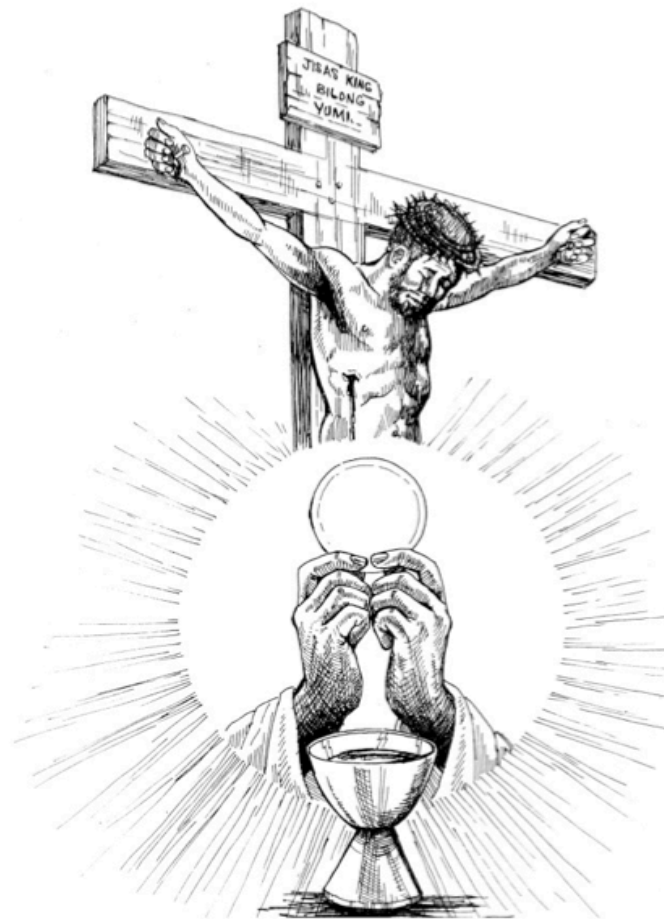


**SPIRITUAL AND PASTORAL
GUIDELINES
FOR PRIESTS
ASSIGNED TO DIOCESES
IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA
AND SOLOMON ISLANDS**



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Sources

Vatican II Documents

LG	<i>Lumen Gentium</i> , Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, 1964
PO	<i>Presbyterorum Ordinis</i> , Decree on the Life and Ministry of Priests, 1965
SC	<i>Sacrosanctum Concilium</i> , Dogmatic Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, 1965

Other Church Documents

CCC	<i>Catechism of the Catholic Church</i> , 1992
CC PNG/SI	<i>Catechism for Catholics of Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands</i> , 2009
CIC	<i>Codex Iuris Canonici</i> , 1983
EG	<i>Evangelii Gaudium</i> , Apostolic Exhortation, Francis, 2013
EIO	<i>Ecclesia in Oceania</i> , Apostolic Exhortation, John Paul II, 2001
FC	<i>Familiaris Consortio</i> , Apostolic Exhortation, John Paul II, 1981
PDV	<i>Pastores Dabo Vobis</i> , Apostolic Exhortation, John Paul II, 1992
PGDP	<i>Pastoral Guide for Diocesan Priests in Churches dependent on the Congregation for Evangelization of Peoples</i> , 1989

PRAYER

Lord God, you have called me to priestly ministry.
You have called me to be witness
of your goodness among the people
and to the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Help me to respect the dignity of human life,
to be open always to your guidance
and to dedicate all my life to you
in gratitude for the gift on my vocation.

Lord, I offer my life at the service of your Kingdom,
to help the Church in her apostolic mission
through the proclamation of the Good News
and the celebration of the Sacraments
so that many people may come to know and love you.

Mary, Mother of the High Priest,
I entrust my life to you every day.
Help me to be generous in my priestly service
and with you, standing at the foot of the cross,
united with Jesus, helping in his work of redemption.
So that one day, with all the people
entrusted to my priestly ministry
we may enjoy in eternity
the love and mercy of God.

Amen.

Dear Priests,

By their priestly ordination, and by the mission they received from their bishops, priests are set aside for the service of Christ.

The following guidelines are offered to help you in your priestly ministry and assist you to grow deeper in your spiritual life.

“The ordained ministry is at the service of the People of God (LG 10). Their role is to preach the Word (prophetic), to sanctify through the sacraments (priestly), and to shepherd the people of God (kingly)” (CC PNG/SI 321).

Priests share in Christ's ministry of building up the Church on earth. They must build the Church into the People of God, the Body of Christ and the Temple of the Holy Spirit.

In these modern days, the pastoral and human circumstances of the priesthood have changed significantly. To help priests in these changing times, so that their priestly ministry can be better fulfilled and their priestly lives can be better taken care of, the Council (Vatican II) makes the following rules concerning the ministry and life of priests (PO 1).

It is in this same spirit that we, the Catholic Bishops Conference of PNG/SI, offer these Spiritual and Pastoral Guidelines for both diocesan and religious priests working within our Dioceses. Together let us become people of service for building up the Body of Christ.



1. IDENTITY OF A PRIEST

"Keep watch over yourselves and over the whole flock of which the Holy Spirit has appointed you overseers, in which you tend the Church of God that he acquired with his own blood" (Acts 20:28).

1.1 Vatican II describes the priest as a person who is publicly ordained to preach the Gospel, to shepherd the faithful and to celebrate Divine Worship (LG 28).

"In the Church and on behalf of the Church, priests are a sacramental representation of Jesus Christ – the head and shepherd – authoritatively proclaiming his word, repeating his acts of forgiveness and his offer of salvation – particularly in baptism, penance and the Eucharist, showing his loving concern to the point of a total gift of self for the flock, which they gather into unity and lead to the Father through Christ and in the Spirit" (PDV 15).

The Sacrament of Holy Orders bestows on a person a special participation in the office of Jesus Christ, the only High Priest and Mediator between God and humankind (1 Tim 2:5). By ordination, the priest becomes, in the Church and for the Church, a real, living and faithful image of Christ the Priest, *"a sacramental representation of Christ, Head and Shepherd"* (PDV 15).

"The chief responsibility of an ordained priest is to represent Christ before the community of believers. At the same time he acts in the name of the Church when presenting to God the prayer of the Church, above all when offering the Eucharistic sacrifice" (CC PNG/SI 702).

