

SECTION 1: PARISHES

"A parish is a certain community of the Christian faithful stably constituted in a particular church, whose pastoral care is entrusted to a pastor as its proper pastor under the authority of the diocesan bishop." (Canon 515§1) The following policies shall be followed in regard to these aspects of parish life:

1.1 PREACHING

The homily is reserved to the clergy. Canon 767§1 states: "Among the forms of preaching, the homily is preeminent; it is a part of the liturgy itself and is reserved to a priest or to a deacon; in the homily the mysteries of faith and the norms of Christian living are to be expounded from the sacred text throughout the course of the liturgical year."

1.1.1 Lay faithful may be admitted to preach in a church or oratory, according to Canon 766, "if it is necessary in certain circumstances or if it is useful in particular cases according to the prescriptions of the conference of bishops and with due regard for Canon 767§1." Examples of necessity would be situations in which there is a shortage of clergy or in cases where the celebrant does not speak the language of the congregation. Examples of usefulness would be various, including situations such as lay persons giving retreats or missions, lay missionaries speaking on their apostolates, or lay leaders speaking on stewardship.

1.1.2 Only Catholics are allowed to preach or speak in a Catholic church or at a Catholic worship service.

1.1.3 Since even clergy must have a faculty to preach (Canon 764), it is necessary that a lay person who preaches must also be qualified and competent. Any lay person who is allowed to preach in a church should have sufficient knowledge of scripture and theology, and the ability to communicate.

1.1.4 Non-Catholics may preach or speak in a Catholic church only with the prior permission of the Archbishop. Catholics are not to preach at the celebration of a non-Catholic Lord's Supper or major liturgical service without the prior permission of the Archbishop or the Vicar General.

1.1.5 One exception to this policy: A non-Catholic may speak or preach at a Catholic funeral service. If the funeral is within the context of Mass, the non-Catholic may speak after the distribution of the Eucharist. If there is no celebration of the Eucharist, the non-Catholic may speak before the prayers of final commendation. Likewise, a Catholic may speak or preach at a non-Catholic funeral service.

1.2 ALIENATION OF PARISH PROPERTY

The diversion or alienation for any purposes of any valuable possessions or properties of the

parish, without the prior written consent of the Archbishop or the Vicar General, is prohibited.

1.3 PARISH INSURANCE

All parishes and institutions under the control of the Archbishop are required to participate in the Archdiocesan Insurance Program; all insurance programs must be structured to provide adequate and reasonable amounts for:

- property damage and destruction
- liability to other parties; and
- workers' compensation as required by law.

1.4 PARISH COLLECTIONS AND INCOME

The parish church has the right to the collections normally taken up in the church, as well as to monies from the parish school, grants, properties, wills, annual drives, offerings made at Mass or other church functions, the proceeds from the sale of votive lights and religious articles.

1.5 STOLE FEES

Offerings of the faithful on the occasion of the administration of the sacraments, commonly called stole fees, become the property of the parish.

1.6 PARISH WEEKLY AND MONTHLY FINANCIAL PAYMENTS

Pastors are obliged to comply with the regulations of the archdiocese concerning the submission of weekly and monthly financial payments to the archdiocese.

1.7 MASS FOR THE PEOPLE

After being installed as pastor, every pastor has the obligation to celebrate a Mass for the people of the parish every Sunday and holy day of obligation observed in the archdiocese. If he is legitimately prevented from this celebration (such as illness or incapacity), the pastor is to apply Mass on these same days through another priest, or he himself is to apply it on another day (Canon 534§1).

1.7.1 A pastor who has the care of more than one parish is obliged to apply only one Mass for all the people entrusted to him. (Canon 534§2)

1.7.2 A pastor who has not satisfied this obligation is to apply as many Masses for his people as he has missed as soon as possible. (Canon 534§3)

1.7.3 If there are co-pastors, they should agree upon a rule whereby one of them celebrates the Mass for the people. (Canon 543§2,2Q)

1.7.4 An administrator is bound by this same obligation. (Canon 540§1)

1.7.5 If the office of pastor is vacant, or if the pastor is absent, parochial vicars or other priests exercising pastoral ministry in the parish do not have the obligation to celebrate the Mass for the people (Canon 549).

1.7.6 This obligation applies only to bishops, pastors and administrators, and not to rectors, chaplains, parochial vicars, or moderators of religious communities.

1.8 RECTORIES

Rectories are provided as residences for priests. Only priests and seminarians assigned to the parish by the Archbishop may live in rectories. In those parishes staffed by members of religious Congregations, members of the Congregation who are not priests may live in the rectory if assigned to do so by the competent Congregational authority. Any exception to this policy must be approved in advance by the Archbishop.

1.8.1 Rectory telephones: All taped messages used to answer rectory telephones are to conclude with a second number at which a priest can be reached.

