

REQUESTS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE BY DIOCESAN PRIESTS

At times situations may arise that cause a priest to request a leave of absence. Leave of absences usually fall into two categories; a time of discernment or a time to care for family members.

When a leave of absence is for the purpose of discernment, the following shall apply:

- I. The priest and the bishop shall discuss the matter and develop an appropriate plan for the leave.
- II. A leave of absence shall not exceed one year.
- III. The priest will usually receive his base salary, living allowance and medical insurance. He will not receive an auto allowance as he is not in active ministry. Bishop will consider other financial arrangements if necessary on a case by case basis.
- IV. For retirement purposes a leave of absence will not be considered as time in active ministry.
- V. The bishop will decide on an individual basis if the priest shall retain his faculties.
- VI. If the priest chooses to return to active ministry, the bishop, in consultation with the priest and the Clergy Personnel Board, will decide the most appropriate assignment.

When a leave of absence is for the purpose of caring for a family member, the following guidelines shall apply:

- I. A priest will first use any annual vacation he has for the purpose of caring for family members.
- II. When a situation requires more time, the priest shall submit a written request to the bishop. This will allow the bishop to assist in making arrangements for the pastoral and financial care of the church and to ensure that the priest's needs are met.
- III. Financial arrangements are open to negotiation with the bishop.