

Diocese of San Diego

**POLICY ON THE COMPENSATION OF PRIESTS
2019-2020**

I. BASE PAY

Priests in full-time assignments are entitled to base pay as follows:

Pastors	\$28,440 annually	\$2,370.00 monthly
Associate Pastors	\$27,840 annually	\$2,320.00 monthly
Priests in Special Ministry	\$28,140 annually	\$2,345.00 monthly

II. STIPENDS AND STOLE FEES

Priests are allowed to retain one Mass stipend a day. The ordinary offering for a Mass intention is \$10. Pastors in fulfilling the obligation to offer a Mass for the people entrusted to them on each Sunday and holy day of obligation may receive \$10 from their source of salary for each of these Masses.

All stole fees for baptisms, weddings and funerals belong to the parish where the ceremony takes place. From the donation received by the parish for weddings or funerals, the stipend given to the celebrant shall be \$20 for weddings (\$30 if celebrated with Mass) and \$15 for funerals (\$25 if celebrated with Mass).

For priests who pay taxes, parishes will report stole fees for weddings and funerals as income on the W-2. Parishes will not report Mass stipends given by individuals as income on the W-2. It will be the responsibility of the priest to report Mass stipends as income on his tax return, in particular, as earnings on Line 1 of Schedule C or Schedule C-EZ.

When offerings are collected for a Novena of Masses, as is typically the case in many parishes for All Souls Day, Mothers' Day and Fathers' Day, the provisions of the 1991 decree of the Congregation for the Clergy, *Mos iugitur*, are applicable. According to these norms, the priest is permitted to retain a \$10 stipend for each Mass offered during the Novena. Any amount exceeding the \$10 stipend for each Mass of the Novena is to be sent to the diocesan bishop as specified in canon 951, §1. In the Diocese of San Diego, Bishop McElroy has delegated authority to pastors to designate a charity of their choice as the recipient of the excess amount.

III. BENEFITS

A. TO BE PAID FOR OR PROVIDED BY THE SOURCE OF SALARY:

1. Room and Board

Room and board shall include an adequately furnished living room, bedroom and private bath; cleaning and laundry services. For Social Security tax purposes, the estimated market value of this benefit for calendar year 2017 is \$750 per month. In particular cases, circumstances may require a priest to declare a different amount.

A monthly food allowance is provided for priests in assignments where meals are not provided in full or in part. Priests who must file federal and state income tax returns may receive up to a maximum of \$750 monthly food allowance, which will be reported on the W-2. For religious priests who do not file tax returns, the maximum is \$500 per month.

2. Social Security Allowance

All diocesan priests are required to participate in the Social Security System so that they will be eligible for Medicare and additional income during their retirement years.

Diocesan priests, as well as religious priests who participate in the Social Security System, are entitled to an annual social security allowance of \$2,000. This allowance is paid at the end of January.

3. Retirement Allowance

All diocesan priests in full-time assignments may elect to receive \$3,000 annually, to be deposited into an Individual Retirement Account (IRA) or into a Tax Sheltered Annuity (TSA). This payment will be billed against source of salary and processed at the end of January.

It should be noted that contributions made to an IRA are treated as having been paid to the priest and then contributed by the priest into the IRA. As a result, contributions to an IRA are reported on the Form W-2 as taxable wages, but the priest may be able to deduct the amount contributed for federal income tax purposes (but not for Social Security Tax purposes). Elective contributions to a TSA are excluded from federal taxable wages and social security tax wages.

For religious order priests in full-time assignments, \$3,000 a year should be paid directly by the source of salary into the retirement fund of their religious community.

4. **Health and Accident Insurance**

5. **Personal Property Insurance**

Personal property (not cash) of priests on assignment in the diocese is covered for fire and theft up to \$25,000.

6. **Pension Plan**

All San Diego diocesan priests are required to be enrolled in the Pension Plan for Priests unless dispensed by the Bishop. The annual premium for priests in diocesan assignments is paid by the diocese. Priests who have been released by the Bishop for non-diocesan ministry are required to pay the annual premium themselves.

7. **Continuing Formation**

If not covered by the diocese, source of salary shall pay expenses for the annual convocation of priests and for days of prayer or assemblies of priests sponsored by the Office for Priests.

The source of salary shall pay up to \$500 for an annual retreat and up to \$500 annually for up to ten days of diocesan sponsored in-service and freely chosen programs for pastoral development.

Priests are entitled and encouraged to take up to 12 days annually for support group or Jesus Caritas meetings. Expenses for these days are the responsibility of the priest.

8. **Special Automobile Reimbursement**

Priests assigned in Imperial County may be reimbursed for automobile expenses up to \$200 per month. Priests in other diocesan assignments requiring extraordinary travel may request permission to receive the same reimbursement.

