

Duties and Responsibilities

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2.1 Introduction

The primary responsibility of all clergy is to serve the church and its people. The nature of this service is clearly set out in the ordination Examination which precedes the consecration of all ordinands, whether bishops, priests, or deacons. In the face of day-to-day difficulties and bureaucratic hassles, it is both useful and necessary to remember, prayerfully and regularly, what we promised to be and do when we were ordained.

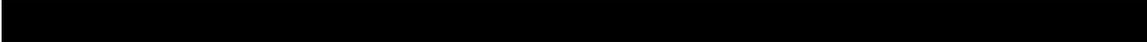
Canons, By-laws and Regulations also provide statements of duties and responsibilities. Users of this manual should be particularly familiar with Canon 4.07, Incumbents, and Canon 4.08, assistant curates. Diocesan By-law B.4 also pertains, setting out roles and responsibilities for the dean, archdeacons, regional deans as well as clergy in general.

The letter of appointment also details the responsibilities and accountabilities of persons appointed to the position of incumbent, priest-in-charge, assistant curate, or another position within the diocese. A sample letter of appointment is reproduced in the appointments section as Annex 1.1. It is important to note that other responsibilities may be added depending on individual circumstances.

2.2 Duties and Responsibilities of Incumbents

The letter of appointment and the Canons, Regulations and By-laws set out specific responsibilities that incumbents have for the spiritual health and well-being of their parish and people. It is clear that incumbents are to share responsibilities with churchwardens and lay leaders in the parish. The primary role of the incumbent (or rector, or priest-in-charge) is to oversee all aspects of parish life and to provide leadership, encouragement, and spiritual support in the parish and in the wider community. These responsibilities are based upon and grow from the responsibilities assumed at ordination. They include the following:

- to arrange the liturgies and worship life of the parish, including music, so that the corporate and individual lives and ministries of the parish community are given expression;
- to provide general leadership with a view to fostering a strong spiritual, scriptural and sacramental base within the community so that it may reach out beyond the parish;
- to oversee the pastoral life of the parish, identifying and training pastoral care team members and providing administrative and communication procedures to support a healthy pastoral care ministry and other volunteer ministries in the parish;
- to ensure that dynamic Christian education programs are available to people of all ages in the parish and to oversee their delivery;
- to oversee the administrative work that supports the parish, ensuring that programs and activities are co-ordinated so as to contribute to the effectiveness of parish life;
- together with churchwardens, lay leaders and vestry, to manage the affairs of the parish with appropriate regard to economy, efficiency and effectiveness;
- to seek opportunities for ecumenical collaboration and for building



mutual understanding and respect among churches within the parish;

- to share in the work of the diocese and to support colleagues in ministry, taking part in committee work and diocesan activities;
- to attend inductions, ordinations, meetings of deanery clericus and great chapter, Synod meetings, clergy conferences and information days;
- to keep up to date with changes in Canons, By-laws and Regulations and with other administrative matters that affect the diocese and the parish;
- to keep parish records and report periodically as required;
- to preside at vestry meetings, working with vestry to establish goals, manage the parish's resources, and develop stewardship programs;
- to perform other duties as may from time to time be required by the regional dean, the archdeacon, or the bishop.

In parishes where there is staff employed (office staff, caretakers, etc.) the incumbent acts as supervisor. The incumbent owes a duty to act fairly in discharging the duties of supervisor/employer and to abide by applicable statutory and common law.

2.3 Duties and Responsibilities of Assistant Curates

Assistant curates are usually newly ordained clergy appointed to serve under the supervision of an incumbent. The purpose of an assistant curacy is to provide a newly ordained person (deacon or priest) with an opportunity to participate in all aspects of parish ministry with a view to developing skills and gaining experience in ordained ministry.

The assistant curate is accountable to the incumbent with regard to the work of the parish. Although discussion and mutual agreement are to be the normal methods of arriving at decisions regarding an assistant's work, some decisions and assignments may be non-negotiable, given the incumbent's responsibilities in pastoral matters. It is essential that at all times there is a relationship of mutual trust, mutual respect and confidentiality between the incumbent and the assistant.