A priest is a man called to share the mission of Christ. In unity with the bishop he is to be like the Apostles, a man bearing witness to Christ who died and rose again. *"We are his witnesses" (Acts 2:32). "What we have seen and heard we are telling you" (1 Jn 1:3).*

As an officially designated public witness, the priest is to be a convincing sign of God's loving presence among his people. *"The life of the priest is modelled absolutely on the example of Christ, who gave himself so that all may have life to the full. Through the ordained priesthood, the presence of Christ is made visible in the midst of the community" (EIO 49).*

1.2 A priest, being part of the local church, is to live in communion with the bishop, the other priests, and the people of the Christian community.

a) Communion with the bishop, for both diocesan priests and religious priests assigned to the diocese, means welcoming him with respect and love in his role as Spiritual Father of the whole Diocesan Community, and collaborating actively with him in apostolic obedience. The bishop on his part should consider his priests as brothers and friends, a relationship based on mutual trust and respect for each other.

b) Communion with other priests within the diocese is based on the fact that together with each other, and gathered around their bishop, they form a single priesthood (LG 28). Each year during the Chrism Mass as a sign of an enduring desire of fidelity, priests are to renew, in the presence of and together with the Bishop, the promises made at Ordination (PDV 80).

c) Communion with the faithful means that priests are part of the People of God. They should serve them and accompany them in their journey of faith, going ahead of them with their good example, avoiding everything that might give scandal (PGDP 5). *“To do so, he will sometimes go before his people, pointing the way and keeping their hope vibrant. At other times, he will simply be in their midst with his unassuming and merciful presence. At yet other times, he will have to walk after them, helping those who lag behind and – above all – allowing the flock to strike out on new paths”* (EG 31).

d) A candidate for the priesthood becomes specifically *diocesan* by his incardination into the Diocese through the ordination to Diaconate.

e) What distinguishes the *diocesan* priest from the *religious* priest is his special bonding with the bishop, the priests and the people of the Diocese. The religious priest assigned to the diocese becomes part of the presbyterium of the diocese. The presbyterate is the privileged place where the priest should be able to find specific means of formation, sanctification and evangelization, and be helped to overcome the limits and weaknesses proper to human nature.

2. SPIRITUAL DIRECTIVES

"The fruit of silence is prayer. The fruit of prayer is faith alive. The fruit of faith is love. The fruit of love is service" (Mother Teresa).

The priest, being consecrated to God, has a special obligation to seek holiness of life (CIC 276 / LG 40). The spirituality of the priest consists essentially in the profound relationship of friendship with Christ, because he is called *"to go to Him"* (Mk 3:13).

The priest is called to live a relationship of deep, personal friendship with Christ (Jn 15:13-16) and it is in proportion to this that he will realise his vocation (PGDP 22). *"God is the only treasure which ultimately people desire to find in a priest"* (Benedict XVI, Address to the Participants at the Plenary of the Congregation for the Clergy, 2009).

The priest must revive his faith, his hope, and his sincere love for the Lord, in such way as to be able to present Him to the contemplation of the faithful and all people as He truly is: a Person alive and fascinating, who loves us more than anyone else because He gave His life for us: *"A man can have no greater love than to lay down his life for his friends"* (Jn 15:13).

"As in the life of Jesus, his identity and authority stem from a deep relationship with the Father which gave credibility to his word and his mission, so too should the identity of a priest be rooted in a special intimate relationship with Christ" (Card. Ratzinger).

Therefore, a priest's life of prayer should always include daily celebration of the Eucharist, with suitable preparation, and thanksgiving to follow; frequent confession and spiritual direction, the complete and fervent celebration of the liturgy of the hours, which is a daily obligation for him; examination of conscience; the regular practice of mental prayer; the *lectio divina*, prolonged moments of silence, especially in periodical spiritual retreats and days of recollection; the precious expressions of Marian devotion, such as the Rosary; the *Via Crucis* and other pious exercises; the fruitful reading of the lives of the saints; etc. (PO 18, PDV 26, 36-38, 47-48, 72, 80-81).

"The new evangelization needs new evangelizers, and these are the priests who are serious about living their priesthood as a specific path toward holiness" (PDV 82). God's works are performed by men of God!

2.1 Celebrating the Liturgy of the Hours.

A fundamental way for the priest to be in the presence of the Lord is the Liturgy of the Hours.

a) Spiritual nourishment

The Liturgy of the Hours constitutes the consecrated bond of the priest with the Church, in whose name the Liturgy is celebrated (CIC 276§3 / SC 84). Therefore priests are obliged to celebrate the entire Liturgy of the Hours daily. The daily obligation to pray the Breviary is also one of the solemn commitments undertaken in ordination to the diaconate. It is an obligation of love that is to be attended to under all circumstances, including during times of vacation or even when a priest is suspended.

b) This is a serious obligation and can be omitted only for serious reasons (e.g. sickness or extensive travelling).

c) Permission can be granted by the Ordinary in case of necessity to change:

- the Office of the Readings and Midday Prayer to fifteen minutes of reading the Scripture
- the entire office to twenty decades of the Rosary.

2.2 Celebration of the Eucharist.

Daily celebration of the Eucharist is strongly recommended even if it is not possible to have the faithful present. The Eucharist is the summit and the source of all worship and Christian life (LG 11).

The Eucharist is an action of Christ and of the Church in which priests fulfil their role (CIC 904).

The Eucharist, which the priest celebrates *in persona Christi*, is the centre and root of his life and he should strive to mirror in his life what takes place at the altar (PO 13).

The priest is to live the celebration of the Eucharist as the core moment of his day and his daily ministry, the fruit of sincere desire and occasion for a deep and effective encounter with Christ. In the Eucharist the priest learns to give himself each day.

"In the Eucharist, the priest chooses to give his life and to die that the people may have life in abundance" (Patriarch M Sabbah).

2.3 Private Prayer.

"Prayer is nothing other than intimate friendship, a conscious relationship with the Lord" (Teresa of Avila).

Priests should, as a daily routine, set aside time for the Divine Office, private prayer, meditation, and adoration before the Blessed Sacrament (CIC 276§3). Only a prayerful priest can become one who reveals the presence of God to others.

In order to carry out his pastoral ministry in a fruitful manner, the priest needs to enter into a special and profound relationship with Christ the Good Shepherd.

"A priest should be a person who knows Jesus intimately and has learned to love him. A priest, therefore, should be a man of prayer, a truly spiritual man" (Card. Ratzinger).

2.4 Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Like all the faithful, the priest also needs to confess his sins and weaknesses. He is the first to know that the practice of the Sacrament of Reconciliation strengthens him in faith and charity towards God, as well as his brothers and sisters.

A priest should make good use of the Sacrament of Reconciliation as a special means to holiness (CIC 276§5). In PNG/SI context, Confession about once a month would be appropriate.

"We are to be signs of conversion, to give witness to the power of God's grace at work in human weakness. This can only be if we present ourselves honestly and regularly to our confessor and experience for ourselves the joy of the Sacrament of Reconciliation" (Archbishop R. Mahoney: 'Priestly Ministry').

2.5 Devotion to Mary

The priestly spirituality may not be considered complete if it does not take into serious consideration the testament of Christ crucified, when he willed to entrust his Mother to the beloved disciple, and through him to all the priests called to continue his work of redemption. Just like John at the foot of the Cross, Jesus entrusted his mother Mary to each priest in a special way (Jn 19:26-27).

Every priest knows that Mary, because she is a Mother, is also the most eminent formator of his priesthood, since it is she who knows how to model his priestly heart, protect him from dangers, exhaustion and discouragement, and, with maternal solicitude, watch over him so he may grow in wisdom and grace before God and men (cf. Lk 2:40).

Good priestly Marian devotions would include a daily rosary, active support for Marian associations such as the Legion of Mary, Saturday Mass in honour of the Blessed Virgin where possible, and wholehearted preparation and celebration of Marian feasts.

2.6 Annual Retreat.

Priests are obliged to make a yearly retreat of at least 5 full days (CIC 276§4). They should also schedule regular recollection days, individually or as a group.

