishop's Vicar for Clergy, possesses the canonical faculties necessary for the exercise of his office and is competent to grant the pastoral faculties of the archdiocese. He serves as head of the office of clergy personnel.

Requests for archdiocesan faculties are to be directed to the Archbishop or the Secretary for Ministerial Leadership.

He is also the primary archdiocesan contact for priests with personal problems and is responsible to intervene in situations where the good of the individual or the Church demands it. This intervention consists of securing appropriate evaluation of the problem, requiring treatment, and insuring the recommended aftercare.

He is also the primary archdiocesan contact for those priests who, for personal reasons or reason of health, have been granted a leave of absence from priestly ministry.

He is Chairman of the Priest Personnel Board, an ex-officio member of the Priest Council, the Priest Retirement Board, and the Priestly Formation Board.

His responsibilities outside the secretariat include membership on the Archdiocesan Administrative Board and communication with the other secretariats. He is also called upon at times to represent the Archbishop or the archdiocese to the priests, religious and laity.

When a priest of the archdiocese dies, the Secretary for Ministerial Leadership supervises the communication and planning of the funeral.

The Secretary for Ministerial Leadership is appointed by the Archbishop after consultation with the Priest Personnel Board.

He is also responsible for the implementation and administration of the Priest Personnel Policy. As chairman of the Priest Personnel Board, he coordinates all details related to the work of the board in archdiocesan as well as religious clergy appointments. He is also responsible for maintaining contact with priests from other dioceses or religious communities who are residing within the archdiocese. He will remain aware of the purpose and duration of their stay as well as ensuring that they have received the permission of their legitimate diocesan bishop or superior to be in the archdiocese.

As chairman of the Priest Personnel Board, the Secretary for Ministerial Leadership will periodically establish a committee to review clergy remuneration as well as benefits and make the appropriate recommendations to the Archbishop.

He is responsible to provide assistance to archdiocesan priests in all matters related to their assignments and is the primary contact for Washington priests outside the archdiocese. He is also one of the primary contacts for priests on leave of absence for reason of health or personal reasons.

The Secretary for Ministerial Leadership assists in implementing the Priest Personnel Policy of the archdiocese, especially relating to clergy sexual misconduct (See Appendix A: Child Protection Policy), including the following duties and responsibilities:

1. Assist in the administrative process to determine credibility of allegations of clergy sexual misconduct;
2. Coordinate assistance to alleged victims of clergy sexual misconduct according to archdiocesan policies and procedures;
3. Update priest personnel files relative to allegations and actions taken by the archdiocese;
4. Prepare reports for the Clergy Task Force;
5. Maintain regular contact with clergy who, as a part of their treatment plan, exercise their ministry under supervision, and those undergoing prayer and penance;
6. Prepare reports for periodic review process with clergy;
7. Provide assistance with counseling services to priests;
8. Serve as a liaison between the archdiocese and a treatment facility during the time of evaluation of a priest, inpatient treatment as well as during the period of aftercare.

## **B. DIRECTOR OF CONTINUING FORMATION FOR PRIESTS**

The Director of Continuing Formation for Priests reports to the Secretary for Ministerial Leadership.

The Director is responsible, in consultation with the Continuing Formation Committee, for the coordination of priests' retreats including scheduling and obtaining appropriate retreat masters.

The Director is responsible for all details related to sponsoring the programs mandated by the Priest Personnel Policy.

The Director is responsible for sponsoring a variety of continuing education/formation courses, workshops, and seminars. He is also to keep accurate records of the priests' continuing formation .

The Director is responsible for coordinating priests' sabbaticals by providing information and assistance to those seeking permission for sabbaticals. As the primary archdiocesan contact for those on sabbatical, he is responsible for insuring their appropriate financial remuneration.

The Director is the primary archdiocesan contact for priests pursuing graduate studies. He is also responsible for the disbursement of grants.

Working with the Secretary for Ministerial Leadership, the Director of Continuing Formation for Priests will conduct an annual assessment of the needs of the archdiocese for ordained personnel with advanced degrees. A report of these needs will be submitted to the Archbishop.

In collaboration with the Secretary for Ministerial Leadership, the Director of Continuing Formation for Priests is to coordinate the Newly Ordained Program established within the archdiocese. At the direction of the Archbishop and in collaboration with the Secretary for Ministerial Leadership and the Continuing Formation Committee, the Director of Continuing Formation for Priests is responsible for the details related to the bi-annual Priest Convocation.

## **C. DELEGATE FOR CONSECRATED LIFE**

The Delegate for Consecrated Life is a member of a religious congregation who acts on behalf of the Archbishop to provide special pastoral service for men and women religious. The delegate is canonically responsible to the Archbishop and administratively responsible to the Secretary for Ministerial Leadership.

The Delegate for Consecrated Life is to provide service to congregations, their major superiors and individual religious as it affects their ministry in the Archdiocese.

The Delegate for Consecrated Life encourages inter-congregational collaboration and acts as a liaison between archdiocesan structures and religious congregations.

The Delegate for Consecrated Life also participates in local, regional and national meetings, conferences and seminars that bring together the leadership of religious congregations.

The Delegate for Consecrated Life seeks to offer a ministry of support and service to men and women religious by providing appropriate programs, referrals and personal availability.

The Delegate for Consecrated Life regularly communicates with the Secretary for Ministerial Leadership on matters concerning religious residing or ministering in the archdiocese.

#### **D. COORDINATOR FOR THE PASTORAL CARE OF PRIESTS**

The Coordinator for the Pastoral Care of Priests is available to offer assistance in the lives of priests who are being reassigned, newly appointed or preparing for retirement. He is not involved in the making of assignments or in disciplinary matters.

The Coordinator for the Pastoral Care of Priests reports to the Secretary for Ministerial Leadership.

The Coordinator for the Pastoral Care of Priests reaches out to retired priests and provides for their well-being. He attends Priest Retirement Board meetings and assists the chair with the agenda. He meets with priests upon their retirement and assists them in the transition. He schedules the monthly retired group gatherings.

The Coordinator for the Pastoral Care of Priests visits the sick priests regularly, monitors their progress and provides appropriate assistance. He provides the Archbishop, Auxiliary Bishops and Secretary for Ministerial Leadership the current status of priests who are ill and an appropriate prayer list for them.

He coordinates, along with the local Dean (See Appendix B: Handbook for Deans, Section X), the arrangements surrounding the funerals of priests. He sends out notices upon the death of the parents of priests, and assists the priests during their time of grief.

He assists in the development of priest support groups, arranges priest gatherings, anniversary celebrations, and other celebrations to encourage fraternity of priests among the priests and bishops.

He assists extern priests seeking residence in the archdiocese.

He reaches out to priests on leave and supports them as appropriate.

#### **E. PRIEST PERSONNEL BOARD**

##### **1. PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Priest Personnel Board is to be of service to the Archbishop and to the priests of the Archdiocese by offering recommendations that pertain to assignments.

## **2. SPECIFIC FUNCTIONS**

The Board has as its main functions:

- a.** To advise and consult with the Archbishop regarding the assignment and placement of clergy.
- b.** To advise the Archbishop on personnel policies and procedures as set forth in this document.

## **3. NATURE AND STRUCTURE**

The Priest Personnel Board is composed of the Archbishop, the Auxiliary Bishops, the Secretary for Ministerial Leadership, five priests elected by their brother priests of the archdiocese, and a specific number of appointed members at the discretion of the Archbishop.

The Chairman of the Priest Personnel Board is the Secretary for Ministerial Leadership.

The recommendations of the Board are advisory in nature and subject to the approval of the Archbishop.

## **4. ELECTED MEMBERS**

Five members of the Priest Personnel Board are elected by the priests of the Archdiocese, one from each of the peer groups as set forth relating to the date of ordination.

