

**CASH INTERNAL CONTROL POLICIES**

To protect the parishes from misappropriation of funds, the Diocese of Las Cruces has adopted the following internal controls over cash.

1. All parish bank account signature cards must have the bishop's and the pastor's signature. If an administrator or parish life coordinator is assigned to a parish, he or she also needs to be on the bank signature card. The pastor has the discretion of allowing other priests assigned to that parish to be included on the signature card. In addition, other members of the parish may be included on the signature card. In the process of annual parish audit and/or financial review, or at any other time, if an account is found without the bishop's signature, *or not presented with the parish financial records*, it will be brought to the pastor's, administrator's or parish life coordinator's attention to be corrected within 30 days. If it is found that the account was in existence for more than three years without being reported to the bishop, there may be an additional fine or penalty, depending on the nature of the account and the amount of monies on hand.
2. The pastor, administrator or parish life coordinator may allow the Finance Council president or other parishioners to be included on the signature card. Two signatures are required when checks are signed by someone other than a cleric or parish life coordinator.
3. The parish bookkeeper is not to be on the bank's signature card.
4. All check signers must take the time to review supporting documentation before signing checks.
5. Blank checks are never to be signed. Alternatives to small purchases needing cash would be to establish a petty cash fund or set up charge accounts with vendors.
6. Stamped signatures for checks are not allowed and the parish's bank should be informed about this policy.
7. A person independent of the parish's bookkeeper should be preparing the parish's bank reconciliation. If the bookkeeper must prepare the reconciliation book, it should be reviewed carefully on a monthly basis by someone independent of the bookkeeper. It is recommended that this person be a member of the Parish Finance Council.