

**Diocese of
OUDTSHOORN**

Directives

Finance & Properties

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PREAMBLE
MESSAGE TO ALL PARISH PRIESTS/PRIESTS IN CHARGE
AND PARISH FINANCE COUNCILS

The directives in this booklet contain important diocesan policy formed and adapted over the years. They were sometimes laid down in writing through letters from the Bishop, in minutes of the Priests' Conference and other similar meetings and in policy documents. Mostly however, they were agreed to and accepted as being in force without always being written down.

These directives accompany other documents that have already been issued, such as especially, the *Statutes for Parish Finance Councils of 2012*. Together with the *Statutes* and other policy indications in other forms such as letters I send to you from time to time, these directives are to guide you closely in the administration of the parish and the goods of the Church, which is your responsibility.

Already in August 2012, and again more recently at the 2013 Priests' Conference, I asked that the vision statement of the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference entitled *Community in service, reconciliation, justice and peace* serve as a pastoral plan for our diocese over the next few years. The document envisions that we foster among us the spirit and practice of stewardship so that we may commit ourselves to an evangelical lifestyle as a witness to God's people.

Above all, the vision statement encourages us to formulate "a strategy that will move local communities from an attitude of dependency to self-reliance." It is in this spirit that these directives are given. I am confident that they will indeed assist and guide you in living out this bold vision.

+ *F. de Gouveia*

+**Francisco de Gouveia**
Bishop of Oudtshoorn
19 May 2013, Pentecost Sunday

Directive no. 1—GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Section 1

All legal documents signed on behalf of the parish shall be signed by the parish priest/priest in charge who alone has the authority to do so.

Section 2

Only the parish priest/priest in charge, with at least one other parish finance council member may operate accounts held in the name of the parish at banks and other financial institutions. The priest is the first signatory of such accounts.

Section 3

The parish priest/priest in charge shall ensure that complete and accurate books on all financial transactions are maintained at all times.

Section 4

A parish priest/priest in charge who is about to take up an appointment elsewhere shall arrange for his successor to operate parish bank accounts.

Section 5

All parish employees are required to have written contracts of employment. The terms of new contracts shall be authorised by the parish priest/priest in charge, who alone has the authority to do so, after consultation with the parish finance council and the parish pastoral council. Moreover, it is incumbent upon the parish priest/priest in charge to ensure that regular payments are made in respect of UIF and PAYE where applicable, and that, where necessary, an annual payment is made to the Workmen's Compensation Fund.

Section 6

Parish priests/priests in charge are reminded of their obligation to pay those who work for the parish a just wage.

Directive no. 2—ADMINISTRATION OF PARISH INCOME

Section 1

Every parish shares in the obligation to support the Bishop and the needs of the diocese, according to law (canons 222 & 1260). The levy of a parish to the diocese is determined from time to time by the Bishop in consultation with the diocesan finance council. Since January 2012 the levy is at twenty percent (20%) of all income. This will include planned giving, collections,

gifts and donations, rent, fundraising, interest on investments and stole fees.

Section 2

All money received by the parish shall be deposited into the parish bank account without delay. Disbursements shall be noted and fully accounted for on deposit schedules.

Section 3

According to the *Statutes for Parish Finance Councils* (Art. III, Sect. 7) planned giving campaigns are to be co-ordinated by the parish finance council. They will also make recommendations for the increased participation of parishioners on planned giving.

Section 4

In all churches the Bishop may order that a special collection be taken up for specified parochial, diocesan, national or universal initiative (cf. can. 1266). Special collections shall be deposited directly into the diocesan bank account without delay using the prescribed deposit codes. At the beginning of each year, the parish receives a list of special collections from the chancery with the date and description. Special collections taken up during Lent and Advent shall be deposited weekly.

Section 5

Without the prior authorisation of the Bishop, collections for cultural or philanthropic purposes shall not be taken up during liturgical services.

Section 6

At least two members of the parish, appointed by the parish priest/priest in charge in consultation with the parish finance council shall be involved in counting money from collections. A collection reconciliation schedule shall be completed and signed by these two persons. Disbursements shall be noted and fully accounted for on this schedule.

Directive no. 3—ADMINISTRATION OF PARISH EXPENSES

Section 1

The parish priest/priest in charge of a parish intending to spend beyond R7 500 for extraordinary or capital expenditure shall obtain written permission from the Bishop.

Section 2

The parish priest/priest in charge shall determine with the parish finance council reasonable household expenses reimbursable to the priest.

Section 3

No loan shall be made from parish funds to any person, even to the parish priest/priest in charge. No parish shall borrow funds from any commercial lending institution without the written permission of the Bishop.

Section 4

Parish funds may never be used to pay for the personal expenses of the parish priest/priest in charge, except medical expenses which may be claimed from the diocesan priests' medical account. Under no circumstances may parish funds be used for the payment of traffic fines.

Directive no. 4—ADMINISTRATION OF PROPERTY

Section 1

Each parish shall ensure that it carries adequate insurance through the insurance brokers of the diocese.

Section 2

Each parish shall be responsible to the diocese for the payment of the insurance premium. Payments shall be made without delay upon receipt of invoices.

Section 3

Insurance claims shall be made directly to the brokers.

Section 4

Apart from the inventory of movable church property prescribed by the *Statutes for Parish Finance Councils*, each priest shall keep an annually updated inventory of personal property in the presbytery in which he resides.