2.7 Community Spirit.

Since priests are working for the same purpose, namely the building up of the Body of Christ, they should be united with one another in the bond of brotherhood and should come together for prayer and sharing (CIC 275).

Priests should try to have relationships of real friendship with their fellow priests and in this way support each other in times of difficulties. By doing this they become a real priestly family and develop their spiritual and intellectual life (EIO 49).

Jesus never sent his disciples out alone. Following this example, his priests should seek each other's company together for recreation, and co-operation with each other, forming support groups that foster community spirit among priests.

There is also a possibility to have a support group from within the parish community. However, experience shows that this fulfils its purpose only when it is made up of many people from various segments of the parish and not one particular family.

It is without doubt a lack of priestly and community spirit if a priest consistently finds his fellowship and social recreation only with lay people and not his brother priests.

In order to rise to the challenges constantly posed by the secularized mentality all around him, the priest must make every effort to reserve absolute primacy to the spiritual life, to being always with Christ, and to living pastoral charity with generosity, intensifying communion with all, and above all with other priests.

Each priest will devote special dedication to vocational activity, never failing to encourage prayers for vocations (PO 11).

2.8 Priestly Obedience.

Among the virtues most necessary for a priest in his ministry is the spirit of loving obedience. A priest should always be ready to seek not his own will but the will of Him who sent him (Jn 4:34).

Obedience for the priest is a continuous attitude, which links him with the will of God through the authority of his superior. This entails:

a) A readiness to accept assignments, tasks, and policies given to him by the bishop or religious superior, and not asking insistently to be assigned to certain tasks or parishes, or avoiding responsibilities.

b) Openness to express ideas and views in an honest and respectful dialogue with the bishop or religious superior before appointment or decision is made.

c) Filial union with his Bishop is also an indispensable condition for the efficacy of the priestly ministry.

d) Faithful execution of a given task in accordance with Church norms and diocesan policies or religious Constitutions (PGDP 27).

e) Attendance and positive participation in presbyteral council and diocesan meetings.

2.9 Solidarity with the Poor.

When we speak of solidarity with the poor, we are necessarily speaking of a conscious and deliberate option to give preference to them in our work and in our lives. As minister of unity, the priest should evaluate all pastoral policies and programs in light of their effect on the poor.

Priests by their ordination are invited to embrace voluntary poverty. This means living in the world without belonging to it (Jn 17: 14-16) and being able to maintain a certain freedom and detachment from earthly things.

The example of Christ's poverty must lead the priest to conform himself to Him, with interior detachment regarding all the world's goods and riches (PO 17, 20-21).

In certain ways, becoming a priest means moving up the social scale in PNG/SI. This fact, although not necessarily intended, should not separate him from ordinary people and the poor. His manner of dress should be appropriate to his position and should be a visible sign of his commitment.

a) Priests should maintain a simple lifestyle, and, as a rule, restrict the use of the car to parish and pastoral activities, with only very limited personal use.

b) While exercising normal hospitality towards *wantoks* and friends, a priest should never have them living or visiting in his house on a semi-permanent or permanent basis.

c) Visit of friends and *wantoks* should be appropriately limited so as not to interfere with pastoral work and time assigned for study and prayer (PGDP 28).

The priest must at all times avoid using or seeming to use his ministry as an opportunity for obtaining benefits, favoring friends and relatives or seeking positions of privilege.

"In all places and circumstances, Christians, with the help of their pastors, are called to hear the cry of the poor" (EG 191).

2.10 Service to the People of the Church

Evangelization is the mission of the Church, which is to proclaim the truth about God who revealed his mystery in Jesus Christ (EIO 18). All our pastoral work, activity and pastoral planning should be directed towards New Evangelization to the making of the mystery of *Communion* visible to the world. *"Mere administration is no longer enough: we must convert to a state of mission"* (EG 25). The priest, through his pastoral ministry, should guide the parish community to be the place where the

church lives in the midst of the homes of people; it should be a community of communities (EG 28). Priests, as pastors of their people, are to form their Christian community to be an evangelical witness, "which announces of the Good News" in the family and in society.

At this time in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands, the general theme of pastoral work and planning is this: New Evangelization in and through the family, carried out within a spirituality of communion. The priest is called to bring the Christian community together and guide it, making sure that everyone has an opportunity to take part in the mission of new evangelization, each using one's own unique gifts to carry out the mission of the Church.

As minister of the Lord and of the Church, the priest should possess a spirit of service (LG 24), which shows itself in a love for the apostolate and in the ability to withstand the tiredness that comes from hard work. The priest should not seek honours or personal reward, but he should try to be like Christ who gave himself totally for His Father and for his people. He should be aware of and respond to the needs of the people.

The priest, as a collaborator of the Bishop and duly mandated by him, bears the responsibility to animate, coordinate and direct the catechetical activity of the community entrusted to him. It is important for him to be able to integrate this activity into an organic project of evangelization, guaranteeing above all the communion of the catechesis of his community with the person of the Bishop, the particular Church and the universal Church (CIC 768).

The sacred power placed in the hands of the priest at ordination must be exercised and modelled on Christ who made himself the least of all and servant of all (Mk 10:41-45).

The priest, in his spiritual fatherhood, guides and leads to sanctification the faithful entrusted to his ministry.

The priest must not see his role reduced to a mere management position. He is the mediator, the bridge, he who is always to remember that the Lord and Master, "*came not to be served, but to serve*" (Mk 10:45), bent down to wash the feet of his disciples (Jn 13:5) before dying on the Cross.

The priest must be zealous to serve his people and to bring to them the Lord's sacramental presence and healing. Therefore he should feel

drawn to be with his people and to avoid any extended period of absence from them.

A priest assigned to a parish is responsible for the people living within the boundaries of the parish. Apart from simply human or pastoral interest, he does not follow his people beyond the territory of the parish or the diocese. He does not continue to influence them after he has left the parish but entrusts them to the care of the new pastor.

He does not interfere with projects and pastoral activities in his own village, place or former parish without the parish priest's consent.

2.11 Promoter and Minister of Unity and Co-operation

Priests, being part of the community, have a duty to work with all the pastoral ministers (sisters, brothers, seminarians, lay ministers, parish teams, parish councils and various spiritual groups or movements) avoiding acting in an independent, selfish way. He should foster a spirit of unity and cooperation among the religious and lay ministers who make up the pastoral team of the parish.

Constant effort should be made to foster unity, mutual trust, co-operation and dialogue among the various pastoral workers in the parish (PGDP 10).

The priest must be a minister of unity who brings all the people together to hear the Word of God, to celebrate the Liturgy and to work together for the good of the Christian Community.

In order to be a good guide of his People, the priest is also to be attentive to the signs of the times; from those that have to do with the universal Church, to those closest to the concrete situation of a particular community. Moreover, he will not fail to request, in the legitimate ways and taking into due consideration the skills of each person, the cooperation of the consecrated faithful and other faithful in the exercise of their activity.

