



Clergy Office

**Diocese of Erie**

429 East Grandview Boulevard  
Post Office Box 10397  
Erie, Pennsylvania 16514-0397

November 20, 2024

Dear Monsignor/Father:

Each year priests who are considering retirement from active ministry, and those seeking to remain in active ministry after the age of 75, have questions and seek guidance regarding the many details of retirement preparation in general, as well as those specific only to priests.

Whether retirement is just around the corner, or you plan on serving in your current capacity for a few more years, there are matters you may need to consider now. To assist you as you begin to think through this next phase, we have developed and enclose an informational Priest Retirement Planning and Procedures Guide.

As you continue to be mindful of the direction that God is leading you in your priestly ministry, we hope you find this guide helpful when you need it. Please reach out to me if you have any questions or need further clarification on the provided information.

Fraternally in Christ,

*Fr. Nicholas Rouch*

The Very Reverend Nicholas J. Rouch, STD, VG  
Acting Vicar for Clergy



# Diocese of Erie

## Priest Retirement Planning and Procedures Guide July 2024

Ordained priesthood is a life of prayer and service from which a priest never "retires." He may retire from active ministry, administrative duties, or a particular office, but he continues until death the lifelong priestly ministry to which he dedicates himself at ordination.

The Clergy Office recognizes that retirement brings important decisions that need to be made and questions often arise on the various aspects of entering retirement. Unless stated explicitly as policy, this guide is informational and meant to provide you with some help in navigating your planning.

### **Practical Matters**

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#### **1. Procedure for Retirement from Active Ministry**

- "A priest of the diocese who has served for thirty (30) years and has reached seventy (70) years of age *may submit a letter of resignation* to the Diocesan Bishop."
- He "must *discuss* his intentions with the Diocesan Bishop and Director of Priest Personnel *one year in advance* of his desired date of retirement."
- "Retirement becomes effective only when accepted by the Bishop."
- "Resignation from full-time active ministry *must* be submitted before one's 75<sup>th</sup> birthday." While other forms of communication may occur with the Bishop or Clergy Office, a priest must submit a formal letter addressed to the Bishop.

*Source: Priest Personnel Policy, III. Retirement, promulgated 1/24/14 (See Appendix A attached as part of this document.)*

#### **2. Opportunities for Continuing Occasional Ministry**

"All retired priests who do any public ministry must comply with the requirements of the diocesan *Policy for the Protection of Children.*" Associated costs are paid for by the Diocese for retired priests. (See *Appendix A*)

Our brother priests and parishes in the diocese benefit greatly from the help of our retired priests. This can take several forms:

- Serving at the parish of residence
- Regular assistance at particular parish(es)
- Availability to cover weekend Masses and help with Confessions, where needed
- Temporary parish administration, etc.

### **Senior Associate option:**

- “A ministerial designation for priests nearing retirement or who are otherwise prevented from assuming responsibility for parochial administrative duties. The guiding principle...is the encouragement of priests...to remain in active ministry. Senior Associates are canonically equivalent to a parochial vicar.” (Source: *Priest Personnel Policy, Section II.C.1.*)
- A priest may petition the Bishop for this designation at age of 65, or earlier if a chronic health problem significantly impedes his ability to function in an administrative role.
- The priest and the Director of Clergy Personnel work together and with a pastor to determine an arrangement which is helpful for all concerned. Any arrangement must be approved by the Bishop.
- Salary and Benefits:
  - **If not retired:** Typically, the senior associate resides in the parish rectory, and is compensated according to the clergy salary scale, and paid by the parish.
  - **If retired:** The senior associate is compensated through the diocesan priest pension plan, social security, and parish stipends. His parish duties as well as room and board are negotiated with the pastor depending on individual circumstances.

### **3. Diocesan Communication**

- **Email:** The Diocese will continue to use diocesan email to send information, some of which is specific to retired priests. If you need help establishing your diocesan email on your cell phone or other device, please contact Cheryl Krolczyk via phone (814-824-1144) or email ([ckrolczyk@eriercd.org](mailto:ckrolczyk@eriercd.org)).
- **Mail:** The Diocese continues to send some correspondence by USPS mail, and your current address is needed for your pension. Please make sure the Clergy Office has your new address once you move into your retirement residence.
- **Phone:** For important timely communication matters, including emergencies, it would be helpful for the diocese to have your cell phone number or updated home phone number on file. We are grateful if you would contact Cheryl Krolczyk with that information.

