

THE ROLE OF *PASTORAL* ADMINISTRATOR



FOUNDATION

The Revised Code of Canon Law, promulgated by Pope John Paul II in 1983, includes a provision for bishops to appoint individuals who are not priests to provide leadership for the pastoral life of parishes (Canon 517.2). This innovation in church law grew out of the experience of the priest shortage in several regions of the world. It reflects notions of team ministry, collaboration and pastoral service that have their roots in the teaching of the Second Vatican Council.

What is a *pastoral administrator*?

A pastoral administrator is a layperson or deacon appointed by the Bishop to lead a parish community. This person is responsible for providing spiritual leadership to the community and direction for administrative functions.

What is a *sacramental minister*?

A sacramental Minister is a priest appointed by the bishop to provide sacramental ministry to a particular parish, including presiding at Mass and celebrating Eucharist. The priest works in collaboration with the pastoral administrator to provide additional spiritual assistance to parishioners.

What is a *moderator*?

A moderator is a priest assigned by the Bishop to supervise the pastoral care of a parish led by a pastoral administrator and to provide guidance and support as needed.

How long has this particular leadership model been in existence?

In other parts of the United States, this model was introduced in the late 1980s, in the Diocese of Rochester since 1994. We currently have 15 pastoral administrators leading parish communities in the Rochester Diocese.

Does Bishop of Rochester Matthew Clark just appoint pastoral administrators to small rural and urban parishes or those on the verge of closing?

No. A priest with six years of pastoral experience, a current pastoral administrator or someone in the pastoral administrator pool may apply for *any* open pastoral leadership position in the Diocese of Rochester. With recommendations from the Priest Personnel Board, which includes a pastoral administrator, the Bishop makes the best possible appointment based on the needs of the parish and the diocese at

large. While his preference is to appoint a pastor, it is not always possible under present circumstances.

What are the qualifications for a *pastoral administrator*?

Pastoral administrators come from many walks of life. They are people of deep spirituality and dedication to the Roman Catholic Church and uphold the sacred teachings of the church. They have many years of successful ministry experiences and leadership capabilities.

The Diocese of Rochester requires:

- A Master's Degree in Theology or related field, with a Master of Divinity degree preferred.
- CPE (Clinical Pastoral Education) preferred
- At least 7 years of full-time, successful experience in a parish. Experience in multiple parish settings is preferred.
- A demonstrated commitment to education, development and formation both personally and professionally.
- Leadership ability; interpersonal, relational, guidance and administrative skills; ability to work collaboratively and to empower others; ability to initiate and organize programs; ability to work with councils and committees; and the ability to work successfully with the sacramental minister.
- Evidence of a lively prayer life and a developed spirituality, maturity, emotional stability, and self-confidence.
- Personal qualities: compassion, the ability to be hospitable, a

sense of humor, respect for others.

What are the responsibilities of a *pastoral administrator*?

Pastoral administrators are responsible to ensure the vibrancy of worship, evangelization, catechesis and other ministries and programs, as well as ecumenical and community outreach. The pastoral administrator works closely with the Pastoral Council, and Finance Council, oversees preparation of an annual budget, supervises staff and oversees the maintenance of the buildings and grounds.