1.9 INVENTORY OF PARISH PROPERTY

Pastors are to compile an inventory every three (3) years of parish movable property, and this inventory is to be reviewed and certified by the Parish Finance Council. One (1) copy of the parish property inventory is to be forwarded to the office of the Executive Director for Clergy and another is to be retained in the parish office.

1.10 PARISH ENTERTAINMENT EVENTS

If rides or other entertainment materials are used on parish or school properties, the vendor must provide the parish or school with a certificate of insurance verifying liability coverage of at least one million dollars. Both the parish/school and the archdiocese are to be named as an additional insured on the policy. If there is a question concerning insurance coverage, parish clergy should contact the Insurance Office of the archdiocese. The wording of the contract should be carefully reviewed. Be alert for "Hold Harmless" or "Indemnification" clauses by which the vendor may attempt to have the parish or school assume some or all of the vendor's legal liabilities. If there is a question concerning the wording of a contract, parish clergy should

contact the legal counsel of the archdiocese.

1.11 CLARION HERALD PARISH REVENUE AND DISTRIBUTION

As a vital component of the archdiocese's communications mission, the *Clarion Herald* publishes 44 issues a year (weekly during the school year and biweekly during the summer) and delivers the newspapers directly to churches, schools, senior residences and area businesses. Parishes are billed 1 percent of their "ordinary income" (based on the most recent pastoral reports) for the *Clarion Herald*. To enhance evangelization, readership and advertising, pastors are urged to have their ushers distribute the *Clarion Herald* with the parish bulletin as parishioners leave church following all weekend Masses.

1.12 MAINTAINING HOLY OILS

The USCCB Secretariat for the Liturgy has received requests for clarification on the practice of diluting the holy oils. Many parishes have begun the laudable practice of displaying the oils in larger and more dignified containers. The problem exists where parishes receive only a small amount of each oil blessed by the Archbishop at the Chrism Mass. To fill the containers, some pastors are using unblest oil, unconsecrated chrism, or oil left over from the preceding year. Concerns have also been raised about the practice of diluting the Chrism, for whatever reason, to such a degree that the validity of the sacrament is affected.

Some of the ambiguity regarding the dilution of the holy oils arises from the practice permitted in the 1917 *Code of Canon Law*. Canon 734§2 of the 1917 Code stated that when the holy oils are about to give out, other olive oil that has not been blessed may be added, even repeatedly, but always in smaller quantity than the holy oils. Canon 847 of the 1983 *Code of Canon Law*, by not repeating the provisions of Canon 734§2 of the 1917 Code, suppresses the practice of adding unblest oil to the blessed oils when the supply runs low. On April 18, 1994, the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments issued the following response to these questions: 1) Is canon 734§2 of the 1917 Code suppressed?; and 2) If the practice is lawful, what are the conditions when unblest oil may be added to blessed oil?:

While canon 734§2 of the 1917 Code of Canon Law is indeed suppressed, the spirit of the law is not suppressed. Therefore, *in case of true necessity only*, a priest may increase the volume of the blessed oils by adding unblest oil to them. It would be an abuse however, if this practice became routine for the sake of expedience or convenience (prot. N.S89/94/L.)

The congregation's response clearly permits adding unblest oil only in cases of true necessity. This would exclude diluting the oils merely in order to fill the oil stocks that will be displayed.

1.13 CONCEALED WEAPONS IN CHURCHES

Louisiana Revised Statute 40:1379.3 states that no concealed handgun may be carried into and no concealed handgun permit issued pursuant to that Section shall authorize or entitle a permittee to carry a concealed handgun into any church, synagogue, mosque, or other similar place of worship, eligible for qualification as a tax -exempt organization under 26 U.S.C. 501, except as provided for in Subsection U of the revised statute.

We discourage the possession of firearms within our churches but assume that if they are present, all criteria within state law have been met.

1.14 REGISTRATION IN A PARISH OTHER THAN ONE'S TERRITORIAL OR PERSONAL PARISH

It is the policy of the Archdiocese of New Orleans that individuals and families belong canonically to the parish within which they reside, or the personal parish to which they have chosen to belong, if eligible to join a personal parish.

1.14.1 The pastor of the territorial parish is responsible for every Catholic residing within the boundaries of his parish regardless of whether or not they are registered or if they are registered elsewhere. He is responsible to catechize, evangelize, and build community within that territory.

1.14.2 It is recognized that individuals may wish, and in reality often do, attend Mass and become actively involved with another parish. They often make their financial contributions to the parish in which they choose to worship and become involved. While not wishing to interfere in the free choice of the individual or family to worship in the church of their choice, the Archdiocese does not recognize membership outside their proper parish.

1.14.3 The following policy provides for the registration of individuals who wish to participate in a parish other than the territorial parish to which they belong. It is strongly recommended that such individuals first speak with their territorial pastor before requesting another pastor to accept their registration. This will allow the territorial pastor to know the reasons for the request and to invite the individuals to remain active in the parish to which they properly belong. It is also strongly recommended that no pastor receive the registration of a non-parishioner before first consulting with the territorial pastor and encouraging the non-parishioner to speak with the territorial pastor. Therefore:

- Individuals are allowed to register outside their territorial parish.
- This does not change parish membership, which remains in the territorial parish or the personal parish they have joined according to canon and archdiocesan law.