The term of office of an elected member shall be three years. A member may be re-elected but may not serve more than two successive terms.

In case of death, resignation, permanent disability or transfer outside the Archdiocese of an elected member, an election will be conducted as soon as possible in the appropriate peer group to fill such a vacancy.

## **5. MEETINGS**

- a.** The Board meets on a regular basis, usually once each month.
- b.** The Secretary for Ministerial Leadership serves as a resource person for the Board. Prior to each meeting the Secretary prepares the agenda and provides each member with a copy of the agenda before the meeting.
- c.** While reaching a consensus is the preferred method of making recommendations,



this is not always possible. After a discussion on the issue at hand and each Board member has voted, the recommendation of the Board along with the results of the voting is presented to the Archbishop.

- d.** Any priest of the Archdiocese may request or be invited to express his concerns to the Board either personally or in writing.
- e.** The Personnel Board may invite other interested individuals to meet with the Board, especially representatives of groups that have special pastoral needs or persons who can supply helpful input to the Board when special subjects are under consideration.

## **6. CONFIDENTIALITY**

- a.** Each member of the Board is to observe strict confidentiality in all matters discussed at meetings. The revealing and sharing of confidential matters may be authorized only by the Archbishop or his representative. Furthermore, the observance of confidentiality binds a priest not only during his term on the Personnel Board but also afterwards.
- b.** Personnel files are confidential. Only the Archbishop or one designated by him has access to the files.

## **PART THREE**

### **ARCHDIOCESAN APPOINTMENTS**

#### **A. ASSIGNMENT POLICIES**

The following policies and procedures were written to respond to the needs of the priests and to the needs of the People of God.

The best interests of this archdiocesan church and the pastoral needs of a specific parish are always the primary considerations at the basis of all pastoral appointments. The assignment process seeks to present not only the personal preferences and aspirations of individual priests but the pastoral needs and concerns of specific parishes.

Priests are called to lead lives of holiness and sacrificial service. Not infrequently priests are asked to undertake challenging and difficult assignments in response to the needs of the Church. Even in such circumstances, every effort must be made to create or maintain a pastoral environment that is respectful of priests' spiritual, emotional and physical needs. Such an environment can enhance the well-being of the priest and the community he serves.

The assignment process strives for an harmonious matching of priest with priest, priest with assignment, and priest with people leading to an effective ministry to the People of God.

#### **1. SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS**

Assignments will be made at any time when pastoral circumstances require it. All priests, pastors and parochial vicars are expected to remain in their assignments until other pastoral provision is made.

##### **a. Pastors**

The term of office for a pastor is six years. Any priest appointed to the office of pastor ceases in that office after six years unless he is reappointed by the Archbishop. Canonically, the pastor continues in office until notified that his term has expired so as to avoid any question of jurisdiction. At the priest's request or at the decision of the Archbishop, a pastor may be appointed to a second six year term after a review of the needs of the parish, the archdiocese, and the individual priest.

Normally the maximum length of service in a particular parish will be twelve years or two terms. However, for serious reasons, the Archbishop may grant an extension.

A pastor may also request appointment to another pastoral assignment or to a different assignment (e.g., special ministry, parochial vicar, senior priest) at any

time during the course of his term. At the same time, the Archbishop may ask a pastor to accept a new assignment at any time during the course of the pastor's term in view of archdiocesan needs.

**b. Parochial Vicars**

Parochial Vicars, under normal circumstances, may expect to remain in their assignments for three to five years. If the assignment were to continue beyond five years in the same parish the parochial vicar will consider annually with the Secretary for Ministerial Leadership the relative merits of his remaining in the parish or of his being assigned to another parish or ministry.

**c. Newly Ordained**

A diocesan priest's first assignment is important in promoting a positive introduction to priestly life and ministry. The willingness of the pastor to be a caring teacher and role model, and the quality of rectory life itself will, therefore, be major factors in considering placements for our newly ordained priests.

The assignment for the newly ordained will normally be three years. At the end of the first, second and third years after ordination assignments, the Secretary for Ministerial Leadership meets with the parochial vicar individually and then at a later date with the parochial vicar and his pastor. After three years, the priest will either be reassigned or his present assignment will be extended. The following are designed to assist the newly ordained priests:

- 1) Spiritual Director: Every priest should have a spiritual director, thus every newly ordained priest is to have a qualified spiritual director. Spiritual direction is especially important as the newly ordained makes the transition from the seminary to the parish. The spiritual director is to help the newly ordained see, in practical terms, the bond between his spiritual life and his ministry. He is to help the newly ordained develop his interior life amid the demands of pastoral service and to grow in pastoral charity. It is expected that a newly ordained priest meet with his spiritual director at least once a month. The Coordinator for the Pastoral Care of Priests maintains a list of recommended spiritual directors and confessors.
- 2) Priest Mentor Program: Its purpose is to provide the newly ordained priest with structured opportunities for discussing with a more experienced brother-priest the variety of pastoral and personal issues he encounters in priestly ministry. These conversations take place once each month for a period of two years.

- 3) Consultation: The Secretary for Ministerial Leadership meets with the pastors of the newly ordained priests prior to the assignment being finalized. Within six months the Secretary for Ministerial Leadership meets with pastors and newly ordained together. During the first year of priesthood, the Secretary for Ministerial Leadership meets at least twice with each of the newly ordained to discuss with him his experience of priesthood.
- 4) Archdiocesan Orientation Program: The Director of Continuing Formation for Priests will conduct a program annually to familiarize the newly ordained with the services provided by the Archdiocese. This program will enable the newly ordained to share their own experiences of priestly ministry as a group.

**d. Special Ministries**

Priests in special ministries normally serve at the discretion of the Archbishop according to the specific need and in consultation with the priest.

**e. Pastors 65 and Over**

As a normal course, pastors 65 years of age or older will not be transferred unless the Archbishop concludes it is necessary in order to meet adequately the needs of the people or to promote the welfare of the pastor.

**2. PRIOR CONSULTATION**

- a. It is the responsibility of the Auxiliary Bishops and the Secretary for Ministerial Leadership routinely to consult and counsel with all priests on matters relating to their well-being or their current interests. Priests are always free to meet personally with the Archbishop concerning their assignment.
- b. The Secretary for Ministerial Leadership will consult with priests relative to their proposed assignments as a pastor or for special ministry and report on the consultation to the Archbishop and the Priest Personnel Board.

**B. ASSIGNMENT PROCEDURES**

**1. APPOINTMENT OF PASTORS**

After the Priest Personnel Board recommends a priest for a vacant pastorate, the Secretary for Ministerial Leadership, with the approval of the Archbishop, meets with the priest and provides him with information about the parish. A discussion including but not limited to the following topics:

- Can the priest adequately meet the needs of the parish?
- Is there anything occurring in the priest's personal life that would indicate that a reassignment would be ill advised?
- Is there any significant reason why the priest cannot leave his current assignment?

## **2. TRANSFER OF PAROCHIAL VICARS**

Under normal circumstances, the transfer of parochial vicars occurs in the following way:

- a.** The Secretary for Ministerial Leadership gives to the Priest Personnel Board in time for the October meeting a list of parochial vicars who will have completed three or more years in their present assignment.
- b.** The Secretary for Ministerial Leadership contacts these priests to discuss with them their present circumstances, their expectations concerning a new assignment and what impact will this move have on the parish. The Secretary for Ministerial Leadership consults with the pastor of the parochial vicar to determine the effect that this transfer might have on the parish.
- c.** The Secretary for Ministerial Leadership gives to the Priest Personnel Board a report on these conversations.
- d.** Whenever a parochial vicar is to be transferred, the Priest Personnel Board, after a careful consideration of the priest's ministerial interests and skills, recommends a new assignment to the Archbishop. If the Archbishop accepts the recommendation, the following procedures are initiated:
  - 1)** The Secretary for Ministerial Leadership first contacts the pastor of the proposed parish informing the pastor that serious consideration is being given to reassigning the named parochial vicar and discusses the impact of this reassignment on the parish and the possibilities of a replacement.
  - 2)** The Secretary for Ministerial Leadership next contacts the parochial vicar to invite his serious consideration of a possible assignment to the named parish. The Secretary and the parochial vicar discuss the suitability of the proposed assignment. Thereafter it is advisable that the parochial vicar and the prospective pastor then meet so a review of ministerial expectations may be discussed.

