

## THE PRIEST IN THE PARISH

A person enters the Priesthood in response to a special calling from the Holy Spirit. This call is made inwardly by God and outwardly by the Church. The call must be responded to by the person, not only in relation to an individual response, but under the authority of the Church, as particularly manifested by the bishop from whom the person receives delegated authority.

### Responsibilities in the Parish

1. The priest as spiritual leader is responsible for teaching the doctrine of the Church and administering the Sacraments and discipline of Christ. In discharging this responsibility, among other things, the priest will:
  - a) exercise overall responsibility for the proper administration of the parish or cure, including teaching and enabling the parish to set Christian standards of stewardship of time, talent and treasure (for which the diocesan standard is the biblical tithes);
  - b) make known to the people of the parish God's will through proper and systematic preaching of the Gospel; and,
  - c) be responsible for the instruction and preparation of candidates for Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Matrimony.
2. The priest is to be the teacher/enabler of the laity so that they may exercise the ministry to which God calls them. Among the areas of particular concern to effect this are:
  - a) to initiate and direct programs of Christian education/formation among all age groups, i.e., adult education, youth work and children's church school;
  - b) to keep before the people of the parish the claims of the mission of the church, working in cooperation with mission education initiatives on the diocesan and national level; and,
  - c) to have overall responsibility for the training of the laity in outreach and evangelistic mission.
3. In consultation with the bishop, the priest will participate in programs of continuing education; included in this would be attendance at conferences and courses which will assist in one's spiritual growth and/or provide knowledge and techniques useful in carrying out parish responsibilities.
4. The priest is responsible to make available either from within or outside the parish such resource persons as are required from time to time by individuals or groups in the parish.
5. The priest is responsible for enlisting and training lay people of the parish to assist in carrying out the ministry of the Church; included in this will be regular and systematic visitations in the parish generally, and with particular emphasis among the sick and shut-ins.
6. The priest has responsibility to exercise a ministry to the broad community of the Church. To accomplish this, s/he must search out lay leaders in the parish to assist in developing a climate in which the fellowship of God's Church can grow in the community.

7. While the primary responsibility is to the Church, the priest is also to be visible in the community, and to give leadership in such areas as community development, social justice, and ecumenical endeavors.
8. The priest is to take responsibility on the deanery and diocesan level when called to do so, sharing his/her God-given talents with the whole Church.
9. The priest is responsible to see that bishop's directives, diocesan regulations and policies are explained and followed at the parish level.
10. When decisions are made by the Diocesan Synod and/or Council, the priest is to see that they are communicated in a positive way, always leaving a concern for the unity of the Body.

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