



Diocese of Erie
PRIEST PERSONNEL POLICY

PROMULGATED FEBRUARY 24, 2026



DECREE

Promulgating the Revised Priest Personnel Policy Manual

On January 24, 2014, I promulgated an updated *Priest Personnel Policy Manual* to assist the priests of the Diocese of Erie. My goal was for us to approach our ministry in a unified and purposeful manner as we serve the people entrusted to our care. The *Manual* served well for over a decade.

Over time, however, some policies and procedures need to be aligned with better practices. It is for that reason that I again appointed a committee to study and update the *Priest Personnel Policy Manual*. Following a period of consultation, the committee has completed its goal and provided necessary updates. There are very few substantive changes to this policy compared with its previous version. The current edition is simplified, reorganized, and harmonized with current practices in the Diocese of Erie, and included in the appendix is the newly approved policy on pets. On February 4, 2026, members of the Presbyteral Council of the Diocese of Erie voted unanimously to recommend the *Manual* as revised.

So that these changes might be used to better enable pastoral care, I hereby promulgate as particular law for the Diocese of Erie the revised *Priest Personnel Policy Manual*.

Anything to the contrary notwithstanding.

Given at the Chancery
of the Diocese of Erie
on the 24th Day of February, 2026

+Lawrence T. Persico

The Most Reverend Lawrence T. Persico, JCL
Bishop of Erie

Christopher J. Singer

The Reverend Christopher J. Singer, JCL
Chancellor

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
I. Diocesan Structures	1
A. Clergy Personnel Board	1
B. Clergy Personnel Office	2
II. Diocesan Assignments.....	3
A. General Norms.....	3
B. Pastoral Evaluation	4
C. Appointments	4
D. Terms of Appointment	5
E. Transfers.....	5
F. Parochial Administrators	6
G. Senior Associate – Active.....	6
H. Senior Associate – Retired.....	6
I. General Norms for Priests in Special Ministry.....	7
J. Priests Assigned to Secondary Education	8
K. Priests Assigned to Gannon University	9
L. Priests Serving Outside the Diocese.....	9
M. Priests Released for Studies.....	10
N. Incardination	11
O. Excardination	12
P. Transfer to a Religious Community.....	12
Q. Externs.....	12
III. Leaves of Absence	13
A. General Norms.....	13
B. Medical Leave.....	13
C. Personal Leave.....	14
D. Disciplinary Leave.....	14
E. Absent Without Leave	14
F. Sabbatical	15
IV. Retirement	15
A. General Norms.....	15
B. Priest Retirement Board.....	16
C. Senior Priest Advocate.....	17
D. Financial Matters.....	17
E. Living Arrangements for Retired Priests.....	18
F. Miscellaneous Concerns.....	18
V. Priestly Ministry.....	19
A. Faculties	19
B. Letters of Good Standing	19

VI. Priestly Life	20
A. Residence	20
B. Working Conditions in the Parish Office	21
C. Attire	21
D. Days Off	22
E. Time Away from the Parish or Place of Assignment	22
F. Physical & Mental Health	23
G. Addiction & Substance Abuse	24
H. Spiritual Life	24
I. Continuing Education and Formation	25
J. The Funeral of A Priest	26
VII. Clerical Misconduct.....	27
A. General Norms.....	27
B. Child Abuse.....	27
Appendices	28
Policy on Pets	28
I. Background	28
II. Priest Assignment and Pet Ownership	28
III. Pet Ownership in Relation to... ..	28
A. Rectory Living Expenses	28
B. Moving Out of a Rectory.....	28
C. Other Priests Living in the Rectory	28
D. Church Building	29
E. Parish Liturgies & Activities	29
F. Parish Staff.....	29
G. Pets in the Parish Office (Public Areas).....	29
H. Expenses Associated with Pet Ownership	29
I. Ordinances & Liabilities.....	29
IV. Service & Emotional Support Animals	30
A. Pets as Service Animals.....	30
B. Pets as Emotional Support Animals	30
V. Enforcement of this Policy	30

INTRODUCTION

This *Priest Personnel Policy* is promulgated for the presbyterate of the Diocese of Erie. It draws upon and integrates universal norms, particular law and local custom. It is intended to foster order without establishing undue structure and to clarify expectations and promote consistency of application of norms for this presbyterate as well as other priests engaged here in pastoral work.

I. DIOCESAN STRUCTURES

A. CLERGY PERSONNEL BOARD

1. The Clergy Personnel Board is a consultative body established by the Diocesan Bishop to advise him on the appointment of priests and deacons to various ministry assignments.
2. The Diocesan Bishop may also consult the Board on other matters, including
 - a. Leaves of absence
 - b. Requests for sabbatical
 - c. Petitions for retirement
 - d. Post-ordination education
 - e. To assess the needs of various diocesan ministries
3. Only active, incardinated priests of the Diocese of Erie in good standing are eligible to serve on the Board.
4. The following serve as *ex officio* members of the Board
 - a. The Diocesan Bishop
 - b. The Vicar General
 - c. The Chancellor (if he is a priest)
 - d. The Director of Clergy Personnel
5. The following serve as elected members of the Board:
 - a. One (1) priest ordained between 0 and 10 years
 - b. One (1) priest ordained between 11 and 20 years
 - c. One (1) priest ordained between 21 and 30 years
 - d. Two (2) priests ordained 31 or more years
6. Members of the board are elected by active priests of the Diocese of Erie in good standing.

7. The election shall be conducted according to the norms of the *Constitution of the Clergy Personnel Board*.
8. The offices, structure, and functioning of the Board are governed by the *Constitution of the Clergy Personnel Board*.