### **3. SENIOR PRIESTS**

A priest who has reached the age of 65 may ask the Archbishop for designation as “Senior Priest” for any of the following reasons:

- Relief from the responsibilities of administration.
- Opportunity for involvement in other non-administrative parish ministries.
- The need for a reduced work schedule for reasons of health

With the Archbishop’s consent, the following procedures are to be followed:

- A priest requesting senior priest status seeks the assistance of the Secretary for Ministerial Leadership in arranging for an appropriate assignment.
- The priest may initiate his own search for a suitable place as an assignment for submission to the Archbishop.
- A letter of understanding setting forth the duties and responsibilities mutually agreed to between the senior priest and the pastor of the parish of assignment shall be drafted. The amount of time that the senior priest is to be absent from the parish is to be negotiated between himself and the pastor and noted in this letter of understanding.
- The letter of assignment from the Archbishop will stipulate residence. On reaching the age of 70, a senior priest may request retirement as outlined in the Retirement Policy (See Appendix C: Priest Retirement Policy).
- For reasons of health, or other inability to perform priestly activity, the Archbishop may terminate the Senior Priest status of a priest exchanging it for the status of retired priest.
- The Archbishop always retains the right to ask the Senior Priest to return to full active service.

### **4. RESIGNATION FROM PASTORATE**

A priest who is a pastor may offer to resign his pastorate at any time in order to be assigned as a parochial vicar. He may resign his pastorate and become a Senior Priest as outlined above. He may resign his pastorate at the age of 70 or above in order to retire. The forms of retirement and benefits are described in the Retirement Policy (See Appendix C: Priest Retirement Policy). In accord with Canon 538, no. 3, a pastor must submit his resignation from his pastorate at the age of 75.

### **5. PUBLICATION OF ASSIGNMENTS**

The priest to be assigned receives a letter of appointment from the Archbishop. All other parties concerned with the assignment, e.g. pastors, agency heads, etc. will receive a letter from the Secretary for Ministerial Leadership. Normally, notice of assignment of all priests will appear in the Catholic Standard and El Pregonero prior to the date the assignment takes effect. It is recommended that the priest being reassigned or transferred

inform parishioners or others affected by his present ministry before the assignment is published in the Catholic Standard and El Pregonero. The Archbishop signs all letters of appointment.

## **6. RETIREMENT OF PRIESTS**

For information concerning retirement issues (See Appendix C: Priest Retirement Policy).

## **7. ARCHDIOCESAN PRIESTS IN RESIDENCE**

Within the Washington presbyterate some are engaged in ministries not directly related to the local parish in which they reside. In the spirit of priestly fraternity the Archbishop asks that the pastor, parochial vicars and parishioners consider the presence of a resident priest as an opportunity for the parish to support the overall mission of the Church of Washington.

### **a. Mission of the Resident Priest**

The resident priest is called by the Archbishop to serve the Archdiocese in a particular way. He must be free to attend to the full-time ministry assigned to him by the Archbishop. He is accountable directly to the Archbishop (or his Delegate) with regard to his specific ministry.

### **b. Parochial Responsibility**

Ordinarily, the resident priest is expected to assist with the Sunday Mass schedule. He may assume other parochial responsibilities including daily Mass when this does not interfere with the duty assigned to him by the Archbishop. The parish responsibilities of the resident priest should be in written form.

### **c. Rectory Living**

The rectory is the resident priest's home as, indeed, it is the home of all the priests residing there. He is entitled to one free day each week which, due to his particular ministry and its related activities, will not usually occur from Monday through Friday. His vacation schedule is to be determined in accord with the responsibilities of his assigned ministry but always keeping the pastor informed. He may not be able to take additional parish responsibilities during the vacations of the other priests.

## **8. CHANGE OF ASSIGNMENT FOR EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES**

- a.** If a priest wishes to initiate a change of assignment for himself the request should be made to the Archbishop, an Auxiliary Bishop, or to the Secretary for Ministerial Leadership, stating the reasons for the desired change. When the Archbishop determines that the priest's request for a reassignment is for the good of all concerned, the reassignment process is begun as described above.
- b.** A priest may be asked to transfer in order to meet pastoral needs in another area of the Archdiocese. In such cases, consultation will take place as described above.
- c.** A priest may request the transfer of a fellow priest for personal reasons or for matters requiring discretion. Such requests are of an extraordinary nature and should be made known to the Archbishop or to an Auxiliary Bishop or to the Secretary for Ministerial Leadership. The request will be dealt with at the Archbishop's discretion.

## **C. SPECIAL MINISTRIES**

### **1. CHAPLAINCIES IN HEALTH CARE FACILITIES, CAMPUS MINISTRY, PRISONS, AND SIMILAR MINISTRIES**

Chaplains in general health care and mental health care facilities, in prisons, in campus ministries and other special ministries require special training and, frequently, certification. Accordingly, selected clergy will be prepared for these chaplaincies so that, when vacancies occur, qualified personnel may fill the positions immediately.

#### **a. Assignments**

All assignments to the chaplaincies mentioned above should be undertaken in consultation with the proper Secretariats of the Archdiocese. The appropriate Secretary will determine, by survey or other means, the pastoral needs of those served by the various chaplains and will make recommendations to the Priests' Personnel Board regarding assignments. The Secretary will recommend clergy both for appropriate formation and chaplaincy assignments.

Each chaplaincy should have a job description that includes a specific provision for the chaplain's day off and a specified duration of ministry. Ordinarily a person in this special ministry should consider a reassignment after six years.

#### **b. Residency of Chaplain and Obligations of Parishes**

A chaplain who has responsibility for an institution (e.g., health care facility, prison) and does not live in residence in that facility will normally be in residence



in a rectory as close to his ministry as is practicable. The parish in whose territory the facility is situated will normally be specified by name and will have the responsibility of meeting the emergency needs of patients on the chaplain's day off. In the case of larger institutions it may be necessary to specify two or three parishes to share coverage for the chaplain's day off.

When no chaplain has been assigned, the parish in whose territory the facility is situated will normally have responsibility for the pastoral needs of the people served by that facility. This additional pastoral responsibility should be taken into account when assignments of priests are made to the parish.

## **2. SPECIALIZED MINISTRY ASSIGNMENTS**

All agency directors are required to inform the Secretary for Ministerial Leadership on a timely basis about their anticipated vacancies and their personnel needs so that the Priest Personnel Board may be able to recommend priests for future education and training, thus providing for future agency needs.

The Priest Personnel Board in consultation with the agency directors should make recommendations for such assignments. Priests assigned to agencies should have served at least three years in full-time pastoral ministry.

As noted previously, priests in specialized ministries will normally serve for a specified period of time approved by the Archbishop in each case. Pastoral considerations and mutual agreement between themselves and their department heads may recommend shortening the term of office.

Except in a most unusual situation a pastor should not be appointed head of an agency without resigning his pastorate and the head of an agency should not be appointed pastor of a parish unless he leaves the agency position.

Budgets of agencies should reflect the cost of their full-time clergy personnel, a cost that includes salary and benefits.

