



# Annual Visit of the Vicar Forane to a Parish in the Deanery

Diocese of Erie

## Overview – Instructions

### Purpose

The visit of the Dean to each parish in his deanery is required by canon 555. The purposes of the visit are to support the welfare of the clerics at the parish, as well as to assess the status of the various ecclesiastical responsibilities and temporal goods entrusted to the Pastor's care.

### Scheduling of the visit

Once per year, typically after the Easter season, the Dean will contact each Pastor to schedule the visit at a time convenient to both. The visit should occur no later than the First Sunday of Advent, and all necessary documents should be submitted to the Chancery by December 31 of that same year. (See below)

### Components of the visit

1. At least one week in advance of the visit, the Dean is to send to the Pastor two forms to complete prior to the visit:
  - "Parish Emergency Data Form" (completed by the Pastor)
  - "Priest's Personal Inventory" (requested of each priest living in the rectory)
2. The visit is to include time for the Dean and Pastor to have a discussion about the Pastor's general welfare, as well as any particular questions or challenges he may be facing.
3. The Dean, utilizing the "Parish Visitation Report" form, discusses the various aspects of the parish with the Pastor. Since the form requires the signatures of both, it is best if the Dean completes the form while speaking with the Pastor.
4. The Pastor shows the Dean the sacramental records who determines if they are being maintained properly. The Dean signs, and dates the last entry, adding "*Visum*" in each record, indicating that he has seen and reviewed the records, including the Baptismal, First Eucharist, Confirmation and Marriage records. If the Dean were to notice any irregularities in the records, he is to ask the Pastor to make any appropriate corrections.
5. The Pastor shows the Dean the rectory, church, sacristy and other buildings as appropriate. While the Dean is to respect the privacy of the priests living in the rectory, it is helpful if the Pastor walks the Dean through as much of the rectory as possible. This allows the Dean to more accurately assess the living conditions of the priests.
6. If other priests are living in the rectory, the Pastor should make every effort to inform them in advance of the visit of the Dean, ask them to complete the Priest's Personal Inventory Form, and allow time for each priest to meet with the Dean individually.

### Filling out the Forms

The forms may be printed from the diocesan website (<https://www.eriescd.org/bishop/Clergy-Personnel.html>) and completed in writing or filled in electronically. Instructions for completing the forms electronically: if using Microsoft Edge, click "Add Text" from the menu at the top left, then click where you would like to type; or if you use the free Acrobat Reader app, click the "Fill in form fields" button on the floating toolbar, then click where you would like to type.

**After the visit**

1. The Dean retains the original copies of the three forms mentioned above.
2. The Dean sends copies of all three forms to the Chancellor.
3. If there is any concern or question which, in his prudent judgment, the Dean considers significant, he is to communicate the same in a discreet manner to the diocesan official in the best position to assist, e.g. Regional Vicar, Vicar for Clergy, Chancellor, etc.

**Questions**

Any questions can be directed to the Chancellor, Regional Vicar or Vicar for Clergy.

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