B. CLERGY PERSONNEL OFFICE

1. The Clergy Personnel Office is charged with various duties including
 - a. Assisting the Bishop in the appointment of priests to ministry assignments
 - b. Soliciting the needs and preferences of each priest with regard to his assignments
 - c. Supporting and evaluating priests in their ministries
 - d. The maintenance of personnel files and other records related to the Office
2. The Office is headed by the Director of Clergy Personnel, who is freely appointed by the Diocesan Bishop.
3. It is the responsibility of the Director of Clergy Personnel
 - a. To carry out the tasks described in #1 above
 - b. To ensure the provisions of this Policy are carried out
 - c. To carry out any other tasks assigned to him by the Diocesan Bishop
4. The Office will maintain clergy personnel files in a secure manner, restricting access only to those personnel who truly require such access.
5. Clergy personnel files shall contain the following:
 - a. Sacramental records
 - b. Seminary formation history
 - c. Appointment letters
 - d. Summary of pastoral evaluations
 - e. Documents required for compliance with the *Policy for the Protection of Children and Youth*
 - f. Medical reports (when appropriate and only with the approval of the priest)
 - g. Documents related to health emergencies and end-of-life considerations including
 - 1) Last Will and Testament
 - 2) Living Will
 - 3) Healthcare Power of Attorney
 - 4) Priest Health Emergency Form
 - 5) Funeral plans
 - h. Commendation letters
 - i. Other appropriate information

6. Each priest may review his own personnel file by appointment with the Director of Clergy Personnel.
 - a. The priest may add any explanations or clarifications he deems appropriate.
 - b. No items may be removed from the file.
7. Each priest may, at any time, submit documentation of awards, continuing education, achievements in ministry, modified vitae/resumes, and other information he deems relevant to an accurate and up-to-date profile.
8. Letters of concern will be kept in a priest's personnel file at the discretion of the Diocesan Bishop.

II. DIOCESAN ASSIGNMENTS

A. GENERAL NORMS

1. The ministry to which a diocesan priest is assigned is determined primarily by the pastoral needs of the Diocese as discerned by the Diocesan Bishop in consultation with the Clergy Personnel Board.
2. The Diocesan Bishop will take care to consider each priest's pastoral gifts and to be aware of each priest's personal interests and hopes in making assignments.
3. All active priests will be asked to complete a Ministry Assignment Questionnaire annually.
4. A priest wishing to be considered for a particular assignment may indicate his desire in his annual Ministry Assignment Questionnaire, by writing to the Diocesan Bishop, copying the Director of Clergy Personnel or by scheduling a meeting with the Diocesan Bishop and/or the Director of Clergy Personnel.
5. A priest may request to meet with the Diocesan Bishop and/or the Director of Clergy Personnel at any time.
6. When a priest is assigned to multiple parishes and/or ministries, the sites must clearly establish a mutually acceptable arrangement regarding equitable sharing of the responsibility for the priest's salary and benefits.
7. A pastor is to be formally installed by the Diocesan Bishop or his delegate. When necessary, the Diocesan Bishop may dispense the pastor from the formal installation

ceremony, in which case the pastor will make his Profession of Faith and Oath of Fidelity in a manner indicated by the Diocesan Bishop.

8. First-time pastors are expected to attend a new pastor's program as specified by the Diocesan Bishop within one year of their arrival in the parish.
9. If a priest becomes incapable of fulfilling the obligations of his assignment either temporarily or permanently, the Diocesan Bishop and the Director of Clergy Personnel will work with the priest to transition him to another assignment, to a Leave of Absence or to Retirement according to the norms of law.

B. PASTORAL EVALUATION

1. In order to assist a pastor in becoming a more effective minister and to manifest accountability to his parishioners, pastors may be evaluated at any time either at their own request or at the request of the Diocesan Bishop.
2. The evaluative instrument will be customized to each situation but typically includes input from the following persons:
 - a. Other clergy assigned to the parish
 - b. Staff members
 - c. Pastoral and finance council members
 - d. Faith formation leader
 - e. School principal (if applicable)
 - f. A cross section of parishioners
 - g. Directors of the diocesan Finance, Faith Formation and Catholic Schools (if applicable) offices
3. Results of the evaluation are shared with the priest by the regional Episcopal Vicar, the Director of Clergy Personnel or the Diocesan Bishop.
4. The evaluation report will be retained in the pastor's personnel file and a copy forwarded to his superior if he is a religious or an extern.
5. Parochial vicars' pastoral gifts, effectiveness of ministry, and areas to be addressed will be assessed by the Clergy Personnel Office and/or the Diocesan Bishop by consulting with the parochial vicar himself and his pastor.

C. APPOINTMENTS

1. The Director of Clergy Personnel and the members of the Clergy Personnel Board will review all Ministry Assignment Questionnaires in order to advise the Diocesan Bishop on clergy assignments.

2. In filling a vacancy, the Diocesan Bishop and/or Director of Clergy Personnel will meet with the candidate(s) considered to be best qualified to better assess the interest and qualifications of the candidate(s) as well as any personal issues (family, health, obligations) which may demand special consideration.
3. The Diocesan Bishop will notify the priest he has chosen and issue a formal appointment letter.
4. The Diocesan Bishop reserves the right to make appointments without consultation.

D. TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

1. Pastors are typically appointed for a term of six (6) years.
2. Parochial vicars are typically appointed for a term of three (3) years.
3. Other assignments are typically for terms of three (3) to five (5) years.
4. In the final year of a term of office, the priest should express his desire to the Diocesan Bishop either to renew his appointment for an additional term or to assume a new ministry.
 - a. This should be communicated either through the annual Ministry Assignment Questionnaire or by another means.
 - b. The Diocesan Bishop will consider the priest's preferences in deciding whether or not to renew the appointment.
5. Following the expiration of a term of office, the priest continues to hold the office until the Diocesan Bishop notifies him in writing that he has lost the office (cf. can. 186).

E. TRANSFERS

1. All priests being transferred to another assignment will be given sufficient time to effect such a move.
2. Any priest wishing to request a transfer may do so as described in II.A.4.
3. When a Parochial Vicar or Senior Associate requests a transfer, he shall inform the pastor of his current assignment that he has made the request.
4. When a Pastor requests that a Parochial Vicar or Senior Associate be transferred, it is expected that he inform the priest that he has made the request.

F. PAROCHIAL ADMINISTRATORS

1. When the duly appointed pastor is unable to function in his ministerial role for an extended period of time, the Diocesan bishop may appoint a Parochial Administrator to substitute for him until he is able to return to pastoral ministry. (cf. can. 538-540).
2. When a parish is without a pastor, the pastor of a nearby parish may be appointed Parochial Administrator temporarily.
3. Parochial Administrators may be appointed to a parish for limited terms as a means of providing a supervised internship to evaluate the priest's pastoral skills.
4. Parochial Administrators may be appointed while the status of a particular parish is under review.
5. Appointment of a Parochial Administrator should not normally extend beyond one year, renewable by the Diocesan Bishop as circumstances require.