### **4. Income**

- **Defined Benefit Pension Plan**

The Diocese offers this benefit to all diocesan clergy with partial benefits beginning at 15 years of diocesan service on up to the 30 years of service for the full benefit. The current monthly (full) benefit is \$1,600 or \$19,200 a year. Please contact the Office of Financial Services at least one month in advance of retirement for the enrollment forms. This benefit is also available to priests who decide to continue work full time after the age of 75 whereas they would receive both their monthly parish full time salary and the monthly retirement benefit amount.

For pension-related questions, please contact Jim Hubert, Chief Financial Officer (814-824-1185).

- **Social Security Benefits**

A priest who is paying self-employment taxes is eligible and would take their Social Security benefit when they reach Full Retirement Age (FRA) or anytime thereafter to age 70. The FRA is based on your year of birth year and will likely be from age 66 to 67 years of age. Benefits stop accumulating at age 70 so be sure to start your benefits by then.

You can apply for benefits 4 months before the date that you would like payments to begin. There are three ways to apply:

- Go to [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov) to apply on-line
- Call 1-800-772-1213
- Make an appointment to visit your local Social Security Office to apply in person

For questions regarding social security benefits, please contact Jim Tometsko, Director of Human Resources at 814-824-1189.

- **Personal Funds**

- **Full Retirement Annual Income *estimate***

Social Security \$12,000

Diocesan Pension \$19,200

Estimated Income \$31,200

Additional sources of income – Mass Stipends, 401(k) distributions, personal investment income, etc.

## 5. **Housing Options**

Retired priests have the following living arrangement options:

- **Personal residence** – The priest finds his own lodging (house, apartment, etc.) and is responsible for all the bills, etc. He may choose to live alone or with family.
- **Living in a rectory** – The priest works this out with the pastor. It is expected that a retired priest provides the parish with some remuneration for his room and board. While the diocese does not have a strict formula for this, recent practice has been to begin at \$600/month and adjust that up or down, depending on the needs of the priest, how much he might help out the pastor with sacramental and pastoral duties, and the services provided by the parish.
- **MJM Residence** – This option is for priests who are capable of independent living, who do not require assistance with basic duties of daily life (eating, bathing, dressing, toileting, getting around, etc.) and who do not need nursing care. The MJM residence provides a private suite, meals, laundry, basic room cleaning, and a garage. The monthly rent is currently at \$995. Priests must complete an application packet with includes documentation of their ability to care for themselves. Admission is dependent on availability of one of 10 suites.
- **St. Mary's Home – Asbury** – There is no special package for priests. They will try to accommodate requests as possible. Options include:
  - a. Private apartment – private pay, \$4,500/month (or approximately \$54,000 year). This monthly rate can be reduced if a person provides \$60,000 up front.

- b. Nursing care – can be paid privately, or by medical assistance. (Private pay for nursing care is currently \$14,000/month)
- c. Once a resident's personal funds are exhausted, St. Mary's helps them apply for medical assistance.

*Note: costs subject to change without notice*

- **Christ the King Manor (DuBois)** – There is no special arrangement for clergy. Priests interested in residing there for retirement are advised to apply early, e.g., a year in advance, as it is a popular place.
- **Pope St. John XXIII (Hermitage)** – The Clergy Office is working on updated information.
- **Other retirement/nursing home** – this is typically arranged by the retired priest himself or his family. There are not diocesan funds available to subsidize this.

**Note:** Tenant Insurance \$40,000 is provided to all priests in residence in our diocesan buildings (e.g., rectories and the Priest Retirement Home).

Moving can be stressful, especially if you have been in a location for a lengthy period of time. For your help and convenience, attached as *Appendix B* is a *Moving Checklist for Priests*.

## **6. Health and Welfare**

- **Medicare and Supplements**

At the age of 65, you are to remain on your local parish/school employer health plan, and it will continue to be your primary insurance coverage until your retirement. However, when you approach age 65, you should contact Medicare, by going online at Medicare.gov (or call (800)-633-4227) to apply for Medicare Part A (Hospital) at that time. You can enroll into Part A during a 7-month period, beginning 3 months before and 3 months after your birthdate. Part A is free for those who have paid into Social Security/Medicare for at least 10 years of employment, therefore, please apply during this time period. Once you receive your Medicare card, please let your physician's office know of this secondary insurance coverage.

You will need Medicare Part B (Medical) in the month that you officially retire, and you would then pay for the monthly premium, currently \$174.70 per month. Therefore, please contact Medicare one month earlier to enroll. In most cases, this premium will be deducted from your monthly social security benefit and you will not see a monthly bill. They will also provide you with a form that your employer (Diocese of Erie, c/o Office of Financial Services) will need to complete before you can enroll into Part B.

