



Orthodox Church in America
DIOCESE OF THE MIDWEST

**Assignment of New Parish Rector
Procedure
June 1, 2015**

In the event of a Parish Rector vacancy or anticipated vacancy, either as a result of a canonical transfer of the rector, the retirement of the rector or the death of the rector, it is the sole responsibility of the Diocesan Bishop to assign a new priest for the vacant position. The following is the proper procedure to be followed.

- 1) Upon the realized or anticipated vacancy of the position of rector in a parish, the sole responsibility for the assignment of priests falls to the Diocesan Bishop. The Parish Council or any member of the parish, under any circumstances, is NOT to contact any prospective candidates to fill the vacancy. Any contact with a priest by the parish council may result in the exemption of that priest as a possible candidate for the vacancy.
- 2) The District Dean is immediately to make initial contact with the Parish Council. At that time the Dean will inform the Parish Council of the proper order and procedure to be followed.
- 3) The District Dean will meet with the Parish Council to develop the Compensation Package for the incoming priest. This Compensation Package will be presented to the Bishop for approval.
- 4) Upon the approval of a Compensation Package, the Diocesan Bishop, working with the Dean, will diligently search for a viable candidate to fill the vacancy.
- 5) When viable candidates, or a candidate, have been identified, the Dean will arrange with the Parish Council for a visit and a mutual interview between the Parish Council and the candidate. All scheduled interviews require the presence of the District Dean.
- 6) In the event of multiple candidates, the first candidate will be scheduled for the mutual interview. If at that time the Parish refuses that candidate or the candidate refuses the parish, that candidate will no longer be considered as a future candidate for the parish. If this occurs, then a second candidate will be scheduled for interview.
- 7) When a candidate has been accepted by the parish (and the parish accepted by the candidate), the Bishop will be informed.

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- 8) The Bishop makes the canonical assignment to the parish.
- 9) The Dean then informs the Parish of the assignment. This is also made official in writing to the new Priest, the Dean, the Chancellor and the Parish Council as an official Act of the Bishop.

There are certain protocols that are to be followed in the Orthodox Church.

- If a candidate is from a Diocese other than the Diocese of the Midwest, the candidate must secure the blessing of his respective Diocesan Bishop to seek assignment in another Diocese with the understanding that should he be considered for the vacancy, he would receive a Canonical Release to the Diocese of the Midwest. *(This is for purpose of information only. This procedure is conducted through the Bishop's office.)*
- No member of the parish is to seek information on the prospective candidates unless written permission and a blessing is granted by the Bishop of the Diocese of the Midwest to do so.
- If the Parish has a desire to consider a certain candidate, they may inform the Bishop either through the Dean or in writing to the Bishop himself. Again, they should not be contacting the possible candidate on their own.
- It is not acceptable for the outgoing Rector to seek his own replacement. The Holy Canons prohibit Bishop's from seeking their own successor, and this prohibition applies to Presbyters as well.

This procedure is provided so that good order is followed in the Church. It is indeed the desire that the best possible candidates are found to lead our diocesan parishes. But to reiterate, this is the sole responsibility of the Diocesan Bishop. In the spirit of conciliarity, however, the Bishop desires the input from the parish, the chancellor and dean so that he can best accomplish the task before him.