G. SENIOR ASSOCIATE – ACTIVE

1. Senior Associate (active) is a ministerial designation for an experienced priest who wishes to remain in full-time ministry but without the responsibilities of administration.
2. A priest may petition the Diocesan Bishop for Senior Associate (active) status at the age of 65.
3. A priest under the age of 65 may request this status due to chronic health problems.
4. A Senior Associate (active) is canonically equivalent to a parochial vicar.
5. A Senior Associate (active) must be able to perform all the duties typically carried out by a parochial vicar (e.g., Mass, Confessions, funerals, sick calls, etc.)
6. Senior Associates (active) will be assigned according to the procedures outlined in Section II of this policy.

H. SENIOR ASSOCIATE – RETIRED

1. Senior Associate (retired) is a status granted by the bishop to a priest whose petition for retirement has been accepted but who wishes to reside in a parish and provide

consistent pastoral and sacramental service under the direction of the pastor, as long as his health permits.

- a. If the Senior Associate (retired) is no longer able to provide consistent pastoral and sacramental service but is capable of independent living, he may arrange with the pastor to remain in the rectory or make other living arrangements according to the policies described in section IV.E below.
 - b. If he is no longer capable of independent living, the Senior Associate (retired) must make arrangements for an appropriate residential option (with the Diocesan Bishop's approval) where he can receive appropriate attention and healthcare (cf. IV.E.2).
2. The Senior Associate (retired) does not draw a salary but is provided for through the diocesan pension plan, social security, and stipends.
 3. The parish of residence typically provides his room and board.
 4. In certain circumstances, the Senior Associate (retired), the pastor, and the Director of Clergy Personnel may negotiate arrangements for additional compensation based upon the ministry the Senior Associate is asked to perform.

I. GENERAL NORMS FOR PRIESTS IN SPECIAL MINISTRY

1. Special ministry refers to a ministry assignment in a non-parochial setting.
2. Primary consideration for special ministry assignments will be given to those who possess the appropriate training and/or educational qualifications.
3. Priests may request special ministry assignments, but they must be willing to pursue the appropriate academic or ecclesiastical degree(s) or professional certification needed for the special ministry.
4. The duties and obligations of priests in special ministry is outlined in their letter of appointment and in the position profile provided by the supervisor of the ministry.
5. Priests in special ministry are expected to be available for weekday and weekend Mass coverage in the parish or institution where they reside and/or throughout the Diocese.
6. The priest's place(s) of assignment is/are normally responsible for his compensation, including salary, health insurance, retirement, retreat stipend, and continuing formation fees in accord with II.A.6.

- a. Priests in secondary and higher education receive salary and benefits according to the Diocese of Erie's Priest Salary & Compensation policy.
 - b. If a priest in secondary education is assigned to multiple ministries, the Clergy Personnel Office will work with the priest and the institutions to which he is assigned to determine an equitable sharing of responsibility for the priest's salary and benefits. (cf. II.A.6)
7. If a priest resides in a parish but is not available for pastoral assistance to that parish, his place(s) of assignment are to provide the parish with compensation for his room and board.
 8. Mass intentions and stipends are available through the Chancery Office to priests in special ministry.
 9. Those in special ministry are ultimately responsible to the Diocesan Bishop for the performance of their duties even though they minister under the direction of their immediate superiors.
 10. It is advisable that a priest in special ministry be evaluated by his supervisor annually and that a copy of this evaluation be shared with the priest himself and with the Director of Clergy Personnel, as well as with the priest's superior if he is religious or an extern.

J. PRIESTS ASSIGNED TO SECONDARY EDUCATION

1. Policies regarding priests in special ministry as described in section II.I (General Norms for Priests in Special Ministry) above also apply to priests assigned to Secondary Education.
2. Priests assigned in secondary education are assigned by the Diocesan Bishop to teach theology, to work in Campus Ministry, and/or to serve in administration. Additional responsibilities (e.g., teaching other disciplines, coaching, etc.) require the consent of the Diocesan Bishop.
3. Priests in secondary education do not sign contracts but serve according to the terms of the assignment made by the Diocesan Bishop.
4. Priests in secondary education are expected to be available for other ministries as assigned by the Diocesan Bishop.

5. The educational institution will make reasonable provision for assigned priests to serve on diocesan committees and to participate in events of priestly life such as days of recollection and clergy continuing education events.
6. The priest will work with the school and his other ministry assignments to arrange for a full day off each week in keeping with article VI.D of this Policy.
7. If the priest and his supervisor are unable to answer any questions or resolve conflicts regarding the priest's ministry, they will consult the Director of Clergy Personnel and/or the Superintendent for Catholic Schools to resolve the issue.

K. PRIESTS ASSIGNED TO GANNON UNIVERSITY

1. Policies regarding priests in special ministry as described in section II.I (General for Norms for Priests in Special Ministry) above also apply to priests serving at Gannon University.
2. A priest interested in serving at Gannon University must first express his interest to the Diocesan Bishop, who may consult with University officials and the Clergy Personnel Board.
3. If the Diocesan Bishop determines that the priest's interest supports the pastoral good of the Diocese and the University, he will give the priest permission to begin conversations with University officials.
4. If the priest and the University reach a mutual understanding, each is to make a formal request to the Diocesan Bishop to appoint the priest to this ministry for an initial term of three years, renewable pending the Diocesan Bishop's approval and a positive review by University officials.
5. Any priest teaching theology, Scripture, or other sacred sciences at the university level must request and receive the *mandatum*.
 - a. The *mandatum* is given for an indefinite period of time.
 - b. The *mandatum* may be revoked by the Diocesan Bishop for a just cause.
 - c. Loss of the *mandatum* precludes the priest from teaching the sacred sciences at the university level.

L. PRIESTS SERVING OUTSIDE THE DIOCESE

1. Priests of the Diocese of Erie wishing to serve outside the diocese in another diocese or as military chaplains or on the faculty of a seminary or university or in any other ecclesiastical institution must express their desire to the Diocesan Bishop.

2. It is preferable that this request be made at least two (2) years in advance of the desired effective date of the ministry outside the Diocese.
3. Permission for ministry outside the Diocese is given for a specified period of time.
4. Priests in ministry outside the Diocese may not assume new ministries, renew contracts, or undertake new initiatives without first receiving written permission from the Diocesan Bishop.
5. Periodic evaluations of the priest's ministry by his supervisor should be conducted and summaries forwarded to the Director of Clergy Personnel.
6. The salary and benefits of a priest serving outside the Diocese are the responsibility of the non-diocesan institution which employs the priest.
7. Contributions to the pension and group health insurance plans become the responsibility of the priest himself.