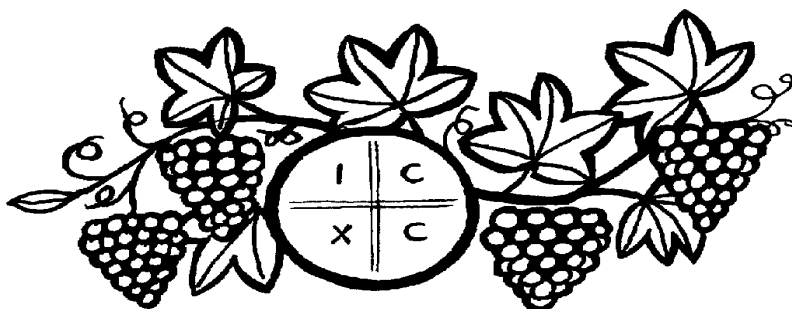
The priest is to devote special care to the initial and continuing formation of catechists, associations and movements. Insofar as possible, the priest is to be the catechist of the catechists, forming together with them a true community of the Lord serving as a point of reference for those receiving Christian instruction. The priest will have

as his main point of reference the *Bible* the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and its *Compendium*. To this end the priest should have regular (monthly) in-services with his catechists, who are among his closest collaborators in pastoral ministry.

The parish is not only the place where catechesis is given, but also the living environment, which must actualize the new evangelization, looking upon itself as being on “permanent mission”. In the parish the priests will need to summon the members of the community, consecrated persons and lay persons, to prepare them adequately and send them forth on the evangelizing mission to individuals, to families and to all the social groups located within the parish. Always remembering that the Church is “mystery of communion and mission”, pastors will bring their communities to be witnesses with their “*faith that is professed, celebrated, lived and prayed*” (*Porta fidei*, Benedict XVI, 2011), and with their enthusiasm.

He must imitate Christ so that in him Christ become “visible in the midst of the flock” entrusted to his care, creating a positive relationship between himself and the lay faithful; recognizing their dignity as children of God, he fosters their role in the Church and places at their service everything of his priestly ministry and pastoral charity (PO15).

One of the tasks that demand special attention is the formation of the laity. The priest cannot be satisfied with the laity having a superficial knowledge of the faith, but must seek to give them a solid formation, persevering in his efforts through theology lessons and courses on Christian doctrine, especially through study of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and its *Compendium*. Such formation will help the laity to carry out in full their role, which is to make this passing world come to the fullness of life in Christ. For Christ's life has something vital to offer to politics, human cultures, the economy, and the life of society (LG 31).



2.12 Celibacy and Self-discipline

"Perfect chastity for the Kingdom is not something that can be acquired once and for all at ordination, but it is a result of a daily self-discipline." "Celibacy sets the whole man on a higher level and makes an effective contribution to his perfection" (Sacerdotalis Caelibatus, Encyclical Letter on Priestly Celibacy, Paul VI, 1967).

Celibacy for the Kingdom is fundamentally a choice of a partner, namely Christ. It is a decision of a priest to find the central love of his life in the Lord. He will give primacy to a relationship with Christ.

Celibacy is also a dedication to the people; to love and care for them and to put oneself at their service.

The heart of the priest, in order that it may be available for this service, for this commitment of love, must be free. Celibacy is a sign of a freedom that exists for the sake of service.

"Priestly celibacy is a deep mystery grounded in the love of Christ, and it calls for a radical, loving, all-embracing relationship with Christ and his Body the Church (EIO 49).

Thus priests should renew every day their total dedication to Christ. To be celibate is to make the effort day by day to be publicly, and with an undivided heart, at the service of the Kingdom of God and to witness to God's love.

There cannot be a vacuum in the priest's life. If it is not filled up with God, then there is a danger that it will be filled with a substitute or distraction such as: a pet project, a business deal, politics, alcohol or other addictions, or watching videos hour after hour or spending time on the internet for long periods of time, or wasting time driving around in a car. Fasting from good things such as these, as well as from food, is a means of developing self-discipline.

Therefore a priest should pay attention to the following:

a) He should pray constantly for the gift of faithfulness to his vocation. This fidelity demands constant human effort and God's grace to be able to live in an attitude of constant alertness (1 Pt 5:8-9).

b) He should practice moderation and self-discipline, especially with regard to alcohol. True freedom cannot abide in a heart dominated

and driven by appetites and natural inclinations. It is impossible to live fully the priestly call without a spirit of self-denial. Priests are just as likely to suffer from the disease of alcoholism as anyone else. Perhaps an individual priest is not to be blamed for this addiction but he must take responsibility for getting treatment before the disease, which is chronic, progressive, and incurable, destroys him and his ministry. Priests, who show symptoms of the disease, especially becoming unpredictable when they drink, should seek treatment.

c) He should have a daily, weekly, monthly, and annual program to ensure that he is always engaged productively and not left with time on his hands. A priest is called daily to make choices among a variety of goods and values. Saying “yes” to one, means saying “no” to others. This is not easy. Therefore, daily he must be prepared to take up his cross and follow the way of the Lord.

d) He should hold women in high regard and be prudent in his relationship with them. He should carefully study and follow the protocols concerning right relationships in ministry as set by the Catholic Bishops Conference and the Federation of Religious.

e) He should also use good judgment in his relationship with children and minors. In particular, he must avoid situations that could give rise to rumors (for example, letting children enter the parish house on their own or accompanying minors in a car, etc.).

f) He should be careful in the choice of entertainment such as movies, videos, Internet, and books. Access to pornography, which corrupts the mind and soul of a person, is a particular danger in today’s world. *"For our part we avoid giving scandal to anyone, so that our ministry may not be brought into discredit"* (2 Cor 6:3).

2.13 Relationship between Ordained Priesthood and Priesthood of the Faithful

Although the ordained priesthood differs from the priesthood of the faithful in essence and not just in degree, the two are nonetheless inter-related. Each in its proper way shares in the one priesthood of Christ (LG 10).

It is important to remember that a priest is called to live out his priesthood at every moment and in all activities of his life, like prayer, study, pastoral work, rest, holiday activities, moments of joy as well as moments of suffering. The priest should keep in mind, in all circumstances, the ultimate goal of his priestly life, which is to preach the gospel, shepherd the faithful and celebrate divine worship. The priest can never take a holiday from his priesthood.

The priest's attitude toward and relationship with the laity is very important. Pope Francis emphasizes this when he says: *"Lay people are, put simply, the vast majority of the People of God. The minority – ordained ministers – are at their service. There has been a growing awareness of the identity and mission of the laity in the Church. We can count on many lay persons, although still not nearly enough, who have a deeply-rooted sense of community and great fidelity to the tasks of charity, catechesis and the celebration of the faith. At the same time, a clear awareness of this responsibility of the laity, grounded in their baptism and confirmation, does not appear in the same way in all places. In some cases, it is because lay persons have not been given the formation needed to take on important responsibilities. In others, it is because in their particular Churches room has not been made for them to speak and to act, due to an excessive clericalism, which keeps them away from decision-making. Even if many are now involved in the lay ministries, this involvement is not reflected in a greater penetration of Christian values in the social, political and economic sectors. It often remains tied to tasks within the Church, without a real commitment to applying the Gospel to the transformation of society. The formation of the laity and the evangelization of professional and intellectual life represent a significant pastoral challenge"* (EG 102).

