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(10/11/2022)

PRIEST HANDBOOK

**Policies, Faculties, Norms
Ministry and Life of the Presbyterate
Catholic Diocese of Penang**

Prepared By:
PENINSULAR MALAYSIA ECCLESIASTICAL TRIBUNAL
PENANG OFFICE
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DECREE OF PROMULGATION



The Rt. Rev. Sebastian Francis, Bishop of the Diocese of Penang, hereby promulgate the accompanying priestly norms and faculties which are contained in the “**Diocese of Penang - Priest Handbook**”. dated this year of **August 4th, 2022**

The Priest Handbook shall be a guide to the priest in the ministries and activities of the Diocese of Penang and are to take effect immediately. These policies, faculties, norms, and procedures are meant to provide the priest in the Diocese of Penang clarity and confirmation, for the good order of the local church and its fidelity to the Gospel of our Lord Jesus.

Given at the Diocese of Penang, Georgetown on August 4th, 2022

“Feast of St. John Mary Vianney”

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Rt. Rev. Sebastian Francis, DD

Bishop of Penang

FOREWORD



My Dear Rev. Fathers,

I am happy to present this “**Diocese of Penang - Priest Handbook**” for the Priests of the Diocese of Penang. This revision and updated version from the earlier ‘*Pastoral Directory for the Priest of the Catholic Dioceses of Peninsular Malaysia (1989)*’ is to assist priest to have a broader understanding of the policies, norms regarding priestly life, priestly ministry, parish personnel, celebration of the Word and sacraments, administration, pastoral visitation, and procedures relating to pastoral matters in the Parish.

The introduction to this Priest Handbook explains the nature and mission of the Church and the role of the Bishop and priests in realizing this mission and in bringing clarity and understanding to the priest. The Diocese of Penang will support its priest in their ongoing human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral formation.

With this Priest Handbook it is my ardent hope that it will be helpful in the ongoing formation by the presbyterate to bring about better ministerial effectiveness. As we move forward as Missionary Disciples, may we all be guided by the ever-present Grace of the Holy Spirit. May the same Holy Spirit continue to bless you in your faithful ministry to GOD’s people.

We also give thanks and acknowledgement to the works done in the 1989, ‘Pastoral Directory for the Clergy of the Catholic Dioceses of Peninsular Malaysia’ issued by the Bishops of Peninsular Malaysia to which this Priest Handbook is a revision an updated version suitable for the present age.

‘Be Disciples of Hope’

Sincerely in Christ

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Rt. Rev. Sebastian Francis
Bishop of Penang

CONTENT

A. INTRODUCTION

- A1 Human Societies before Christ
- A2 The Church: An independent and self-governing society
- A3 The Church: A unique society
- A4 The Church: A mystery
- A5 Mission of Christ
- A6 Mission of Apostles
- A7 Mission of Bishops
- A8 Priests: Participants of the one Priesthood of Christ
- A9 Priests: Co-operators of the Episcopal Order

B. FRATERNITY

- B1 Bishops and Diocesan Priests
- B2 Duty of Priests to Bishops
- B3 Priests among themselves
- B4 Priests and Religious
- B5 Priests and Laity
- B6 Civil Authorities

C. PRIESTLY LIFE

C1 Introduction

SPIRITUAL LIFE

(i) Obligations

C2 To Seek Holiness

C3 To Nourish Spiritual Life

C4 To Pray Daily

C5 To Approach Penance Frequently

C6 Annual Retreat

C7 Monthly Recollection

C8 Regular Spiritual Direction and Confession

C9 Celibacy

C10 To Act Prudently

C11 Reverence and Obedience

C12 Remembering the Dead

C13 Objectionable Association

(ii) Means to Spiritual Perfection

C14 Union with Other Priests

C15 Community Life

C16 Simplicity of Life

C17 Mental Prayer

C18 Devotion to Mary

C19 Spirit of Sharing

INTELLECTUAL LIFE

C20 On-Going Formations

C21 Study Programs

C22 Retreat

MATERIAL LIFE

(i) Temporal Provisions

C23 Introduction

C24 Diocesan Responsibility

C25 Parish Responsibility

C26 Allowances

C27 Free Will Gift

C28 Financial Assistance

C29 Vehicle

(ii) Bodily Health

C30 Self-care

C31 Medical Check-up

C32 Insurance and Hospitalization Benefit

(iii) Vacation

C33 Annual Leave

C34 Holiday Allowance

(iv) Last Will and Testament

C35 Preparation of Will

D. PRIESTLY MINISTRY

D1 Introduction

(i) Priestly Rights

D2 Power of Orders

D3 Associations

(ii) Priestly Obligations

D4 Spiritual Perfection

D5 Ministry of the Word

D6 Ministry of the Sacraments

D7 To honour & respect

D8 Assignments

D9 Absence

D10 Associations

D11 Attire

D12 Unbecoming to Priestly State

D13 Public Office

D14 Proprietorship and Guarantors

D15 Conducting Business

D16 Political Factions

D17 Military Service

E. PARISH AND PRIESTS

(i) Parish

E1 Parish integral with the Diocese

(ii) Priests

E2 Parish Priest

E3 Parish Administrator

E4 Assistant Parish Priests

E5 Rectors

E6 Deacons

E7 Priest Residence

E8 Priest in Residence

E9 Special Assignment

E10 Assignment Outside the Diocese

E11 On Leave

F. PRIEST RETIREMENT

F1 Introduction

F2 Retirement Age and Legal Instruments

F3 Role of the Retired Priest

F4 Living Arrangements upon Retirement

F5 Retirement Benefits

G. ADMINISTRATION

1. Matters relating to Diocesan Priests

G1 Parish Priest's Personal Bank Account

2. Matters relating to Parishes

(i) Pastoral Administration

G2 Collaboration with the Bishop and Priest (Can 519)

G3 Peace and Harmony

(ii) Parish Administration

G4 Use of Parish Premises

G5 Administrative Transactions

G6 Alteration of Parish Boundaries

G7 Accurate Records

G8 Parish Seal

G9 Baptism and Marriage Records to be kept in the Diocesan Secretariat

G10 Annual Parish Reports

G11 Holy Oils

(iii) Financial Administration

G12 Fund Raising

G13 Parish Bank Account

G14 Priest on Transfer

- G15 Church Properties
- G16 Works of Maintenance
- G17 Parish Projects
- G18 Diocesan Extension Fund

APPENDICES ON BISHOP'S DIRECTIVES

- Appendix 1 - Dated 11/02/2013 on Holy Communion, Liturgical Ministries
- Appendix 2 - Dated 14/02/2013 on Basic Ecclesial Communities (BEC)
- Appendix 3 - Dated 21/02/2013 on Finance
- Appendix 4 - Dated 01/07/2013 on Altar Servers, Liturgical Ministries
- Appendix 5 - Dated 02/04/2014 on Finance
- Appendix 6 - No. 1/2015 on Matrimony
- Appendix 7 - Dated 18/07/2016 on Matrimony
- Appendix 8 - Dated 18/10/2016 on Mass Intentions & Priest Allowance
- Appendix 9 - Dated 19/10/2016 on Catechetics
- Appendix 10 - Dated 15/02/2017 on Catechetics `

A. INTRODUCTION

The promulgation of the “Diocese of Penang - Priest Handbook” is for the priests of the Penang Diocese to grow in holiness, appreciative of their vocation and to live out their priestly ministry according to canonical norms and teaching of the magisterium. This local legislation incorporates and complements the canonical norms. This priest handbook will provide consistency in the working and functional order of the priest in the Diocese of Penang.

The Priest Handbook is intended as a guide and norm for priest in his sacramental dedication to the fulfillment of sacred functions union in the Diocese of Penang. The handbook is not about the laity or the permanent deacons. This work is mainly about the priests in the Diocese of Penang. However, there will be some mentioning of the transitional and permanent deacons in this work. Therefore, the permanent deacons will have their own handbook to deal with spiritual and material affairs of their lives.

The collaborative relationship with the Bishop and with other members of the Presbyterium and Diaconate further exemplifies the ecclesial reality of the sacred orders they have received. The policies and procedures in this handbook will enable and sanction the Diocesan Bishop in the exercise of his canonical and pastoral responsibilities throughout the Diocese of Penang.

Each section of the handbook puts forth an introduction for the preceding policies and procedures that pertain specifically to the life and ministry of priest, the diocesan and parochial administrative policies affecting the clergy in their particular role or assignment.

This work highlights certain rights and privileges and obligations that are rightful to the clergy. The so-called positive obligations of the clerics are fostered through this work. There are a number of practical dimensions in the life and ministry of a priest:

- a. His relationship with God
- b. His relationship with Bishop
- c. His pastoral ministry
- d. His Spiritual and temporal dimensions

This work is a compass for the priests in the diocese. However, this handbook is not an end in itself. Therefore, this work has to go through regular updates in line with the latest canonical norms. At the end of the day, nothing is more important than to remember that the canonical equity, that is the salvation of souls. Juridical norms have no place in the Church, if it is not related to Jesus Christ as the primary focus, followed by spiritual and pastoral dimension.

A1 Human Societies before Christ¹

Men need the company of their fellow brothers and God has willed that those men, living in society, should give witness of ecclesial communion through living together in brotherhood. Men are called to attain their common destiny, God himself, not as separate units, but as a people.

Man is a social being by nature and is a composite of the material and the spiritual. Clearly, he can only develop and society itself can only progress when the social order caters to man's material and spiritual needs. Therefore, every human society man had formed on earth was ordered for man's religious and material good. However, even in the time of Christ there were tensions between man's religious needs and the demands of civil authority in every human society. Civil life came to be regarded as most important and the material needs of man considered as all-important. This resulted in the neglect of man's spiritual and immortal soul – the distinguishing feature which makes him like God and master of all earthly creatures.