M. PRIESTS RELEASED FOR STUDIES

1. Priests Assigned to Studies by the Diocesan Bishop
 - a. The Diocesan Bishop may assign a priest to pursue a program of advanced study or certification.
 - b. While a priest is assigned to studies by the Diocesan Bishop, provision will be made by the Diocese to provide for his salary, benefits, and room and board.
2. Priests Released to Studies at their own Request
 - a. A priest may request to be released for studies by meeting with the Director of Clergy Personnel and the Diocesan Bishop.
 - b. Release for studies is not granted until the Diocesan Bishop gives approval in writing.
 - c. Provisions will be made for the salary, benefits, and room and board of a priest released for studies at his own request according to determination of the Diocesan Bishop.
3. Release to Studies for Priests Assigned to Gannon University
 - a. Priests assigned to Gannon University may arrange to pursue a program of advanced studies with the permission of both the Diocesan Bishop and the President of the University.

- b. A written agreement between the priest, the University, and the Diocese will specify the following details of this arrangement:
 - 1) The academic institution at which studies are to be pursued
 - 2) The course of studies
 - 3) The time frame in which the studies are to be completed
 - 4) Provisions for the payment of academic tuition/fees
 - 5) Provisions for payment of the priest's salary and benefits

N. INCARDINATION

The process for incardination is governed by universal law. The following is a description of the typical procedure.

1. Should a priest wish to become incardinated in the Diocese of Erie, he must first receive the written permission of his diocesan bishop or religious superior.
2. Once this permission has been obtained, he is free to present a written request to the Bishop of Erie, copying the Director of Clergy Personnel.
3. If the Diocesan Bishop wishes to consider the request for incardination, the Director of Clergy Personnel will schedule an interview with the priest.
4. At the time of the interview, the priest must present
 - a. All appropriate background checks
 - b. Written permission to review the priest's personnel file
 - c. Results of a recent physical examination
 - d. Results of a recent psychological assessment is required
 - e. Letters of recommendation from his Diocesan Bishop or religious superior
5. The Diocesan Bishop will consult the Clergy Personnel Board regarding the request for incardination.
6. The Diocesan Bishop may, if he wishes, accept a candidate for incardination immediately on reception of his application. Normally, however, the applicant will be received *ad experimentum* for a period of three (3) to five (5) years. During this period, he will be monitored by the Director of Clergy Personnel, at the end of which time a pastoral evaluation will be conducted. An additional *ad experimentum* period may be imposed at the discretion of the Diocesan Bishop.
7. The candidate for incardination received *ad experimentum* remains incardinated in his own diocese (can. 271, 2) during the trial period and must receive a new letter of acceptance from the Diocesan Bishop of Erie, either extending the trial period or

incardinating him into the Diocese of Erie, once the trial period and evaluation are completed.

8. The same process described above applies to a member of religious institute or society of apostolic life requesting release for incardination as a secular priest. The superior must grant permission to allow the priest sufficient time to discern his call to diocesan ministry. The superior is responsible for the completion of all canonical procedures including exclaustation, departure, and secularization of a religious candidate for incardination into the Diocese of Erie.
9. A priest seeking incardination shall be compensated according to the norms regarding externs as described in section Q below.

O. EXCARDINATION

The process for excardination is governed by universal law. The following is a description of the typical procedure.

1. A priest requesting excardination must obtain the written permission of the Diocesan Bishop.
2. In the absence of true necessity of the Diocese of Erie, permission for excardination may be granted for a just cause, provided the Diocesan Bishop *ad quem* indicates in writing his willingness to incardinate the priest.

P. TRANSFER TO A RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY

1. Written permission from the Diocesan Bishop is required before a priest applies for membership in a religious community.
2. Release is contingent upon the approval of the Diocesan Bishop and the religious community, as well as the fulfillment of any canonical requirements.

Q. EXTERNS

1. The ministry of externs in the Diocese shall be governed by the agreements established between the Bishop of Erie and the extern's diocesan bishop or religious superior.
2. Externs are entitled to the same compensation and benefits as incardinated priests.
3. The salary of an extern shall be calculated from his year of ordination.

III. LEAVES OF ABSENCE

A. GENERAL NORMS

1. A priest who wishes to take a leave of absence must make his request directly to the Diocesan Bishop.
2. A leave of absence does not become effective until granted by the Diocesan Bishop.
3. Suitable arrangements for a priest's remuneration and social welfare will be made at the time the leave of absence is granted (cf. can. 281).
4. Information about the status of a priest on leave will be shared with the presbyterate as determined by the Diocesan Bishop.
5. If the faculties of a priest are revoked, the decree of revocation will state precisely what functions are proscribed.

B. MEDICAL LEAVE

1. Upon the recommendation of a physician, psychiatrist, or psychologist, the Diocesan Bishop may grant a priest a period of medical leave up to six (6) months.
2. The Director of Clergy Personnel will maintain regular contact with the priest during his medical leave.
3. While a priest is on medical leave, he will continue to receive salary and benefits from the parish or institution to which he is assigned unless other provisions are made by the Diocesan Bishop.
4. Medical leave may be extended beyond six (6) months provided that
 - a. The attending physician, psychiatrist, or psychologist recommends the leave be extended.
 - b. Periodic reports of the priests' progress are made to the Diocesan Bishop and/or the Director of Clergy Personnel by the attending clinician.
 - c. The priest is not declared permanently disabled.
5. A priest declared permanently disabled shall be subject to the provisions of this policy regarding Retirement.

C. PERSONAL LEAVE

1. A priest may request a leave of absence from the Diocesan Bishop for personal reasons.
2. The Diocesan Bishop's letter granting the personal leave shall specify
 - a. The length of the leave
 - b. A date on which the reasons for leave will be reviewed and the priest's return to ministry discussed
 - c. What financial support, if any, the priest will receive from the Diocese
 - d. What ministerial functions the priest may or may not perform during the period of leave
 - e. Any other obligations the priest is to observe in the course of the leave

D. DISCIPLINARY LEAVE

1. A priest may be placed on leave by the Diocesan Bishop due to conduct incongruent with priestly life.
2. A priest placed on such leave will receive a letter from the Diocesan Bishop specifying
 - a. Any ministerial functions the priest may or may not perform
 - b. Any other obligations the priest is to observe in the course of the leave
 - c. What financial support, if any, the priest will receive from the Diocese
3. The reasons for the disciplinary leave may constitute sufficient grounds for the initiation of a penal process leading to the suspension of the priest.
4. If the priest's faculties are revoked, he will be notified in accord with the norms of universal law and the provisions of III.A.5 of this policy.

