



Policies of the Diocese of Kansas City ~ St. Joseph

Policy # 220.41

Priests' Personnel Placement Guidelines

Approved By: Most Reverend Robert W. Finn, DD

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Revised:

The Bishop of Kansas City-Saint Joseph has the authority and the responsibility to appoint pastors, administrators, associate pastors, and sacramental ministers for the various parishes and missions of the Diocese. To assist him in this ministry, the following guidelines are established.

At the same time, we must caution against unrealistic expectations regarding these policies/guidelines. Circumstances in parishes can change from day to day, and events occur that could never have been anticipated. So the Bishop is accorded the widest possible latitude and is given the freedom necessary to effectively carry out this task. It is in this spirit that these guidelines are put forth.

I. PRIESTS' PERSONNEL PLACEMENT BOARD

- 1) Ordinarily, the Priests' Personnel Board, hereafter referred to as "the Board," will be comprised of up to eight priests representative of the Diocesan Presbyterate, including a representative from priests ordained less than ten years. It will include a Vicar General, who is an ex officio member, and the Director of Priests' Personnel, appointed by the Bishop. Other members will serve three year terms, and appointments will be staggered to provide continuity on the Board. The Director of Priests' Personnel, as liaison, will serve as an ex officio member of the Presbyteral Council.
- 2) When there is an opening, a priest may nominate either himself or another priest for the Board by sending that name to the Bishop or his delegate. The Bishop will, in turn, select a group from those nominated or from other priests of the Diocese.
- 3) Board meetings are scheduled monthly, January through June and September through November, and these dates will be announced in the Bishop's calendar. Meetings may be cancelled if there is no particular agenda.

II. CONSULTATION

- 1) A questionnaire will be sent annually to priests of the Diocese soliciting information regarding their assignment, their plans for that assignment, and their hopes and plans for the future. A priest may ask, or be invited, to meet with the Board for further discussion and clarification of these hopes and plans.
- 2) At least every five years, each priest will be contacted by a member of the Board for a conversation regarding his needs and his assignment. This discussion will be based upon issues dealt with in the questionnaire. A written report of the conversation will be submitted to the priest being consulted. After he has approved the report for accuracy, a copy will be given to him and one will be filed with the Board. In addition to this interview, a priest may at any time request a meeting with the Board. This meeting will be scheduled at the earliest possible convenience of all parties involved. Over and above all this, any priest, at any time, has access to the Bishop.
- 3) When valuable, other Diocesan personnel may be invited to consult with the Board, providing statistical information regarding demographics, finances and other data useful for decisions regarding the placement of priest personnel.
- 4) In addition to his consultation with the Board, the Bishop has the prerogative of consulting with the staff and/or pastoral council of a parish regarding the unique character of special needs of that parish.
- 5) A pastor will be consulted before an associate pastor is assigned to the parish.

III. EXPECTATIONS

- 1) Job description for pastors and associate pastors are developed according to Canon Law.
- 2) All priests are expected to pursue their ongoing formation via professional education through continuing education offerings and other programs relating to their specific ministry.
- 3) Ordinarily, a pastor could expect to serve six years in an assignment. After six years, the possibility of an extension will be considered on a year-by-year basis, ordinarily not to exceed an additional six years.
- 4) There is value in newly ordained priests serving as associate pastors for some time in more than one parish, under the guidance and mentoring of designated pastors, to learn important aspects of leading a faith community, before being named a pastor.
- 5) When a pastor receives a new assignment, the Bishop will communicate any particular goals or expectations he has in mind for that parish.

- 6) Information about parishes is kept on file at the Office of the Chancellor. Members of the Board are charged with representing the interests of individual priests as regards their pastoral placement. Though ongoing surveys and interviews will assist this process, it is most helpful for each priest to communicate his preferences, needs, special circumstances, strengths and liabilities so that his hopes can be properly expressed and represented.
- 7) Some methods of evaluating priests' performance are available. A self-evaluation assessment may be obtained through the Vicar General.