St. Paul conceived of leadership in the Church as ordered toward fostering the spiritual growth and mission of all the baptized: *"And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ"* (Eph. 4:11-13).

Church teaching spells out in considerable detail what this would mean. Priests are to do the following:

- **Cooperate** with laity in their mission to the world.
- **Listen** to laity.
- **Recognize** lay expertise.
- **Awaken and deepen** lay co-responsibility.
- Confidently **entrust** duties to laity.
- **Invite** lay **initiative**.
- **Help** all **explore and discern vocation**.
- **Form and support** secular apostles. (PO 9)

The task of governance also requires that priests recognize, uncover with faith, acknowledge with joy, foster with diligence, appreciate, judge, discern, coordinate, put to good use, and have ‘heartfelt esteem’ for the charisms of all the baptized (LG 30).

2.14 On-going Formation

The human person is constantly developing. The need for growth in one's Christian and priestly life requires of the priest a continual ongoing formation, which involves all the dimensions of his life: physical, spiritual, intellectual, emotional and social. An ongoing holistic human formation of the priest is a necessity each individual priest should strive to fulfill.

a) Human formation. The priest is to practice goodness of heart, patience, kindness, strength of soul, love for justice, even-mindedness, fidelity to his word, and coherence with the commitments freely assumed (PO 3). In this field, ongoing formation fosters growth in the human virtues, helping priests to always live “*unity of life in the exercise of the ministry*” (PO 14). CBC Conference Pastoral Plan (“*Go tell everyone*”) promotes initiatives for strengthening the human formation of priests with such programs as the “Vangeke Institute”, as well as in-services and retreats for both junior and senior priests.

b) Spiritual formation. It is hoped that each priest, perhaps during periodical retreats, would draw up a concrete plan of personal life in consultation with his spiritual director. The following elements may be suggested:

- daily meditation on the Word or a mystery of the faith,
- daily personal encounter with Jesus in the Eucharist, in addition to devoted celebration of Mass and frequent confession,
- Marian devotion (Rosary),
- a period of doctrinal formation and study of the history of the saints,
- proper rest,
- renewed commitment to follow the Pastoral Plan,
- attention to priestly communion, friendship and fraternity.

Likewise to be deepened are other aspects such as the administration of one's time and work, and the importance of working with others.

c) Intellectual formation. The priest should dedicate time – possibly each day – to the study of articles and books on philosophy and theology. In this task the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and its *Compendium* constitute a most valuable reference instrument.

Qualified priests are encouraged to also pursue further postgraduate studies. However, there is no right to overseas study, and overseas study should not be considered routine for all priests.

d) Pastoral formation. Priests should take part in meetings, discussions, courses and seminars concerning the issues of morals and ethics, liturgy and catechesis, family life, priestly and religious vocations, youth, the elderly and sick and a variety of social issues.

The priestly vocation, even after ordination, must be considered as a process of constant determination to grow toward maturity in a full commitment to Christ. To be a disciple is to be disciplined. Formation did not come to an end at the end of the years in the seminary. On the contrary, as of the very day of his ordination, the priest must feel the need to make constant progress in order to be ever more like Christ the Lord.

Priests must be convinced of the need to continue suitable means of ongoing formation, such as organised courses, meetings for sharing experiences, and the availability of good books and articles (PGDP 32, EIO 49). Ongoing formation is a means necessary for the priest to attain the aim of his vocation, that being the service of God and his people.

3. PASTORAL DIRECTIVES:

MINISTRY AND DUTY OF PRIESTS.

"Lord help us to be generous, to serve you with gratitude, to give without asking for returns, to work without seeking rest, to be involved without reservation and help us to do always your will" (Anonymous).

3.1 Ministry of the Word.

The Second Vatican Council declares that *"the primary duty of priests is the proclamation of the Gospel to all"* (PO 4).

"The people of God are first united through the Word of the living God and are fully entitled to seek this Word from his priests" (CIC 762), because when the Gospel is proclaimed, Christ again speaks his living word (SC 7).

Therefore it is important that the homily should be about the reading of the Word of God and should be well prepared.

Homilies should not be lectures or entertainment. They should not be moralistic, doctrinaire, or overly exegetical. Rather, homilies should be brief, should put people in dialogue with God, give life and meaning, and be transformative. Priests who preach must know the hearts of the faithful and be in touch with what they need to hear. They must prepare thoughtfully and prayerfully. Homilies must draw from the Scripture text and the priest must understand its meaning, allowing it to touch his heart. The priest must use effective images to engage the assembly. Simplicity, brevity, and focus are keys as is positivity. Likewise, catechesis needs to be more focused on transforming hearts, not just on acquiring information (EG 138).

It is the responsibility of the priest to show interest and be fully involved in all aspects of catechesis for adults, children, in the religious instruction in the schools and especially in the instruction prior to the administration of the Sacraments. It is not acceptable for the priest to outsource the work of catechesis to others and then consider his work done without further involvement from himself.

The priest should ensure that those who read the word in the Liturgy of the Word are well trained and well prepared.

3.2 Ministry of the Sacraments

“Priests are the Bishop’s closest co-workers and greatest support in the work of evangelization, particularly in the parish communities entrusted to their care. They offer the Sacrifice of Christ for the needs of the community, reconcile sinners to God and to the community, strengthen the sick on their pilgrimage to eternal life, and thus enable the whole community to bear witness to the Gospel in every moment of life and death” (EIO 19).

3.2.1 The Eucharist

a) The Eucharist *“is the source and summit of the Christian life”* (EIO 40) and is central to the growth of the Church (CC PNG/SI 562, 575). Through the Eucharist, the Community is formed, lives and is nourished to maturity (LG 3, 26) and *“the work of redemption is accomplished”* (SC 2).

The priest should observe the one-hour fast in preparation for the Eucharist and encourage the people to do the same (CC PNG/SI 585).

It is hoped that the priests entrusted with the guidance of communities would dedicate long periods of time for community adoration – for example, holy hour with Benediction once a week, the days of prayer for vocations, etc. *“The Eucharist, although it is the fullness of sacramental life, is not a prize for the perfect but powerful medicine and nourishment for the weak”* (EG 47).

b) When some people or group prepares the liturgy, the priest also should be involved with them. He presides over the liturgy of the Mass.

c) The faculty to preach the homily during the celebration of the Eucharist is granted only to the priest and deacon (CIC 767).

“Preparation for preaching is so important a task that a prolonged time of study, prayer, reflection and pastoral creativity should be devoted to it” (EG 145).

“A preacher who does not prepare is not ‘spiritual; he is dishonest and irresponsible with the gifts he has received” (EG 145).

“Whoever wants to preach must be the first to let the word of God move him deeply and become incarnate in his daily life” (EG 150).

d) Only for grave reasons can the homily on Sunday be omitted (CIC 767§2).

e) Ordinarily a homily should also be given at weekday Masses (CIC 767§3). *“The same Spirit who inspired the Gospel and who acts in the Church also inspires the preacher to hear the faith of the God’s people and to find right way to preach at each Eucharist”* (EG 139).

f) Priests should acquaint themselves with the *“Homiletic Directory”* published by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, 2014.

“Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel!” (1Cor 9:16).