E. ABSENT WITHOUT LEAVE

1. A priest shall be considered to be absent without leave when he
 - a. Leaves his assignment without the permission of the Diocesan Bishop
 - b. Refuses to report to an assignment given by the Diocesan Bishop
 - c. Fails to fulfill the terms and conditions of his leave
 - d. Is otherwise absent without the permission of the Diocesan Bishop
2. The Diocesan Bishop will make every effort to contact a priest who is absent without leave and encourage his return to the ministry.

3. When a priest is absent without leave, the Director of Clergy Personnel or his delegate will investigate to determine if the priest's absence constitutes a withdrawal from ministry.
4. If a priest refuses to return to ministry, he will be notified that his financial support and benefits – including health insurance and contributions to the Diocesan pension plan– will be terminated on a specified date.
5. When a priest is absent without leave, the Director of Clergy Personnel or his delegate will investigate to determine if the priest's absence constitutes a withdrawal from ministry.
6. Unauthorized absence may constitute sufficient reason for the initiation of a penal process leading toward the suspension of the priest.
7. If the priest's faculties are revoked, he will be notified in accord with the norms of universal law and the provisions of III.A.5 of this policy.

F. SABBATICAL

1. Priests become eligible for sabbatical to engage in further study and formation after ten (10) years incardinated as presbyters in the Diocese of Erie.
2. Priest wishing to go on sabbatical must make their request in writing to the Diocesan Bishop who will approve or defer their request according to the pastoral needs of the Diocese.
3. The length of sabbatical leave is determined according to the following formula:
 - a. 10 Years Incardinated = 1 month
 - b. 15 Years Incardinated = 2 months
 - c. 20 Years Incardinated = 4 months
4. The costs associated with a sabbatical program may be split between the priest, the diocese, and his place of assignment in a manner to be determined and reviewed periodically by the Presbyteral Council.

IV. RETIREMENT

A. GENERAL NORMS

1. In the Diocese of Erie, the normal age of retirement for priests is seventy-five (75) years.

2. A priest who has served for at least thirty (30) years in the Diocese may request to retire at age seventy (70).
3. All requests for retirement must be communicated to the Diocesan Bishop at least one year in advance of the desired retirement date.
4. Retirement becomes effective only when accepted by the Diocesan Bishop.
5. Upon reaching his 74th birthday, every active priest must write to the Diocesan Bishop to indicate either
 - a. His readiness to retire in the coming year OR
 - b. His request to remain in active ministry beyond age 75.
6. With retirement comes the automatic resignation of all offices and duties, excluding those explicitly extended by the Diocesan Bishop.
7. Retired priests are encouraged but not required to participate in the Emmaus convocation, days of recollection, priest retreats, and all other continuing formation opportunities for priests.
8. The Director of Clergy Personnel will coordinate with the Clergy Continuing Formation Committee and the Priest Retirement Board to regularly provide priests nearing retirement age with information and guidance on all matters pertaining to retirement.

B. PRIEST RETIREMENT BOARD

1. The Diocesan Priest Retirement Board consists of the following:
 - a. the Diocesan Bishop
 - b. the Director of Clergy Personnel
 - c. the Chancellor (if he is a priest)
 - d. the Senior Priest Advocate
 - e. the Director(s) of the Bishop Michael J. Murphy Residence for Retired Priests
 - f. a representative of the diocesan Finance Office
2. The Diocesan Bishop serves as chairman of the Board.
3. The Diocesan Bishop may also appoint additional members to the Board who are experienced in matters of retirement, health insurance, law, and finance.
4. The Board meets annually in order to review, update, and decide on priest retirement matters such as the priest pension plan, the Good Shepherd Collection, the Bishop Michael J. Murphy Residence for Retired Priests, etc.

C. SENIOR PRIEST ADVOCATE

1. The Senior Priest Advocate is appointed by the Diocesan Bishop as his liaison to the retired priests of the Diocese.
2. His responsibilities include
 - a. Identifying and attending to the needs of the retired priests of the Diocese in close cooperation with the Director of Clergy Personnel
 - b. Maintaining regular contact (at least annual) with all retired priests of the Diocese
 - c. Being available for individual contact with retirees as the need arises
 - d. Advocating to the Diocesan Bishop on behalf of retired priests.

D. FINANCIAL MATTERS

1. Priests become eligible for retirement benefits after fifteen (15) years of priestly ministry in the Diocese of Erie.
2. A priest is fully vested in the diocesan pension plan after thirty (30) years of active ministry.
3. The monthly pension benefit is determined annually by the Priest Retirement Board.
4. All priests are to apply for Medicare at age 65.
5. Premiums for health coverage beyond that covered by Medicare Plans A and B will be paid by the Diocese up to the rate covered by the plan selected by the Diocese.
6. The Finance Office will assist retirees in completing the necessary paperwork once their petition for retirement has been approved by the Diocesan Bishop
7. A priest continuing to serve in a full-time assignment (e.g., pastor) after reaching age of 75 is eligible to receive both his pension benefit and a full salary according to the diocesan salary scale.
8. Retired priests serving in parishes are entitled to be reimbursed for ministry-related mileage.

9. Each priest must plan prudently and carefully for his retirement years through the Diocesan Pension Plan, Social Security, IRAs, annuities, or other savings/investment plans, as there are no additional diocesan funds available to subsidize a priest's retirement.

E. LIVING ARRANGEMENTS FOR RETIRED PRIESTS

1. Retired priests are wholly responsible for their own living arrangements and are encouraged to explore all options well in advance of the actual need, including
 - a. A personal residence owned by the priest
 - b. A rectory
 - c. The Bishop Michael J. Murphy Residence for Retired Priests (independent living)
 - d. Catholic or other retirement/nursing homes
2. The living arrangements of a retired priest must be approved by the Diocesan Bishop in accord with VI.A.1 below.
3. The Diocese of Erie does not have arrangements with any Catholic or secular nursing homes for the care of priests.
4. Though a retired priest may be invited to reside in a rectory by a pastor, he should not reside in the rectory of the parish where he last served.
5. A retired priest living in a rectory shall compensate the parish for his room and board.
 - a. The actual amount paid must be worked out between the retired priest and the pastor.
 - b. The amount should take into consideration any sacramental or pastoral assistance provided by the retired priest as well as the services (e.g., cook, housekeeper) offered to the priest by the parish.
6. The Bishop Michael J. Murphy Residence for Retired Priests provides an independent living opportunity for up to ten (10) priests and is open to those retired priests who are fully capable of independent living and successfully complete the application process.

