

SUMMER PLACEMENT POLICY FOR THEOLOGY SEMINARIANS

INTRODUCTION

The goal of the Summer Placement Policy for students in theology is to present them with a comprehensive pastoral outlook regarding the particular needs of the Diocese of Spokane. This pastoral formation should provide an opportunity for the seminarian to more fully integrate the human, spiritual and intellectual pillars of priestly formation (PPF 241).

Any exceptions to this policy will be made by the Director of Seminarians.

POLICY

Each seminarian will spend three summers in a supervised ministry experience within the diocese before priestly ordination. Theologians studying in Europe are expected to come back to the diocese for their pastoral placements, i.e., theologians will not spend any of their summers in Europe. This expectation will need to be accepted by the Major Seminary prior to admission.

It will govern all seminarians in theological studies. The administration of this policy shall be the responsibility of the Director of Seminarians and the policy should be reviewed every three years.

PLACEMENT PROCESS

The Director of Seminarians is responsible for maintaining a file which describes the possible placements for summer ministry indicating opportunities, resources, expectations, and personnel.

In February of each year, the Director of Seminarians begins the process of matching the seminarian's strengths, weaknesses and pastoral goals with the opportunities a particular pastoral assignment can provide. Director of Seminarians (in consultation with the seminarian, the personnel of the parish or institution, and the Priestly Formation Council) will make a placement recommendation to the bishop.

The seminarian will receive a letter of assignment by the bishop. All arrangements should be completed by May 1 in order to provide time for adequate preparation by the seminarian and the personnel of the place of assignment.

Care should be taken to assure that those involved fully understand the process for supervision and evaluation prior to the actual placement.

SUPERVISION AND EVALUATION

The onsite supervisor for the summer ministry experience will be carefully chosen by the Director of Seminarians with an eye to his or her dedication to the Church and respect for the priesthood (PPF 249). The relationship between the seminarian and the supervisor is central to the summer experience.

Given the individual needs of a seminarian and the unique pastoral opportunities of the placement, the seminarian and supervisor will draw up an agreement which clearly outlines the expectations, responsibilities, and accountability of both the seminarian and supervisor in the ministry and the evaluation process.

Ongoing assessment and theological reflection are necessary components of the summer pastoral placement.

Moreover, a final written evaluation will be prepared by including the following people:

- The pastor and/or supervisor
- A member of the pastoral staff or someone with whom the seminarian worked closely.
- One member of the parish or client population.

The written evaluations and original agreement are shared with the individual seminarian and Director of Seminarians. A copy of the final document is sent to the seminarian's Theologate and one is placed in his diocesan formation file.

TYPES OF ASSIGNMENTS

Depending on the needs of the individual seminarian and the diocese, the Director of Seminarians will use discretion in choosing the type of assignment from the following three categories:

1. Parish Setting

In addition to the regular duties specified in the assignment, the seminarian is encouraged to enter into the spiritual and pastoral activities and life of the people of the parish as fully as possible.

Placement in a parish setting could include the following ministry experiences:

- Home/ family visitations
- Nursing home/hospital/shut in ministry
- Work with youth and young adults
- Vacation Bible School
- Liturgical celebrations
- Participation in parish meetings
- Marriage preparation
- Religious education
- Outreach

2. Spanish Language and Culture Studies

Given the specific pastoral needs of the Church in Eastern Washington, it is helpful for a future priest to be exposed to Spanish language and culture. Therefore, seminarians are ordinarily expected to engage in a summer language program in the United States or Mexico.

The Director of Seminarians will maintain a current list of available programs.

3. Pastoral Ministry in Catholic Institutions

There are a variety of Catholic institutions throughout Eastern Washington which can provide valuable opportunities for pastoral formation. Depending on the needs of the seminarian, these might include:

- Catholic Charities
- Catholic Hospitals
- Clinical Pastoral Education.
- Immaculate Heart Retreat Center
- Prison Ministry
- Catholic Schools

VACATION TIME AND DAYS OFF

Each summer assignment will be no longer than eight weeks in duration. This will allow the seminarian an adequate amount of time for pastoral formation and still leave time for family, friends and vacation. Unless otherwise agreed by those involved, there will be no time off for vacation during the eight week period of the assignment. However, the seminarian should take one day off each week.

FINANCES

Seminarians in theological studies who are assigned to parishes or other institutions for pastoral experience will be paid a stipend by the diocese for the duration of the assignment. The parish or institution will provide for room and board, unless otherwise arranged through the Director of Seminarians.

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