The Diocese does offer a Medicare Advantage plan, free of charge, as a supplement to Medicare for those deductibles and coinsurance that Medicare does not cover. Please contact the Office of Financial Services one month in advance of enrollment for more information. This supplement requires that you have signed up for both Medicare Parts A & B before you enroll into the plan. This plan also includes prescription coverage, subject to customary copays, and covers the "donut hole", or lapse coverage for those experiencing costly medications (up to \$6,350 annually in out-of-pocket costs).

For questions regarding Medicare, please contact Jim Tometsko, Director of Human Resources at 814-824-1189.

- **Dental Insurance**

You will continue to be covered by the diocesan dental plan. Currently, the dental plan is with Delta Dental and the broker assisting is Vicary Insurance - (814) 459-3407. For questions regarding Dental Insurance, you may contact the above insurance agency or Jim Tometsko, Director of Human Resources at 814-824-1189.

- **Vision Insurance**

You will continue to be covered by the diocesan vision plan. Currently, the vision plan is with Highmark Fashion Focus. For questions regarding Vision Insurance, you may contact Jim Tometsko, Director of Human Resources at 814-824-1189.

- **Long Term Care**

Your current health coverage and retiree health coverage covers in-hospital stays and skilled nursing care within certain parameters. However, it does not cover assisted living care nor nursing care if needed. For situations such as these, it is the personal financial responsibility for those that may need it. Also, the state Medicaid program is available to everyone once your personal assets are spent down to a certain level.

## **7. Tax Implications**

Retirement income distributions from 401(k) Plans, Pension Plans, and Traditional IRA's are subject to Federal taxes. However, this type of retirement income is not subject to Pennsylvania and Local income taxes.

For some retired priests receiving the diocesan pension benefit, it is possible that your pension may only be partially taxable for Federal tax purposes. Each year, the Diocese will send a letter at the end of January to all priests receiving the pension informing them of the "Housing Allowance" amount which they may be able to exclude from their Federal tax return. For example, in 2023 the amount excluded was approximately \$11,940, leaving approximately \$7,260 of the annual pension to be taxable for Federal Income tax. Each priest should consult his tax preparer to determine if this provision applies to his tax liability.

401(k) Plan - If you are still working and contributing into the 401(k) Plan you do not have to take a required annual minimum distribution.

Traditional Individual Retirement Account (IRA) - Once you reach age 73, you are required to take a required annual minimum distribution, even if you are still working at age 73. There is no such requirement for a ROTH IRA.

## **8. Estate and Funeral Planning**

Retirement planning is an ideal time to make sure that the Chancery has an updated copy of your Will, Living Will, Power of Attorney, and *Priest Emergency Form (attached as Appendix C)*. This information is critical for us to have in order to help you and your family in the event of a health emergency or death. This is your opportunity to make sure your wishes are carried out. If you have any questions, please contact Maria Caulfield, Assistant Chancellor (814-824-1130).

## 9. Resources

- **Continuing Formation Opportunities**

Retired priests are free to take advantage of all continuing formation opportunities, including, Emmaus, annual priest retreat, days of recollection, etc. The Diocese currently pays up to \$550.00 for yearly retreats. Any amount above \$550.00 is the responsibility of the retired priest. You may either submit a receipt for your retreat to the Clergy Office for reimbursement, or submit the invoice for the retreat venue for direct payment.

- **Senior Priest Advocate**

The Bishop of the Diocese of Erie names a Senior Priest Advocate whose responsibility is to attend to and identify any needs of our retired priests. He is the Bishop's liaison to the retired priests and deacons, and in turn is their advocate to the Bishop. He works closely with the Director of Clergy Personnel. He offers opportunities to stay in regular contact with the retirees (at least once a year) and is always available for individual contact with the retirees should the need arise. He also sits on the Priests' Retirement Board. The current Senior Priest Advocate is Reverend Philip Oriole who can be contacted at his residence at St. George Parish, Erie, or his diocesan email: pmoriole@eriercd.org.

- **Priest Retirement Board**

The Priest Retirement Board meets yearly for reviewing, updating and deciding on priest retirement issues, such as the priest retirement plan, pension, the Good Shepherd Collection, MJM Residence for Retired Priests, etc.

The Bishop serves as the Chairman. The board is also comprised of the Chancellor, Senior Priest Advocate, Directors of the MJM Residence for Retired Priests, Director of Finance, Director of Clergy Personnel and additional persons who are experienced in retirement, health insurance, legal and financial matters, all of whom are appointed by the Diocesan Bishop.