A2 The Church: An independent and self-governing society²

For this reason, Jesus Christ, when founding his Church as a society, separated the religious concerns of man from the State, and transferred them to the Church. The Church was made independent of the State, to function as a self-governing society. For this reason, he said, "Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's."³

Christ founded his Church as an independent, self-governing society. He gave full power to his Apostles and their successors to teach, sanctify and rule. He entrusted them with the power to make laws, to judge and to punish. This power was so complete that it cannot be limited by reason of territory⁴, persons⁵, matter⁶ and time⁷. He made it quite clear that such a

¹ Pastoral Directory for the clergy of the Catholic Dioceses of Peninsular Malaysia, 1989, pg.1

² Pastoral Directory, 1989, pg.2

³ Mt. 22:21

⁴ Mk. 16:16

⁵ *Ibid*, Mt. 28:19

⁶ Mt. 28:20

⁷ *Ibid*

power could not be limited by any human authority when he said, “Whatever you bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven: whatever you loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.”⁸

A3 The Church: A unique society⁹

In a way the Church is like any other society, in that she is made up of human beings who are members of the earthly city. She is in the world, lives and acts in it. To fulfil her mission, she needs help from the talents and industry of individuals and from society as a whole. She is also equipped with what is suitable for her as a visible and social unity.

Yet the Church is not quite the same as a civil society. The purpose of her existence is unique: she is in the world to carry forward the work of Christ Himself – the salvation of all; to make God the Father and his Incarnate Son present and, in a sense, visible; to communicate divine life to all. The Church is not moved to action by earthly ambition but by a zeal to give witness to the truth. Her purpose is not to sit in judgement but to rescue, and not to be served but to serve. The Church as a society therefore has to use supernatural and spiritual means to fulfil her mission.

A4 The Church: A mystery

It is in this point that the Church goes beyond human understanding. It is both a visible assembly and also a spiritual community. It lives in the world yet is not of the world. It is set apart from the civil order, and yet not separated. It is zealous in action and yet dedicated to contemplation; present in the world but as a pilgrim, conforming to proper laws but only in order to bring them into harmony with the spiritual order. The Church accepts the imperfections of the world, yet tries to perfect it. She undergoes the same experience as other men but in it and through it expresses the newness of the life in Christ. The Church therefore is not merely a society but a mystery.

The Church is called the Mystical Body of Christ because like Christ himself, she is both divine and human. The human always looks to the

⁸ Mt. 16:19, 18:18

⁹ Pastoral Directory, 1989, pg.3

divine and is subordinated to it. In all her life she looks not towards the earthly city but to the Kingdom of God for her laws and the inspiration to action. We know about this mystery of the Church only because it has been revealed to us. We cannot come to a full knowledge of the truth about her, but only strive to understand more deeply her nature and penetrate it in order to share it more intimately. So, as a mystery, the Church cannot be defined but only described. Scripture gives us various images to help us understand better the nature of the Church. Four groups of such images come especially to mind: the Church as the Flock of Christ, the Vineyard of God, the Temple of the Holy Spirit and the Spouse of the Immaculate Lamb.¹⁰

The Church is the **FLOCK** of which God himself foretold that he would be the shepherd.¹¹ She is also a sheepfold whose only door is Christ.¹²

The Church is the **VINEYARD** of God.¹³ It is like a piece of land cultivated by Him and the True Vine is Christ who gives life to his branches.¹⁴

She is the **TEMPLE** of the Holy Spirit¹⁵ of which Christ is the corner stone.¹⁶

The Church is the **SPOUSE** of the Spotless Lamb¹⁷, for he loved her so much so as to give himself up for her. He has created an unbreakable union with her and he has filled her with heavenly gifts.

These images supplement one another and illuminate Christ's relationship with his Church. There are other metaphors which attempt to throw light on the nature of the Church. She is our Mother, since she brings to birth children to a new, immortal life, conceived by the Holy Spirit. The Church is called the Community of the Faithful as she is composed of all those who have received Christ in faith and love and are united among themselves in love and are united among themselves in love and mutual service. The Church is the new Israel, the new People of God

¹⁰ LG No.6

¹¹ Is. 40:11, Ez. 34:11

¹² Jn. 10:1-10

¹³ Mt. 21:33-43

¹⁴ Jn. 15:1-17

¹⁵ 1 Cor 3:12

¹⁶ Mt. 21:42, Acts 4:11, 1 Pet. 2:7

¹⁷ Rev. 19:7, 21:2-9, 22:17

according to God's Sacrament because she is a sign of salvation witnessing to Christ's saving mission.¹⁸

A5 Mission of Christ¹⁹

The Father sent Christ into the world to teach, to sanctify and to rule according to His will. This mission did not end with his ascension into heaven, but continues in the Church. From the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the Lord Jesus lives in the Church in such a way that she lives by Him. Continually present to the Church, he will shepherd his flock until the Day of Judgment when he will separate the sheep from the goats.²⁰

A6 Mission of Apostles²¹

Just as he was sent by the Father, Christ sent his Apostles²² to glorify the Father on earth and enrol new members into the Church, the Body of Christ. The mission will last till the end of the world²³. Thus, the Apostles appointed successors and passed on to them the duty of perfecting the work begun by themselves. This arrangement for appointing successors was to continue through the ages.

A7 Mission of Bishops²⁴

Amongst those various offices which have been exercised in the Church from the earliest times, the chief place, according to the witness of tradition, is held by the function of those who, through their appointment to the dignity and responsibility of a Bishop, and in virtue consequently of the unbroken succession going back to the beginning, are regarded as transmitters of the apostolic line. Thus, according to the testimony of St Irenaeus, the apostolic tradition is manifested and preserved in the whole

¹⁸ LG No. 11

¹⁹ Pastoral Directory, 1989, pg. 6

²⁰ Mt. 25:31 ff

²¹ Pastoral Directory, 1989, pg.7

²² Jn. 20:21

²³ Mt. 28:20

²⁴ Pastoral Directory, 1989, pg.7-9

world by those who were made Bishops by the Apostles and sent by their successors down to our own time.²⁵

The Roman Pontiff, as the successor of Peter, is the source and foundation of the unity of the Bishops and among the faithful. The individual Bishop, however, is the visible principle and foundation of unity in his particular church, fashioned after the model of the universal Church. The universal Church is made up of the sum of these particular churches. Thus, each Bishop represents a particular church, but all of them together in union with the Pope, represent the entire Church in the bond of peace, love and unity.

Bishops are to regard their priests as brothers and friends. They are to take the greatest interest in their welfare both temporal and spiritual. On their shoulders, particularly falls the burden of sanctifying their priests.²⁶

A8 Priests: Participants of the one Priesthood of Christ²⁷

Christ whom the Father hallowed and sent into the world²⁸ has, through his apostles, made their successors, namely the bishops, sharers in his consecration and mission; and these, in their turn, duly entrust in varying degrees, to various members of the Church the exercise of their ministry. Thus, the divinely instituted ecclesiastical ministry is exercised on different degrees by those who even from ancient times have been called bishops, priests, and deacons.²⁹

A9 Priests: Co-operators of the Episcopal Order³⁰

All priests, whether diocesan or religious, share and exercise with the bishop the one priesthood of Christ. They are thus constituted providential co-operators of this episcopal order. The diocesan priest have, however,

²⁵ LG No.20

²⁶ CD No.28, PO No.7

²⁷ Pastoral Directory, 1989, pg.8

²⁸ Jn. 10:36

²⁹ LG No.28

³⁰ Pastoral Directory, 1989, pg.9

a primary role in the care of souls... and accordingly from one body and one family of which the bishop is the father.³¹

³¹ CD No.28

B. FRATERNITY

B1 Bishops and Diocesan Priests³²

The relations between the bishop and the diocesan priest should be based before all else on supernatural charity, so that their unity of purpose will make their pastoral activity even more effective.³³

B2 Duty of Priests to Bishops³⁴

Priests for their part should keep in mind the fullness of the sacrament of Order which bishops enjoy and should reverence in their persons the authority of Christ, the supreme Pastor. They should therefore be attached to their bishop with sincere charity and obedience... inspired by the spirit of cooperation. There is all the more need in our day for union of priests with their bishops and carry out their mission by joining forces with other priests under the leadership of those who are rulers of the Church.³⁵

B3 Priests among Themselves³⁶ Can. 275§1

Diocesan priests should be united among themselves and should be genuinely zealous for the spiritual welfare of the whole diocese. They should bear in mind that the worldly goods which they acquire through their ecclesiastical functions are closely connected with their sacred office, and they shall therefore contribute liberally to the material needs of the diocese in accordance with the Bishop's directives.³⁷

Older priests should sincerely accept the younger priests as brothers and be a help to them in facing the first tasks and responsibilities of the ministry. They should make an effort also to understand their outlook even though it may be different from their own, and should give kindly encouragement to their projects. Young priests for their part are to respect

³² Pastoral Directory, 1989, pg.9

³³ CD No.28

³⁴ Pastoral Directory, 1989, pg. 10

³⁵ PO No.7

³⁶ Pastoral Directory, 1989, pg.11-12

³⁷ CD No.28

the age and experience of the elders; they ought to consult with them on matters concerning the care of souls and willingly cooperate with them.³⁸

B4 Priests and Religious³⁹

Religious, on their part, must give witness that they effectively and willingly belong to the diocesan family.⁴⁰ They will do this not only by being available for the needs of the local church according to the charism of their institute⁴¹, but even more so by sharing their spiritual experience with the diocesan priests and by facilitating prayer groups for the faithful.

