

**Report of the Standing Commission on Clerical Compensation
to
The 222th Annual Convention
of
The Diocese of New Jersey**

Members:

Martin F. Nelson, Chair
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The Rev. J. Connor Haynes, Secretary
The Rev. John Charles Powell
The Rev. Denise Cavaliere, Dcn
The Rev. Thomas B. Conway

The commission consists of 12 members; 6 clergy and 6 lay members elected by the Diocesan Convention.

Our objective is to assure that all clergy are adequately and correctly compensated.

The commission monitors compliance of salary, social security offset, continuing education, professional expenses allowance, health and life insurance and housing allowance including housing equity contributions. The Commission makes recommendations to the Convention on compensation matters, but the Convention has the ultimate approval.

The Canons of the Diocese direct the Commission to submit a report to the Convention each year on compliance with all compensation guidelines.

The report on clerical compensation is **due in the Diocese by March 1** of each year. We sincerely thank the majority of parishes who send their reports on time, but there are a number of parishes that are consistently late. It is a time consuming and unnecessary process for Commission members to contact delinquent parishes. Any church, which is having trouble completing the forms, should contact a Commission member.

Of the 122 parishes, we have identified with full-time ministries only 77 sent in their 2005 compensation report. That is a response rate of 63.1%. We have trouble understanding if our form is too complex and needs revision, if churches are not in compliance and do not want to disclose the fact or if they feel it is too much diocesan bureaucracy. Churches that do not send in their clergy compensation forms are in violation of Canon 33, Section 4. The Commission does not want to punish any parish; it simply wants to insure all clergy are paid according to Canon 74. The Commission is available to assist churches with questions or problems of clergy compensation.

Another resource for compensation issues available to clergy and lay is the Church Pension Fund. It, also, contains a wealth of information on church insurance. Their web site is www.cpg.org.

The Commission will face many difficult issues this year. We will continue to balance fair compensation for clergy against the limited resources of parish finances. The Commission has a broad representation of parish sizes to make sure all viewpoints are heard. In addition to the usual issues, the Commission may look into increasing the housing allowance to try to bring it more in line with present expenses. Anyone with thoughts on the subject should convey them to the Commission.

Compensation standards recommended by the Commission and passed by Convention are only minimums. We encourage churches to exceed the minimums whenever possible. Even in these difficult financial times, it is unfair for the clergy to have to accept less compensation to balance the parish budget.

I want to thank the members of the Commission for their dedicated service to the clergy of the diocese. They handle the difficult issues with open, inquiring minds not mention a sense of humor at times.

Respectfully submitted,

Martin F. Nelson, Chair
Standing Commission on Clerical Compensation.