

Appendix 4: Guidelines of the Priest Personnel Board

ARTICLE ONE: PURPOSE

It shall be the responsibility of the Personnel Board of the Diocese of Bismarck:

1. To function in an advisory capacity to the Bishop of the Diocese by studying prayerfully possible means of making the most effective and efficient use of the priests available in the Diocese,
2. To offer suggestions which will contribute to the personal satisfaction, happiness and stability of the priests, and at the same time, accomplish the greatest good for the spiritual welfare of the parish,
3. To endeavor to promote the spirit of fraternity among all priests together with their Bishop, a genuine concern for each other and the needs of the whole Church,
4. To consider the dignity, capabilities and needs of the individual priest and parish with sincere and reasonable attention, and make placement of priests in light of the forgoing, and
5. To respect the confidence of each priest in every instance.

"In making a judgment on the suitability of a priest for the administration of any parish, the Bishop should take into consideration not only his knowledge of doctrine, but also his piety, apostolic zeal and other gifts and qualities necessary to the exercise of the care of souls." (Decree of Bishops' Pastoral Office in the Church, Par. 31)

ARTICLE TWO: FUNCTIONS

1. The Board will provide the Bishop with its recommendation for priest appointments.
2. The Board shall recognize the right of the Bishop to make certain appointments without consultation, such as: rector of the cathedral, Chancellor, priests to various Diocesan offices, and priests for further education.
3. Upon request of the Bishop, the Board may consider the filling of pastoral assignments by persons other than priests.

ARTICLE THREE: ELECTION AND MEMBERSHIP

The Personnel Board shall be composed of five members chosen as follows:

1. Four elected incardinated members from the priests of the Diocese, of which at least one must be from the northern deaneries (Minot and Williston) and at least one from the southern deaneries (all other deaneries).
2. These shall be elected at the annual Fall meeting of the priests of the Diocese. Should there be no Fall meeting, they shall be elected by mail. The Presbyteral Council conducts the election.

3. Terms shall be three years, beginning with election and shall be staggered so that in any three-year period two members will be elected one year and one member in each of the other two years. An elected member shall fill out his term even if he moves to another part of the Diocese.
4. One appointed by the Bishop from among the priests of the Diocese. The Bishop determines the term.
5. In the event that the term of an elected member cannot be completed, a replacement that would complete the term shall be elected by mail according to the procedure that would be used by the Presbyteral Council to fulfill Article Two, number 2 above. Such an election would take place as soon as possible.

ARTICLE FOUR: OFFICERS AND MEETINGS

1. A chairman shall be elected by the members of the Board from among their number at the first meeting after the election of the Board meetings.
2. A recording secretary shall be elected by the members of the Board from among their number at the first meeting after the elections.
3. Terms of office shall be for one year.
4. Meetings of this Board may be called by the Bishop or the chairman at either's discretion as often as is necessary to fulfill the functions of the Board.

ARTICLE FIVE: PROCEDURES

1. Each Diocesan priest shall be invited to complete an annual questionnaire concerning his present assignment and preferences for future assignments. Questionnaires shall be renewed each year.
2. Notification of vacancies in parish and institutional assignments shall be given to all Diocesan priests and all eligible priests are free to apply for these positions. Applications must be made in writing either to the Bishop or to the Personnel Board. This provision does not apply to appointments reserved to the Bishop as indicated in Article Two, number 2 of these guidelines.
3. The Board, after consulting with the Bishop, may invite a priest to prayerfully consider applying for an assignment.
4. Upon the opening of a pastoral position, the Board invites the Parish's Pastoral Council and staff to express in written form the needs of the parish to the Board.
5. The Board may maintain a current file on each parish and assignment in the Diocese.

ARTICLE SIX: AMENDMENTS

1. These guidelines may be amended by the Personnel Board with the approval of the Bishop and the Presbyteral Council.