There is, furthermore, a particularly important matter which deserves to be mentioned today: that of the close relation between the religious institutes and the priest regarding the contemplative dimension that every dedicated life to the Lord must have as its fundamental element. Diocesan priests need to draw from contemplation, strength and support for their apostolate. As in the past, they must normally seek help from experienced religious and from monasteries that should be ready to receive them for spiritual exercises and for periods of meditation and renewal. Besides, their participation in prayer exercises promoted by the local church could contribute to the growth and enrichment of the spiritual life of the whole Christian community⁴².

B5 Priests and Laity⁴³ cf Can. 295§2

Priests should acknowledge and promote the dignity of the laity and the role which is proper to them in the mission of the Church. They should listen to the laity willingly, consider their wishes in a fraternal spirit and recognize their experiences and competence in the difficult areas of human activity. Priests should also entrust the laity with duties in the service of the Church, allowing them freedom and room for action. They could invite them to undertake works on their own initiative.⁴⁴ In a word,

³⁸ PO No.8

³⁹ Pastoral Directory, 1989, pg.12-13

⁴⁰ cf CD 24

⁴¹ cf CD 35

⁴² The Contemplative Dimension of Religious Life, no.24-25

⁴³ Pastoral Directory, 1989, pg.13-14

⁴⁴ PO No.9

priests should admit, observe and try to put into practice those things which they can do regarding the state of the faithful in the Church, about their dignity, rights and duties, as also their relationship to the hierarchy.

B6 Civil Authorities⁴⁵

The needs of the pastoral ministry and for the common good of the earthly city demand that priests have contact directly or indirectly with those who govern the state or who direct political, socio-economic, or military affairs and people in similar positions.

⁴⁵ Pastoral Directory, 1989, pg.14

C. PRIESTLY LIFE

C1 Introduction⁴⁶

By the Sacrament of Orders priests are configured to Christ, the priest, as servants of the Head, so that as co-workers with the episcopal order they may build up the Body of Christ, the Church. They are bound by a special reason to acquire perfection according to the Lord's word:

“You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”⁴⁷

As they are ministers of the Word of God, they read and hear every day the Word of God which they must teach to others. If they strive at the same time to make it part of their own lives, they will day by day become more perfect disciples of the Lord, according to the saying of the apostle Paul to Timothy:

“Practice these duties, devote yourself to them; so that all may see your progress. Take heed to thyself and to your teaching; hold to that, for in doing so you will save both yourself and your hearers.”⁴⁸

For by seeking more effective ways of conveying to others what they have meditated on they will savour more profoundly the ***“unsearchable riches of Christ”⁴⁹*** and the many-sided wisdom of God.

Priests as ministers of the sacred mysteries, especially in the sacrifice of the Mass, act in a special way in the person of Christ who gave himself as victim to sanctify men. And this is why they are invited to imitate what they handle, so that as they celebrate the mystery of the Lord's death, they may take care to mortify their members from vices and concupiscence.⁵⁰

Priests, who are consecrated by the anointing of the Holy Spirit and sent by Christ, mortify the works of the flesh in themselves and dedicate themselves completely to the service of people, and so are able, in the

⁴⁶ Pastoral Directory, 1989, pg.16 -18

⁴⁷ Mt. 5:48, PO No.12

⁴⁸ 1 Tim. 4:15-16

⁴⁹ Eph. 3:8

⁵⁰ PO No.13

holiness with which they have been enriched in Christ, to make progress towards the perfect man.⁵¹

The very holiness of priests is of the greatest benefit for the fruitful fulfilment of their ministry.⁵²

Among the virtues especially demanded by the ministry of priests it must be reckoned that disposition of mind by which they are always prepared to seek not their own will but the will of Him who has sent them is most important. The divine task for fulfilment of which they have been set apart by the Holy Spirit transcends all human strength and human wisdom; for

“God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong”^{53, 54}

Therefore, the true minister of Christ is conscious of his own weakness and labours in humility.⁵⁵

I. SPIRITUAL LIFE

(i) Obligations⁵⁶

C2 To Seek Holiness

Priests should be **men of God**. Hence, they have a special obligation to seek holiness in their lives.⁵⁷ Priests are to be faithful to the pursuit of holiness through their commitment to the celebration of the Eucharist and the Liturgy of the Hours and the reception of the sacrament of reconciliation, and to prayer, meditation, spiritual reading, and the study of the Scriptures and an annual retreat. These disciplines are fundamental to the effective proclamation of the Gospel and their fulfilment of their ministerial responsibilities.

⁵¹ PO No.12

⁵² *Ibid*

⁵³ 1 Cor. 1:27

⁵⁴ PO No.15

⁵⁵ *Ibid*

⁵⁶ Pastoral Directory, 1989, pg.18-22

⁵⁷ Can. 276 § 1

C3 To Nourish Spiritual Life

They are to nourish their spiritual life at the two-fold table of sacred Scripture and the Eucharist.⁵⁸ In all personal and professional relationships, priests will, by their words, actions and attitudes, reflect fidelity to the promises they made at ordination. A consistent fidelity to the Church's teaching in pastoral practice and selflessness in pastoral service are essential dimensions of priestly life and ministry.

C4 To Pray daily

They are bound to daily recitation of the Divine Office.⁵⁹

C5 To Approach Penance frequently

They are to approach the sacrament of reconciliation frequently.⁶⁰

C6 Annual Retreat

They are required to make an annual 5-day spiritual retreat.⁶¹ The retreat should be scheduled so as not to remove the priest from the parish for Saturday evening/Sunday Masses.

C7 Monthly Recollection

They are required to participate in monthly recollections.⁶²

⁵⁸ Can. 276 § 2,2°

⁵⁹ Can. 276 § 2,3°

⁶⁰ Can. 276 § 2,5°

⁶¹ Can. 276 § 2,4°

⁶² Can. 276 § 2,4°

C8 Regular Spiritual Direction and Confession

They are required to have spiritual direction and confession on a regular basis.

C9 Celibacy

They are obliged to observe perfect and perpetual continence and are therefore bound to celibacy.⁶³ Priests make a promise of celibacy and are called to witness faithfully to this promise in all their relationships. They are to be aware of warning signs of potential problems in regard to their personal and professional lives and are to strive for greater self-awareness in order to recognize the unique dynamics at work in pastoral relationships and to heed the warning signs in their lives which indicate when they may be approaching boundary violations.

C10 To act prudently

They are to behave with due prudence in relation to persons whose company can be a danger to their obligation of preserving continence or can lead to scandal of the faithful.⁶⁴

C11 Reverence and Obedience

They have a special obligation to show reverence and obedience to the Supreme Pontiff and to their own Ordinary.⁶⁵

C12 Remembering the Dead

They have a special obligation to say masses for the Bishop/priest from the Diocese as soon as they know of his death and to say one Mass annually for all the departed Bishops and priests of the Diocese.

⁶³ Can. 277 § 1

⁶⁴ Can. 277 § 2

⁶⁵ Can. 273

C13 Objectionable Groups

They are to refrain from establishing or joining associations whose purpose or activity cannot be reconciled with clerical obligations.⁶⁶

(ii) Means to Spiritual Perfection⁶⁷

C14 Union with Other Priests

They are to be united with one another in the bond of the brotherhood and prayer. They should strive to co-operate with one another.⁶⁸

C15 Community Life

Some manner of common life (e.g., sharing a meal, watching movies, outings...) is highly recommended to priests; where it exists, it is as far as possible to be maintained.⁶⁹

C16 Simplicity of Life

Priests should cultivate a simplicity of life and shun anything that smacks of worldliness.⁷⁰

C17 Mental Prayer

Priests should engage regularly in mental prayer.⁷¹

C18 Devotion of Mary

Priests should honour the Blessed Virgin Mary with particular veneration.⁷¹

⁶⁶ Can. 278 § 3

⁶⁷ Pastoral Directory, 1989, pg.21-22

⁶⁸ Can. 275 § 1

⁶⁹ Can. 280

⁷⁰ Can. 282 § 1

⁷¹ Canon 274 § 2

C19 Spirit of Sharing

Priests are exhorted to give away any surplus funds they may have after providing for their own necessities, to the activities of the Church and to charitable causes.⁷²

II. INTELLECTUAL LIFE ⁷³

C20 ON-GOING FORMATIONS

Priests should pay special attention to their own on-going formation in the sacred scriptures, theological studies, and human formation which would help them to be more efficient in the exercise of their pastoral ministry.⁷⁴

All priests are expected to determine their personal and professional growth needs and to plan a program to meet these needs. They shall be expected to demonstrate their continued development in the areas of personal and ministerial growth.

The needs of the Diocese at times will require that certain priests will be asked to forego their present ministry and enter formal training to become skilled in helping to meet the diocesan needs.

C21 STUDY PROGRAMS

Generally, any priest who has had the opportunities of continuing education and gained skills should make himself available to the diocese in general and to local parishes or institutions for the purpose of sharing his skills and talents.

Therefore,

1. All priests are to be sent for a refresher course every 5 years. The duration of the course may be from 1-3 months.
2. All priests should go for higher studies after their 5th year in priesthood

⁷² Can. 282 § 2

⁷³ Pastoral Directory, 1989, pg.22

⁷⁴ Can. 279 § 1-3

or when necessary, according to the needs of the diocese. The higher studies may be for Degree or Masters course.

The Bishop may ask a particular priest(s) to pursue further studies or to begin extended study for the future benefit of the diocese. The Bishop shall consider both the needs of the Church as well as the personal inclinations and abilities of the priest when he is making his decision. The "Formation Committee"⁷⁵ is to assist Bishop in identifying and selecting the priest for the relevant studies. The Bishop along with the chosen priest will determine the place, length, and program of study or training.

C22 RETREAT

All priests are obliged to make an annual spiritual retreat⁷⁶ and participate in monthly recollections.⁷⁷ The days spent in the retreat do not count as part of the vacation. No one shall be exempted from the retreat, except in a particular case, for a just reason, and with the explicit permission of the Local Ordinary.

