

1105 Pastoral Policies for Priests

The Division of Clergy Personnel

PART FIVE PASTORAL POLICIES FOR PRIESTS

1105.1 Development of Policies and Procedures

- **Reasons for Policies** - The experience of priestly life and ministry today takes place in an environment of constant change. New circumstances and realities emerge in the church and in society that present new challenges and opportunities for those engaged in priestly ministry.
- **Policy Development** - The development of policies and procedures relating to priestly life and ministry is designed to provide consistent, thoughtful approaches that can lead priests to enjoy happier, healthier, more satisfied and more effective ministry.

Who Formulates Policy

- The Priestly Life and Ministry Board, in collaboration with the Office of Clergy Personnel, formulates and recommends policies and procedures to the Archbishop.

Process to Propose Clergy Policy:

1. **The Board charges one of its Committees** (Standing or Ad Hoc) with the task of preparing a policy draft pertaining to an identified area of concern;
2. **The Board researches the issues** involved, consults with priests and other knowledgeable persons, and designs a policy proposal in draft form for presentation to the Board for approval for socialization among the Presbyterate;
3. **The Archbishop and Vicar Bishops** conduct a preliminary review of the draft policy before it is sent to the entire Presbyterate;
4. **After the Archbishop's preliminary review and upon the Board's approval, the proposed policy is presented to the Presbyterate** at the Regional Priests' meetings for comments, suggestions, and an affirmation;
5. **Upon the Board's approval, the proposed policy is presented to the Presbyteral Council** for its input and affirmation;
6. Once the socialization process is complete, **the Committee presents a final policy proposal for approval by the Board;**
7. **The policy is presented to the Archbishop for his review;**
8. **Upon approval by the Archbishop,** the policy statement is provided to all priests for their information as well as to the staff of the Division of Clergy Personnel and other Archdiocesan bodies.

9. **The approved policy will be posted on the Archdiocesan website** for easy access by all priests.

1105.2 Mentoring Policy & Process for Newly Ordained/ Early Ministry Introduction

- **First Assignment** - The Archdiocese has long recognized that the first priestly assignment is an important one. In this assignment a man truly learns the “art” of healthy priestly living. However, transition from seminary to full-time, permanent assignment is not without its challenges.
- **Newly ordained**, for this program, is described as those in the first year of their first parochial assignment as a priest.
- **Participation Required** - Every newly ordained priest shall participate for at least one year in a Mentoring Program approved by the Archbishop in consultation with the Priestly Life and Ministry Board. This mentoring process may be continued beyond the first year of priestly work at the discretion of the priest and his mentor.
- **Goal of the Process** - Goal of the Mentoring Process is to ease the transition of the newly ordained from seminarian to priesthood, thus enabling him to initiate a joyful and fulfilling experience of ministry.
- **Role of the Mentor** - Role of the Mentor is to provide an opportunity to establish a supportive relationship for the newly ordained priest: specifically to serve as a confidential advisor, guide, and personal resource. The mentor’s role is intended to be a clear sign of concern, care, and support and not as an evaluator, reporter, or liaison.

Mentor Assignment

- **Who Assigns Mentor** - The Office of Clergy Personnel will evaluate the personality of the newly ordained priest including his experience, age, gifts and talents when considering who to assign to him as a mentor. The Office of Clergy Personnel will also consult with the Office of Vocations and the newly ordained priest regarding the final selection of a mentor.
- **Mentor** - The mentor should NOT be the current pastor of the newly ordained priest.
- **Mentor** - The mentor should be skilled in providing support and assistance to the newly ordained priest. Great care should be taken in these assignments given their lasting impact on the ministry of the newly ordained.

1105.3 New Pastors and New Administrators

- **Mentoring Recommended** - It is recommended that new pastors and administrators establish a mentoring relationship with at least one experienced pastor as they begin their new duties. The transition to the leadership of a pastorate can be exciting and challenging at the same time. Proper support and counsel for new pastors and administrators can serve to make this transition more successful.

1105.4 Pastoral Leadership Skills

- **Leadership Skills** - All pastors, including new pastors and administrators, should consider appropriate managerial practices to improve their leadership skills including participation in a 360° Evaluation, a survey of some kind or some other type of management tool or training method.

1105.5 Periodic On-line Survey of Priests

The Archbishop of Baltimore, the Office of Clergy Personnel and/or the Priestly Life and Ministry Board may periodically conduct an on-line survey of priests in order to obtain useful information including basic facts about individual priests including languages spoken, aspirations for ministry or assignment or other information it deems useful to fulfill its mission.