

POSITION DESCRIPTION FOR DEANS DIOCESE OF DAVENPORT

The Bishop of the Diocese has the responsibility for the entire local Church committed to his care. In our complicated culture, the Bishop needs to multiply as much as possible his presence with all the members of the local Church. To assist the Bishop, the Second Vatican Council called for greater collegiality and subsidiarity in the administration of and the ministry to the local Church. The dean makes the pastoral role of the Bishop more proximate to all members of the deanery. The dean's role is essentially an extension of the Bishop's office. The Bishop, however, as Chief Shepherd of the Diocese, remains accessible to those who prefer to deal directly with him and will attempt to be as visible as possible to all persons in the Diocese.

The work of the dean is personal and pastoral. He will try in every way possible to have a personal relationship with the priests, religious and laity of his area. He will attempt to develop a firsthand knowledge of the personnel, resources and needs of the deanery which he shall share with the Bishop. Through the dean, diocesan goals and policies shall be clearly reflected. In turn, he shall share his responsibility with persons or groups who are suited for particular ministries in the same spirit of collegiality and subsidiarity with which the Bishop shares responsibility with him.

I. Ministry of the Dean

As representative of the Bishop in a geographical area known as a *deanery*, the dean shall work closely with the Bishop at all times and share with him the concern for the good of the whole diocese. As a representative of the Bishop, he enjoys ordinary jurisdiction granted him by the law of the Church. His responsibilities and faculties include the following:

- A. Coordinate the general pastoral activities in his deanery. (Canon 555.1)
- B. Conduct parish visitations.
- C. Develop a close relationship with the officials of the Diocese and be acquainted with the work of the various offices.
- D. Provide personal counsel to the Bishop concerning personnel matters in the deanery.
- E. Install new pastors in the deanery when requested. This is not to be delegated.

II. Ministry to the Priests and Pastoral Leaders of the Deanery

The dean shall conduct regular meetings (especially deanery meetings) of the priests and meetings with other pastoral leaders in the deanery to discuss common parish concerns and, where advisable, common pastoral actions to promote fellowship, prayer and continuing education, and for the general purpose of promoting shared communication and coordinating inter-parochial activities. At these meetings the dean shall provide a setting for the presentation of diocesan programs and policies to the priests and other leaders of the deanery. These meetings shall also serve as a forum for consultation. As a result of these meetings the dean will reflect the status of the deanery to the Bishop and the diocesan administration. Some specific areas include the following:

- A. Promote fraternity among the priests of the deanery by visiting them and phoning them.
- B. Have a special concern for sick priests, visit them and notify the chancery, depending on the seriousness of their illness, as soon as possible. The dean will notify the Bishop and local priests when one of his confreres is in the hospital.
- C. Upon the death of a priest, notify the chancery and assist chancery officials in making funeral arrangements. These arrangements should be in collaboration with the family. Where possible, the Bishop should preside at the funeral Liturgy.
- D. Be responsible for vesting of the priest in Mass vestments at death. It is suggested the dean could receive the body at the parish where the priest is to lie in state and could also be responsible for the committal service.
- E. Encourage priests of the deanery, give fraternal counsel when needed and make referrals to Vicar for Clergy. While the dean should make serious attempts to help the priest personally, it must be noted that the Bishop is always interested in helping his priests and desires to minister to them as a healer rather than a judge.
- F. Welcome newly assigned priests and other pastoral leaders to a parish in the deanery and be especially concerned with the newly ordained assigned to the deanery to ensure they feel at home.
- G. Notify the priests when a retired priest moves into the deanery.
- H. In the case of the death of a relative of one of the priests in the deanery, the dean should notify the chancery so proper information about the death and funeral may be given to the Bishop, the priests and other pastoral leaders of the Diocese.
- I. The dean shall have a special relationship with the Personnel Board.

1. The dean offers suggestions regarding clergy personnel needs in his deanery in light of his personal knowledge and special needs of parishes or individual priests.
2. The dean is available to priests of his deanery and speaks on a priest's behalf to the Bishop/Personnel Board whenever necessary.

III. Ministry to the Presbyteral Council

The Presbyteral Council is the body of the geographical and age group representatives to the Bishop. The mutual cooperation and collaboration of the dean and the Presbyteral Council can help to unify the priestly ministry in the deanery and the Diocese.

IV. Ministry to the Deanery

- A. The dean by word and example shall give leadership to the deanery by implementing diocesan policy and promoting programs of the diocesan offices.
- B. The dean will attempt to solve controversies involving the local parishes when possible. He makes referrals to the Vicar for Clergy, the Vicar General or the Council for Conciliation when the problems indicate such action.
- C. The dean will coordinate and encourage participation of the Catholic parishes in programs set up in the civil community.

V. Selection of Deans

The appointment of the dean is a prerogative of the Bishop whom he represents. Every priest holding a canonical appointment in the deanery, whether diocesan or religious, is eligible for consideration as dean. The dean shall be appointed by the Bishop for a term of three years or for a term designated by the Bishop or until he is assigned outside his current deanery.