III. Material Life

(i) Temporal Provisions

C23 Introduction

*"Since Priests dedicated themselves to the ecclesiastical ministry, they deserve the remuneration that befits their condition, taking into account both the nature of their office and condition of time and place. It is to be such that it provides for the necessities of their life and for the just remuneration of those whose services they need."*⁷⁸

⁷⁵ consists of a group of not more than 3 priests in assisting Bishop in the formation of the diocesan priests.

⁷⁶ either communitarian or individual

⁷⁷ Can. 276 § 2,4°

⁷⁸ Can 281 §1

C24 Diocesan Responsibility⁷⁹

“Each priest is to be provided with a just and appropriate timely remuneration established and reviewed by the diocese annually”⁸⁰

C25 Parish Responsibility⁸¹

The allowances are to be paid by the parish (or other institution).

C26 Allowances⁸²

The allowances consist of Monthly remuneration, meal, phone, and miscellaneous expenses.

C27 Free Will Gift

The cultural gift of “Ang pow” and any other gifts given with a clear intention directly to the priest, will belong to the priest.

C28 Financial Assistance⁸³

a. Loan scheme

If the priest is in need of financial assistance, the diocese is to provide a loan. Repayment is to be settled in the given time frame.

b. Special Circumstances

A request for financial assistance in special circumstance (aged parents, family hardship etc.) is to be given the appropriate consideration by the Diocese.

⁷⁹ Pastoral Directory, 1989, pg.23

⁸⁰ Richmond p.19; to review an addition of minimum 5% of the current allowance

⁸¹ Pastoral Directory, 1989, pg.23

⁸² Pastoral Directory, 1989, pg.24

⁸³ Refer to the Policy of the Diocese of Penang

c. IT Gadgets for Ministry

Hand-phone and laptop are to be given to each priest to better serve the people of God in the diocese. The policy regarding this matter is to be established by the diocese.

C29 Vehicle⁸⁴

Each diocesan priest in the diocese is entitled to a proper car or vehicle to minister to the people of God. Diocese is to establish and review the policy on the vehicle purchase every 7 years. The Priest has the responsibility to maintain the vehicle in good condition for his own safety. The parish will provide funds for the operation and maintenance of the vehicle.

(ii) Bodily Health

C30 Self-care

Mental and physical health are necessary in serving the people of God. Priests are to exercise regularly and maintain a good and healthy lifestyle. Priests are responsible for their own spiritual, physical, mental, and emotional health. They are to strive to keep physically and emotionally healthy by getting proper nutrition and adequate sleep, by exercise, by taking allotted days off and vacations, by guarding against addictive or abusive behaviours and by nurturing appropriate friendships outside pastoral relationships.

C31 Medical Check-up

All priests are to go for an annual medical check-up.

⁸⁴ Refer to the Policy of the Diocese of Penang

C32 Insurance and Hospitalization Benefit⁸⁵

Diocese is to provide for medical insurance and hospital benefits for all Diocesan Priests and those serving in the Diocese of Penang.

(iii) Vacation

C33 Annual Leave

The Priests that are assigned within the diocese of Penang, are entitled to an annual leave of 30 days. This leave cannot be carried forward to the following year.

C34 Holiday Allowance

A timely and appropriate holiday allowance is to be established by the Diocese and to be reviewed regularly. The holiday allowance is to be paid by the parish.

(iv) Last Will and Testament⁸⁶

C35 Preparation of Will

Each diocesan priest is required to make a legally valid last will and testament.

To be legally valid the following must be carefully observed:

- (a) the name and address of the testator must be clearly stated;
- (b) an executor must be named and his address given;
- (c) the document must be signed by two witnesses in the presence of the testator and in the presence of one another, and their addresses given;
- (d) mention must be made of the place and date on which it was made.

⁸⁵ Refer to the Policy of the Diocese of Penang

⁸⁶ Pastoral Directory, 1989, pg. 27- 28

NB: 1. To ensure legal validity, it is recommended that a local solicitor be consulted.

2. Last wills and testaments made by priests belonging to religious orders or societies in accordance with their own constitutions may not be valid according to the civil law of Malaysia.

3. A copy of the will carefully sealed is to be kept by the diocesan procure.

D. PRIESTLY MINISTRY⁸⁷

D1 Introduction

Priests should look at their rights and obligations in the light of the nature of priesthood.

As rights arise from the dignity and responsibility of the priesthood, so also certain obligations follow consequent to their indispensable ministries all of which should be carried out as continuation of the mission of Jesus Christ.

Priests' obligations, humanly speaking, may be burdensome. But those who love Christ and his inseparable cross, for those who long to imitate Christ for whom the only food was God's Will, find their priestly yoke light and the burden sweet.

(i) Priestly Rights

D2 Power of Orders

Only the priest can assume offices which require the power of orders.⁸⁸ Although the law allows deacons and lay persons to participate in pastoral ministry due to the shortage of priests⁸⁹ only a priest can be appointed to the full pastoral care of souls.⁹⁰

D3 Associations

The secular priest has a right to join or associate with others in the pursuit of goals that conform to the priestly state.⁹¹

⁸⁷ Pastoral Directory, 1989, pg. 29- 37

⁸⁸ Can. 274 §1

⁸⁹ Can. 517 §2

⁹⁰ Can. 150

⁹¹ Can. 278 §1

(ii) Priestly Obligations

D4 Spiritual perfection

They are to seek their own spiritual perfection using all the spiritual aids available to a priest.

D5 Ministry of the Word

As co-operators with the Bishop, priests have the duty to proclaim the gospel of God.⁹²

Priests must regard preaching as a priority in as much as their primary responsibility is the proclamation of the gospel to everyone.⁹³

They must see to it with zeal that they stir up and teach the Christian faith especially through the ministry of the Word.⁹⁴

D6 Ministry of the sacraments

Priests have the obligation to give the sacraments to the faithful who are properly disposed and are not prohibited by law from receiving them.⁹⁵

They are obliged to give the sacraments only to Catholics and are forbidden to give them to non-Catholics except in circumstances permitted in the law.⁹⁶

D7 To honour & respect

Priests will honour the equality of all people, avoiding all forms of discrimination and respecting the dignity of each person by providing service without regard to economic status, age, gender, race ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or physical or mental abilities.

⁹² Can. 757

⁹³ Can. 762

⁹⁴ Can. 836

⁹⁵ Can. 843 §1

⁹⁶ Can. 844 §1

Priests will reach out to all people in a spirit of humility, reverence, and respect, especially to those who feel estranged from the Church. Priests will take care to be approachable and available to help those who seek their assistance and to be sensitive to the good of the community as they respond to the diverse forms of spirituality and theology within it.

Priests should not restrict the rights of the Christian faithful beyond what the laws of the Church provide.

The Priests of the Diocese of Penang, will model a life consistent with the teachings of the Gospel, promoting through their own behaviour the way to love God and to love neighbour as self. The Priests will also exhibit a deep commitment to the Church and loyalty to its traditions and teachings in the way that they interact in the lives and circumstances of the people they serve.⁹⁷

D8 Assignments

Unless legitimately prevented, priests are bound to assume and faithfully fulfil the assignment given to them by their Ordinary.⁹⁸

D9 Absence

Priests may not be absent from their parish/ assignment for more than a week without the permission of the Ordinary.

D10 Associations

They should avoid groups of associations whose goals and activities are not in conformity with clerical obligations or interfere with the fulfilment of their priestly responsibilities.⁹⁹

⁹⁷ Can. 273

⁹⁸ Can. 274 §2

⁹⁹ Can. 278 §3

D11 Attire

Priests are to wear suitable ecclesiastical dress in accord with norms of episcopal conference and local custom. ¹⁰⁰

The following are norms of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei:

i. In liturgical celebrations:

The prescribed vestments according to liturgical books shall be used. ¹⁰¹ However, a white cassock may replace alb.

ii. In para-liturgical celebrations:

(e.g., Benediction) A stole shall be used over the alb or cassock.

iii. In civil and official functions:

Priests should wear a cassock, priest suit or a shirt with a Roman collar prescribed by the Episcopal Conference.

iv. For ordinary occasions:

Priests should exercise discretion in their choice of dress keeping in mind, in addition to simplicity and propriety, the expectations of the faithful in this regard. A small cross to identify himself should be worn with the dress.

D12 Unbecoming to Priestly State

1) In accord with local norms:

They should completely avoid whatever is unbecoming to their state of life in accord with local norms. ¹⁰² e.g., gambling

2) Inconsistent with priesthood:

They should avoid those things which, though not unbecoming in themselves, are inconsistent with the priestly state. ¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ Can. 284

¹⁰¹ Can. 929

¹⁰² Can. 285 §1

¹⁰³ Can. 285 §2

D13 Public Office

Priests are forbidden to assume public office, especially one which involves the exercise of civil power, without permission of both proper Bishop and the bishop of the place where he intends to exercise administrative authority.¹⁰⁴

D14 Proprietorship and Guarantors

Without the permission of the Bishop, priests may not undertake the administration of property which belongs to lay persons or assume the office of a secular organization. The priests are not encouraged in being trustees and executors of wills, guarantors for personal or corporate loans, sureties for bail or bond undertakings. However, in extraordinary case, they would need to consult the Bishop and get his approval.¹⁰⁵

D15 Conducting business

Without permission of legitimate ecclesiastical authority priests are forbidden to conduct business or trade either personally or through others, for personal gain or for benefit of others.¹⁰⁶

D16 Political factions

Priests may not take an active role in political factions or in the management of labour unions unless the judgment of the competent ecclesiastical authority and with its permission, it would be required for the protection of the rights of the Church and for the common good.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ Can. 285 §3

¹⁰⁵ Can. 285 §4

¹⁰⁶ Can. 286

¹⁰⁷ Can. 287 §2

D17 Military service

They may not enter military service without the permission of the Bishop.

¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁸ Can. 289 §1

E. PARISH AND PRIEST

(i) Parish

E1 Parish Integral with the Diocese

A parish is a certain community of Christ's faithful stably established within a particular Church, whose pastoral care, under the authority of the diocesan Bishop, is entrusted to parish priest as its proper pastor.¹⁰⁹

The basic element of the parish is the existence of the group of the faithful who are in need of spiritual help, but to whom the diocesan Bishop is not personally able to minister to because of the great number of faithful in his Diocese, also called the particular church, for which he is responsible.¹¹⁰

The parish priests are in a special sense collaborator with the Bishop. They are given, in a specific section of the diocese, and under the authority of the Bishop, the care of souls as their particular shepherd.¹¹¹

(ii) Priest

E2 Parish Priest

The appointment of a parish priest is for an indefinite period of time.¹¹²

The parish priest is the proper pastor of the parish entrusted him. He exercises the pastoral care of the community entrusted to him under the authority of the diocesan Bishop, whose ministry of Christ he is called to share, so that for this community he may carry out the offices of teaching, sanctifying and ruling with the cooperation of other priests or deacons and

¹⁰⁹ Can. 515 §1

¹¹⁰ Sweeny, E. A., *The Obligations and Rights of the Pastor of a Parish According to the Code of Canon Law, Society of St. Paul*, New York 2002, pg. 6.

¹¹¹ *Christus Dominus*, n.30 - 31

¹¹² Can. 522

with the assistance of lay members of Christ's faithful, in accordance with the law.¹¹³

A parish priest is to have the parochial care of one parish only. However, because of the shortage of priests or other circumstances, the care of a number of neighbouring parishes can be entrusted to the one parish priest.¹¹⁴

The functions are as follows¹¹⁵:

- 1° The administration of baptism:
- 2° The administration of the sacrament of confirmation to those in danger of death, in accordance with Can.833,3°
- 3° The administration of Viaticum and of the anointing of the sick, without prejudice to Can. 1003 § 2 and 3, and the imparting of the apostolic blessing.
- 4° The assistance at marriages and the nuptial blessing.
- 5° The conducting of funerals.
- 6° The blessing of the baptismal font at paschal time, the conduct of procession outside the church, and the giving of solemn blessings outside the church.
- 7° The more solemn celebration of the Eucharist on Sundays and holydays of obligation.

E3 Parish Administrator

When a parish is vacant, or when the priest is prevented from exercising his pastoral office in the parish by reason of captivity, exile or banishment, incapacity or ill health, or some other cause, the diocesan bishop is to designate as soon as possible a parochial administrator, that is, a priest who takes the place of the parish priest according to the norm of can. 540.¹¹⁶

¹¹³ Can. 519

¹¹⁴ Can. 526 §1

¹¹⁵ Can. 530

¹¹⁶ Can. 539

A parish administrator is bound by the same duties and possesses the same rights as a parish priest unless the diocesan bishop establishes otherwise.¹¹⁷ The parish administrator is not permitted to do anything which prejudices the rights of the parish priest or can harm parish goods.¹¹⁸ After he has completed his function, a parish administrator is to render an account to the parish priest.¹¹⁹

E4 Assistant Parish Priest

Whenever it is necessary or opportune for the due pastoral care of the parish, one or more assistant parish priests can be joined with the parish priest. As co-operators with the parish priest and sharers in his concern, they are, by common counsel and effort with the parish priest and under his authority, to labour in the pastoral ministry.¹²⁰

Unless it is otherwise expressly provided in the letter of the diocesan Bishop, the assistant parish priest is by virtue of his office bound to help the parish priest in the entire parochial ministry. Likewise, if the matter should arise in accordance with the law, he is bound to take the place of the parish priest.¹²¹

The assistant parish priest is to report regularly to the parish priest on pastoral initiatives, both those planned and those already undertaken.¹²²

They are to act for the parish priest when the latter is on leave (short or long). They are also bound to reside in the parish.¹²³

Parish priests / assistant parish priests who have completed their 75th year of age or for some other grave reason are unable to perform their duties adequately and fruitfully are earnestly requested to tender their resignation spontaneously, or when the Bishop invites them to do so.

¹¹⁷ Can 540 §1

¹¹⁸ Can 540 §2

¹¹⁹ Can 540 §3

¹²⁰ Can. 545 §1

¹²¹ Can. 548 §2

¹²² Can. 548 §3; *officially or informally; e.g., over a meal*

¹²³ Can. 549

E5 Rectors

Rectors of churches are here understood to be priests to whom is entrusted the care of some church building (e.g., shrine) or a parish¹²⁴.

E6 Deacons

A seminarian is ordained to the diaconate and serves as a deacon for a period of time (often six months to a year or more) before his ordination to the priesthood¹²⁵.

Transitional deacons are seminarians in the last stage before being ordained to the Catholic priesthood.

(i) Their Functions

If, because of a shortage of priests, the diocesan Bishop has judged that a deacon, or some other person who is not a priest, or a community of persons, should be entrusted with a share in the exercise of the pastoral ministry of a parish, he is to appoint some priest who, with the powers and faculties of a parish priest, will direct the pastoral care.¹²⁶

All deacons, including permanent deacons, may conduct the following rites:

- a) administer baptism.
- b) distribute Holy Communion at Mass and outside Mass.
- c) conduct the rite of Viaticum.
- d) impart benediction of the Blessed Sacrament to the faithful.
- e) assist at marriages, but only in the parish to which he is assigned.

¹²⁴ Can. 556

¹²⁵ Can. 1031§1

¹²⁶ Can. 517 §2

- f) administer sacramentals.
- g) preside at wake, funeral and burial rites.
- h) proclaim the gospel, read the Scriptures, teach and preach to the faithful, preside over prayer meetings and Bible services.

A deacon may give all blessings contained in rites in which he is a minister.

E7 Priest Residence

The parish priest is obliged to reside in the parochial house, near the church.¹²⁷

The assistant parish priest is bound to reside in the parish he is appointed to.¹²⁸ Likewise, transitional deacons.¹²⁹

The parish priest is obliged to reside in the parochial house, near the church. In particular cases, however, where there is a just reason, the local Ordinary may permit him to reside elsewhere, especially in a house common to several priests, provided the carrying out of the parochial duties is properly and suitably catered for.

E8 Priest In Residence

Those priests to whom the faculties of the Diocese of Penang have been given and who are in residence in a parish, whether in the parish house or in other institutions in the Diocese, have the faculties to celebrate the Sacraments that is not contrary to the office of parish priest.

E9 Special Assignment

Those with special diocesan assignments enjoy the powers specified for those offices. In the parishes where they reside, they have the faculty of

¹²⁷ Can. 533§1

¹²⁸ Can. 550§1

¹²⁹ For permanent deacons, refer to their own handbook.

the position to which they are assigned i.e., Parish Priest, Assistant Parish Priest, Priest in Residence.

E10 Assignment Outside the Diocese

Priests assigned to serve any ecclesiastical office or ministry outside the Diocese of Penang retain the faculties. However, the faculties of priests may be restricted by the local ordinary of the receiving Diocese.

A yearly written statement of assignment should be sent to the Diocesan Bishop. Recall or return to the Diocese should be preceded by a reasonable period of notice.

E11 On Leave

1. Study Leave: When the Bishop grants a Study Leave to the priests, the duration of the Study Leave is the time taken to complete the particular study.
2. Authorised Leave of Absence: When the Bishop grants a leave of absence, diocesan faculties are automatically withdrawn, unless otherwise indicated by the Bishop in his letter of authorisation. The priest may not exercise his ministry in public without special authorisation of the Bishop.
3. Unauthorised Leave of Absence: When a priest leaves his assignment of designated residence without the express permission of the Bishop or Vicar for Priest, his faculties are automatically withdrawn. He is forbidden to exercise any function of his priestly ministry with the exceptions noted in Canon 976.
4. Sabbatical Leave: When a priest request for sabbatical leave, the Bishop may grant leave for not more than 12 months.

F. PRIEST RETIREMENT

F1 Introduction

The priesthood of Jesus Christ involves a lifelong call to ministry. Retired priests therefore remain part of the presbyterate and continue to share in its mission. To the degree that their health, energy, personal circumstances, and interest permit, retired priests are encouraged to continue some form of priestly ministry, and to participate in clergy monthly recollections.

F2 Retirement Age and Legal Instruments

1. The retirement age for priest shall be at 75 years. In special circumstances the priest can request in writing to the Bishop for early retirement from full-time ministry because of current health or other factors that suggest an earlier age is more appropriate.
2. On retirement, the priest should execute a valid and updated will, and if necessary, a properly executed power of attorney for financial matters.
3. The names and addresses of the priest's next of kin and the telephone number of an emergency contact should be documented. Information should also be written concerning any arrangements regarding funeral, burial or cremation requests that he may wish to make.

F3 Role of the Retired Priest

1. Retired priests are invited to stay fully informed concerning the Diocese of Penang activities through meetings, regular communications via social media apps, emails or mobile phones.
2. If a priest chooses retirement from full-time ministry and resides in a parish house, whether in a parish in which he had previously served or another parish to which he is invited to move upon

retirement, he should be invited to participate in the ministry of that parish and be given suitable opportunities to do so.

3. On retirement, the priest is expected to be cooperative and supportive of the parish priest/ parish administrator.

F4 Living Arrangements upon Retirement

1. The Bishop or the Council of Priests will evaluate and review each case with the effected parties to determine the appropriate living arrangements. The spirituality, emotional stability, physical health, and temperament of the retiring priest are important factors in arriving at a decision.
2. If a priest elects to live outside the parish house or diocesan facility, the arrangement is to be made with the local ordinary.

