

Parish Life Coordinator Job Description

In the absence of a pastor, canon 517, § 2 recognizes the possibility that women and men who are not ordained may be entrusted with a participation in the pastoral care of a parish. The definitions given here are intended to assist those responsible to formulate role descriptions in particular circumstances. To distinguish specific areas of responsibility, the following generic definitions are provided:

These notes are written assuming the parish life coordinator is a permanent deacon.

Basic Definition

The parish life coordinator is a woman or man to whom a participation in the exercise of the pastoral care of a parish is entrusted. This care includes the following areas: education and pastoral services, worship, administration (cc. 517, § 2 ;528-537).

Areas of Responsibility

Specific areas of responsibility entrusted to the parish life coordinator include:

a. *Teaching office:* In the area of education the parish life coordinator:

1. provides appropriate coordination of the sacramental catechesis programs such as: pre-baptismal instruction of parents, first communion, first penance, confirmation preparation, marriage preparation (c. 528, § 1);
2. maintains a spiritual and educational vision for religious education activities and or school activities in the parish;
3. promotes the role of laity and provides for an adult education ministry (c.529,§2);
4. assures that a ministry of evangelization and outreach occurs within the parish.

b. *Sanctifying office:* In the area of worship the parish life coordinator:

1. administers baptism (c.861,§3);
2. recruits and schedules liturgical ministers (acolytes, servers, ushers, lectors, eucharistic ministers, presiders);
3. coordinates and supervises liturgical ministers;
4. provides spiritual and liturgical direction for the liturgy committee;
5. serves as minister of the Eucharist and Viaticum (cc.910,§2;911,§2);
6. preaches when pastorally appropriate;
7. administers approved sacramentals (c. 1168);
8. imparts blessings designated in the ritual for blessings;
9. shares in planning and evaluation of Sunday liturgies, children's and other special group or home liturgies, seasonal liturgies and communal penance services;
10. participates in the planning and coordination of the communal Rite of Anointing;
11. promotes marriage and family life, works with couples in marriage preparation (prenuptial inquiry, petitions for matrimonial dispensations, premarital inventory); and witnesses marriages according to the norms of the law.

12. assists in ministry to divorced and remarried persons and assures that access to a marriage tribunal is facilitated;
13. provides spiritual counseling and support to individuals and families;
14. assists families with funeral arrangements;
15. presides at wake services and celebrates Liturgy of the Word and Final Commendation according to the Order of Christian Funerals; if priest is available, he will offer Mass of Christian Burial;
16. plans and coordinates the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults;
17. presides at weekday liturgy (liturgy of the hours and Communion services or liturgy of the word and Communion service) and on Sundays assists the priest assigned in the celebration of the Eucharist;
18. oversees sacramental life of the parish.

c. Administrative functions: In the area of administration the parish life coordinator:

1. reports to the priest supervisor regularly on all facets of the life of the parish;
2. represents the parish community (practically, even if not juridically) and is involved in ecumenical, area, cluster, deanery, vicariate and diocesan networks of pastors (even though he is not canonically the same as a pastor);
3. establishes structures for collaborative functioning and shared decision-making such as the parish council, finance council, town hall meetings (cc.535;537);
4. maintains parish sacramental records, death records, parish archives and prepares annual reports requested by the diocese (c.535);
5. administers the material assets of the parish, oversees maintenance of buildings, finances, fund-raising, and budget preparation in accordance with Diocesan Policy and in collaboration with the finance council (cc.535;537);
6. invites the parish community to articulate its mission/vision in the light of the Gospel and promulgates it;
7. discerns parish needs and plans for the future in collaboration with the priest supervisor and priest supervisor and parish leaders to ensure effective parish programs related to real needs;
8. ensures that there is ongoing evaluation of parish life, programs and staff functioning in the context of the mission/vision;
9. selects staff members capable of performing ministries in response to parish needs, vision, and mission;
10. oversees the formation, training, and ongoing development of staff, encouraging freedom and creativity;
11. forms a faith community among staff members, supporting and affirming them;
12. provides opportunities for prayer and celebration with staff.

Accountability

The parish life coordinator is ultimately accountable to the diocesan bishop. The parish life coordinator is immediately accountable to the priest supervisor with whom he meets regularly for the purposes of self-evaluation and sharing of information, as with any ministry position, it is presumed the parish life coordinator recognizes responsibility toward the faith community in which he ministers as a primary form of accountability.

a. Diocesan level: The parish life coordinator is to:

1. be familiar with the diocesan policies, handbooks and procedures;
2. demonstrate support for the mission statement of the diocese;
3. promote the implementation of its pastoral plan;
4. abide by diocesan guidelines and policies in all that pertains to parish pastoral administration;
5. receive all diocesan communications that pertain to the position of parish life coordinator, and to be consulted regarding decisions affecting his ministry or the life of the parish;
6. submit reports, respecting deadlines established by the diocese. In addition, the parish life coordinator is to attend and participate in meetings concerning pastoral leadership and parishes.

b. Parish level: The parish life coordinator is to:

1. collaborate with the priest supervisor for the coordination and directing of parish liturgy;
2. facilitate clear, honest and open communication within the parish and between the parish and the diocese, its offices and staffs;
3. exercise ministry in a spirit of collaboration and subsidiarity;
4. relate aspects of parish life to the life and mission of the universal church to strengthen bonds of unity with the broader community of faith, its joys, pains and needs;
5. initiate and provide for ecumenical involvement wherever possible;
6. involve parishioners in the administrative function of the parish;
7. familiarize the pastoral council and the finance council with their respective administrative roles and evaluate their performance;
8. keep accurate records, particularly insofar as these reflect the sacramental of the parish;
9. preside at meetings within the parish as required;
10. exercise stewardship over parish properties, and help to foster a sense of stewardship (development and divestment) within the parish;
11. keep books and prepare budgets in collaboration with pastoral councils and volunteers in ways consistent with their respective roles;
12. oversee all parish maintenance, repairs and construction.

Priest Supervisor Job Description

Basic Definition

The priest supervisor provides supervision of the pastoral care given by the parish life coordinator. He is accountable to the bishop and collaborates with the parish life coordinator. He provides the sacraments in a parish where there is a parish life coordinator.

Role in General

The priest supervisor should have a deep understanding of the nature of collaborative ministry. It is essential that he understand the baptismal call of every Christian to ministry and be solidly rooted in Vatican II theology and liturgical reform. Therefore the priest supervisor must demonstrate a pastoral ability to:

- a. accept the role of the parish life coordinator and support and assist him in that role;
- b. afford the laity their rightful place in liturgical celebrations;
- c. serve as spiritual advisor;
- d. provide pastoral counseling on request;
- e. communicate with others;
- f. deal with conflicts.

Relationship to parish life coordinator

The priest supervisor is appointed to supervise the pastoral care of the parish assigned to a parish life coordinator. For this reason, the priest supervisor ought to seek to be informed of the parish life, its needs, growth and development, as well as how the parish life coordinator is responding to the pastoral need. Mutual trust, and respect will contribute to genuine collaboration. It is essential that the priest supervisor and the parish life coordinator communicate regularly to increase, enhance and foster mutual understanding, bearing in mind that both the parish life coordinator and the priest moderator have been appointed by the bishop to their respective roles by the bishop.