- **Methuselah Ministry**

Methuselah Ministry is a Catholic volunteer ministry that specifically provides hospitality services to retired priests. The services they provide include transportation, shopping, scheduling appointments, companionship, etc. See attached letter (*Appendix D*), which includes contact information.

If you have questions or concerns not addressed by this guide or suggestions for adding additional helpful information, please contact the Clergy Office.

Contact Information:

Clergy Office: 814-824-1144

Finance Office: 814-824-1180

Senior Priest Advocate: 814-864-0622

*Revised November 11, 2024*

### III. Retirement [Endnote 5](#)

#### A. Age of Retirement

1. A priest of the diocese who has served for thirty (30) years and has reached seventy (70) years of age may submit a letter of resignation to the Diocesan Bishop. The priest must discuss his intentions with the Diocesan Bishop and Director Priest Personnel one year in advance of his desired date of retirement. Retirement becomes effective only when accepted by the Bishop.
2. Resignation from full-time active ministry must be submitted before one's 75<sup>th</sup> birthday. The Director of Priest Personnel will contact the priest about his retirement plans as he nears his 74<sup>th</sup> birthday. [Endnote 6](#)

#### B. Priest Retirement Board

1. To coordinate issues of retirement, the Chairperson of the Presbyteral Council will serve *ex officio* on the Priest Retirement Board. Two retired priests will be appointed to Board membership and will serve as the Bishop's delegates for senior priests. Among their responsibilities is to meet yearly with each retired priest.
2. The Priest Personnel Office will maintain a list of retired priests interested in continuing limited ministry.

#### C. Retirement and Continuing Education

1. Retired priests are welcomed but not obligated to participate in the various diocesan activities and events for priests. They are strongly encouraged to attend continuing education opportunities, days of reflection and priest retreats.
2. In cooperation with the Continuing Education and Formation Committee and the Priest Retirement Board, the Director of Priest Personnel will schedule a pre-retirement seminar every three years for priests nearing retirement. Attendance is mandatory for those sixty (60) years of age and older.

#### D. Income

1. Premiums for health coverage will be paid by the diocese. The Finance Office will assist retirees in completing the necessary paperwork once their petition for retirement has been approved by the Diocesan Bishop.
2. A retired priest continuing to serve as a Pastor or Parochial Administrator after reaching the age of 75 is eligible to receive both his pension benefit and a full pastor's salary. [Endnote 7](#)
3. Retired priests serving in parishes are entitled to be reimbursed for mileage-related ministry. [Endnote 8](#)
4. It is not the purpose or intent of the Priest Retirement Plan to meet all the needs of a retired priest. Each priest must plan prudently and carefully for his retirement years through such means as Social Security, IRA's, annuities or other savings/investment plans.

## E. Miscellaneous Concerns

1. A retired priest should not reside in the rectory of the parish where he last served. A pastor, however, is free to welcome a retired pastor to live with him in his rectory. Retired priests are encouraged to consider residence at the + Bishop Michael J. Murphy Residence for Retired Priest or the Blessed Sacrament Residence.
2. Fraternal care and solicitude demand that when a priest's ministry or well-being become seriously impaired, the Diocesan Bishop, Director of Priest Personnel and regional Vicar should be immediately notified.
3. Each priest is urged to keep a sealed copy of his last Will and Testament and Living Will on file in the Priest Personnel Office. These documents will be opened only at the time of death by either the Diocesan Bishop, Director of Priest Personnel or Vicar General. Care should be taken to up-date the Will as necessary.
4. All retired priests are obliged to comply with the requirements of the diocesan *Policy for the Protection of Children* and the *Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests and Deacons Policy*. Endnote 9

## END NOTES

<sup>5</sup> Constitution, Priest Personnel Board, Article IX

<sup>6</sup> Canon 538 mandates that pastors submit their resignation by their 75<sup>th</sup> birthday. This policy extends the requirement to all priests in active ministry in the Diocese of Erie.

<sup>7</sup> Policy on pension benefits and continuing pastoral administration, as contained in a letter to the priests of the Diocese of Erie dated May 6, 2005 and effective as of July 1, 2005

<sup>8</sup> Decree Concerning Mileage Reimbursement promulgated January 1, 2010

<sup>9</sup> Refer to current diocesan policies for the *Protection of Children* and *the Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests and Deacons*.



