



The Diocese of Fond du Lac

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SABBATICAL GUIDELINES FOR CLERGY AND CONGREGATIONS

Adopted by the Executive Council August 23, 2001, as recommended Guidelines

The purpose of **Sabbatical Leave** is for clergy to return to their congregations refreshed and renewed, with new insights, which will enhance their ministries and the ministries of the congregations. A sabbatical is not to be understood as simply an extra vacation or extra continuing education time for the clergy, but should be a period of intentional rest, renewal and growth. In planning the sabbatical, the cleric should specifically develop a program of rest, renewal and growth in relation to his/her personal, spiritual, emotional and intellectual life.

It is recommended that a cleric accumulate sabbatical leave time, of two weeks per year of service to his/her present congregation, which shall be available after five years (for the first sabbatical or three years for subsequent sabbaticals). Sabbatical leave should not accumulate for more than seven years. It is expected that all full-time, active clergy, resident in the Diocese of Fond du Lac, whether in a parish or mission, shall take sabbatical leave time at least every seven years.

Congregations are asked to plan for sabbaticals and reserve funds to provide to the cleric full pay and benefits during the sabbatical, as well as cover the cost of Sunday supply clergy during the period.

It is expected that any cleric taking a sabbatical will return to serve his/her congregation for at least one full year following the completion of the sabbatical. No person, expecting to move to another cure within a year, should take a sabbatical leave.

Sabbatical leave is to be mutually negotiated between the wardens and vestry/Bishop's Committee and the cleric and should be incorporated into the covenant.

The cleric and vestry/Bishop's Committee should agree upon the dates of a sabbatical leave at least one year in advance. A specific plan for the sabbatical should be developed by the cleric and presented to the Bishop and vestry/Bishop's Committee at least six months prior to the beginning of the sabbatical leave. All parties should agree upon the dates and plan for the sabbatical leave. The cleric is, also, expected to submit a written report, identifying the benefits and key learning experiences of the sabbatical, to the Bishop and vestry/Bishop's Committee within a mutually agreed upon period of time following completion of the sabbatical. It may also be beneficial for parish leadership to write a summary of preparations and experiences in the parish before, during and after their cleric's sabbatical.

Expenses incurred during the sabbatical leave should be borne by the clergy, (tuition, books, supplies, travel, living expenses), although it is recommended that congregations endeavor to make available such funds, as may be possible, to aid the clergy with these expenses.

It is, also, recommended that the diocese develop a clergy sabbatical fund to aid clergy in taking sabbaticals and aid congregations in providing Sunday supply clergy during their cleric's absence.