This benefit is taxable for IRS purposes and will be reported on the W-2, although a priest may be able to deduct mileage expenses for business purposes on his tax return by keeping a mileage log.

9. **Automobile Insurance**

Every priest in a full-time assignment can receive an allowance for payment of auto insurance. For priests who file tax returns this allowance is taxable and will be reported on the W-2. The maximum annual allowance is \$2,100.00 for priests who must file tax returns and \$1,600.00 for religious priests who do not file tax returns.

10. **Days Off and Vacation**

Priests are entitled and encouraged to take a day off each week for prayer and/or recreation. At 65 years of age, priests may take two days off each week. After each full year of ministry, priests are further entitled to an annual vacation of 30 days with pay, including a maximum of four weekends. Any additional annual vacation days are without pay.

Vacation time should be taken between July 1 of one year and June 30 of the following year.

Substitution, if necessary, for days off and for 30 annual vacation days is to be paid by the source of salary.

11. **Temporary Disability Care and Coverage**

For any period of time up to three months, the source of salary is to continue to provide for the salary and benefits of priests who become disabled. Substitution, if necessary, is also to be paid by the source of salary.

12. **Moving Expenses**

When a priest is transferred to a new assignment or retires, the source of salary from which the priest is departing is responsible to pay for moving expenses up to a maximum of \$1,000. Payment is made directly to the moving company or reimbursement is paid to the priest for receipts submitted. Documentation is required in order to receive the benefit and for this benefit to be non-taxable.

B. TO BE SUBSIDIZED BY THE SOURCE OF SALARY AND DIOCESE:

Sabbatical Program

A sabbatical is an extended leave encouraged by the Diocese for a period of three to four months in which a priest takes time off from the responsibilities of his assignment to pursue a planned and approved program of study and reflection for the purpose of increasing his theological understanding, pastoral skills, or his spiritual development. Ordinarily, a priest's annual retreat should be included in his sabbatical.

Sabbatical program and travel expenses will be paid by the Diocese of San Diego.

The salary and benefits for priests on sabbatical will be paid from a Diocesan Sabbatical Fund.

Clergy supply expenses, including salary, room and board, will be the responsibility of the sabbatical priest's source of salary.

Priests may seek permission for a sabbatical leave every seven years.

Please refer to the diocesan handbook: Personnel/Priests-9 for the complete policy.

C. TO BE PAID FOR BY THE DIOCESE:

1. **Workshops and Special Programs**

Expenses are paid by the diocese for workshops and special programs which may be required for:

newly ordained priests;
priests needing inculturation assistance;
new pastors
priests approaching retirement;
retired priests.

2. **Language and Advanced Study**

Language studies and advanced studies, approved by the bishop, are paid for by the diocese.

3. **Disability Care**

In proportion to the degree of their disability, the diocese provides for priests who are disabled beyond three months.

Priests partially disabled on a long-term basis and employed part-time, unless otherwise provided for, receive from the diocese that portion of full salary and benefits not received from the source of salary for services rendered.

Priests totally disabled or in a long-term illness situation, unless otherwise provided for, receive from the diocese that portion of full salary and benefits not covered by the disability provision of the Priests' Pension Plan.

4. **Confidential Professional Counseling**

All priests covered by the diocesan insurance plan (CIGNA), and according to the limits proscribed by the plan, are eligible on their own initiative to engage professional counseling for human growth and development.

In addition, after the manner of employee assistance programs, confidential professional counseling is available to incardinated priests of the Diocese of San Diego. The Office for Priests administers this benefit and provides diocesan funds for these counseling services beyond those covered by the diocesan insurance plan, according to fees commonly expected by professional counselors. Priests utilizing this benefit are known only to the director of the Office for Priests. The length of subsidized confidential counseling is determined by a professional review of anonymous treatment reports.

IV. COMPENSATION FOR SUPPLY SERVICES

Sunday/Holy Day Masses

The norm for compensation is:

\$75 for one (1) Sunday/Holy Day Mass;
\$125 for two (2) Sunday/Holy Day Masses.

Weekday Mass

The norm for compensation is \$50.

Funeral and Wedding Masses

The norm for compensation is \$100 for each. Additional compensation should be provided for wedding practice and/or wedding preparation.

Note: Compensation for supply does not include stipends attached to Masses offered by priests providing supply services.

Extended Supply

Compensation for extended supply, for example, during vacations and sabbaticals, should not exceed the salary of a pastor.

Other Work

Compensation for all other work (e.g. confessions, novenas, etc.) should be agreed upon by the involved parties. Special attention may be given for priests who have to travel some distance for supply work.