If the parish in which the priest resides is providing all or part of his salary and living expenses, these costs should be listed in the budget of the agency in which he is employed as both a contribution of the parish and as an expense of the agency.

## **3. MILITARY SERVICE**

Requests for release for military service must be made to the Archbishop. Ordinarily, a priest will not be considered for Military Service until he has completed three years of pastoral ministry in a parish assignment. The Archbishop reserves the right to judge and approve individual requests.

At the conclusion of this time the priest will have the opportunity of entering active duty as

a military chaplain for a period of up to twenty years if he so desires and qualifies. At the end of this period the priest-chaplain is expected to return to the Archdiocese and take an assignment. Retirement benefits earned in military service will be considered when determining the archdiocesan benefit.

#### **4. MISSION SERVICE**

The Archdiocese recognizes the universal mission of the Church and the ever- changing circumstances of the world in which the Gospel is preached. In particular, it recognizes the pressing needs of some local churches worldwide. Therefore, the Archbishop will consider applications from priests of the Archdiocese, on an individual basis, or may ask a priest to consider serving in another diocese for a limited period of time to be determined by the Archbishop. In light of this missionary spirit some priests of the archdiocese may be sent for ministry outside of the Archdiocese of Washington.

- a.** Requests for assignment of priests of the Archdiocese of Washington to go on mission may be presented in the following ways:
  - The bishop of another diocese may request a priest from the Archbishop of Washington.
  - The Archbishop may ask a priest to go to another diocese on assignment.
  - A priest may request assignment to the missions five years after ordination.
- b.** It is recommended that a priest be ordained a minimum of five years and in pastoral ministry in the archdiocese before being sent to the missions.
- c.** The term of assignment is normally three to five years and this may be renewed for another term.
- d.** Compensation:
  - Salary, health care coverage, travel expenses, room and board are expected where possible to be provided by the receiving diocese.
  - Retirement and Life Insurance costs will normally be provided by the Archdiocese of Washington. Reimbursement from the receiving diocese for these expenses may be negotiated depending on the financial circumstances of the receiving diocese.
  - A signed agreement covering the terms of the assignment, as mutually agreed, will be provided to the Archdiocese of Washington and the mission diocese.
- e.** As a rule the number of priests of the Archdiocese of Washington formed in the specific case of the Neocatechumenal Way to be assigned on mission at any one time should not exceed 25%.

## **5. PRIESTS SEEKING EMPLOYMENT**

The Archbishop of Washington makes all assignments of Archdiocesan priests both within and outside of regular parish ministry. Priests are not to apply for, nor accept, any full or part time salaried or stipend position (e.g., a chaplain or teacher) without the endorsement of the Archbishop.

## **6. SALARIES OF PRIESTS IN SPECIALIZED MINISTRIES**

Priests in Specialized Ministries (e.g., Non-Military Chaplains and Teachers) who receive a salary above that of their peers in parish ministry shall be expected to donate a pre-determined sum to an appropriate ministry in an arrangement approved by the Archbishop.

# **D. POLICY FOR EXTERN PRIESTS AND PROCESSES OF INCARDINATION AND EXCARDINATION**

## **1. POLICY FOR EXTERN PRIESTS**

### **a. Introduction**

These procedures are necessary not only to ensure full recognition of the rights of the faithful to priestly service of approved quality, but also to protect the pastors and the Archbishop from any misunderstanding that can easily cause embarrassment and even harm to the Church.

To give the best service to the people of the Archdiocese it is necessary that priests from other dioceses and priests from religious communities be presented and receive the permission of the Archbishop or his representative before undertaking ministry within the Archdiocese. To ensure a necessary review of credentials and to facilitate the exchange of information between the Archbishop and the Bishop or Religious Superior of the priest coming to the Archdiocese, the following procedures must be followed:

- All ministerial, pastoral assignments in the Archdiocese outside of a religious house require the permission of the Archbishop.
- A priest seeking to minister in the Archdiocese of Washington, full-time, part-time, or week-ends, on a continuing basis, must present a letter of permission and recommendation from the his ordinary dated within a month of the request. For the convenience of Religious Communities within the Archdiocese, one letter may be issued for all the “supply priests” of their order or congregation.

In his confidential letter to the Archbishop, the Bishop or Religious Superior of the Extern priest should:

- indicate the reason why the priest is coming to minister in the Archdiocese of Washington (e.g. different pastoral experience, study, etc.)
  - include a recommendation for his acceptance for ministry in the Archdiocese.
  - state a definite period of time that he is giving permission for him to be out of his Diocese or Religious Community.
  - assure that the priest will remain incardinated in his own Diocese.
  - give his estimation of the priest in question and attest to the fact that there is no canonical or civil reason for his leaving the Diocese or Religious Community to come to the Archdiocese of Washington, and whether or not the applicant has ever been charged, arrested or convicted of a criminal offense (other than a traffic violation) and whether or not the priest has been the subject of any civil proceeding. (The details of the disposition of any such involvements should be sent for purposes of evaluation)
  - indicate whether or not there is any information in his personnel file that may be relevant to any sexual activity of the applicant.
- b.** Both the particular needs of the Church of Washington, as well as of the individuals who wish to minister in the Archdiocese, will be considered in accepting a priest from outside the Archdiocese.
- c.** The priest requesting to work in the Archdiocese of Washington must write a letter of intent to the Archbishop. Upon receipt of the Extern's letter, an application form will be sent asking for:
- name, address and written permission of the Diocesan Bishop or Religious Superior;
  - date and proof of Ordination;
  - academic background education in theology;
  - native country and citizenship status;
  - linguistic skills;
  - ministerial skills;

- recent health records;
  - reasons for wanting to minister in the Archdiocese; last assignment and names of last Pastor/Superior for letters of recommendation. Response to form Appendix E of the Child Protection Policy. If living in a parish the priest must complete VIRTUS and fingerprinting.
- d. The priest requesting to minister in the Archdiocese of Washington must make application himself through the Secretary for Ministerial Leadership and not through an individual pastor, agency or institution.
  - e. Pastors must contact the Secretary for Ministerial Leadership before engaging the services of an Extern priest or inviting a priest to live in their rectory on a continuing basis.
  - f. Acceptance of a priest for ministry in the Archdiocese of Washington for a limited period of time in no way implies incardination, nor do the years of ministry spent here apply toward the incardination process as outlined in the Code of Canon Law. (Canon 268, § 1)
  - g. The maximum time for a priest of another diocese to minister in the Archdiocese of Washington will be five (5) years.
  - h. Any priest from a foreign country who needs a VISA to be in this country must consult with the Secretary of Ministerial Leadership.
  - i. If an Extern priest requests merely to live in a rectory but with limited ministry, it is necessary that such a request also be referred to the Secretary for Ministerial Leadership for approval by the Archbishop. It should be noted here that if the need arises for an archdiocesan priest to occupy these quarters, the extern priest will be given thirty (30) days notice to vacate. The Pastor will also be notified that the Extern priest has been given notice to vacate his room(s) within thirty (30) days.
  - j. In terms of compensation, a priest assisting part-time in a parish is to be provided room and board, and he would be expected to be available for sacramental assistance during the week and weekends, and may be asked to provide an appropriate stipend to the parish. If further ministerial help is to be provided, compensation is to be negotiated by the pastor and extern priest. The parish may charge room and board to an extern priest who only resides in the rectory, but does not assist the parish. Agreements should be written and signed by the pastor and extern priest.
  - k. All extern priests are expected to have health insurance. This should be obtained from their diocese, religious community or, if students, from the university. The Archdiocese of Washington Priests Health Care Plan serves incardinated priests. Extern priests are admitted to it only by exception. If an exception is requested, the

priest should contact the Secretary for Ministerial Leadership. The request will be considered only if the priest is in full time ministry to the Church of Washington.