F. MISCELLANEOUS CONCERNS

1. The Diocesan Bishop, the Director of Clergy Personnel, and the regional Vicar should be immediately notified of any impairment to a retired priest's ministry or well-being.

2. Each priest is urged to provide updated copies of his last will and testament, living will, healthcare power of attorney, priest health emergency form, and funeral plans to the Chancery Office.
3. In order to be eligible for any ministry inside or outside the Diocese of Erie, all retired priests must be in compliance with the *Policy for the Protection of Children and Youth*.
4. The Diocese shall reimburse retired priests for costs incurred in obtaining the child protection clearances required by the *Policy for the Protection of Children and Youth*.

V. PRIESTLY MINISTRY

A. FACULTIES

1. Following ordination or incardination, faculties for ministry indicated by universal law, particular law, and a letter of appointment are given to each diocesan priest until they are withdrawn in accord with the universal law of the Church.
2. Diocesan priests who enjoy the faculties of another diocese also enjoy the faculties to preach and celebrate the sacrament of Reconciliation in the Diocese of Erie unless those faculties have been revoked, presuming that they have observed the requirement below regarding Letters of Good Standing.
3. Clergy of religious congregations obtain the faculties of the Diocese of Erie by virtue of their appointment to ministry within the Diocese.
4. Religious priests or priests of other dioceses residing within the Diocese of Erie but not assigned to ministry by the Bishop of Erie (e.g., for retirement, for studies, etc.) may request faculties with the written permission of their superiors and a Suitability for Ministry document.
5. Requests for faculties are to be directed to the Chancellor, who will maintain records of all requests and faculties granted.

B. LETTERS OF GOOD STANDING

1. Any priest of the Diocese of Erie wishing to exercise ministry in another diocese must first request a Letter of Good Standing from the Chancery.

2. No priest or deacon from outside the Diocese may exercise any public ministry until he has presented a Letter of Good Standing, also known as a letter of suitability, a testimonial letter, or a celebret, dated within the last six (6) months.
 - a. This requirement applies to all acts of ministry whatsoever, including but not limited to celebration and concelebration of the Eucharist on Sundays and weekdays, presiding at any Sacrament or Liturgy such as baptisms, funerals, weddings, confessions, etc., or any other ministerial function such as leading a retreat or mission or delivering a public lecture or speech.
3. Letters of Suitability should include the purpose and dates of the cleric's service.
4. Copies of letters of good standing must be mailed or emailed to the Chancery before the cleric's visit.
5. A copy of the letter of good standing is to be kept on file in the parish, school, or retreat house where the cleric ministers for a period of three years after which it is to be shredded or otherwise destroyed.
6. Any cleric functioning on behalf of the Erie Diocesan Missionary Cooperative will already have letters of good standing received by the Erie Office of Foreign Missions and the Chancery.

VI. PRIESTLY LIFE

A. RESIDENCE

1. Each priest of the Diocese of Erie is to live in a residence assigned or approved by the Diocesan Bishop.
 - a. Active priests may only reside outside a parish or institution in extraordinary circumstances and then only with the explicit approval of the Diocesan Bishop.
 - b. Retired priests should seek the Diocesan Bishop's approval for their living arrangements.
2. The parish rectory is equally the home of all the priests assigned there.
3. No one except the priest(s) assigned there by the Bishop shall reside in a parish rectory.
 - a. In exceptional circumstances, the Diocesan Bishop may permit a priest who lives alone in a rectory to welcome a family member or other individual into

the rectory for a period of time and under conditions to be given in writing by the Diocesan Bishop.

- 1) This permission shall not be extended to anyone who is not capable of independent living.
 - 2) If the resident becomes incapable of independent living, he/she must make arrangements to relocate to another residential arrangement that meets their needs as soon as possible.
- b. Any such arrangements shall be reviewed regularly at a frequency determined by the Diocesan Bishop.
 - c. Any such arrangements shall not add expense to the parish budget or burden the parish staff in any way.
 - d. The Diocesan Bishop reserves the right to revoke this permission at any time.

B. WORKING CONDITIONS IN THE PARISH OFFICE

1. Each priest should have access to an office for counseling, studying, and instructional purposes.
 - a. The office must be distinct from the living quarters.
 - b. Private or common living quarters are never suitable for counseling or spiritual direction.
2. Each priest in the rectory should have access to basic parish files, record books and equipment.
3. Confidentiality, especially in regard to counseling as well as church records, should be safeguarded at all times.
4. Job descriptions of all parish employees should be clearly defined and understood by all staff members and all priests in the rectory.
5. Parish offices are to make provision that an emergency contact number is available twenty-four (24) hours per day.

C. ATTIRE

1. Priests are to wear customary clerical attire in the daily exercise of their ministry.
2. In all other circumstances, priests are to dress in a manner appropriate to a minister of the Church.

3. Liturgical attire is governed by the norms of liturgical law.

D. DAYS OFF

1. Each priest is entitled to one (1) day off per week, defined as a period of twenty-four (24) consecutive hours.
2. If two or more priests are serving in a parish or other ministry together, they should coordinate their day-off schedule in a collaborative manner.
3. The parish daily Mass schedule should be arranged to afford the opportunity for each priest to have a day off.

E. TIME AWAY FROM THE PARISH OR PLACE OF ASSIGNMENT

1. Each priest is entitled to four (4) weeks of vacation per year. (cf. Can. 533 and 550)
 - a. Four weeks shall be understood to include three (3) weekends.
 - b. Vacation time must be used in a single calendar year and cannot be carried over.
2. In addition to this vacation time, priests may also be absent from their places of assignment each year for
 - a. Five (5) days for annual retreat
 - b. The Emmaus Convocation
 - c. One (1) week for continuing education and formation
 - d. Programs of spiritual renewal
3. When a pastor will be absent from his parish for more than one (1) week, he must inform the local Episcopal Vicar (cf. canon 533 §1).
4. When there is more than one priest in a particular parish, prudence and practicality ought to guide the determination of vacation schedules so that there is suitable coverage to meet the pastoral needs of parishioners.
 - a. The parish is responsible for remuneration of those who substitute for priests while on vacation according to the amounts specified in particular law.
5. In one-priest parishes, arrangements should be made to offer approved options for liturgical services to ensure the prayer life of the community continues while the priest is away.
 - a. The Office for Divine Worship can provide assistance in this regard.

6. The priest's annual retreat, time for continuing formation, programs of spiritual renewal, and the Emmaus convocation are not counted against the priest's allotted vacation time.