3.2.2 Baptism, First Communion, First Confession

“The divine life offered to us by the Spirit, through the ministry of the Church, answers the deepest longings of the human heart. Such divine life is like an immortal seed which only the Spirit can give, preserve and make it grow” (F. Giardini).

When candidates have been sufficiently prepared by a catechist or pastoral worker for the reception of the Sacraments, the role of the priest then is:

a) To make sure about the candidate’s knowledge of all the basic truths of the faith and prayers.

b) To hold at least three separate meetings of immediate preparation and instruction of the candidates on the sacraments and to give an explanation of the liturgy as well as the practice of the ceremony.

c) To hear confession for those who are to receive their First Communion, and other sacraments.

d) To give at least one instruction to the parents of children to be baptised. To enquire if the parents have a sacramental marriage in order to encourage and support them to regularise their marriage if possible, and if there is moral assurance that the child will be raised as Catholic.

In the case of adult catechumens, the RCIA should be followed as closely as possible.

The proper place of Baptism, First Communion and First Confession is the parish church, an outstation church or chapel (CIC 857).

The ordinary minister of these sacraments is the parish priest or, where appropriate, an assistant priest or deacon.

Communion Ministers.

a) The ordinary minister of the Holy Communion is the bishop, priest or deacon. When ordinary ministers are lacking and the need of the church requires it, an acolyte, or other lay person appointed for a specific time, may serve as an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion (CIC 910).

b) The extraordinary minister of Holy Communion (Communion Ministers) should be well instructed, be commissioned by the Bishop and officially installed in the parish.

c) It is recommended that Holy Communion be brought by the Communion Minister to the sick and aged in the community on every Sunday after the Mass or *Sande Lotu*. If this is not possible it should be brought at least twice a year.

d) Never, under any circumstances, should the Holy Eucharist be kept overnight in a private home, even a presbytery, unless there is an urgent pastoral need and the regulations of the bishop are observed. The Blessed Sacrament normally must be kept only in a tabernacle in a church (CIC 935). The tabernacle itself should be fixed and the key kept in a secure place.

Eucharistic hospitality may be extended to Anglicans who are not able to attend their own Anglican Eucharist (CC PNG/SI 581, DE 131, CIC 844).

Sacred Vestments Obligatory

a) In administering the Sacraments priests and deacons are to wear sacred vestments as prescribed by the rubrics.

b) All priests taking part in a public Eucharistic Celebration in the Diocese or at any gathering of priests, should be encouraged to concelebrate, unless there are good reasons not to, and be dressed in alb (or white religious cassock or habit) and stole.

3.2.3 Confirmation

The ordinary minister of the Sacrament of Confirmation is the bishop, but he can delegate to a priest (CIC 882). After a period of sufficient preparation for Confirmation by a catechist or pastoral worker the priest:

- a) Must give at least one full instruction to those to be confirmed and their sponsors, focusing on the meaning of the liturgy for Confirmation.
- b) Give all candidates the opportunity for Confession.
- c) Check baptismal information (place, record number etc.) well before the day of Confirmation. Make sure that candidates have not already received Confirmation.
- d) Arrange the date and an appropriate reception for the bishop.
- e) Enter the names in the Register immediately and send notification to the parish of Baptism for the records and files (CIC 895).

3.2.4 Sacrament of Reconciliation

a) The faculty to hear confessions of the faithful anywhere within the diocese is granted to a priest by the bishop (CIC 966). By virtue of receiving this faculty, the priest has faculties to hear confessions anywhere in the world, unless this is denied in a particular case by a local ordinary. Religious priests assigned to another diocese must apply again in the diocese of the new assignment.

b) When a priest is given the responsibility of caring for the people of a certain pastoral area, he is bound to provide the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the faithful entrusted to him on a regular basis (CIC 986). He should prepare himself well and provide the people with an opportunity to make individual confession on the day and times announced to suit both priest and people.

c) Individual confession and absolution is the ordinary way in which a Catholic receives forgiveness for serious sin. The priest may hear the confession of Anglicans to whom Eucharistic hospitality is to be extended.

- d) General absolution may be given:
- In case of serious necessity when there are not sufficient priests to hear individual confessions of a large number of penitents within a suitable time and the people would be deprived of sacramental grace and Holy Communion for a long time through no fault of their own (CIC 961).
 - To a number of penitents in danger of death with no time for individual confession.

When general absolution is given, the obligation remains to confess all serious sins in individual Confession at a later date (CIC 262, 961).

e) Community penitential celebrations should be encouraged and held especially at appropriate periods of the liturgical year to help the faithful experience the true meaning of penance and reconciliation. Penance services with or without individual confession and absolution are important for the spiritual growth of the people.

f) A priest who is conscious of a serious sin may not celebrate Mass or receive Communion without going to confession unless there is a serious reason and no immediate opportunity for confessing. The obligation remains to go to confession as soon as possible.

g) A priest may not absolve the serious sin of someone with whom he has joined to commit a serious sin, except in danger of death. Absolution of an accomplice in a serious sin against the sixth commandment is invalid (CIC 977) and the priest receives automatic excommunication reserved to the Apostolic See (CIC 1378).

h) Along with the Sacrament of Reconciliation the priest should not fail to exercise the ministry of *spiritual direction*.

3.2.5 Marriage

Priests are to ensure that their own Church community assists, by various means, those intending to get married and also assists those who are already married (CIC 1063). This can be done by:

- a) Preaching and teaching about Christian marriage.
- b) Providing personal preparation for those entering marriage.
- c) Fruitfully celebrating the marriage liturgy.
- d) Helping those who are already married.

Since it is clear Church teaching that marriage is made by the consent of the couple getting married, the priest must seek some assurance that a couple have arrived at a true consent before agreeing to a marriage ceremony (CIC 1057). This is important, because without true mutual consent there is no valid marriage. See also Catholic-Lutheran agreement on marriage.

By diligently filling in the appropriate pre-nuptial enquiry forms the priest can determine whether any dispensations are required, whether or not any impediments to the marriage exist, and whether or not the marriage can be recognized by civil law (CIC 1066).

Where appropriate, the priest sees to it that those about to be married have the opportunity for confession and that the marriage is celebrated together with the Eucharist. When marriage is celebrated without the Eucharist the priest should ensure that it is celebrated in a formal and respected manner.

Courses of marriage instruction can be given by various trained and competent people, especially a “core couple”. The role of the priest is:

- a) To fill out the marriage inquiry sheet personally with attention given to freedom to marry and to the record of baptism (CIC 1066-7).
- b) To obtain or grant any necessary dispensations (disparity of cult or mixed religion).
- c) Where appropriate, to establish that *bride price* has been given and that local customs have been followed (CC PNG/SI 729).
- d) To give at least one full instruction before the marriage, focusing on the significance of the liturgical ceremony (CIC 1063).
- e) To give opportunity for confession (CIC 1065).
- f) To celebrate the Mass of Christian marriage for Catholics (CIC 1065, CC PNG/SI 738).
- g) To enter the marriage into the parish marriage and baptism books and notify the parishes of baptism about the marriage (CIC 1121-2).

It could be opportune to postpone the marriage rather than have the people receive the sacraments without the active involvement of the

priest in their preparation. He must first ensure that the couple are fully aware of the meaning, purpose and obligations of Christian marriage.