- l.** Priests from other dioceses and religious priests currently residing in, or already engaged in ministry in Archdiocesan parishes must furnish a letter of approval from their Bishop or Religious Superior (local or regional) so that, retroactively a Certificate of Approbation together with Archdiocesan faculties may be issued.
- m.** If there is no canonical or civil obstacle, and the Extern priest's services are needed, a written appointment, specifying the ministry, will then be issued by the Archbishop, together with Archdiocesan faculties for the period of ministry.
- n.** The Secretary for Ministerial Leadership presents data on Extern priests to the Priests Personnel Board for review and assignment. The Priest Personnel Board makes recommendations to the Archbishop.
- o.** Religious priests assigned to their respective houses/ministries in the Archdiocese are not considered Extern priests, but must still request from the Secretary of Ministerial Leadership the appropriate faculties for their circumstances.
- p.** See policy on Extern Priests from Foreign Countries in Appendix G.

Note: In assigning Extern Priests where there is a sizeable Hispanic population and services in Spanish, the Episcopal Vicar for Hispanic Affairs and the Office of Hispanic Pastoral Affairs will be consulted.

## **2. PROCESS OF INCARDINATION**

A priest desiring incardination must present necessary documents to the Archbishop. He must also furnish the results of a physical exam conducted by a physician designated or approved by the Archdiocese. If the Archbishop approves him for assignment the priest's request will be processed under the customary assignment and placement procedure. He will be informed that he is beginning a probationary period. During this period he will receive the appropriate salary and will be covered for health insurance by the parish or agency to which he is assigned.

After not more than three years, the Archbishop will make an evaluation. If the request is approved, the procedure for incardination prescribed by church law will be followed.

## **3. PROCESS OF EXCARDINATION**

A priest seeking excardination must first write to the Archbishop for permission to join another diocese or religious community. In his letter he should state the reason for seeking excardination. The bishop of the diocese he wishes to join, or the religious superior, if he plans to join a religious community, must then write to the Archbishop of

Washington expressing a willingness to accept the priest seeking excardination from Washington. Final approval must come from the Archbishop of Washington. Upon excardination, the priest will no longer have diocesan faculties. His salary and participation in the Group Health Plan and the Retirement Plan will cease.

## **E. SPECIAL SITUATIONS**

### **1. AUTHORIZED LEAVE**

Authorized leave is defined as absence of more than one month from official assignment in the Archdiocese with approval and without loss of standing. Application for such leave must be made to the Archbishop. Routine vacations and retreats, of course, do not require the approval of the Archbishop. Academic sabbaticals are covered in Part Four of this document.

#### **a. Personal Leave**

The Archbishop may grant a temporary leave of absence from active ministry to a priest who requests it for personal reasons. This leave of absence is usually given in writing and is granted for a specific period of time. The Archbishop will determine whether a priest on leave will be required to assume responsibility for the premium payments of the Health Care and Retirement Plans and whether the Archdiocese will continue the priest's salary. Residence is not provided. The Archdiocese will not continue to provide health care coverage beyond six months from the date of approval of the leave.

#### **b. Release from Archdiocesan Assignment**

This is understood to be a leave to serve, as a priest, in another diocese. This release from Archdiocesan assignment means service in another diocese in parochial ministry, in teaching, counseling, research or other service in another diocese. Requests for such a release must be made to the Archbishop who reserves the right to judge and approve individual requests. Release is granted with the following conditions:

- Assignment and salary are discontinued.
- Participation in the Retirement Plan and Health Care program will be worked out on an individual basis.

### **2. LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM ACTIVE MINISTRY FOR REASON OF HEALTH**

Priests of the Archdiocese may request sick leave if their physical or emotional health makes such a request necessary. In these cases, the individual priest directs his request to the Archbishop, accompanied by a physician's report and recommendation. The duration of

the leave will be included in the Archbishop's response. Remuneration and health insurance benefits during a leave of absence for reason of health are outlined in the current clergy salary and benefits schedule (See Appendix E: Priest Compensation and Benefits). Ordinarily, a leave of absence for reason of health shall be published in the official notices. Sick leave does not affect a priest's seniority or years of service to the archdiocese. While a priest is on sick leave, the Secretary for Ministerial Leadership will maintain contact with him on behalf of the Archdiocese.

### **3. LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM ACTIVE MINISTRY FOR PERSONAL REASONS**

It may be necessary for a priest of the Archdiocese to request a leave of absence for personal reasons. Such requests must be directed to the Archbishop. Unless the Archbishop decides otherwise, priests granted a leave of absence for personal reasons will be given some financial support for up to three (3) months. However, health insurance benefits will continue for the duration of the leave of absence unless the Archbishop determines otherwise or until such coverage is available through other suitable employment. The normal period for leaves of absence for personal reasons is six (6) months (unless determined otherwise by the Archbishop). This period may be renewed at six-month intervals but not beyond a period of two (2) years. In the interests of clarity, a leave of absence for personal reasons may be published in the official notices. Priests on leave of absence for personal reasons do not possess archdiocesan faculties. While on a leave of absence for personal reasons, the priest is expected to maintain regular contact with the Secretary for Ministerial Leadership. A priest who asks to return to active ministry following a leave of absence for personal reasons may be expected to participate in a specially designed period of reflection and renewal before being given an assignment.

A leave of absence can be terminated at the discretion of the Archbishop. Also at the discretion of the Archbishop the designation of a leave of absence for reason of health can be changed to a leave of absence for personal reasons. For purposes of calculation of time, the duration of a leave that has had its designation changed is from the date of the beginning of the earliest legitimate leave of absence.

### **4. UNAUTHORIZED ABSENCE**

A priest is considered on an unauthorized leave of absence if he fails to report to an assignment or leaves an assignment without permission of the Archbishop. Failure to request and receive an extension of personal or health leaves also constitutes an unauthorized leave of absence.

A priest's unauthorized leave of absence begins on the effective date of an assignment to which he fails to report, or on the day he leaves an assignment without permission, or on the expiration date of a personal or health leave of absence. Unauthorized leaves of absence are usually not published in the official notices.

Unless the Archbishop decides otherwise, a priest on unauthorized leave of absence is not entitled to any remuneration, health insurance or other benefits.



Priests on unauthorized leave of absence do not enjoy the faculties of the Archdiocese.

A priest who returns to active ministry following an unauthorized leave of absence will be expected to participate in a specially designed period of reflection and renewal.

## **5. WITHDRAWAL FROM ACTIVE MINISTRY**

A priest withdraws from active ministry:

- a.** by notifying the Archbishop in writing,
- b.** by attempting civil marriage,
- c.** by remaining on unauthorized leave of absence for more than six (6) months,
- d.** or by remaining away from ministry at the conclusion of a leave of absence.

Priests who have withdrawn from active ministry do not enjoy the faculties of the Archdiocese and receive no remuneration, health insurance coverage or other benefits.

Employment by archdiocesan agencies and participation in ecclesial life by priests who have withdrawn from active ministry is governed by norms established in universal law.

Appropriate archdiocesan offices will assist these priests to avail themselves of the processes of law regarding their status within the Church.

**PART FOUR**  
**MINISTRY AND LIFE CONCERNS**

**A. PRIESTLY MINISTRY AND CONTINUING FORMATION**

**1. CONTINUING FORMATION OF THE CLERGY**

**a. Bi-Annual Multi-Day Convocation**

This event provides an opportunity to bring together priests for spiritual and pastoral renewal, and enrichment.

**b. Annual Spring Convocation**

This one day event is intended to provide the opportunity for clergy to gather around a variety theological, pastoral and administrative topics.