- Pastors may accept the registration of someone not a parishioner but then must notify the pastor of the proper territorial parish.
- Once a parishioner's registration has been accepted by a parish other than his or her territorial parish, no further permission is necessary for baptisms and marriages or for the celebration of funerals outside a parish church.
- As a general rule, pastors wishing to provide pastoral services outside their own territorial parish to registered non-parishioners can do so only with permission of the territorial pastor.
- Acceptance of registration of non-parishioners is left to pastoral judgment of receiving pastor.

1.15 PARISH REGISTRATION OUTSIDE OF ONE'S TERRITORIAL OR PERSONAL PARISH

The current diocesan policy allows Catholics to register in parishes other than their territorial parish if the pastor of the chosen parish is willing to accept the registration. The individual nevertheless retains canonical (legal) membership in the territorial parish.

1.15.1 What does parish registration mean? It is the expression of intention to participate in the life of the parish community. It should indicate willingness to:

- worship regularly with the parish community;
- participate in the ministry of the parish to bring Christ to other people;
- support the parish program financially;
- take an active part in parish activities, enroll in the school, religious education, and other parish programs;
- receive all sacraments in the parish without permission from the territorial or personal pastor.

1.15.2 While parents of school-age children are expected to take an interest in school-related activities, parish registration implies a commitment to the parish community over and beyond the school program. Parents from other territorial parishes need not, indeed should not, register in a parish simply to participate in the school program.

1.15.3 The Presbyteral Council approved the form on the following page to be used when a Catholic wishes to register in a parish other than the territorial parish.

APPLICATION TO BE REGISTERED

IN _____ PARISH

BY ONE BELONGING TO ANOTHER TERRITORIAL PARISH

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

HOME PHONE _____ WORK PHONE _____

TERRITORIAL PARISH: _____

Names of other family members seeking to be registered:

How long have you lived at this address? _____

Have you been a registered parishioner of your territorial parish? _____

Have you been involved with the territorial parish? _____

Where do you attend church on a regular basis? _____

How long have you been associated with the parish in which you now wish to register?

Why do you wish to be registered in _____ Parish?

Office use only:

Registration accepted by pastor:

Signature _____ Date _____

Notice of registration sent to the pastor of territorial parish.

Date _____

1.16 PARISH PASTORAL COUNCILS

The Code of Canon Law states that after a diocesan bishop has consulted the Presbyteral Council and if he judges it opportune, a pastoral council is to be established in each parish. (c. 536). The parish pastoral council, governed by the norms of the Code, allows the Christian faithful to be of assistance to the pastor in fostering pastoral activity in the parish. The Archbishop of New Orleans requires that there be a pastoral council in each parish. Each parish pastoral council in the Archdiocese is to operate according to the Code of Canon Law and the following policy. The Office of Pastoral Planning and Ministries assists the archbishop in providing resources on the structure and functions of Parish Pastoral Councils.

1.16.1 THE PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL:

- Shall include ex-officio the pastor who presides over the pastoral council.
- Shall consist of members who are partly appointed by the pastor and partly selected by parishioners through a process determined by the pastor
- Shall give due consideration to include the parochial vicars and deacons assigned to the parish.
- Shall give due consideration to include youth, young adult, and an ethnically diverse representation
- Shall include a minimum of five members and a suggested maximum of twenty.
- Shall require a quorum consisting of a simple majority of members.
- Shall have members serve a specific term; the manner of selection and terms of office are to be stated in the by-laws of the Parish Pastoral Council.
- Shall keep minutes of each meeting with a copy on file in the parish office.
- Shall be convened only by the pastor or the priest administrator of the parish. There shall be at least four meetings each year.
- Shall not convene without the pastor present.
- Shall not be dissolved by the pastor or the administrator without the prior permission of the Archbishop.

1.16.2 THE MEMBERS OF THE PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL ARE TO:

- Be supportive of the teachings of the Catholic Church.
- Be active members of the parish.

1.16.3 THE ROLE OF THE PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

- The role of the Parish Pastoral Council shall be consultative. The meetings of the Pastoral Council are authorized by the pastor or administrator who approves the agenda. While it is expected that the pastor give due consideration to the advice of the council, the pastor, in concert with the pertinent regulations of the Archdiocese, is responsible for all decisions affecting the life of the parish.

1.16.4 THE DUTIES OF THE PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

- to assist the pastor in setting direction, mission, vision, and values for the parish.
- to participate in pastoral planning.
- to collaborate with the parish Finance Council
- to review and promote the service and ministry activities of the parish.
- to foster unity and a sense of community in the parish and an awareness of the place of the parish in the archdiocese and the universal Church.
- to support diocesan initiatives (e.g. diocesan synods).

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