## DIOCESE of ERIE

*Sharing the Catholic faith in northwest Pennsylvania*

### Moving Checklist for Priests

*Congratulations on your new assignment! The following checklist has been compiled by brother priests to help with your move from your current assignment. Please know that there will certainly be things that are particular to you and may not appear on this list. Feel free to add any items for your specific needs as you think of them.*

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#### **Beginning to Plan Your Move**

After you are permitted to publicly announce your move, coordinate with your predecessor and successor to discuss the best dates to move your items to the new rectory and a place to stage them. It may be best to ask if you can move your items in a few days before your new assignment begins, keeping with you only that which you need for the remaining days. As to when to take up residency, many priests arrive to their new assignment the day/evening before the start date so that they can begin on “day one.”

It would be very helpful to actually meet your predecessor and successor at each location to review what furniture items will remain in place and what items will be moved.

#### **Packing your Belongings**

Here are some hints that seem to work well:

- Start collecting boxes or look for totes on sale about a month before the move
- Unless you're buying new packing materials, keep an eye out for items that could be used for packing such as newspapers, bubble wrap, etc.
- Begin packing and staging less-used items several weeks before the move, this way the final days aren't so overwhelming.
- Consider packing room by room – this way you will not misplace any of your items and have like-items boxed together. Start with rooms that have items which will not likely be immediately needed, then move on to other rooms:
  - Garage items (tires, car maintenance items, sporting equipment, etc.)
  - Sitting / Living room and other rooms with less used items
  - Kitchen
  - Bedroom and closets
  - Auxiliary storage areas
  - Your parish office / den, etc.

- **HERE IS A TIP:** Remember that the end goal is to move with the least amount of “hunting” for things. Identify boxes (e.g., by labelling or colored duct tape) according to the room associated with the contents. Those helping you unload your moving van can pile like boxes in each of the designated rooms.

### **Moving your Belongings**

This step varies from priest to priest.

- A. The most economical way to move your belongings is to enlist parishioners from your current assignment to help for moving day.** You have served them well, and they want to help you. Don’t forget to ask the men of your local Knights of Columbus Council—they are always a great help. You may also consider asking some of the stronger youth and young adults of your parish, age 18 and older to do the heavy lifting. Be sure to follow any child safety protocols when working with youth under age 18. For this case, you may want to request that one of their parents also assist—thus making this a safe environment for all.

Often generous parishioners will offer the use of their personal trucks. But it may be best to rent an enclosed truck so that all items are all together, safe from weather, and all belongings arrive at the same time. Places like “U-Haul” and other trucking places provide various size vehicles. Save receipts, as you may be able to write off your move on next year’s taxes.

OR

- B.** If you are not so fortunate to enlist parishioners with strong arms, **research movers and hire one as soon as you decide on your moving date.** Movers can book up fast certain times of the year, so get on their schedule as soon as you can.

### **Now is the time to Sort and Pitch**

Let’s be honest, we all have an excess of stuff we really don’t need or use. By starting the preparations to move early you can stop the cycle of carting unused items from place to place and begin to “de-clutter.” You will thank yourself in the end. Our diocese has various places where old clothes or gently used items can be donated for those who may need them.

First, think of our own Catholic organizations who run thrift stores, such as:

<i>(Erie Area)</i>	<i>The St. Martin Center</i>
<i>(Sharon Area)</i>	<i>Prince of Peace Center</i>
<i>(Oil City Area)</i>	<i>St. Elizabeth Center</i>

Throughout our diocese there are local thrift stores and charities, or parish/scouting rummage sales who would be happy to take your gently used items. Call first and once you have selected your charity, start filling boxes designated for them. A parishioner may be very willing to drop them off for you.

### **Leave it “Move in Ready”**

Work with your housekeeper and staff to arrange to have a deep cleaning scheduled for your entire rectory, including carpet-cleaning, wood floor cleaning, any necessary painting, etc. A clean rectory may be the best “welcome gift” your brother priest will receive.

### **When you Move— MOVE!**

A common complaint is moving into a new residence and the former priest still has his items left behind. It is not good form to leave your items in “storage” at your old assignment and assume the next priest doesn’t need the space. Over time we forget about the items we left there. *Be a good sport..... Take all your stuff with you or arrange for them to be donated.*

### **Update Contact Information**

Second only to packing, changing addresses, and updating online accounts can be time consuming. You can begin this at any time **after** your assignment is made public. Here are several helpful hints:

- The Clergy Office normally informs the Office of Finance of the new clergy assignments so that your Health / Dental / Eye insurance has your new information.
- Updating your information for **governmental agencies**:
  - Driver’s License / vehicle registration / voting can be updated through the PennDOT online portal. If you don’t already have one, this is worth creating as it makes changes fast and simple.
  - Obtain an IRS Change of Address form, Form 8822, by calling (800) 829-1040 or visiting the [IRS website](#). There you can find form 8822 and most other IRS tax forms; e.g., Form 3903 to help deduct moving expenses.
  - If you are moving outside of your taxing municipality, you may want to call both your current and new municipalities and provide them your new contact information.
  - Social Security Administration-- Fill out their change of address [application](#) online or give them a call at (800) 772-1213. This is another good online account to have if you don’t already have one.
  - Visit your local post office to obtain a change of address form. You can also obtain this form online at the [Postal Service website](#). *NOTE: It is best to individually change your addresses yourself with senders rather than relying on the post office to forward mail. Many of our rectory addresses are listed as “businesses” and your request to filter out your mail may not be honored.*
- Update all appropriate contact information with the following entities:
  - Your credit cards – call the number on the back of each card or change it using your online portal
  - Your tax preparation person (this will help next January)
  - Alumni offices for: High School, College, Seminary

- Magazines
- Financial Investment firms
- Diocesan 401K plan – If you participate in it, be sure to inform the bookkeeper of the parish to which you are going.
- Insurance agent for life, property, and auto insurance
- Notify doctors and dentists of moves and seek referrals if needed. Collect all medical, dental, and school records. Keep these in a safe place.
- Prescription services (Make sure you have enough required medication in case you don't locate a new pharmacist/doctor immediately.)
- Transfer organization memberships to your new location (i.e. Knights of Columbus, YMCA, Planet Fitness, etc.) or cancel memberships if necessary.
- Your banking institution-----If your new location does not have a branch, decide if you need to research a new bank in the area you will be living in.
- Do you need to order new checks with updated information?
- Go through your list of other online accounts and decide which ones you want to update contact information or even close. Use prudential judgement.
- Either during your closing weeks or sometime after arrival, you may want to inform your family / friends of your new address, phone number, etc. by way of a note card, phone call or an email. Remember to use caution when sharing your info via social media as information can be seen by many others.

### **Pets**

- If you are a pet owner, it may be best to schedule any upcoming pet health exam and/or get recommendations for veterinary services in your new town. Arrange to get your pet's medical records transferred as well.
- Arrange pet care for the day of your move or identify a place where they can be out of the way during the unpacking time itself.
- Pets are another reason to have all carpets and the rectory deep cleaned before the next priest arrives... some of our brother priests are allergic to animals!

### **As you get Closer to Your Move**

- Create a designated file for moving-related expenses where you can keep all receipts. This will come in handy as many moving expenses are tax deductible.
- Check with your movers to confirm all the details are set. If you are packing on your own, start the process so that you don't get overwhelmed.
- For pastors: You may need to ask your administrative assistant to begin to form a plan to transfer signature authority to the new pastor or parochial administrator. Leave a copy of your new assignment document with your secretary in case they need it to verify the removal of your name when the new pastor arrives.
- As you prepare to move out of your office, make sure that your parish-owned computer has been cleared of any of your personal files, i.e., homilies, bookmarks, etc. You may want to make a copy on a thumb drive of some files for future reference or transfer

them onto your personal cloud account before deleting anything from your work computer. Be sure to leave your computer passcode for your successor! Let your parish Information Technology person know to clean and prepare the work computer for your successor to use when he arrives.

- Change voicemail on parish phones.
- Determine which pastor will update parish website, bulletin, and social media
- Redirect emails which are addressed to your parish email address.
- Submit any ministry-related expense reimbursements before you leave (e.g. ministry mileage, continuing education, etc.). Generally, your annual retreat allowance is paid by the parish/assignment where you assigned when the retreat occurs.
- REMEMBER: If your work computer web browser is “linked” to your personal one, **de-link it.**
- Don’t forget to double check to see that you have all your belongings from all closets, basements, garages, or attics. (Nobody wants your old stuff unless it’s money.)
- Ensure there is space in each room for your successor to stage items as he moves in.
- Moving plants? Those might be best moved in someone’s car to avoid damage.
- Organize and keep safe important private documents — wills, passports, deeds, financial statements. You may want to transport them in your car when moving.
- Valuable items such as your chalice, some vestments, jewelry, or heirlooms should be kept separate from the rest of your packed belongings, so you don't risk losing them. Bring them to the new location in your car.
- Return any borrowed items, such as library books, and collect any clothing you may have taken to be dry-cleaned.
- Pack any items you haven't yet packed. Your final week at home has the potential to be very stressful; don't put things off until the last minute.
- Disconnect and disassemble your personal computer and peripherals. You should plan to take your computer equipment in the car. Exposure to extreme temperatures can damage your computer equipment.
- Think about quick and easy meals that use up the remaining food in your refrigerator. The priest behind you may not enjoy the same things you enjoy.
- On moving day, do a walk-through and make sure everything's where it should be.
- In your new rectory, make it as easy as possible so movers know where things are going.
- It may be a good idea that on the day of your move to plan to treat your volunteer helpers to a meal... or think ahead of another way to say, “thank you.”