**c. Short Term Study Programs**

- 1) Short- term studies include workshops of a single day's duration, longer study days, seminars, convocations, institutes or an academic course.
  - The subject matters, for example, could include scripture, preaching, spirituality, papal teachings, current issues of bioethics, and areas of priestly growth.
- 2) Three regularly scheduled pastoral formation days sponsored by the Archdiocese for continuing priestly formation will be available each year.
  - In the year of the Multi-Day Convocation only two of the three ongoing formation days will be offered. Each priest could choose depending on his interest and his availability of time except in the years when the convocation is offered. Substitutes of equivalent value could be accepted to fulfill the requirement. Reimbursement up to the annual limit may be requested from the Director of Continuing Formation (See Appendix D: Retreat and Continuing Education Reimbursement).
  - The place could vary geographically but effort should be made also to find central locations such as Georgetown or Catholic University, Washington Retreat House, Little Sisters of the Poor, John Paul II Cultural Center, and the Franciscan Monastery.
- 3) Development of short- term study events is the responsibility of the Director of Continuing Formation for Priests in consultation with the Archbishop and the Continuing Formation Committee. These are to be developed based upon the needs of the priests and the Archdiocese.

- 4) Permanent deacons normally are encouraged to participate in Archdiocesan programs for priests when it may be useful for their ministry.
- 5) Special attention will be given annually to sessions for priests ordained less than five years and less than ten years.
  - Possible topics could include, for example, issues regarding the marriage tribunal and issues important for priests preparing to become pastors.
- 6) Priests are encouraged to enroll in programs that enhance the quality of their ministry. Local colleges, universities, seminaries or other educational facilities, often offer courses or seminars. It is understood of course that the duties and responsibilities of a priest's assignment are not neglected or hampered as a result of attendance at such courses or seminars.
- 7) Substitutes at the place of ministry, when necessary, are the responsibility of the individual priest. Cost of the substitute is to be borne by the place of ministry.
- 8) Funding from sources outside the place of ministry or Archdiocese should be applied for if available.

**d. Preparation for Special Ministerial Needs and Transitions**

- 1) Priests are encouraged to prepare themselves to meet the language and cultural needs of those to whom they are called to minister.
- 2) Special efforts will be made by the Archdiocese to provide the resources to prepare priests for ministry to diverse cultural groups.
- 3) Special training will be necessary also for those entering special ministries such as hospitals and nursing homes, schools, prisons, etc.
- 4) The newly-ordained are required to participate in the program developed for them by the Office of Continuing Formation for Priests.
- 5) First time pastors are required to participate in the archdiocesan program for new pastors.
- 6) Special efforts to assist priests to prepare for service as senior priests or for retirement will be developed and adapted to individual needs.

**e. Retreats and Days of Prayer**

- 1) Retreats are essential to a priest's spiritual growth and development. Each priest is expected to make an annual retreat. This retreat must be in common with his fellow archdiocesan priests at least every other year. In addition, each priest is permitted the opportunity of making a private retreat in the alternative year if he decides this is necessary. When this occurs, the priest is expected to inform the Director of Continuing Formation for Priests about the time and location of his private retreat.

Each priest is to be granted a minimum of five days for an annual retreat over and above his annual vacation. Appendix D provides information concerning the payment of retreat fees.

- 2) Retreats will be arranged each year by the Director of Continuing Formation for Priests and may vary in type when appropriate. Priests will receive prior notice about the types of retreats available and the names of the retreat directors.
- 3) The Director of Continuing Formation for Priests shall provide days of prayer, reconciliation, or recollection for the priests, especially during Advent and Lent. Priests are encouraged to join their bishop(s) and brother priests in these events. These days will be planned with the special attention to the unique spirituality of the diocesan priest.

## **2. GRADUATE STUDIES (DEGREE PROGRAMS)**

- a. The Archdiocese of Washington has a continuing need for priests who are prepared by special studies in the sacred sciences as well as in other appropriate subjects to serve the needs of the people.
- b. Priests should discuss their interest to undertake graduate or specialized studies with the Director of Continuing Formation for Priests. The Archbishop must approve the proposed degree program in advance and the schedule of study. During the period of study the priest is still entitled to his day off.

## **3. SABBATICALS**

### **a. Definition and Duration**

A sabbatical is a continuing formation effort for an extended period of time away from a priest's normal assignment for the personal and ministerial growth of the priest. It may involve participation in a specific sabbatical program or a combination of different elements that fit the particular personal or ministerial needs of the priest and the people he serves.

Sabbaticals are normally to be from one to six months.

### **b. Eligibility**

Each priest after ten (10) years of service in the Archdiocese may request a sabbatical. Additional sabbaticals may be applied for every ten (10) years thereafter. Normally a sabbatical is granted between pastoral assignments. The time before a change of assignment can be ideal for a sabbatical.

**c. Application Procedures**

- 1) The applicant contacts the Director of Continuing Formation for Priests about his interest in a sabbatical.
- 2) The Director informs the applicant about the procedures, possibility, and programs available.
- 3) The applicant sends in a letter of request to the Archbishop and an initial proposal after reviewing it with those in his ministry who may be affected.
- 4) The Director of Continuing Formation for Priests and the Secretary for Ministerial Leadership review the request and make their recommendation to the Archbishop.
- 5) The Archbishop makes a decision concerning the sabbatical and details are worked out with the Office of Ministerial Leadership.

**d. Criteria for Granting a Sabbatical**

- 1) The quality of the experience and its benefit to the priest and the Archdiocese.
- 2) The years of service of the priest.
- 3) The availability of financial resources.
- 4) The availability of a replacement or substitute.

**e. Follow-up and Evaluation**

- 1) When a sabbatical is completed a priest is requested to give a written report on the sabbatical experience to the Director of Continuing Formation for Priests.
- 2) When a sabbatical is completed, the priest is requested to formulate a plan for his future continuing formation so that the experience of the sabbatical will be sustained and continued.

**4. RETIREMENT (SEE APPENDIX C: Priest Retirement Policy and Manual)**

**5. PLANNING AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

- a. The need for continuing formation is a lifelong reality for the priest. Every priest is accountable for constantly furthering his human, spiritual, liturgical, intellectual and emotional growth and for improving his ministerial and leadership skills.
- b. Every priest is responsible for developing an individualized program of prayer, study and reading for his own personal and professional development. Such a plan should involve a review of past continuing formation activities, a review of one's present strengths and weaknesses ministerially and personally, and a projection

about the areas and programs for continuing formation that may be appropriate in the future.

- c. To ensure continued spiritual growth each priest is strongly encouraged to have and meet regularly with a spiritual director.
- d. The Director of Continuing Formation for Priests is a resource person for the priests of the Archdiocese to help them to assess their needs, develop programs, or provide resources for their continuing formation.
- e. Every year each priest can request a maximum of 80 hours (ten days) away from his ministerial activity for continuing formation. This is separate from vacation, support group, and retreat time.
- f. From time to time, priests will be required to attend special Archdiocesan study days or convocations.
- g. Hospital and prison chaplains are strongly encouraged to work for appropriate chaplaincy certification. In some cases an appropriate certification is required of candidates for such positions.
- h. Individuals or small groups of priests are encouraged to seek the assistance of the Director of Continuing Formation for Priests in setting up small group discussions.
- i. During the first week of January of each year, the Director of Continuing Formation for Priests will send to each Archdiocesan priest a form to be used for reporting his continuing formation activities of the previous calendar year and information about his annual retreat. This annual report must be returned to the Secretary for Ministerial Leadership by the end of January for review by the Archbishop. It will be included in the priest's personnel file for use at the time of reassignment.
- j. Permission to be absent from one's assignment for a continuing education activity for a longer period than the designated allotment is to be sought from the Archbishop through the Director of Continuing Formation for Priests.
- k. The Director of Continuing Formation for Priests will make an annual report to the Archbishop and the priests on the continuing education programs sponsored by the Archdiocese.