F. PHYSICAL & MENTAL HEALTH

1. Each priest shall maintain his optimal level of health and wellness.
2. In cases of serious concern, the Diocese may intervene to identify options and resources for returning a priest to wellness.
3. Each priest should have an annual health screening, the cost of which is covered by the diocesan health insurance plan.
4. A priest in need of intensive or long-term rehabilitative services for physical, psychological or emotional reasons must meet with the Vicar General and the Director of Clergy Personnel.
5. All priests in need of psychological counseling or therapy are encouraged to seek it.
6. The Diocese will assist priests in seeking care from a credentialed professional therapist by
 - a. Making available a list of professionals known to be uniquely qualified to assist priests
 - b. Directly paying the cost of a limited number of therapy/counseling sessions with a professional from this list
 - c. When possible, providing limited need-based financial assistance in the cases described in #7 below as determined by the Director of Clergy Personnel.
7. In seeking care from professionals beyond the Diocesan list (cf. #6.a), the priest is responsible for utilizing his health insurance plan and/or Medicare plan to cover the cost.
8. The priest may be asked to sign a release form allowing the Diocesan Bishop or his delegate to receive reports from the therapy/counseling sessions every three (3) months.
 - a. This information may be used to determine the usefulness of continued treatment.
 - b. This information shall be held in the strictest confidence.

G. ADDICTION & SUBSTANCE ABUSE

1. Any priest whose repeated addictive behavior or abuse of addictive substances interferes with the performance of his ministry, reduces his dependability, impairs his interpersonal relationships, affects his health, or reflects discredit to his office will be considered in need of treatment.
2. The diagnosis and treatment plan for the priest will be held in strict confidence unless the priest himself chooses to share the information with the presbyterate, with parishioners, etc.
3. In the course of his treatment, the responsibility for the cost of care will be determined by the Diocese and made known to the priest.
4. Provisions for the priest's salary and benefits will be determined by the Diocese.
5. When a priest is discharged from treatment, the Director of Clergy Personnel will meet with him to discuss his return to ministry.

H. SPIRITUAL LIFE

1. Liturgy of the Hours
 - a. Every priest is obliged to pray the following hours of the Divine Office daily:
 - 1) the Office of Readings
 - 2) Lauds (Morning Prayer)
 - 3) one of the Daytime hours
 - 4) Vespers (Evening Prayer)
 - 5) Compline (Night Prayer)
 - b. A priest may commute this obligation to Lauds and Vespers only in the following instances:
 - 1) When attending and/or concelebrating the Chrism Mass, the ordination of a deacon or a priest, or the funeral of a priest, deacon or religious.
 - 2) When attending study days, diocesan workshops or days of recollection.
 - 3) When making a holy hour before the Blessed Sacrament, whether reserved or exposed, providing one full hour is spent in prayer.
 - 4) When traveling for weekend parish assistance for more than one full hour.

- 5) When giving a day of recollection or day of reflection.
- 6) When out of pastoral necessity one binates or tricates on a Sunday, holy day or weekday.
- 7) When hearing confessions for at least one (1) full hour (even non-consecutively) in a single day.

2. Priest Retreats

- a. Every priest is obliged to make an annual spiritual retreat of five (5) days in a suitable retreat facility.
- b. Priests are encouraged to participate in the annual retreats scheduled by the Diocese.
- c. Priests who make a private retreat are to notify the Director of Clergy Personnel.

3. Priest Gatherings

- a. All active priests are expected to participate in the Emmaus convocation and in days of recollection scheduled by the Clergy Continuing Formation Committee.
- b. Because the Chrism Mass, priesthood ordination, the Emmaus convocation, and priest funerals are among the most significant events in the life of the presbyterate, all priests are urged to attend them and to concelebrate the Liturgies.

I. CONTINUING EDUCATION AND FORMATION

1. Continuing Education and Formation is defined as opportunities for study concurrent with a priest's full-time assignment from the Diocesan Bishop.
2. All priests are entitled to one (1) week of time away from their place of assignment for continuing education and formation each year in addition to the annual retreat, the Emmaus convocation, and vacation time (cf. VI.E.2).
3. Active priests serving in the Diocese of Erie are entitled to reimbursement for continuing education expenses according to the procedures and limits established by Diocesan financial policy.
 - a. Expenses associated with continuing formation are to be paid by the priest's place of assignment.

- b. These payments may be made either directly to the vendor/institution or by reimbursing the priest following the procedures in the Accountable Reimbursement Plan issued annually by the diocesan Finance Office.
- c. The Continuing Education allowance is a reimbursement plan and may not be paid to the priest as a lump sum.
- d. All reimbursement requires appropriate receipt documentation or the Continuing Education allowance is reclassified as taxable income and must be reported as such.

J. THE FUNERAL OF A PRIEST

1. The funerals of priests of the Diocese of Erie in good standing are conducted according to the provisions detailed below.
2. The Chancery is to be notified of the death of a priest as soon as possible.
3. Every priest in good standing is to have a Mass of Christian Burial celebrated by the Diocesan Bishop or his representative.
4. Arrangements for the Mass of Christian Burial will be made by the Chancery in consultation with the executor of the priest's estate, his family, the Office for Divine Worship, and the parish in which the Mass will be held, in accord with diocesan custom regarding the funeral of a priest.
 - a. The Chancery shall compose the priest's obituary using information provided by the priest himself and in consultation with the executor of his estate.
 - b. No plans for the priest's burial shall be finalized without the approval of the Diocesan Bishop or his delegate.
 - c. Every effort will be made to honor the requests of the deceased insofar as liturgical law, local custom, propriety, and particular circumstances allow.
 - d. The priest himself is responsible for funeral home, casket, and burial expenses.
5. No priest's remains may be cremated without the express permission of the Diocesan Bishop and then only after the celebration of the funeral Mass and are to be interred according to the law of the Church.
6. Every priest will be careful to provide the Chancery with up-to-date copies of his Last Will and Testament and plans for his funeral as detailed in I.B.5.g above.

7. The funerals of priests who have ceased ministry will be conducted according to the May 1, 2019 decree entitled, *Particular Law Concerning Funeral Rites for Clergy of the Diocese of Erie Who have Ceased the Exercise of Ministry through Laicization, Dismissal, or de facto Departure from Ministry*.