### **The last day you are at your old assignment**

- Have an envelope with all your parish assignment keys, combination of the parish safe, parish online account usernames and passwords, alarm codes, garage door openers, parish credit cards, etc. along with your new contact information. Perhaps leave it with the parish secretary or hand them directly over to the new pastor. Please don’t drive off with them!

- A really nice gesture may be to write a brief congratulatory note to your successor and leave it on his desk. Remember, this is a new assignment for him, as yours will be for you. Your kindness will always be remembered.

**After you arrive at your new assignment and are alone**

- Breathe...
- Say a prayer...
- And be secure in the knowledge that this where God wants you to be! You were chosen because with Christ you have what it takes.

Diocese of Erie  
Clergy Office  
June 2022

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“Remember, my brother,  
always be a loving father, a gentle shepherd, and a wise teacher of young people,  
so that you may lead them to Christ who will strengthen all that you do.”

(Words of the Bishop to a new Pastor,  
from the Order of Installation of a Pastor, *Book of Blessings*)



INFORMATION REGARDING HEALTH EMERGENCY OR DEATH OF A PRIEST

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

1. NOTIFICATION

The following persons should be notified immediately in the event of a health emergency or of my death:

Name	Relationship	Address	Phone
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

2. HEALTH EMERGENCY

I have a Living Will.    yes     no

My Living Will is filed at \_\_\_\_\_

My designated Durable Healthcare Power of Attorney is:

Name	Address	Phone
_____	_____	_____

A copy of my Living Will is in my Priest Personnel File at the Diocese.    yes     no

My physician has a copy of my Living Will.    yes     no

*(It is highly recommended that your physician have both a copy of your Living Will and the name of your Durable Healthcare Power of Attorney.)*

3. FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS

My preferred Funeral Home is: \_\_\_\_\_

Parish Church for my Funeral Mass is: \_\_\_\_\_

I have a cemetery plot.    yes     no

If yes, in what cemetery? \_\_\_\_\_

#### 4. PROPERTY DISPOSITION

I have a Last Will and Testament.    yes     no

Date of my Last Will and Testament is:

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The information in my Will is current. (For example, my executor and beneficiaries are still alive).    yes     no

My Will is filed/located at

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My designated executor is:

Name

Address

Phone

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I have given a complete inventory of my personal property to my Dean.    yes     no

If not specified in my Will, I would like my chalice to be given to:

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#### 5. INFORMATION FOR YOUR OBITUARY (Optional)

*Please note that the Bishop's Office works with the family and funeral home to compose the obituary, to assure accuracy of ministry information.*

Please list any 1) honors you have received, 2) organizations or memberships in which you have been active, and 3) military service, which you would like to have included in your obituary.

## 6. FUNERAL MASS PLANNING

I would like \_\_\_\_\_ to be the homilist.  
(priest or deacon)

The Bishop is the main celebrant at priest funerals. I would like the following priests to be principal concelebrants:

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### First Reading Outside Easter Time

- \_\_\_\_ 2 Macc. 12:43-46 *He had the resurrection of the dead in view.*  
\_\_\_\_ Job 19:1, 23-27a *I know that my Vindicator lives.*  
\_\_\_\_ Wis 3:1-9 *The souls of the just are in the hand of God.*  
\_\_\_\_ Wis 4:7-15 *The just man, though he die early, shall be at rest.*  
\_\_\_\_ Isaiah 25:6a, 7-9 *He will destroy death forever.*  
\_\_\_\_ Lam 3:13-26 *It is good to hope in silence for the saving help of the Lord.*  
\_\_\_\_ Dan 12:1-3 *Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake.*  
\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

### First Reading During Easter Time

- \_\_\_\_ Acts 10:34-43 *He is the one appointed by God as judge of the living and the dead.*  
\_\_\_\_ Rev. 14:13 *Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.*  
\_\_\_\_ Rev. 20:11-2:1 *The dead were judged according to their deeds.*  
\_\_\_\_ Rev. 21:1-5a, 6b-7 *There shall be no more death.*  
\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