The assistant curate is also responsible to the bishop, from whom the assistant curate may seek support and guidance at any time. The bishop may require the incumbent and the assistant to enter into a written covenant to clarify responsibilities and relationships. Evaluation of the assistant's work and development in ordained ministry is done in the same way as for all clergy.

The responsibilities accepted at the ordination of a deacon or priest guide the establishment of duties and responsibilities of assistant curates. These duties and responsibilities are to be carefully established and reviewed from time to time as appropriate.

During an assistant curacy, duties and responsibilities are to include regular participation in all these areas:

- ministry of word and sacrament;
- ministry of pastoral care;
- programs for various ages and interest groups within the parish;

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- parish administration;
 - work in the deanery and diocese.

In addition, specific primary responsibilities may be assigned, depending on the parish's needs and on the goals and responsibilities established for the period of the assistant curacy. The duties and responsibilities of the assistant curate are not to be limited to carrying out tasks that are not the incumbent's favourite activities. A wide range of work is needed to ensure worthwhile experience and sound development in ordained ministry.



2.4 The Dean, Archdeacons, and Regional Deans

In addition to responsibilities and duties assumed at ordination, specific responsibilities are assigned to those appointed to the position of Dean, Archdeacon and Regional Dean.

2.4.1 Dean

The Dean of Ottawa is the member of the clergy in the diocese next in precedence after the bishop and any suffragan or assistant bishop. At the request of the bishop, the dean represents the bishop at meetings or activities in the diocese or in the wider community.

The dean may also hold the office as Incumbent of the Cathedral Parish. The dean is also the regional dean of the Deanery of Christ Church Cathedral.

2.4.2 Archdeacons

Each archdeacon assumes these responsibilities:

- assisting the bishop in pastoral care in the archdeaconry and watching, inquiring into and reporting on those things that the archdeacon believes may need the bishop's consideration;
- from time to time visiting the clergy and churchwardens in the archdeaconry to provide advice on problems and to be pastor to the clergy;
- ensuring the provision of priestly services in parishes without clergy and providing advice on clergy appointments and deployment in the archdeaconry;
- arranging, as appropriate, for services of induction for new incumbents or regional deans in the archdeaconry;

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- assisting/advising regional deans in their duties;
 - visiting each parish annually (or asking the regional dean to visit) to ensure that each parish in the archdeaconry is complying with civil and canon law;
 - acting as a member of Executive Committee, Administration and Finance Committee, and other committees as required.

2.4.3 Regional Deans

Parishes in the diocese are grouped into deaneries. Each deanery has a regional dean who carries out these responsibilities:

- providing the archdeacon with information on secular and ecclesiastical developments that could affect the life of parishes in the deanery;
- providing for meetings of clergy in the deanery for mutual support, encouragement, communications with diocesan officers, and for transacting other business;
- providing for meetings of clergy, churchwardens and lay members of Synod in the deanery to conduct relevant business, and to provide for meetings of Great Chapter, with one meeting prior to the annual meeting of Synod;
- encouraging and supporting incumbents and churchwardens in the deanery in promoting good stewardship;
- ensuring that the statistical returns from the parishes in the deanery are forwarded to the diocese prior to 21 March of each year;
- making arrangements for priestly services in any parish in the deanery, when required in an emergency situation;

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- once during the term, visiting each parish in the deanery to inspect buildings, to ensure that required maintenance and repairs have been undertaken, and to review accounts and related reports and to report to the archdeacon on these matters. (The regional dean may meet with the incumbent and churchwardens or parish council to seek to ensure compliance with civil or canon law, and may meet with diocesan officers to clarify matters of concern to a parish, the deanery, and the diocese);
 - assist the archdeacon in performing duties;
 - perform other duties as required from time to time.



2.5 Hours of Work

The Canons, By-laws and Regulations of the Diocese of Ottawa make no mention of hours of work for clergy. A national church document, *Fair Employment Practices*, notes that there are legal restrictions on the number of hours worked; however, these restrictions are not usually invoked in respect of professional occupations. The document also notes that the nature of parish ministry makes it impossible to set fixed hours of work; instead clergy must make provisions for adequate time off.

In considering this matter, all clergy are encouraged to consult the *Clergy Self-Care Guide*.