## **B. PRIESTLY LIFE**

### **1. DAYS OFF AND VACATION**

Vacation Time and Days Off: Time to relax and rest is helpful for a priest's human, spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being. Each priest of the Archdiocese is encouraged to take one full day off from his assigned duties each week. He has a right to an annual, usually summer, vacation of twenty-eight days, which includes three weekends.

### **2. SALARY**

Remuneration for priests is determined according to the current clergy salary and benefits schedule that is established and reviewed annually by the Priest Personnel Board (See Appendix E: Priest Compensation and Benefits).

A priest without a pastoral assignment is not entitled to a salary.

### **3. PRIEST BENEFITS**

#### **a. Purpose**

The purpose of these benefit plans is to offer eligible priests of the Archdiocese of Washington comprehensive Health Care coverage, a means of financial assistance for extraordinary expenses, retirement income and to provide for funeral and other final expenses for incardinated priests of the Archdiocese if final expenses are not already provided for through their wills and/or estates.

#### **b. Eligibility for Priest Benefits**

Eligibility for benefits extends to all priests incardinated in the Archdiocese who are in good standing, and to any other priests to whom the Archbishop or his delegate may approve to receive some or all such benefits.

When a priest leaves active ministry in the Archdiocese for approved ministry outside the Archdiocese, the Archbishop or his delegate will confer with the priest as to which benefits will be continued, if any, and who will bear the costs for him.

If a priest is requesting leave of absence for any reason, the priest must confer with the Archbishop or his delegate with regard to arrangements for continuance of these benefits. Healthcare benefits may be granted for a period of up to six months.

Coverage and benefits under all plans cease and are no longer available to any priest who becomes incardinated into another diocese, leaves priestly ministry, is professed in a religious community, or obtains outside employment.

#### **c. Health Care Coverage**

- 1) **Archdiocesan Plans.** The Health and Dental Care Plan of the Archdiocese of Washington for eligible priests provides for comprehensive health care benefits for both remedial and preventative health care maintenance. A copy of the plan for health care benefits may be obtained from the Office of Ministerial Leadership.
- 2) **Nursing Care.** Should a priest require nursing home care, he may go to Carroll Manor or to any other nursing home facility of his choice as space

allows. Current policies for long term care for priests are included in the Priest Retirement Policy (See Appendix C: Priest Retirement Policy).

- 3) All Archdiocesan priests must participate in social security and upon reaching the eligible age must enroll in Medicare A and B.

**d. Special Health Care Needs**

Ordinary medical expenses that remain after health insurance has been applied are part of the normal financial obligations of each priest.

- 1) All requests for financial assistance are treated as confidential.
- 2) Applications must be made in writing and sent directly to the Secretary for Ministerial Leadership.
- 3) Requests for reimbursement must be accompanied by proper financial and medical documentation.
- 4) Medical procedures or treatments, not ordinarily covered by insurance will not be considered.

When extraordinary medical expenses arise which a priest of the Archdiocese of Washington cannot meet, assistance may be requested for such extraordinary medical expenses. This takes place after health insurance payments have been applied and a priest cannot meet the remainder of his obligation in part or in full.

**4. RESIDENCE**

Each priest of the Archdiocese is to live in a residence assigned or approved by the Archbishop. Permission for residence outside a parish or institution, requires the explicit permission of the Archbishop, and will not be granted except in extraordinary circumstances. Consideration will be given to allowing a priest in a small or isolated parish to live in a neighboring rectory to foster fraternity and ministerial support.

As part of his annual visit, the dean will verify that the living conditions for all priests assigned to a particular residence are adequate and appropriate (See Appendix B: Handbook for Deans). Any problems uncovered by the dean as part of his annual visit should be reported to the Secretary for Ministerial Leadership for appropriate action.



## **5. RECTORY LIFE**

### **a. The Rectory**

#### **1) Living Environment**

- The rectory is the home for all the priests assigned there, pastor/administrator, parochial vicar(s) and all priests in residence (Canon 533, §1). All priests living in the house have a right to proper furnishings, privacy and adequate provision for food, heat, laundry service, and other appropriate services. Responsibility for providing these items rests with the pastor (Canon 384).
- Except for approved domestic help, lay persons and extern priests shall not, without the written approval of the Ordinary, regularly reside in the rectory. This applies also to relatives by blood or marriage. Neither pastor nor parochial vicar should presume to invite a new long-term resident without consulting others in the rectory.

#### **2) Availability**

- In order to provide priestly service to the people, the pastor should make sure that a priest is available either by his actual presence in the rectory or by being easily accessible through the rectory telephone, cell phone, answering service or beeper. Other than a priest's day off each week, he is expected to be available for parish ministry.
- In rectories with only one priest, neighboring parishes are encouraged to assist in covering for emergencies. In rectories with more than one priest, a system may be designed that provides accessibility.

#### **3) Common Meals and Social Time**

- As in the Eucharist, shared meals and fellowship before or after meals do much to build Christian community. Shared meals and time together should be a priority in rectory living. The ideal of using some of this shared time for prayer is well worth achieving, even in view of different days off, parish and social obligations.
- In situations where there is only one priest in a rectory, neighboring parishes could work out the occasional or frequent sharing of meals for fellowship and the general good health of the priests. The economic benefit of one cook preparing meals for several neighboring priests should not be overlooked.

#### **4) Rectory and Private Space**

- It is strongly recommended that priests living in a rectory mutually negotiate boundaries between public and private areas in their rectory. Questions such as use of the Common Room, kitchen privileges for staff and parishioner access to residential areas of the rectory should be discussed and agreed upon. These and other questions should periodically be reviewed in house meetings.
- It is also recommended that priests sharing a rectory discuss their own need for personal privacy and boundaries in relationship to each other and the rectory lifestyle. Fraternal charity and mutual respect should guide these meetings.

#### **5) Hospitality**

- Christian hospitality should be the hallmark of every rectory. The pastor's role in maintaining the rectory as home for the priests and place for parish gathering and ministry cannot be overstated. A rectory that is known for its hospitality will be a rectory where the people will not be afraid to come in time of crisis or to conduct other business.

#### **6) Working Environment and Living Where One Works**

- The increased demands and stress caused by parish life today point out the responsibility that priests have in creating the best possible work space and living space. Priests have a right and a need for privacy and personal space so that they can spend adequate time in prayer, reading, exercise, study and recreation. At the same time, parishioners have a right to expect that their pastoral needs will be met adequately.
- There is no one single solution to this problem, since each parish plant differs greatly one from the other. A number of parishes have been able to move the parish offices to another building close to the rectory. However, the rectory should be near to the church. This policy does not give permission freely to experiment in alternative off-site living arrangements for our priests. The Archbishop reserves to himself the approval of changes in such living arrangements.
- The question of separating the rectory, as the living quarters for the priests, from parish offices is negotiable only when both sites would be on the parish property. Parishioners must sense a close union between the two, and must never feel that a priest can be approached only "during business hours." The Archbishop would give an individual pastor permission to move the office space provided it is feasible and within the parish means. Although parish offices can be in a separate building, the rectory should be a place where people come to see the priest in crucial times in their lives.

- The provision of a common area other than the dining or kitchen areas can do much to improve rectory living; such a space could be used for recreation, study and/or prayer. Rectories with more than one priest and no common area should give this consideration.
- The more “open” the rectory public spaces, the greater the need for consideration of security and privacy for the residents. There should be times, based upon mutual understanding, when the private space of the priests could be declared “off-limits”, (e.g. after 10 p.m. or on holidays).
- With planning, much can be done to define the boundaries between offices and private space in our rectories; and this should be a first consideration in remodeling or new construction.
- Alternative space on or adjacent to the immediate rectory and church property should be considered before rectory living space is converted into additional office space; this should be the topic of special house meetings, staff and/or parish council meetings and subject to the approval of the Archbishop.
- The presence of a pet in the rectory is only on the agreement of the priests assigned to that rectory. Pets should not take priority over the needs of the residents and in the office space over the needs of parishioners. Any damages to the rectory because of a pet are the responsibility of the pet’s owner.
- Sensitivity should be given to non-smoking members of the rectory in consideration of health risks. Designated smoking areas should be established that do not present a health risk to the non-smoking members of the rectory.