The priest should make sure that he returns any request for freedom to marry and baptism information as soon as possible to the requesting parish.

3.2.6 Anointing of the Sick

a) All priests who are entrusted with the care of souls have the duty to administer the sacrament of the anointing of the sick (CIC 1003). The people should see that the priest is readily available to administer the sacrament when requested.

b) A community celebration of the anointing of the sick for several persons together should be encouraged and practised where possible with participation of their families and the whole community (CC PNG/SI 666).

c) The parish priest should be especially diligent in visiting the sick and dying (CIC 529).

4. COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN THE SACRAMENTS

"The priest or deacon must use every opportunity to evangelise and catechise, whether it be at the time of Baptism, a small group meeting, marriage preparation, or homily. Parish renewal comes about only through hard work, committed prayer, and belief in a power greater than one's own" (Marc Montininy, New Evangelization, 235).

4.1 The administration of the sacraments is not simply a private affair between the priest and the recipient.

4.2 It is essential that the community is involved and takes part in assisting in the preparation of candidates and of the liturgy, etc., so that it becomes a celebration of the whole community.

"The Church must be a place of mercy freely given, where everyone can feel welcomed, loved, forgiven and encouraged to live the good life of the Gospel" (EG 114).

5. EXCLUSION FROM THE SACRAMENTS

5.1 Those upon whom the penalty of excommunication has been imposed and those who obstinately persist in serious sin or scandal are not to be admitted to Holy Communion (CIC 915).

5.2 With regard to those who have recourse to civil *divorce* and contract new civil unions, the priest must follow the guidelines given in the Universal Catechism (CCC 1650).

5.3 In Apostolic Exhortation “*Familiaris Consortio*”, Pope John Paul II draws attention to the difficult situation of the divorced and remarried people. Priests and pastors should be aware of church teaching on the matter and also be aware that different cases may need to be evaluated individually as Pope John Paul II himself indicated (FC 84).

With regard of Catholics married in Church, husbands who have taken second wives are not permitted to receive Communion. The second wife is also not permitted to receive the Eucharist. The wife of a man who takes a second wife is allowed to receive Communion so long as she has not agreed to the polygamous marriage and has not assisted her husband in it. For her this situation can be rectified by going to Confession and receiving absolution. The confessor is to impose a salutary and appropriate penance, which has to be fulfilled.

Older people might consider “*wok bilong marit i pinis*” and ask for the sacraments. Husband and second wife can promise in front of the community to live as brother and sister and be readmitted to the sacraments.

5.4 Couples who have not entered a sacramental marriage may not receive Communion so long as they live in this situation. This is especially true in cases where the couple already have children and the *bride price* has been paid, or where the couple are not making any move to comply with the local marriage customs or church law.

5.5 The situation of young people who sleep together without being married is against the tradition of the ancestors and of the Church. They cannot be admitted to Holy Communion without repentance and confession.

These pastoral policies regarding marriage require serious effort on the part of the priest to help couples understand the sinful exploitative aspect of such a transitory sexual relationship. At the same time the very positive value of Christian Marriage must be stressed, namely that it is an intimate partnership of life and conjugal love.

5.6 The PNG/SI bishops have approved guidelines to discern when one may or may not give communion to an Anglican in PNG. See *Guidelines for Discerning When Anglicans in PNG Can Receive Communion at a Catholic Mass* (Approved at the 2014 PNGSI CBC AGM).



6. CONFERENCE PASTORAL PLAN **and the DIOCESAN PASTORAL PLAN**

Priests should study the Conference Pastoral Plan together with Diocesan Pastoral Plan and become very familiar with them. It is the duty of the priest to see to it that the diocesan pastoral plan is implemented in his pastoral area. He is to work in cooperation with the parish staff and the pastoral team of the pastoral area in carrying this out. The Conference and Diocesan Pastoral Plan requires good leadership from the pastor of the parish and the priest in charge of a pastoral area. One of his most important tasks is to lead and unify the parish staff and the pastoral team in a common effort to care for the people of the parish or pastoral area. Therefore the pastor or priest in charge of a pastoral area should:

a) Call regular meetings, at which pastoral concerns are discussed and plans are made for the pastoral care of the people.

b) See to it that pastoral teams of the various churches under his care are established, functioning well and are continually being formed through regular in-services.

c) Remember that, although he himself cannot attend every meeting of every pastoral team, he is a member, indeed the leader and unifier of all the pastoral teams and that he should take that role seriously by attending their meetings from time to time, praying with them and bringing them together as a team.

d) Share his pastoral ideas, plans and concerns openly and in a spirit of cooperation with his co-workers at the parish, deanery and diocesan level.

e) See to it that all the pastoral workers in the parish or pastoral area, both full-time and part-time, work together in a spirit of cooperation and peace to carry out the Conference and Diocesan Pastoral Plan.



7. GENERAL DIRECTIVES.

"The Lord has inspired in me a great desire for holiness. I've been thinking how far a soul can ascend if it lets itself be possessed entirely by God. It is a shame to waste such precious time and such valuable gift" (Archbishop Romero, Diary).

7.1 Keeping Parish Records and Files Updated

After the administration of the sacraments of Baptism, Marriage or Confirmation:

a) The pastor shall carefully and without delay enter the names and details of those who received the sacraments into proper parish books and parishioner files (CIC 877, 875, 895, 1121, 1122).

b) The pastor should closely supervise the entering of records if he does not do it personally. He should see to it that records are entered as soon as possible after the celebration of the sacraments.

c) He should see to it that the registry books of Baptism, Confirmation and Marriage are kept updated and are presented to the Bishop without him asking for them on the occasion of his visitation.

d) Copies of the annual reports and statistics (Prospectus) should be forwarded to the Diocesan office in January every year.

e) The statutes, pastoral letters of the bishops and minutes of various diocesan meetings should be kept in proper files.

7.2 Absence from the Diocese

Priests assigned to the diocese should not leave the Diocese for longer than a few days without the knowledge and, in some cases, the permission of the Bishop (CIC 283).

7.3 Absence from the Parish and Local Leave

Each priest is entitled to a vacation (local leave) each year, two weeks for expatriate missionaries (one Sunday) and three weeks for national priests (two Sundays). The priest should not normally be absent from his pastoral area for more than two consecutive Sundays. *"For an absence from the parish of more than a week, the parish priest is bound to advise the local Ordinary"* (CIC 533§2). The annual retreat of at least 5 full days is not included as part of the local leave.

7.4 Rules Concerning Diocesan Property

The priest should be aware that the goods of the parish belong to the church or diocese and are not his own. He should see to it that they are administered in accordance with canon 1284 of CIC and the diocesan policies regarding church property. All funds, including offerings at Mass, must be duly acquitted to the source of the funds.

The following are considered diocesan property:

- a) Money or goods which are received by the priest from an aid organisation to promote mission work or development.
- b) Money or goods which are received from benefactors, unless the gift is explicitly designated as personal by the benefactor.
- c) Money or goods which are received from local Christians in the form of collections at liturgical celebrations.
- d) Vehicles, furniture, equipment, tools and other things of the parish which are given to a priest to use when he is assigned to a parish or pastoral area.