F5 Retirement Benefits

1. A priest retired in a parish house; the parish should provide for his daily sustenance.
2. Priests are to undergo annual medical examination, the medical expenses to be borne by the Diocese. Sickly and dependent priests are to be given adequate nursing and medical care.
3. Upon retirement, except for some unless health or safety reasons, a retired priest is given a suitable vehicle by the Diocese. The Diocese to cover usual vehicle operating and maintenance expenses for retired priest who live in the parish house and are able to drive.
4. Appropriate monthly allowance is to be given. Additionally, an ex-gratia payment should be given upon retirement.

G. ADMINISTRATION

1. Matters relating to Diocesan Priests

G1 Parish Priest's Personal Bank Account

The parish priest is to see to it that his personal bank account, if any, is administratively separate from the parish bank account.

2. Matters relating to Parishes

(i) Pastoral Administration

G2 Collaboration with the Bishop and Priest (Can. 519)

Clergy in the parish are to collaborate with the diocesan bishop, presbyters and deacons in striving to achieve a vibrant parish community centred in Christ. He must bring the people to the point where they see themselves also as members of the diocese and of the universal Church.

G3 Peace and Harmony

They should promote as much as possible the preservation of peace and harmony among all people.

(ii) Parish Administration

G4 Use of Parish Premises

The rectory, that is, the house or quarters of the parish priest, is the private residence of the priests in charge of the parish. No other persons may reside there without the permission of the Bishop.

Accordingly, as a general rule, parish employees will not be permitted to live in the rectory. If, however, accommodation is available in a part of the parish buildings separate from the priest's quarters, or in a separate property belonging to the parish, employees may be permitted to live there while they remain in the employ of the parish. Where boards and/or lodging are provided, employees should be charged a small sum to be determined by the parish priest.

To avoid legal complications, no house or property belonging to the parish may under any circumstances, be let, without the written consent of the Financial Administrator.

G5 Administrative Transactions

In all juridical matters, the parish priest acts in the person of the parish, in accordance with the law. He is to ensure that the parish goods are administered in accordance with Can. 1281 – 1288.

G6 Alteration of Parish Boundaries

Modifications of parish boundaries may be indicated for various reasons such as significant changes in population density, especially in the developing areas of the diocese. Where such changes are deemed necessary, the parish priests of the affected parishes should reach a consensus and submit proposals for a redrawing of their parish boundaries to the Bishop. They will be officially informed in writing of any decision taken by the diocesan Bishop before it is made public.

G7 Accurate Records

Priests involved in the parish ministry should have a good working knowledge of the day-to-day administration of the parish. They should

therefore familiarize themselves with the parish registers and parish records, and Book:

1. Register of Baptism
2. Register of Confirmation
3. Record of Marriage
4. Record of Deaths
5. Record of Masses
6. Journal Cash Book
7. General Ledger

Note:

1. In each parish there are to be parochial registers, that is, of baptisms, of marriages and of deaths, and any other registers prescribed by the Episcopal Conference or by the diocesan Bishop. The parish priest is to ensure that entries are accurately made and that the registers are carefully preserved.
2. In the register of baptisms, a note is to be made of confirmation and of matters pertaining to the canonical status of the faithful by reason of marriage, without prejudice of the provisions of can. 1133, and by reason of adoption, the reception of sacred order, the making of perpetual profession in a religious institute, or a change of rite. These annotations are always to be reproduced on a baptismal certificate.
3. All amendments are to be made by deletion, not by erasure; and an amended entry is to be certified by the signature or initials of the parish priest who makes it.

4. In each parish there is to be an archive, in which the parochial books are to be kept, together with episcopal letters and other documents which it may be necessary or useful to preserve. On the occasion of visitation or at some other opportune time, the diocesan Bishop or his delegate is to inspect all of these matters. The parish priest is to take care that they do not fall into unauthorised hands.

Older parochial registers are also to be carefully safeguarded, in accordance with the provisions of particular law.

G8 Parish Seal

Each parish is to have its own seal or rubber stamp. Certificates concerning the canonical status of the faithful, and all acts which can have juridical significance, are to be signed by the parish priest or his delegate and secured with the parochial seal or rubber stamp.

G9 Baptism and Marriage Records to be kept in the Diocesan Secretariat

Church Law requires parish priests to send to the Diocesan Secretariat a record of the baptisms and marriages entered in their parish registers.

G10 Annual Parish Reports

The Diocesan Secretariat is required to supply each year up to date information concerning parishes, schools and Catholic welfare agencies to

- a. the Holy See, and
- b. the editor of the Official Catholic Directory.

In addition, a summary of this information is included in the General Report on the Diocese sent to Rome every five years on the occasion of the Bishop's ad limina visit.

Accordingly, all concerned are earnestly requested to complete the annual reports accurately and forward them promptly to the Diocesan Secretariat.

G11 Holy Oils

The parish priest has responsibility of keeping custody of the Holy Oils obtained from the bishop.

(iii) Financial Administration

G12 Fund Raising

Any person, whether priest, religious or lay, wishing to collect money for any pious purpose or to solicit funds for a Catholic institution (church, hospital, schools, etc.) has to obtain the written permission of the Bishop. This refers to all means of collecting money such as bazaars, raffles, gala premiers, door-to-door calls, walkathons, special sales.

To avoid abuses and to ensure the proper coordination of fund-raising activities in the Diocese, the written permission of the Bishop is to be requested well in advance, each time these activities are to be carried out. This permission is to be obtained before any approach is made to the relevant civil authorities.

G13 Parish Bank Account

Only the Bishop may authorise a priest to operate a parish bank account. The bank will be chosen by the Bishop.

G14 Priest on Transfer

Whenever a parish priest is on transfer, he shall hand over in the presence of the Bishop or his representative or the Financial Administrator, to his successor the following:

- the parish account books brought up to date;
- the parish programmes, plans, documents, receipts of quit rent and assessments, etc
- cash belonging to the parish
- all outstanding bills
- the latest bank statement and all receipts of fixed deposits.

N.B.

1° Parish account books are to be countersigned by both priests.

2° Parish account books and bank statements shall be made available at any time to the Bishop or his authorised delegate.

G15 Church Properties

Regarding Church properties (land and buildings) within the parish, the parish priest should conscientiously look after them for the diocese. Written permission of the bishop is required if he wants to use any Church land for new buildings or for any extension or renovation of existing buildings. No one should be allowed to stay on or use church land without the written permission of the Bishop.

G16 Works of Maintenance

No work of maintenance or extension exceeding the sum mentioned in the Bishop's latest Directive is to be carried out without the prior written permission of the Bishop. This holds good even if funds are available in the parish.

G17 Parish Projects

For Parish Projects and Purchases (per unit) exceeding the sum mentioned in the Bishop's latest Directive the prior approval of the Bishop

is required. This directive also applies to funds held and run by the Parish Councils or committees.

G18 Diocesan Extension Fund

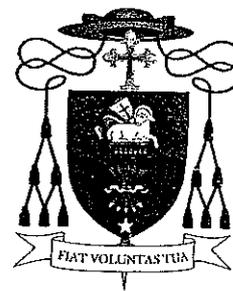
10% of the Sunday collections should be contributed to the Diocesan Extension Fund.

N.B. This fund covers deficits of parishes, subsidises catechists' salaries, purchase of cars, etc.

Bishop's Office

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APPENDIX 1



Diocese of Penang

11 February 2013 (**Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes**)

Dear Reverend Father (Parish Priest) - Diocese of Penang

Appointment of Extraordinary Ministry of Holy Communion

The faculty is granted to all Parish Priests in the Diocese of Penang to appoint and designate suitable persons to distribute Holy Communion in their parishes and on specific occasion when there is genuine necessity to do so.

The following norms are to be followed in appointing Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion:-

There must be a genuine need for such a ministry. A need exists when Ordinary Ministers (Priests and Deacons) are not available or a sufficient number of them are not present to respond to the faithful requesting Communion within a short period of distribution.

When such a need exists, the Parish Priest may select and appoint men and women, to be Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion for their own parishes.

Those chosen to be Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are to be mature persons thirty years of age or older, confirmed, leading an exemplary Christian life and so recognized and respected by the faith community.

The Priest has the responsibility of providing instruction for both the Candidates for this ministry and those to whom they will minister to ensure acceptance, understanding and appreciation of the ministry.

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion who function on a regular basis in their own Parish should be appointed either for a specific period of time, generally three years, and renewable.

The distribution of Holy Communion to the Sick and Homebound is to be considered a special and distinct ministry. Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion should be taught to see their role as sharing in the Church's ministry to the sick after the manner of Jesus.

The Parish Priest is responsible for the continued Spiritual growth of the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion and it is recommended that they be formally commissioned in a ceremony witnessed by members of the faith community.

Thank you and God bless you.

Sincerely in Christ,

Sebastian Francis

Bishop Sebastian Francis

Bishop's Office

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APPENDIX 2



Diocese of Penang

14th February, 2013

To all Parish Priests,

Re: Basic Ecclesial Communities (BEC)

Greetings of Love and Peace!

Please take note that following the principle of BEC as understood by the Church in Peninsular Malaysia, BECs are home based, understood as area based small communities made up of 10-15 families to provide time for prayer and it is primarily centered on the Word of God.

On the other hand, whenever the small communities gather for big functions such as Christmas, Cultural festivities or yearly BEC Eucharistic celebrations, it is only appropriate that the BECs gather in a hall/dewan when the number of people is large.

Therefore, I have decided that I will not approve of any purchase of any building or home in the name of the Parish or Diocese for the purpose and needs of BEC.

I hope and pray that we will keep to the spirit of building small communities and to form communion of communities towards the civilization of love and mission.

Thank you for your support and collaboration. May Our Lord grant us all the graces we need and desire this Lent!