### Second Reading

- \_\_\_\_ Romans 5:5-11 *Since we are now justified by His Blood, we will be saved through Him*  
\_\_\_\_ Romans 5:17-21 *Where sin increased, grace overflowed all the more.*  
\_\_\_\_ Romans 6:3-9 *We who were baptized into Christ were baptized into His death.*  
\_\_\_\_ Romans 8:14-23 *Those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.*  
\_\_\_\_ Romans 8:31b-35, 37-39 *What will separate us from the love of Christ?*  
\_\_\_\_ Romans 14:7-9, 10c-12 *Whether we live or die we are the Lord's*  
\_\_\_\_ 1 Cor 15:20-28 *So too in Christ shall all be brought to life.*  
\_\_\_\_ 1 Cor 15:51-57 *Death is swallowed up in victory.*  
\_\_\_\_ 2 Cor 4:14-5:1 *What is seen is transitory, but what is unseen is eternal.*  
\_\_\_\_ 2 Cor 5:1, 6-10 *We have a building from God, eternal in Heaven.*  
\_\_\_\_ Phil 3:20-21 *He will change our lowly bodies to conform with His glorified body.*  
\_\_\_\_ 1 Thess. 4:13-18 *Thus we shall always be with the Lord.*  
\_\_\_\_ 2 Tim 2:8-13 *If we have died with Him, we shall also live with Him.*  
\_\_\_\_ 1 John 3:1-2 *We shall see Him as He is.*  
\_\_\_\_ 1 John 3:14-16 *We know that we have passed from death to life*  
\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

## Gospel

_____	Matt 5:1-12a	<i>The Beatitudes</i>
_____	Matt 11:25-30	<i>Come to me and I will give you rest.</i>
_____	Matt 25:1-13	<i>Behold the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!</i>
_____	Matt 25:1-46	<i>Come, you who are blessed by my Father.</i>
_____	Mark 15:33-39, 16:1-6	<i>Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed His last.</i>
_____	Luke 7:11-17	<i>Young man, I tell you, arise!</i>
_____	Luke 12:35-40	<i>At an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come.</i>
_____	Luke 23:33, 39-43	<i>Today you will be with me in Paradise.</i>
_____	Luke 23:44-46, 50, 52-53; 24:1-6a	<i>Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.</i>
_____	Luke 24:13-35	<i>The Road to Emmaus</i>
_____	John 5:24-29	<i>Whosoever hears my word and believes has passed from death to life.</i>
_____	John 6:37-40	<i>Everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have eternal life</i>
_____	John 6:51-58	<i>Whoever eats this bread will live forever</i>
_____	John 11:17-27	<i>I am the resurrection and the life</i>
_____	John 11:32-45	<i>Lazarus, come out!</i>
_____	John 12:23-28	<i>If it dies, it produces much fruit.</i>
_____	John 14:1-6	<i>In my Father's house there are many dwellings.</i>
_____	John 17:24-26	<i>I wish that where I am they also may be with me.</i>
_____	John 19:17-18, 25-39	<i>And bowing His head, he handed over His Spirit.</i>
_____	Other	

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## Music

*Please describe any music you would like for your Funeral Mass.*

## 7. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (Optional)

Please add any additional information, requests, or comments.



Dear Retired Priest of the Diocese of Erie,

May God's peace reign in your hearts!

We are writing as a reminder to all of you, our beloved Retired Priests, of our services available to you through the Methuselah Ministry. We have attached our former introduction letter, which was sent to you previously through the Diocesan Offices and continue to be grateful for their kind support.

Some of the services we have offered to those already using our services have been:

- Transportation to and from Doctor appointments, lab work, hospital stays, any and all medical needs.
- Any and all shopping needs as described by you.
- Transportation to and from personal excursions such as, movie theatre, dining experiences, visits with family or friends.
- Scheduling of any appointments you may be in need of assistance with.
- Research of information you may be in need of.
- Visitation and meal sharing with someone from our Ministry for companionship.

Always remember we are a personal "concierge service" for you and are happy to try our very best to meet your current needs. If we are not available to assist you personally we will happily find the experienced individual who is capable to fulfill the service you may be in need of! We have a small group of wonderful individuals dedicated to reaching this goal!

Please do not hesitate to contact us with your requests for assistance! No need is too big or too small and we commit to doing our very best to serve you in this manner!

Rest assured of our prayers for you and we thank you for your continued prayers for the Methuselah Ministry!

Hugs & Blessings,

Dan & Dawn Schaaf  
Co-Founder Methuselah Ministry