

# *Standing Commission on Clergy Compensation*

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**The Rev. Dr. Gina Walsh-Minor**  
**Vice-Chair**

**Martin F. Nelson**  
**Chair**

**The Rev. Valerie Balling**  
**Secretary**

September 18, 2007

To all Parish and Congregations of the Diocese

Dear Friends:

Enclosed is a copy of the Schedule of Mandatory Minimum Cash Salaries for Clergy which will take effect on January 1, 2008. We are mailing it to you early so that you can use it when planning your budgets for 2008.

The schedule was authorized by resolutions adopted by the Diocese Convention last March. The resolutions direct the Commission on Clerical Compensation to determine a cost of living adjustment (COLA) based on the Northeast Urban Consumer Index for the 12 months ending May 31, 2007. The enclosed schedule reflects this adjustment.

The COLA for the year beginning January 1, 2008 is **2.3%**. We emphasize that this is the minimum and encourage churches that can do so to give their clergy raises exceeding 2.3%.

For your convenience the chart also lists other major components in the clergy compensation package: housing, professional expense reimbursement, continuing education allowance and Social Security offset.

The minimum housing equity contribution for 2008 is \$1,857 for level I parishes, \$2,166 for level II, \$2,476 for level III and \$3,095 for levels IV and V.

The cost of living adjustment is, also, applied to the continuing education allowance. The amount for 2008 is \$1,026.

The housing allowance for clergy who own their homes remains at \$16,000.

The professional expense allowance remains at \$4,500.

The biggest change this year involves the revision to the classification brackets due to inflation. To simplify the change this year, the Commission decided to use only the 2006 points (the last year we have available) and to apply strictly the new classifications as voted on by the Convention to determine the 2008 levels. Many churches have been downgraded a level when the new brackets are applied to them. Churches that do not accept their new classification should send a letter to the Commission in care of the Diocese stating their reasons why the new classification is wrong. **All** clergy are still required to receive the COLA adjustment even though they may be ahead of the salary grid because of the new brackets. After this year, the Commission will return to the usual policy that a church must be in the new classification range for two consecutive years before changing.

If you have any questions regarding the enclosed schedule, please feel free to contact me or other members of the Commission.

Sincerely yours,

Martin F. Nelson