



**Southern African Catholic
Bishops' Conference**

INTEGRITY IN MINISTRY AT THE SERVICE OF COMMUNION

**Documents of Principles and Standards for
Catholic Clergy and Religious in Southern Africa**

2019



The call to communion in ministry is likened to the image of the African three-legged stool, with a well-practiced balance between personal care, accountability and transparency; care of others and respect for their best interests; and spiritual care in prioritizing one's relationship with God as the primary source from which all else flows.

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INTRODUCTION

This revised *Integrity in Ministry* document is intended to support and guide Clergy, Religious, Deacons and Seminarians serving within the Southern African Catholic Bishops Conference (hereafter, “SACBC”) territory by setting out in a straightforward and readable way the main principles and behavioural standards by which those engaged in ministry seek to live, work and grow.

This document seeks to promote the highest standards of pastoral practice in all our ministries and interactions through promoting honest and ethical conduct and rests upon a commitment to:

- respect in all relationships
- fairness and equity
- faith, poverty, chastity, celibacy and obedience
- developing and maintaining competence
- justice
- maintaining personal well-being
- stewardship in administration
- respond to concerns or complaints of abuse

This document is grounded theologically in terms of a concept that lay at the heart of Jesus’ mission, *koinonia*, or “communion”, and provides a framework for understanding our lives and ministry as men and women of integrity and models of respect and compassion to all those we encounter. None of us as Clergy or Religious can or should work in isolation and this document calls us to become agents of life-giving communion as we endeavour to deepen our personal care of individuals and groups. The call to communion in ministry is likened to the image of the African three-

legged stool, with a well-practiced balance between personal care, accountability and transparency; care of others and respect for their best interests; and spiritual care in prioritizing one's relationship with God as the primary source from which all else flows.

The public and private conduct of Clergy and Religious can be a source of profound inspiration and motivation; sadly, it can also undermine the faith of the people they serve. As Church personnel, we must at all times be aware of the sacred responsibility and trust that has been placed in us and the need for constant personal and prayerful reflection as we seek to exhibit the highest Christian ethical standards and personal integrity. While appropriately addressing past hurt and damage, it is our hope that people will read *Integrity in Ministry* as a positive and life-affirming document which seeks to provide protection for all, especially the most vulnerable.

This document will only find relevance if it is lived; a vague recollection its existence does not equate with implementation. The principles and behavioural standards contained in the *Integrity in Ministry* document seek to inspire us to minister with competence, dedication, faithful love and genuine pastoral care; additionally, we are also challenged to remain vigilant in ensuring that best practice is maintained. The *Integrity in Ministry* document must be read, workshopped, actioned and reviewed on an ongoing basis. Its core values seek to build a culture of integrity within the Catholic Church in Southern Africa and to become a way of living for all Clergy and Religious.

PLEASE NOTE: FOLLOWING APPROVAL OF THE DOCUMENT BY THE SACBC PLENARY, PERMISSION WILL THEN BE SOUGHT OF THE AUSTRALIAN BISHOPS CONFERENCE TO USE THEIR ORIGINAL TEMPLATE. THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPH WILL BE PRINTED ONCE APPROVAL IS GIVEN.

Permission to use and adapt the '*Integrity in Ministry*' document of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference was generously granted and duly acknowledged. It is hoped that this revised '*Integrity in Ministry at the Service of thCommunion*' document will be an instrument of healing and hope within our Church as pastoral ministers model to the people of God the integrity of Jesus as Shepherd, Teacher and Healer.

PREAMBLE

For whom is this document intended?

Integrity in Ministry is a code of conduct for Clergy and Religious in the Catholic Church in South Africa, eSwatini and Botswana. It has been written for the guidance of those in ministry and for the information of those people with and among whom Clergy and Religious exercise their ministry. The values inherent in this document apply also to lay people who have been engaged to carry out formal ministries alongside Clergy and Religious in the Catholic Church.

Context

The ecclesiology of Vatican II provides the framework from which principles for pastoral practice and religious life are drawn in this document. After each principle, an illustrative list of behavioural standards is suggested. The commitment to provide a positive and holistic context for standards prevents this document appearing simply as a list of forbidden behaviour. It also means that behaviour that supports good health or spiritual growth is found on the same page as behaviour that guard against acts of professional misconduct. Different contexts will call for different degrees of compliance. Responses to non-compliance will also vary widely, from loving support, to formal and even legal procedures depending on the nature and severity of the particular issue.

