



Diocese of Scranton

SELECTING NEW PASTORS

Priest Personnel Board:

The Priest Personnel Board of the Diocese of Scranton is responsible for reviewing and discussing information relevant to the canonical assignments of priests. The members of the board engage in this exercise in order to make recommendations to the Bishop so that he ensures that a sufficient number of priests are available within the Diocese to serve the needs of its people.

Process:

The Vicar for Clergy will communicate pastor openings to active clergy and distribute a parish profile. The profile will include demographic and financial information, staff size, active ministries, and specific needs of the parish. Any priest may apply to a pastor opening by completing the New Pastor Discernment Form and submitting it to the Vicar for Clergy.

The Priest Personnel Board will meet to discuss the candidates. The Board may invite priests to consider an opening. This could occur if no one applies, a name surfaces in discussions that seems like a good candidate, or if the applicant(s) are deemed not to be a good fit for the parish. The Board makes a final recommendation to the Bishop who ultimately makes the decision. New Pastors receive a six-year term with an option to renew if approved by the Bishop.

Frequently asked questions:

1. What if I complete my second term and I am almost at retirement age? The bishop may grant an extension depending on the overall needs of the diocese.
2. Once appointed as pastor does that mean I will definitely remain there for twelve years? It would be rare that a priest receives a new assignment before they complete their first term. While the term system is meant to give stability to the pastor and the parish please keep in mind:
 - Given demographic changes, the Blue Print process could result in a parish closure or consolidation prior to the end of a term.
 - A pastor opening occurs during one's second term and it is beneficial to everyone involved to make a change prior to the completion of the second term.
 - The pastor could decide that he has completed as much as he can and it is time for a new assignment.

3. What if I am not comfortable submitting my name for open parishes? Simply let the Vicar for Clergy know that you would prefer to be given an assignment rather than to apply for one.
4. Will every open parish be posted? It is normally the intent to post all pastor openings. One exception could be if a parish consolidation occurs and one of the existing pastors is named pastor of the consolidated parish.
5. What if, for whatever reason, it becomes evident that I am not a good fit to serve as pastor at particular parish? A discussion should be had with the Vicar for Clergy and it may be possible to make a change when the right parish becomes available.
6. What if being a pastor becomes too difficult for me given declining health? Please discuss this with the Vicar for Clergy and options will be identified depending on the circumstances.