**b. Shared Ministry – Priestly Collaboration – As a Model of Ministry**

The prime site for shared initiative and innovation between pastor and parochial vicar(s) should be the rectory where they reside. While ultimate responsibility and decision lies with the pastor, it is expected that shared responsibility, consultation and involvement in decision-making be the model for all priests working and living together in rectories in this Archdiocese. Associates and pastors should share responsibility for their living conditions as well as for total parish ministry.

**1) Staff Meetings**

To facilitate shared ministry, it is strongly recommended that weekly staff meetings be held. These would involve the pastor, parochial vicar(s) and all key persons involved in the administration of the parish (DRE, principal, deacon(s), etc.). It is suggested that a regular schedule and agenda be agreed upon that meets the needs of all concerned. Discussions at staff meetings should address any and all issues in the parish (e.g. liturgy, social concerns, religious education, youth, family life, vocations, etc.).

## **2) House Meeting**

Additionally, a regular house meeting should be convened by the pastor, parochial vicar(s) and all residents of the rectory. This meeting might occur less frequently than staff meetings, but could combine communal prayer and social components, and would permit all residents to share responsibility for the smooth running of the rectory. Topics could include house furnishings and improvements, meals, liturgy, parish and personal scheduling and matters requiring mutual cooperation.

## **3) Recently Ordained Priests**

- Special mention is made here of recently ordained priests (i.e. those priests ordained five years or less). Many of these men are coming from seminaries that have stressed the need for a collaborative style of ministry in today's Church. Pastors, where a recently ordained priest is assigned, are urged to take this into consideration whenever possible. This can help the recently ordained successfully make the transition from the seminary to the parish. There is a vital connection between life in the rectory and the first years of priesthood.
- Recently ordained priests should be made to feel welcome and at home. A spirit of mutual trust and confidence should be encouraged. In such a climate, the initiative and giftedness of the recently ordained are fully appreciated.

## **4) Ministry to One Another**

As priests we are in a special way co-worker with the Archbishop and our brother priests in carrying out the mission of Jesus: proclaiming the Gospel, building the Faith Community and serving all peoples. This mission must begin with our relationships in the rectory before it extends itself to the parish.

# **6. ATTIRE**

In the daily exercise of ministry, priests are to wear customary clerical attire and dress in a manner appropriate to their leadership within the Christian community.

At all other times, priests are to dress in a manner which reflects their responsibility among God's people, taking care that their attire is neither a source of scandal nor embarrassment to the faithful.

## **7. INTERVENTION**

There may be occasions when credible reports are made to archdiocesan administrators regarding the personal health or misconduct of a priest. This information will be directed to the Secretary for Ministerial Leadership who will then make whatever intervention seems appropriate.

## **8. ALCOHOL AND CHEMICAL DEPENDANCE**

The Secretary for Ministerial Leadership directs the implementation of the alcohol and chemical dependency care of a priest.

## **9. HEALTH EXAMINATION AND REPORTS**

Each diocesan priest over forty (40) years of age should undergo a thorough medical examination annually; for priests forty (40) years of age and younger, every other year.

## **10. WILLS AND FUNERAL INSTRUCTIONS**

Each priest is responsible to have filed with the Secretariat for Ministerial Leadership a form (SEE APPENDIX F: Funeral Arrangements), indicating his preferences regarding funeral and burial arrangements. These forms are available from the Secretariat for Ministerial Leadership and should be reviewed and updated every five (5) years.

While it is strongly recommended that a copy of a priest's will be on file with the Secretariat for Ministerial Leadership, it is required that the location of the will and the names of the executors be on file in that office and power of attorney for health care decisions.

Arrangements for the funeral of a priest should be made in accordance with the guidelines published by the Secretariat for Ministerial Leadership.

Priests are encouraged to be buried in a section of an Archdiocesan Cemetery designated for priests. A cemetery plot will be available for each priest in an Archdiocesan Cemetery upon his death. This plot will be in a section designated for priests.

The Archdiocese of Washington will cover the funeral expenses of a priest who is buried in an Archdiocesan Cemetery unless an individual's last will and testament stipulates otherwise. If a priest has his own burial plot in a cemetery that does not belong to the Archdiocese of Washington, the priest's estate will be expected to cover the burial expenses.

Priests are encouraged to fill in the Funeral Arrangement form found in Appendix F so that funeral arrangements will be made in keeping with the priest's wishes.

Priests will be reminded periodically through the Clergy Newsletter to update this form.

## **PART FIVE**

### **ADDITIONAL MATTERS**

#### **A. COMMENDATIONS AND COMPLAINTS**

All signed letters about priests received by the Archbishop or archdiocesan offices are acknowledged and may be placed in the priest's personnel file based on the credibility and the importance of the letter's content. If appropriate, the priest is notified regarding the contents of the letter. All letters placed in the personnel file are available for the priest's inspection. At the priest's request, his response to the matter raised will also become a part of the personnel file.

**Commendations.** A commendation of a priest for his ministry of outstanding service will be acknowledged by the recipient and placed in the priest's file.

**Complaints.** A complaint registered against a priest which is submitted to any archdiocesan office will be handled under the principle of subsidiarity; that is, a complaint will be accepted only if the complaint was first taken to the person(s) involved without success and there is no other recourse.

Every effort will be made to insure that all are aware that priests have the right to inspect any material which is sent to the diocesan administration mentioning a priest by name. In the same way, every effort will be made to insure that such knowledge is not used against any person or in a manner which would harm the reputation of an individual.

#### **B. ACCESS TO PERSONNEL FILES**

Personnel files are those which contain the individual priest's sacramental records, academic history, medical reports, and appointment letters in addition to his personnel profile forms, commendation or complaint letters, and other pertinent information appropriate for inclusion by the priest himself or by any archdiocesan office.

Each priest's personnel file maintained in the Office of Ministerial Leadership will contain certain required documents including:

##### **1) For all active and retired priests:**

- Name(s) and contact information for family
- Name of and contact information for primary care physician
- Designation of Secretary for Ministerial Leadership to have access to health data
- Funeral arrangements
- Health Care Power of Attorney
- Finance Power of Attorney
- Will

2) In addition, for retiring priests:

- Memorandum of Understanding detailing effective date of retirement, compensation, information on personally owned long-term care insurance

These files are located in the office of the Secretariat for Ministerial Leadership and are maintained by the Secretary for Ministerial Leadership. Access to them is strictly limited to archdiocesan administrators whose ministry specifically requires inspection for particular reasons, usually only the Secretary for Ministerial Leadership.

Each priest has access to his own personnel file. Inspection of that file may be arranged by making an appointment through the Secretary for Ministerial Leadership. While the priest may not remove anything from his file, he may add any explanation or clarification he deems appropriate or helpful, by way of a correspondence to the Archbishop or Secretary for Ministerial Leadership.

## **LIST OF APPENDICES**

- **Appendix A: Child Protection Policy**
- **Appendix B: Handbook for Deans**
- **Appendix C: Priests Retirement Policy and Manual**
- **Appendix D: Retreat and Continuing Education Reimbursement**
- **Appendix E: Priest Compensation and Benefits Schedule**
- **Appendix F: Funeral Arrangements**
- **Appendix G: Extern Priest from Foreign Countries**
- **Appendix H: Parish Review Survey**