

RESPONSIBILITIES OF A PRIEST IN THE DIOCESE OF NEWARK

It is the calling of the priest to “proclaim by word and deed the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to fashion [one’s] life in accordance with its precepts.” Book of Common Prayer (BCP 531). Desiring that clergy fully and faithfully live into those ordination vows and the canons of The Episcopal Church and the Diocese of Newark, this diocese seeks to insure that each of its presbyters engages in an active, balanced, and healthy ministry and personal life.

Every priest should faithfully live into his/her vows to be “a faithful pastor to all whom [he/she] is called to serve” and “to pattern [his/her] life (and that of his/her family, household or community) in accordance with the teachings of Christ, so that [he/she] is a wholesome example to [the] people” (BCP 532). To that end, the following expectations for priests in this Diocese are provided.

Will you respect and be guided by the pastoral direction and leadership of your bishop? (BCP 532)

- Attendance at the Annual Convention of the Diocese of Newark.
- Attendance at the Clergy Conference and Clergy Days announced by the Bishop.
- Attendance at the service for the renewal of ordination vows and rededication to held on Tuesday of Holy Week.
- Attendance at the Clergy Conversations with the Bishop or Canon to the Ordinary.
- To inform and/or seek the advice of the Bishop’s Office for any serious legal, financial, pastoral or professional matter affecting the life of the congregation or the priest.
- Announce to the congregation and prepare it for the Bishop’s Visit and provide information as to the state of the congregation, spiritual and temporal, in the categories requested by the Bishop.

Will you be diligent in the reading and study of the Holy Scriptures and in seeking the knowledge of such things as may make you a stronger and more able minister of Christ? (BCP 532)

- Observe daily times for prayer, Scripture reading, and meditation or otherwise engage in some Rule of Life.
- Maintain a regular program of continuing education each year, including participation in workshops, seminars, and seminary courses designed to enhance clergy professional skills.
- Participate in an annual mutual ministry review with the wardens and vestry conducted by a facilitator from outside the congregation.
- Plan with the vestry and congregation, a periodic sabbatical for refreshment, renewal and growth.

Will you endeavor so to minister the Word of God and the sacraments of the New Covenant, that the reconciling love of Christ may be known and received? (BCP 532)

- Ensure that all persons in the congregation receive instruction in the faith and ministry of the Church.
- Ensure that all persons in the congregation are instructed concerning Christian stewardship.
- Ensure the preparation of persons for Baptism, Confirmation, Reception, and Reaffirmation.

Will you undertake to be a faithful pastor to all whom you are called to serve, laboring together with them and your fellow ministers to build up the family of God? (BCP 532)

- Encourage the development of “shared ministry” as the model for congregational life that seeks to hold both clergy and the people they serve accountable for that ministry, and emphasizes the partnership that must exist if that ministry is to be realized.
- Encourage and participate in joint ministry with other diocesan congregations and clergy as well as other denominations, faith communities, and community organizations.
- Be creative in the exercise of your ministry.
- Encourage and work with wardens and vestry to insure compliance with the filing requirements and other mandates of the national church and diocesan canons (e.g., parochial reports, diocesan pledge, financial audit).
- Establish and maintain a clergy discretionary fund.
- Maintain the Parish Register.
- Engage in district meetings and activities, and encourage lay participation in these events.
- Become involved in the life, councils, and activities of the Diocese of Newark.
- Attend services for the Ordination of Deacons and Priests, and the Celebration of New Ministry for clergy within your district.
- Take part in and inform lay employees and leaders of and insure your and their compliance with Diocesan- required anti-racism, Safe Church, sexual exploitation prevention and similar trainings required by state law, canons or resolutions of diocesan convention.

Will you do your best to pattern your life [and that of your family *or* household, *or* community] in accordance with the teachings of Christ, so that you may be a wholesome example to your people? (BCP 532)

- Practice responsible stewardship of financial resources, adopting the tithe as the minimum standard of giving or engaging in a systematic plan of moving towards that minimum.
- Pay adequate attention to physical health, including the responsible use of alcohol and drugs.
- Pay adequate attention to emotional health, seeking professional help when there is a need to do so.
- Observe the 48-hour /week time off requirement in your letter of agreement.
- Observe each year the vacation and other time off for recreation and refreshment mandated by your letter of agreement.
- Participation in CREDO and similar programs designed to promote clergy professional, vocational, and personal development.
- Maintain regular contact with other clergy, spiritual director, and/or professional therapist.
- Spend intentional and significant time “away from the congregation” with family, friends, and /or be engaged in community activities.

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Bishop of Newark
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