United in Christ,

† Sebastian Francis

Rt. Rev. Sebastian Francis
Bishop of Penang

**THE TEN DIRECTIVES CONCERNING THE PASTORAL CARE OF BEC'S
IN THE DIOCESE OF PENANG**
(Adapted From The PMPA III BEC DIRECTIVES)

1. COMMUNITARIAN PASTORAL CARE OF BEC'S IS CENTRAL AND VITAL.

The Parish is a communion of BECs – 10 to 15 families divided geographically. They have monthly gatherings.

2. BECS ARE RELATIONAL COMMUNITIES.

Small numbers enhance interpersonal relationship and sharing of faith.

3. ALL ARE INCLUDED.

The BEC Core Team regularly visits all families, especially those who need more attention. Everyone is given importance.

4. ACTIVE PARTICIPATION OF YOUTH.

All Youth, especially the Working Youth must take an active part at the BECs. The leaders of BECs will make plans to welcome all Youths for their gatherings.

5. A COMMON DESIGNATED WEEK (REGULARLY).

All BECs in the Diocese will have the second week of the month (Sunday – Saturday) for their monthly gathering. Priority will be given to BEC gatherings.

6. FORMATION OF THE ZONE COORDINATING TEAM (ZCT).

The PPC in collaboration with the relevant parish bodies (PAT/ZCT) will meet, animate, facilitate and give formation regularly for all BEC Core Teams. Prayer and the Word of God are important.

7. A BEC CORE TEAM IS IMPORTANT.

A BEC Core Team is made up of Leader, Assistant Leader, Messengers and Youth Representative.. They meet monthly.

8. COMMITMENT OF PARISH PRIESTS TOWARDS COMMUNITY BUILDING

A greater commitment is envisioned from Parish Priests whose important task is as community builders.

9. THE EUCHARIST AT BEC LEVEL.

The Eucharist will be celebrated only once a year at BEC level.

10. THE DIOCESAN PASTORAL TEAM ANIMATES AND COORDINATES BECS

The Diocesan Pastoral Team (DPT) with the help of the Asian Integral Pastoral Approach Team (AsIPA) helps in the animation, progress and formation of BECs.

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APPENDIX 3



DIRECTIVE No. 01/2013

21st February 2013

Dear Fathers,

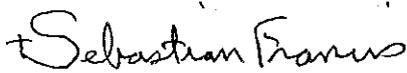
Kindly be informed that the following will take effect from 1st March 2013 regarding financial management.

- 1) Limit for expenditure by Parish Priest has been increased to RM5,000-00.
- 2) For expenditure exceeding RM5,000-00, consultation and approval of the Parish Finance Committee or other relevant bodies is required.
- 3) Limit for expenditure by Parishes has been increased to RM50,000-00.
- 4) For expenditure exceeding RM50,000-00, approval of the Bishop is required.

All parties involved will show responsibility, transparency as required and accountability in the governance and administration of finances.

Thank you for your collaboration and support.

Sincerely in Christ,



Rt. Rev. Sebastian Francis
Bishop of the Diocese of Penang

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APPENDIX 4



Diocese of Penang

1st July, 2013

Dear Fathers,

Re: Altar Servers

I am pleased to inform you that after consultation, I have decided to put into practice the female Altar Servers in the Diocese of Penang. This will be implemented on the 1st Sunday of Advent 2013. As such, you will have five months to prepare the people for this occasion.

Please take note that the preferred terminology is **Altar Servers** and not Altar Boys or Altar Girls. The dress code for the Altar Servers is left entirely to the Parish Priest. However, the existing dress code is suitable for both male and female Altar Servers. In addition, the criterion for age could be the same as with the present male Altar Servers.

Wishing you the best in your ministry!

United in Christ,

Sebastian Francis

Rt. Rev. Sebastian Francis
Bishop of Penang

Bishop's Office

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APPENDIX 5



Diocese of Penang

2 April 2014

Dear Fathers,

Re: DIRECTIVE ON FINANCIAL MATTERS

The following Directive is for your immediate attention and action as applicable. Accountability is not optional. Good stewardship practices invite us to be accountable for all of the gifts we have been given, financial blessings among them. In view of this,

1. Clergy are not permitted to open any Bank Account for their Parish, Chapel or Ministries in their personal name. All Bank Accounts must be approved by the Bishop of Penang via a written letter of request with the list of signatories for the said Bank Account following the Diocesan procedures that is; *Clergy is to sign with any one of the three members of the Finance Committee.*
2. Any form of lease or tenancy that implicates the land, building and properties of the Church should be submitted to the Diocese for Bishop's approval. Thus, the Bishop signs the contract or tenancy since the Clergy has no *locus standi* (place of standing) meaning "the right or capacity to bring an action or to appear in a court."

However, if the above said has been carried out previously, whereby there are occupants, tenants in the compound or properties of the Church, kindly review and rectify the contracts/tenancy so as to comply with the Diocesan procedures.

3. *Can. 286* states that "Clerics are prohibited from conducting business or trade personally or through others, for their own advantage or that of others, except with the permission of legitimate ecclesiastical authority."

As such, I strongly appeal that Clerics do not engage in registering a business company in one's name or in partnership with others even if it deals with religious articles, publications, pilgrimages etc. Furthermore, Clerics should not also be spiritual advisors for any form of business ventures even if it pertains to religious matters.

4. Lastly, no loans are to be given to any party from Church funds.

May Jesus and Mary bless and guide you in your ministry!

Sincerely in Christ,

Bishop Sebastian Francis
Diocese of Penang

Clerics are not to manage the money or property of lay people without the *permission* of their ordinary. They need permission, therefore, to be guardians of children, executors of wills, or trustees of funds. They would, of course, be permitted to handle the affairs of relatives or close friends who were dependent upon them. They must also have authorization to hold secular offices for which they are legally accountable, such as an official in a savings bank, a cooperative, or a charitable association.

Without consulting their ordinary, clerics are not to give surety (e.g., bail), even with their own goods, or to sign promissory notes obliging themselves to pay money on demand. One member of the commission sought to eliminate this clause or at least to substitute an exhortation in place of the necessary permission of the bishop. The secretariat responded that for the sake of prudence the text should remain as it is.¹⁶¹ Again this paragraph does not apply to permanent deacons (c. 288) but it does apply to religious (c. 672).

The 1977 draft included a fourth paragraph (CIC 139, §3) inhibiting clerics from hailing anyone before a lay tribunal or having any part in a lay criminal trial, even to the extent of giving testimony without necessity, unless they had the permission of their ordinary. This paragraph was subsequently dropped.¹⁶²

Business or Trade

Canon 286 — Clerics are prohibited from conducting business or trade personally or through others, for their own advantage or that of others,

¹⁶¹ Cardinal Bernardin sought to leave the matter to the discretion of the clergyman, but it was decided to leave the text as it is "for the sake of prudence" (*Rel. ad c. 260, 68*).

¹⁶² The *coetus* dropped the former permission needed for a priest to appear in civil court and be involved in criminal cases (CIC 139, §3) precisely because such permission presumed the priest to be a minor in dependence on the bishop. See *Comm. 14*, (1982): 82: "Esso risente di una vecchia concezione per cui il sacerdote era considerato quasi un minore alla dipendenza del Vescovo."

except with the permission of legitimate ecclesiastical authority.

Clerics are barred from engaging in business. An interpretation of this highly technical and complicated canon must be based on canon 142 of the 1917 code and a 1950 decree of the Sacred Congregation of the Council, the only sources indicated in the annotated edition of the current code. The 1983 code is the same as the former one except for the provision that legitimate ecclesiastical authority may permit such activity. Clerics are forbidden to engage in *negotiatio aut mercatura*. While in practice most canonists treat the terms as synonymous, *negotiatio* refers to all business operations carried on for gain, whereas *mercatura* is restricted to trading, i.e., the buying and selling of merchandise.

Commentators distinguish among several types of commercial enterprises. (1) Trading strictly so-called is buying goods with the intention of selling them unchanged for a profit, whether or not in smaller quantities or newly packaged. Included under this category would be a currency exchange where money itself is bought and sold. Such activity is definitely not lawful for clerics. (2) Industrial business or buying materials with the intention of selling them later at a profit after they have been transformed by one's own labor or that of hired employees is also prohibited. However, publishing or other apostolic enterprises are not forbidden, since they are not undertaken for profit alone.¹⁶³ (3) Domestic business is permissible. It consists in the profitable management of more or less permanent investments. A religious community, for example, may sell wine produced from its vineyards. Land, houses, and farms may be purchased with the intention of renting them out later at a profit. (4) Convenience operations which make such items as food, books, and religious articles available to a school or other community are permissible so long as any profit accrues to the organization. (5) With regard to stocks, a distinction must

¹⁶³ J. Dede, "Business Pursuits of Clerics and Religious," *J* 23 (1963) 50-60.

be made between speculation and investment. Investment is the purchase of stocks and bonds with the intention of receiving periodic income. Speculation is carried on, not for the sake of the income accruing, but with the hope that the item purchased will rather quickly increase in value so that it can be resold for a profit. All speculation, which is akin to gambling, is forbidden to clerics, especially such a transaction as short-selling.

The canon forbids clerics to "conduct" (*exercere*) business, that is, on a more or less habitual basis. An isolated act would not violate the law. A cleric may not engage in business either personally or through an agent; he is not allowed to commission an agent to carry on the operation in the cleric's name and at his risk. Clerics are forbidden, furthermore, to carry on such activity either for their own benefit or for that of other persons. Even the intention to devote the proceeds to pious or charitable causes does not justify a cleric's engaging in business.