VII. CLERICAL MISCONDUCT

A. GENERAL NORMS

1. A priest has the right to utilize procedures as established in the *Code of Canon Law* (can. 220) and applicable diocesan norms and policies to protect his good reputation.
2. Complaints alleging ecclesiastical crime(s) will be forwarded to the Diocesan Bishop and the Promoter of Justice.
3. Complaints alleging crimes in the civil forum will be forwarded to the appropriate law enforcement agencies.
4. Non-criminal complaints will be handled at the discretion of the Bishop and/or Director of Clergy Personnel.
 - a. According to the principle of subsidiarity, the Bishop or Director of Clergy Personnel may involve the Regional Vicar, Dean, and/or Pastor in investigating and addressing the complaint.

B. CHILD ABUSE

1. Crimes against children are regulated by their own ecclesiastical norms in both universal and particular law.
2. All priests serving in the Diocese of Erie are subject to the *Policy for the Protection of Children and Youth* and the *Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests and Deacons Policy*.

APPENDICES

POLICY ON PETS

I. Background

Some priests choose to welcome pets into their rectories. This invites an important conversation on the expectations of pet ownership specifically regarding the *care, responsibility, costs, obligations, and sensitivities* involved in pet ownership within the context of rectory living. The intention of this policy is to assist the priest in mature, responsible pet ownership grounded in Christian stewardship.

II. Priest Assignment and Pet Ownership

Diocesan priests are called by God to serve the entire local Church. Consequently, a priest's assignment shall not be contingent upon his ability to have a pet present in the assignment. Each priest who owns a pet shall have ready at all times a plan for the long-term or permanent care of his pet in the event that the needs of the local Church preclude him from continuing to care for the pet himself.

III. Pet Ownership in Relation to...

- A. **Rectory Living Expenses** - The rectory is owned and maintained by the parish to house the pastor and other priests assigned to residence. All costs associated with the modification or care of the rectory due to a priest's pet shall be the sole financial responsibility of the priest (e.g., a fence, "doggie door", etc.). In addition, all costs associated with pet-related rectory cleaning shall be the responsibility of the priest.

The priest shall be solely responsible for the cost of repairing any damage caused to parish property by his pet.

- B. **Moving Out of a Rectory** – The priest shall be solely responsible for the cost of undoing any modifications made to the rectory to accommodate his pet (e.g., "doggie door," ramp, etc.), as well as for the cost to repair or replace furniture, fixtures, and flooring in the rectory that have been damaged by his pet. The priest shall also be responsible for any additional pet-related cleaning fees accrued in preparing the rectory for a new resident.
- C. **Other Priests Living in the Rectory** – A priest living in a shared rectory must keep in mind that the rectory is equally the home of all priests assigned to residence. Priests who own pets must consider the comfort of their brothers both in choosing to acquire a pet and in caring for a pet. To this end, the following is to be observed:
- a. No priest who resides with other priests shall bring a pet into the rectory without the explicit consent of each resident of that rectory.

- b. Should any of the residents object to the presence of the pet, on any grounds whatever, his wishes are to be respected without recrimination.
 - c. Pastors in particular must take special care to solicit the honest opinions of other residents about the presence of a pet in the rectory, as they may be reticent to speak openly against the pastor's desire for a pet on account of his office.

- D. **Church Building** - Out of respect for the sacredness of the space, pets shall not be present in the church building at any time.

- E. **Parish Liturgies & Activities** – Priest pet owners shall not bring their pets to parish Liturgies or activities. While many parishioners enjoy the company of pets, others find them off-putting or even frightening. Even when parishioners express approval or desire for the presence of the pet, the priest must remember that other parishioners will be unwilling to voice their preferences or fears out of deference to the priest.

- F. **Parish Staff** - Caring for a priest's pet - including feeding, toileting, walking, grooming, transporting, veterinary care, boarding, etc. - shall not be the expected responsibility of the parish staff. If a priest asks a member of the staff to assist him in caring for his pet on a personal basis – even temporarily – he must remember that staff members may not feel free to refuse his request, either because the priest is their employer or because of the unequal relationship between priest and parishioner.

If the priest should invite a pet-sitter or groomer into the residence, due care must be taken not to inconvenience the parish staff, for the appearance of impropriety, the privacy of other residents, and the security of parish property.

- G. **Pets in the Parish Office (Public Areas)** – No animals (with the exception of Service Animals) shall be in the office area. This prohibition includes those pets brought to work by the staff. Some visitors to the parish will inevitably be allergic to or afraid of the animals. Furthermore, there is always a chance of a pet becoming unexpectedly aggressive.

- H. **Expenses Associated with Pet Ownership** – All pet food, pet toys, medical care and other pet items are to be the financial responsibility of the priest owner.

- I. **Ordinances & Liabilities** – The priest owner is responsible for knowing and complying with all local ordinances relating to his pet. These may include but are not limited to requirements for leashing, vaccination, zoning requirements, health codes, etc. Any fees incurred are the responsibility of the pet owner.

Priests who own pets must bear in mind that even the most docile animals can sometimes react unexpectedly. The priest is solely liable for all damages associated with personal injury caused by his pet.

IV. Service & Emotional Support Animals

- A. **Pets as Service Animals** – On occasion, priests may require the use of specially trained service animals to assist with some disability. The overall guidelines in this policy, with a few obvious exceptions, should continue to be enforced.
- B. **Pets as Emotional Support Animals** – On occasion, priests may be aided by the presence of an emotional support animal in their residence as attested to in writing by a mental health professional. Because emotional support animals do not enjoy the same access to public places as service animals, the overall guidelines of this policy – including the prohibition against the animal’s presence at parish events – remains in force.

V. Enforcement of this Policy

- A. The Dean shall see that this policy is enforced during his annual visit. He may consult not only the priest owner but also the other priests in residence as well as the parish staff about the presence of the pet.
- B. In the event of a conflict relating to the priest’s pet, the Dean shall attempt to work with the pastor in a fraternal manner to assist him in moving into compliance with this policy and with the needs of his parishioners.
- C. Should the Dean judge that his efforts to enforce this policy in a parish have been unsuccessful, he shall bring the matter to regional Episcopal Vicar and the Vicar for Clergy.
- D. When a pastor with a pet concludes his term of residence in a rectory, the Dean shall personally inspect the entirety of the rectory, documenting any evidence of pet damage. He shall report his findings to the outgoing pastor, the incoming pastor, the parish Finance Council, the regional Episcopal Vicar, and the Vicar for Clergy.
- E. The guidelines set forth in III.a and III.b of this policy shall be observed, and the Dean shall confirm with the outgoing pastor and the incoming pastor that any necessary repairs were made at the personal expense of the outgoing pastor.