Section 5

Each priest shall ensure that he has drawn up a will. The priest shall inform the Bishop in writing as to the whereabouts of the will. Alternatively, the will may be sealed and lodged at the chancery, to be opened on the death of the priest.

Section 6

Where there is a need for repairs to, or maintenance of immovable parish property, the permission of the Bishop is required before any such work may be undertaken if the cost is more than R7 500 (see Directive no. 3, §1).

(In the case of structural changes to immovable parish property, the permission of the Bishop is always to be sought, even if the value is below R7 500.)

Section 7

Where the erection of a building or the carrying out of structural changes to an existing building on parish property is envisaged, initially a parish priest/priest in charge is to discuss the proposed project and its financial implications with both the parish pastoral council and the parish finance council. With the support of these councils and, prior to an architect being engaged, he is to consult with the Bishop.

Section 8

Should the cost of the building or that of the structural alterations involve a greater sum of money than that determined each year by the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference, the proposed project becomes an act of extraordinary administration, requiring the consent of the college of consultors and the diocesan finance council for the *validity* of the act (cf. SACBC, Decree no. 18, "*Acts of Extraordinary Administration*", September 4, 1990). In 2013 an act of extraordinary administration is set at R80 000.

Directive no. 5—LEASING OF CHURCH PROPERTY

Section 1

Neither the parish priest/priest in charge, nor the parish finance council or parish pastoral council is to allow anyone to live on church property without the written permission of the Bishop.

Section 2

Any leasing of ecclesiastical property for a period extending beyond thirty continuous days shall be recorded in writing, observing all applicable civil and particular laws (SACBC, Decree no. 9,§3).

Section 3

Before any lease agreement is ratified, it shall be submitted to the Bishop for approval.

Section 4

After it is signed, a copy of the lease agreement is to be lodged with the chancery.

Section 5

"A lease extending over a period of two years, constitutes an act of extraordinary administration, and is subject to the prescriptions of canon 1277" (SACBC, Decree No. 9,§2). In the Diocese of Oudtshoorn, all leases shall be for a period of one year only unless the written permission of the Bishop was obtained beforehand.

Section 6

Ecclesiastical property "shall not be leased at less than the current comparable rates" (SACBC, Decree no. 9,§4). If the property is leased for less than these rates, the written permission of the Bishop is required.

Section 7

In terms of SACBC decree no. 9,§5, any leasing of ecclesiastical property without charge to charitable or other organisations, if the duration of the lease extends beyond three months, requires the written consent of the Bishop.

Directive no. 6—ADMINISTRATION OF MOTOR VEHICLES

Section 1

Where possible, each parish shall supply a motor vehicle for its parish priest/priest in charge and the assistant priest.

Section 2

Each parish shall be responsible for the insurance, maintenance and other related costs of the motor vehicle.

Section 3

Motor vehicles bought and owned by the parish shall be registered in the name of the parish. Permission to purchase a vehicle shall be obtained in writing from the Bishop, who from time to time will set a limit for the amount that can be spent.

Section 4

In case of an accident, a report shall be submitted to the chancery in addition to any claim lodged with the brokers.

Directive no. 7—ADMINISTRATION OF PRIESTS' MEDICAL ACCOUNT AND RETIREMENT PLAN

Section 1

Each parish shall contribute a predetermined amount to the priests' medical account according to the number of priests in the parish.

Section 2

The priests' medical account shall ordinarily make provision for doctors' and specialists' consultation costs as well as prescribed medicines; preference shall be given for the cover of generic medicines. Where possible, these services and medicines shall be taken from state hospitals or clinics. "Over the counter" medicines shall not be covered.

All accounts shall first be paid by the priest either personally or from the parish funds and thereafter he should institute a claim from the priests' medical account at the chancery. Each claim must be accompanied by a covering letter motivating the expense with the original invoices attached. The priest shall keep a copy of the claim.

Section 3

Where it is anticipated that there will be high costs for medical, dental or optical treatments, these should first be referred to the Bishop.

Dental treatment is usually covered by the priests' medical account, except for cosmetic work such as implants, chrome dentures and veneering. If a dentist prescribes crowning or capping, priests will submit a request to the Bishop accompanied by a letter from the dentist clearly stating the reasons before proceeding with the intervention.

Unless prescribed by an optometrist, the priests' medical account covers eye tests and lenses only once every two years. Photo chromatic lenses are not included. Claims may be made for frames only every four years to a maximum of R1000. The cost of contact lenses is also covered but disposable lenses are paid for only if prescribed by an optometrist.

Section 4

Priests who travel abroad shall obtain medical insurance to their own account.

Section 5

Each parish shall contribute a predetermined amount toward the diocesan priests' retirement plan.

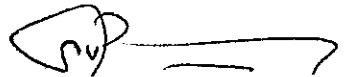
Section 6

Each priest shall contribute to the retirement plan by offering two masses per month, for which the diocese pays two mass stipends into the retirement plan on behalf of the member.

GIVEN AT OUDTSHOORN on this 19th day of May 2013,
the Solemnity of Pentecost, under the seal of the Diocese.

+ F. de Gouveia

+ Francisco de Gouveia
Bishop of Oudtshoorn

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'S' and 'V' followed by a horizontal line that ends in a hook.

Notary