

DIOCESE OF CLOYNE
DIOCESAN POLICY ON
THE RESIGNATION FROM OFFICE OF PARISH PRIESTS
AND THE RETIREMENT OF PRIESTS

INTRODUCTION

The pastoral welfare of the Priests and People of the Diocese as a whole is the primary concern underlying this policy on the resignation from office of Parish Priests and the retirement of priests in the Diocese of Cloyne. This policy also seeks to ensure for those resigning from the office of Parish Priest conditions which will be in keeping with their dignity. It is inspired by a spirit of gratitude to them and of appreciation for the years of faithful service rendered by them to the Diocese and its people.

1. PRINCIPLES OF CHURCH LEGISLATION

1.1 "A parish priest who has completed his seventy-fifth year of age is requested to offer his resignation from office to the diocesan bishop who, after considering all the circumstances of person and place, is to decide whether to accept or defer it. Having taken account of the norms laid down by the Episcopal Conference, the diocesan Bishop must make provision for the appropriate maintenance and residence of the priest who has resigned." (Canon. 538§3)

1.2 "Since clerics dedicate themselves to the ecclesiastical ministry, they deserve the remuneration that befits their condition, taking into account both the nature of their office and the conditions of time and place. It is to be such that it provides for the necessities of their life and for the just remuneration of those whose services they need." (Canon 281§1)

1.3 "Suitable provision is likewise to be made for such social welfare as they may need in infirmity, sickness or old age." (Canon 281§2)

1.4 "In accordance with the prescription of Cann. 281§2 and 538§3, the Irish Episcopal Conference hereby declares that, while leaving the details to be worked out in each diocese in accordance with its own circumstances and traditions:

- a. each diocesan Bishop have a specific and funded scheme, adequately designed to provide for the worthy maintenance and accommodation for all the infirm, old and retired priests of his diocese;
- b. a number of priest-representatives of the priests of the diocese be actively involved in the administration of the scheme;
- c. the adequacy of the scheme be reviewed regularly." (*Decree No.2 IRISH EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE*)

2. DIOCESAN POLICY REGARDING RESIGNATION FROM OFFICE

2.1 In accordance with Canon 538§3 of the Code of Canon Law all Parish Priests, incardinated in the Diocese of Cloyne, on the completion of their seventy-fifth year are requested to present their resignation from office in writing to the Bishop.

2.2 After due consideration of all the circumstances of person and place, the Bishop shall decide whether to accept or defer the resignation from office of a Parish Priest.

3. OPTIONS ON RESIGNATION

3.1 Resignation from the office of Parish Priest and retirement from all active ministry.

3.2 Resignation from the office of Parish Priest and assignment as a full-time Curate.

3.3 Resignation from the office of Parish Priest and assignment to part-time duties with the title of Assistant Priest

4. FINANCIAL PROVISION

4.1 The retired Parish Priest who retires from all active ministry may receive a designated annual allowance from the Cloyne Sick and Retired Priests Benevolent Fund. As from 1st January, 2025 this allowance will be decided by the The Sick Priest Benevolent fund Committee with the approval of the Bishop. Those who wish to receive funding for a housekeeper can apply to the Sick Priest Benevolent Fund Committee for same.

4.2 The retired Parish Priest who takes up the duties of a full-time Curate will be remunerated in accordance with the provisions of the Remuneration Scheme for Parochial Clergy in the Diocese of Cloyne from the dues account of the parish to which he is appointed. Telephone rental, housekeeper's allowance and local authority service charges, where applicable, will be paid by the parish to which he is appointed.

4.3 The retired Parish Priest who takes up part-time duties as an Assistant Priest will receive his remuneration *pro rata* from the Benevolent Fund and from the Parish Dues account where he has been assigned post resignation in accordance with the Remuneration Scheme for Parochial Clergy in the Diocese of Cloyne.

5. ACCOMMODATION

5.1 In the case of a priest who has been assigned as Curate or Assistant Priest, the parish to which he is appointed will provide his accommodation.

5.2 In the case of a priest retired from all active ministry, the following options may apply following consultation with the Bishop and the Sick Priest Benevolent fund Committee.

5.2.1. Residence in a house belonging to a parish: the Fund will, in lieu of rent, pay a designated sum to the parish to cover insurance and normal maintenance of

the building and its surroundings. The priest occupying the house shall be responsible for his own insurance for personal items and house content. The parish as proprietor of the property shall be responsible for any property tax or otherwise.

5.2.2 Residence in a house which is his own property: The Fund will, in lieu of rent, pay a designated sum to the priest.

5.2.3. Residence with relatives: The Fund will, in lieu of rent, pay a designated sum to the priest. The priest occupying the house will pay for the insurance of his own property.

6. RETIREMENT HOME OR NURSING HOME

6.1

Retirement or Nursing Home: Any Priest who needs respite or full time care in a residential home should contact the Sick and Retired Priest Benevolent fund in regard to Financing of same. For anyone who needs full time residential care legal advice should also be sought in regard to the Fair Deal Scheme.

7. RETIREMENT OF PRIESTS OTHER THAN PARISH PRIESTS

7.1 The provisions of this policy, including the possibility of appointment as Assistant Priest, where considered appropriate by the Bishop, will apply equally to incardinated priests, other than Parish Priests having completed their seventy-fifth year, who retire from full time ministry or from all active ministry for good reason and with the approval of the Bishop.

8. BENEVOLENT FUND

8.1 The Cloyne Sick Priests' Benevolent Fund will serve to finance the provisions of this policy.

8.2 A Committee of representatives of the clergy of the diocese will be responsible for the administration of the fund in accordance with the stipulations of this policy.

8.3 The Bishop, in consultation with the Council of Priests, will draw up statutes for the constitution and procedures of this Committee.

8.4 The Committee will arrange for the provision of funds by:

- a. Collecting an annual contribution from parish income at a rate to be determined from time to time by the Bishop after consultation with the Council of Priests;
- b. Holding an annual collection at Masses throughout the diocese;
- c. Collecting contributions from all incardinated priests in ministry in the diocese at a rate to be decided by the Bishop on the recommendation of the Committee;
- d. Prudent investment of the assets of the Fund;
- e. Receiving bequests from the priests and people of the diocese and elsewhere;
- f. Engaging in any other fund-raising activities which may be approved by the Bishop from time to time.

9. REMOVAL FROM THE CLERICAL STATE

9.1 Where a priest has been removed from the clerical state or has voluntarily resigned his canonical precept, upon request from the Bishop the trustees may remove the provision of accommodation and or remuneration.

9.2 Upon removal from the clerical state either voluntarily or by mandate from the Holy See occupation of property owned by the Diocese or Parish shall be strictly under licence.

10. REVIEW OF POLICY

10.1 A periodic review of this Policy will be carried out by the Council of Priests of the Diocese to make sure that the Policy is fulfilling its stated aim.

10.2 Following the review carried out by the Council of Priests the Bishop will meet with the Diocesan College of Consultors in order to consider and decide on which modifications, if any, should be introduced into the overall Policy on Resignation from the Office of Parish Priest and the Retirement of Priests of the Diocese of Cloyne.

+ *William Sean*

13th October 2025

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