

VICAR FORANE

The duties of vicars forane or regional vicars are from canon law as well as from diocesan policies. Canon law statements are in italics.

*** CANON 555**

§1. *In addition to the faculties legitimately granted him in particular law, a vicar forane has the duty and right:*

___1° *To promote and coordinate the common pastoral activity within the vicariate, and:*

- ___ to convene regular meetings of those involved in pastoral ministry in the vicariate; i.e., meetings of the Vicariate Council of Laity after consulting with the elected officers and the diocesan liaison;
- ___ to take the initiative in convening vicariate gatherings for religious, spiritual, educational, and/or social purposes and to foster celebrations that give a sense of unity and "Catholic" identity to the people;
- ___ to serve as a member of the Steering Committee of the United in Ministry annual fund drive;
- ___ to represent the bishop in the vicariate, and make known diocesan policies and programs, as well as to inform the bishop and ministry heads of the needs of the vicariate;
- ___ to communicate to the parishes messages of special urgency from the bishop and The Pastoral Center;
- ___ to celebrate confirmations when delegated by the bishop;
- ___ to represent the bishop at liturgical functions;
- ___ to represent the bishop at public and civic functions;
- ___ to see to the election of two priest representatives to serve three year terms as vicariate representatives to the Presbyteral Council;
- ___ to serve as an ex-officio member of the Presbyteral Council during his five-year term of office as vicar;
- ___ to serve as a third party in grievances brought against pastors and administrators of parishes. See Grievances and Arbitration, Section D. (August, 1999)

___2° *To see to it that the clerics of his district lead a life which is in harmony with their state of life and diligently perform their duties, and:*

- ___ to meet with new pastors and welcome them to the vicariate; to assist in the orientation of pastors new to the diocese. (August, 1993)

___*3° *To see to it:*

- ___ *that religious functions are celebrated in accord with the prescriptions of the sacred liturgy;*
- ___ *that the good appearance and condition of the churches and of sacred furnishings are carefully maintained especially in the celebration of the Eucharist and the custody of the Blessed Sacrament;*
- ___ *that the parish books are correctly inscribed and duly cared for;*
- ___ *that ecclesiastical goods are carefully administered;*
- ___ *that the rectory is maintained with proper care.*

* Duties identified in 3° are ordinarily covered by the bishop and/or diocesan staff.

§2. *Within the vicariate entrusted to him the vicar forane:*

___1° *Is to see to it that clerics, in accord with the prescriptions of particular law and at the times stated in such law, attend theological lectures, meetings, or conferences in accord with the norm of canon 279, #2.*

___ is to convene regular meetings of the clergy of the vicariate prior to the scheduled meetings of the Presbyteral Council in order to review the minutes of each previous Presbyteral Council meeting;

___ is to present the agenda of the next Presbyteral Council meeting and seek the opinion of the vicariate clergy;

___ is to solicit input on agenda items for future Presbyteral Council meetings;

___ is to seek open discussion of items which concern the clergy of the vicariate.

___2° *Is to take care that the presbyters of his district have ready access to spiritual helps and is to be particularly concerned about those priests who find themselves in rather difficult circumstances or who are beset with problems.*

§3. *The vicar forane is to take care that the pastors of his district whom he knows to be seriously ill do not lack spiritual and material aids, and:*

___ to inform the bishop or the director of clergy personnel when priests are sick or in need of assistance;

___ to encourage all priests in his vicariate to make a will, and have on file at The Pastoral Center an inventory of personal belongings;

___ to encourage all priests to complete a durable power of attorney for health care and have a copy on file at The Pastoral Center; (August 1993)

___ **to see to it that funerals of those who die are celebrated with dignity;*

___ to communicate death notices of priests to the parishes in the vicariate when notified by the bishop's office;

___ ***to make provisions that when priests are sick or dying, the books, documents, sacred furnishings, or other things which belong to the church are not lost or transported elsewhere;*

___ ***to take personal charge of parish property in the absence of a pastor due to sudden illness or death.*

§4. *The vicar forane is obliged to visit the parishes of his district in accord with the regulations made by the diocesan bishop, and:*

___ to do follow-up to the bishop's pastoral visit by calling the pastor in whose parish the visitation has taken place to ascertain the pastor's reaction to the visitation and offer assistance in response to areas of concern expressed in the visitation report.

*Ordinarily performed by bishop

**Assisted by diocesan staff