Property belonging to the diocese may not be sold, given as a gift or donation or transferred from one parish to another without the permission of the bishop. In some cases the bishop will seek the advice of his consultors concerning the sale or transfer of diocesan property.

The permission of the bishop is required beforehand for acquisition of machinery, cars, generators and other valuable equipment etc., even if they are offered as a gift. Normally, permission or request for machinery, equipment and other expensive items for the parish should be submitted to the bishop and his consultors for approval.

A priest should never involve his relatives and *wantoks* in the administration of church property (PGDP 28).

The priest is to make an inventory of the property of the parish and keep it up to date.



7.5 Rules Concerning Mass Intentions and Offerings

7.5.1 Missa pro Populo (Mass for the faithful):

a) *“The parish priest is bound on each Sunday and holy day of obligation in his diocese to apply the Mass for the people entrusted to him. If he is lawfully impeded from this celebration, he is to have someone else apply the Mass on these days or apply it himself on other days”* (CIC 534§1) *“Parish priest who has the care of several parishes is bound to apply only one Mass for all the people entrusted to him”*(CIC 534§2).

b) It is important that the priest be present on Sunday among his people to celebrate Mass with and for them.

7.5.2 Mass Stipends

a) In accordance with the approved Church custom, priests may accept an offering to celebrate Mass for a certain intention (CIC 945§1, CC PNG/SI 852). These Masses are said only after receiving the intention. In no way is this a form of remuneration, since the Eucharistic Sacrifice is absolutely gratuitous. *“Urged by their religious and ecclesial sense, the faithful, with a view to a more active participation in the Eucharistic celebration, wish to add their personal offering, thereby contributing to the needs of the Church and in particular to the support of her ministers”* (Paul VI, *Motu Proprio Firma in Traditione*, 1974). The offering for the celebration of Holy Masses is to be considered ‘an excellent form’ of almsgiving.

b) Once offerings are accepted by a priest for Masses for specific intentions, he must celebrate separate Masses for the intention of those who gave the individual offerings, unless an alternative method is approved (CIC 948).

c) If the priest loses the offering for a Mass intention he is still bound in conscience to fulfil his obligation and celebrate the Mass (CIC 949).

d) Every priest should keep a written record of the Mass stipend received and the date he celebrated the Mass.

7.5.3 Number of Masses

A priest who celebrates a number of Masses on the same day may keep for himself only one offering for one Mass. The offering for the other Masses (“binations”) must be transferred to the purpose prescribed by the ordinary (CIC 951). It is recommended that these extra offerings be allocated for seminary training.

7.5.4 Special Occasions

The priest should make a prudent and unselfish judgement of the intention of the donor when offerings are made for the celebration of sacraments, feast days, or funerals (stole fees). He may keep the offerings for himself if this is clearly intended, or set the offering aside as a contribution to the parish. Sacraments are free. The priest should never ask the people for personal gift of money on special occasions and important feast days as a kind of payment for his services.

7.6 Respects for Liturgical Norms

“The ordering and guidance of the sacred liturgy depends solely upon the authority of the Church, namely, that of the Apostolic See and, as provided by law, that of the diocesan Bishop” (CIC 838). The priest, therefore, may not add, remove, or change anything in the liturgy on his own initiative. This is especially true for the celebration of the sacraments, which are acts of Christ and the Church, and which the priest administers in the person of Christ the Head and in the name of the Church for the good of the faithful (SC 22).

7.7 First and New Appointments

a) In the first year(s) after ordination, and especially at one’s first appointment, a young priest should be supervised by one of the experienced priests.

b) It is not acceptable that a priest be asked to take up a new position without adequate preparation. When there is a transfer of a priest from one parish to another there should be a careful handover-takeover period so that the priest taking over the new assignment is well prepared to meet the responsibilities of his new position. The diocese should have structures for this. The outgoing priest should leave the presbytery as soon as possible.

8. SPECIAL DIRECTIVES

8.1 Use of Alcohol and Drugs / Sexual Abuse

The priest is a public, religious figure in the community. People expect him to conduct himself in a way that is proper for a person in his position. He should reflect often on his public behaviour and accept advice and criticism as he goes about his work in the apostolate and as he spends his free time for personal concerns and recreation.

Alcohol and drug abuse are serious and growing problems in PNG. The priest soon discovers that many pastoral problems like dysfunctional marriage and family breakdown, alienation of the youth, disorder and fighting in the community and other social problems are related to alcohol and substance abuse.

The priest must not become a part of the problem of alcohol and drug abuse. Rather he should be aware of the serious problems associated with them and be a good example for the people to follow. For this reason he should abstain from or limit his consumption of alcohol, avoid giving scandal and practice prudence as to when, where and with whom he consumes alcohol.

He should never buy black market alcohol; especially where/when there is a ban on alcohol since such conduct is a scandal to Catholic people and a source of criticism by the members of other denominations.

Because of the harm that can be done to the Church by such behaviour, a priest who is drunk in public could legitimately be suspended from priestly ministry. He might then be re-instated only after he has dealt with his problem by undergoing a program of rehabilitation. He must also repair the scandal by good conduct in the future.

The diocese will do everything possible to assist and support the priest as he deals with his problems of alcohol/drug abuse.

Under no circumstances should a priest ever use dangerous and illegal drugs such as marijuana etc.

Priests must avoid any sexual abuse or misconduct, keeping in mind his own commitment to the Lord. They should be aware of the scandal and harm done to individuals and the community by sexual abuse of

children. Priests should be aware of the advice and sanctions contained in our Right Relations Protocol and Child Protection Policy.

If a priest fathers a child, he is obliged to care for the child and the mother. He will be advised to seek a dispensation to leave the priesthood. If the offense is repeated, he will be dismissed.

The sexual abuse of a minor is a particularly serious crime, which should be reported to civil authorities. It must also be reported to Church authorities at the highest level. This sin and crime ordinarily requires dismissal from the clerical state.

8.2 Public Office.

8.2.1 Canon Law forbids priests to run for elective office or assume a public office. Priests are not allowed to play an active role in political parties (CIC 285§3).

The priest must remember, *“it is not the role of the Pastors of the Church to intervene directly in the political structuring and organization of social life. This task is part of the vocation of the lay faithful, acting on their own initiative with their fellow citizens”* (CCC 2442).

8.2.2 The CBC of PNG/SI has decided that any priest who runs for public office will be immediately suspended from his public ministry as soon as he nominates for election. The suspension will continue for at least two years from the time when he finally repents of his mistake and permanently gives up the intention of running for public office.

8.3 Businesses or Trade

Priests are forbidden to conduct business or trade either personally or through another for their own or another's benefit, except with the permission of the bishop (CIC 286).

Priests are also forbidden to give loans or advances from church or parish funds. They are not allowed to give away or lend diocesan or parish property (cars, etc.) to outsiders. They may not open an account for church funds without the approval of the bishop.

Breath on me, Spirit of God, that I may think what is holy.

Drive me, Spirit of God, that I may do what is holy.

Strengthen me, Spirit of God, that I may preserve what is holy.

Guide me, Spirit of God, that I may never lose what is holy.

(St. Augustine)