A March 22, 1950, decree of the Sacred Congregation of the Council declared that any cleric or religious who violated the canon on business activity incurred an excommunication specially reserved to the Holy See. Even the penalty of degradation, which included dismissal from the clerical state, could be invoked.¹⁶⁴ Paul VI in *De episcoporum muneribus* reserved to the Holy See any dispensation for a cleric "to practice business or commerce."¹⁶⁵

The 1983 code eliminated the automatic excommunication but provides in canon 1392 that "clerics or religious who exercise a trade or business contrary to the prescripts of the canons are to be punished according to the gravity of the delict." The code, nevertheless, makes explicit reference to the possibility of obtaining permission from "legitimate ecclesiastical authority" to engage in such activity. It was recognized under the 1917 code that in cases of necessity, either of the cleric himself or of his family, the ordinary could

allow what would otherwise be forbidden. If a cleric inherited or succeeded to a viable business that could not be relinquished without loss, the permission of the Holy See had to be obtained to continue it. Now a secular cleric is to seek permission from the diocesan bishop and a religious from the major superior.

The Clergy as Signs of Peace

Canon 287 — §1. Most especially, clerics are always to foster the peace and harmony based on justice which are to be observed among people.

The clergy are to be especially zealous promoters of peace. Here the obligation is stated positively in contrast to the negative position of the 1917 code (CIC 141) which had forbidden the clergy to participate in any way whatever in civil conflict or public disturbances. The sources for this paragraph stress the need for the clergy to be imbued with an all-embracing concern for concord. "The pastor's task is not limited to individual care of the faithful" but extends to all people; "priests can never be the servants of any human ideology or party." (PO 6) "Since God the Father is the beginning and the end of all things, we are all called to be brothers and sisters; we ought to work together without violence and without deceit to build up the world in a spirit of genuine peace." (GS 92) "It is the Church's mission to preach the gospel message with a consequent demand for justice in the world. "This is the reason why the Church has the right—indeed, even the duty—to proclaim justice on the social, national, and international level; and to denounce instances of injustice when the fundamental rights of people and their very salvation demand it. The Church is not solely responsible for justice in the world; however, she has a proper and specific responsibility that is identified with her mission of giving witness before the world of the need for love and justice contained in the gospel message."¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁴ CIC 1950, 69. This decree generated extensive canonical literature. For a bibliography see Dede, 61-62.

¹⁶⁵ CIC 1983, 6, 398.

¹⁶⁶ The 1971 synod of bishops, "Justice in the World," P II, TPS 16 (1972) 383.

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APPENDIX 6



Diocese of Penang

Ref: 1/2015

NOTIFICATION

Dear Fathers,

Re: Documents for Dispensations involving Mixed Marriages, Disparity of Cult, Consanguinity and others.

With regards to the above, kindly send copies of these documents in your Parishes from 2012 onwards to the Bishop's Office for records. Chancery Office all around the world are asking for such documents for cases of annulment and therefore the records of these are necessary for efficiency. The pre-nuptial enquiries should be properly filed so that when these chanceries request for these documents, we can do the necessary.

Thank you for your collaboration.

Sincerely in Christ,

† Sebastian Francis

Rt. Rev. Sebastian Francis
Bishop of Penang

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APPENDIX 7



Diocese of Penang

18 July 2016

Dear Fathers,

**Re: Translations of the 3rd Question in the Celebration
on the Rite of Matrimony**

Greetings of Peace!

Attached are the approved translations to be implemented with immediate effect. Booklets will be printed and distributed later.

Thank you for your cooperation and best wishes.

Sincerely in Christ,

Sebastian Francis

Rt. Rev. Sebastian Francis
Bishop of Penang

Translations of the 3rd Question in the Celebration on the Rite of Matrimony

Are you prepared to accept children lovingly in the marriage and be responsible for their upbringing and education?

Bahasa Malaysia

Sanggupkah kamu menerima anak-anak dengan penuh kasih sayang di dalam perkahwinan ini dan bertanggungjawab dalam pertumbuhan moral dan pendidikan mereka?

Chinese

你是否愿意接受在婚姻中所赐予的孩子，并负起道德熏陶与他们的教育？

Nǐ shìfǒu yuànyì jiēshòu zài hūnyīn zhōng suǒ cìyǔ de hái'zǐ, bìng fù qǐ dàodé xūntáo yǔ tāmen de jiàoyù?

Tamil

தமிழ்

இத்திருமணத்தில் உங்களுக்கு அருளப்படும் குழந்தைகளை நீங்கள் அன்புடன் ஏற்று அவர்களை நல்லொழுக்கத்திற்கும் கல்விக்கும் பொருப்பாயிருப்பீர்களா?

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APPENDIX 8



Diocese of Penang

18 October 2016

Dear Fathers,

Re: Mass Intentions and Priests' Monthly Allowance

Greetings of Peace!

In view of the above and after reflection, I would like to remind us of the following from Vatican II, Vol. I regarding the DECREE ON THE MINISTRY AND LIFE OF PRIESTS, **PRESBYTERORUM ORDINIS** PROMULGATED BY HIS HOLINESS, POPE PAUL VI ON DECEMBER 7, 1965 no. 20 and Vatican II, Vol. II on the THE MINISTERIAL PRIESTHOOD, Synod of Bishops, **ULTIMIS TEMPORIBUS** on November 30, 1967 no. 4.

20. (Providing equitable remuneration for priests.) As those dedicated to the service of God and the fulfillment of the office entrusted to them, priests deserve to receive an equitable remuneration, because "the laborer is worthy of his hire," (Lk. 10:7)(61) and "the Lord directed that those who preach the Gospel should have their living from the Gospel" (1 Cor. 9:14). Wherefore, insofar as an equitable remuneration of the priests would not be provided otherwise, the faithful themselves—that is, those in whose behalf the priest labors—are truly obliged to see to it that they can provide what help is necessary for the honorable and worthy life of the priests. The bishops, however, should admonish the faithful concerning this obligation of theirs. And they should see to it whether each individual for his own diocese or, more aptly, several together for their common territory—that norms are established according to which suitable support is rightly provided for those who do fulfill or have fulfilled a special office in the service of the People of God. The remuneration received by each one, in accord with his office and the conditions of time and place, should be fundamentally the same for all in the same circumstances and befitting his station. Moreover, those who have dedicated themselves to the service of the priesthood, by reason of the remuneration they receive, should not only be able to honorably provide for themselves but also themselves be provided with some means of helping the needy. For the ministry to the poor has always been held in great honor in the Church from its beginnings. Furthermore, this remuneration should be such that it will permit priests each year to take a suitable and sufficient vacation, something which indeed the bishops should see that their priests are able to have. Special importance ought to be given to the office fulfilled by sacred ministers. Therefore the so-called system of benefices should be relinquished or at least so reformed that the place of the benefices, or the right to revenue from the endowment attached to an office, would be held as secondary, and the first place in law would be given to the ecclesiastical office itself. From this it should be understood that whatever office is conferred in a stable manner is to be exercised for a spiritual purpose.

Economic Affairs

- 4. The remuneration of priests, to be determined certainly in a spirit of evangelical poverty, but as far as possible equitable and sufficient, is a duty of justice and ought to include social security. Excessive differences in this matter must be removed, especially among priests of the same diocese or jurisdiction, account also being taken of the average condition of the people of the region.*

It seems greatly to be desired that the Christian people be gradually instructed in such a way that priests' incomes may be separated from the acts of their ministry, especially sacramental ones.

The above texts will be our guiding principle with regards to the distinction between the remuneration of priests and the celebration of the Sacraments especially of the Eucharist.

Thus, in order that there will not be any more link between the priests' monthly allowance and the Mass offerings and intentions celebrated at the Parish, Chapels, outstation centers or BEC Masses, all of Mass intentions will be centralized at the Parish office. There can be multiple intentions for all Masses on weekdays as well as weekends as per request of the people. As a result, there will be no surplus Mass intentions, which are not celebrated, to be sent to the Diocese. Each Mass intention will remain at RM10.00 and this would mean that your Parish income would increase. Therefore, I strongly recommend that you use your discretion and use the surplus funds for formation, ministry to the poor and maintenance of the Parish.

With regards to the priests' monthly allowance, all priests will receive an increase from RM300.00 to RM 500.00, which is to be taken from the Parish funds. Also, the annual holiday allowance will increase from RM1000.00 to RM1500.00. These changes will take effect from 1 January 2017 and will also apply to the retired priests.

I thank you for your patience and collaboration. I wish you God's blessings always!

Sincerely in Christ,



Rt. Rev. Sebastian Francis
Bishop of Penang

Bishop's Office

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APPENDIX 2



Diocese of Penang

19 October 2016

Dear Fathers,

Re: Directives for Immediate Implementation

In the light of the recent deliberations of PMPC IV, I would like to suggest that every parish to have a **Bahasa Malaysia Mass** on the 1st Sunday for every month and the time for the Mass to be decided by the Parish Priest in collaboration with the Liturgical committee. Every parish will have the celebration of Mass in Bahasa Malaysia irrelevant of whether you have Bahasa speaking parishioner or not.

With regards to the **formation of catechists**, it is important that catechists from all languages to attend at least one formation per year that is offered in the Diocese. The Parish or Diocese could sponsor the catechists.

Thank you for your collaboration and support.

Sincerely in Christ,

Sebastian Francis

Rt. Rev. Sebastian Francis
Bishop of Penang

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APPENDIX 10



Diocese of Penang

15th February 2017

Dear Fathers,

Re: DIRECTIVES

Greetings in Jesus Christ, Our Life and our Hope!

Below are the directives to be implemented by the parishes:-

1. Every Faith Formator (Catechism teachers, RCIA facilitators, Baptism/marriage instructors) is required to participate in at least one (1) formation a year organized at Parish level, Deanery Level or Diocesan Level.
2. Every parish is required to celebrate one (1) weekend Bahasa Malaysia Language mass once a month at Parish level.

These directives take effect from the 1st Sunday of Lent, 5th March 2017.

“Be Disciples of Hope”

Sincerely in Christ,

Sebastian Francis

Rt. Rev. Sebastian Francis
Bishop of Penang