While acknowledging fully the harm caused by the misconduct of some Clergy and Religious, this document begins from the recognition that the majority of those appointed or ordained for service in the Church live in a committed effort to follow and serve the mission of the Church faithfully.

Aim

The aim of this document is to support Clergy and Religious and others who work or minister alongside them on behalf of the Church in their effort to live dedicated and committed lives. It seeks to offer them an ecclesial context for measuring their behaviour as witnesses and ministers of the Church's mission. While conscious of the need to protect against harm, its goal is to provide positive guidelines both for healthy lives among Clergy and Religious, and for the highest standards of pastoral practice.

Objectives

The objectives of this document are:

- to offer a theology of the Church as the context for shaping and measuring behavioural standards for Clergy and Religious;
- to encourage Clergy and Religious in their vocation as witnesses and ministers of the reign of God through lives of respect, service, integrity and selfless love;
- to help Clergy and Religious to care for themselves and one another;
- to support Clergy and Religious in their efforts to be visibly accountable as witnesses and ministers of the Church's mission;
- to support Clergy and Religious in their concern to protect children and adults from all abuses of power, including sexual, physical, psychological abuse, neglect and harassment;
- to support the Church in responding to instances of sexual or any form of abuse and professional misconduct, in the best interests of those who have been harmed, the wider community, and the offender.

Structure

- A brief outline of the theological background to the document is offered on the following page.
- Each chapter of the document begins with a summary of the ecclesial vision relevant to its particular topic, signified by *italic script*.
- A number of principles that flow from that vision relevant to the life and ministry of Clergy and Religious are then outlined, signified by **bold print**.
- Below each principle an illustrative list of behavioural standards is provided. The list is not intended to be exhaustive, but to suggest a number of key behavioural standards that follow from the principle. As already noted, standards range from those that promote good health, through those that support the highest levels of pastoral practice, to those that guard against professional misconduct.
- The degree of compliance required, and the nature of the response to non-compliance, will vary from standard to standard.

- The final chapter outlines the current policies for responding to instances of non-compliance.

Legislation

- Clergy and Religious covered by this document are subject to both canon and civil law. The civil law in South Africa, eSwatini and Botswana covers such areas as privacy, prevention of harassment, protection of personal information, and the professional duty of care, besides the protection of children and other vulnerable people. Clergy and Religious also have canonical responsibilities some of which are alluded to in different sections. We note too that Clergy and Religious may be involved in different Church structures in regard to professional conduct and safeguarding.

The safeguarding policies and procedures of the Southern African Conference of Catholic Bishops are contained on the conference website at [**www.sacbc.org.za**](http://www.sacbc.org.za) under *Protocols*.

AN OUTLINE OF THE THEOLOGICAL CONTEXT OF THIS DOCUMENT: THEOLOGY OF COMMUNION

Jesus and the Reign of God

The first words spoken by Jesus in the gospel of Mark are these: ‘The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is close at hand. Repent and believe the gospel.’¹ In the description of the day that follows Jesus gathers disciples to share his mission, proclaims the word of God, heals men and women of physical and spiritual illness, and spends time in prayer. The day models life under the reign of God, where men and women are healed and gathered together in a communion of faith, hope and love.

Luke begins Jesus’ public ministry with the quote from Isaiah: ‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for he has anointed me to bring good news to the afflicted. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives, sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim a year of favour from the Lord.’²

Throughout Luke’s gospel Jesus reveals the meaning of God’s rule when he heals, mends, reconciles, teaches, forgives and restores life to the men and women of his time. The ‘kingdom of God is among us’³ when men and women are restored to communion with one another and with God.

The Church and the Reign of God

The Acts of the Apostles shows the Church continuing the mission of Jesus and the Spirit by becoming both a sign and an agent of God’s rule of love in the world. The Church brings good news, proclaims liberty, ministers healing and announces God’s favour.

It is a mission that transforms the ordinary values of the world. It grows slowly, from small beginnings, often unnoticed but always carried forward by the powerful Spirit of God.⁴ Its foundation is love: ‘You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind’; ‘You must love your neighbour as yourself.’⁵In

¹ Mark 1:14f.

² Luke 4:18f.

³ Cf., Matt 12:28.

⁴ Cf., Matt, chp 13.

⁵ Luke 10:27f.

fact the mission to live the reign of God is a commitment to a way of love. ‘I give you a new commandment; love one another; you must love one another just as I have loved you. It is by your love for one another that everyone will recognise you as my disciples.’⁶

The Invitation to Communion

When the Spirit of love rules in the hearts of the men and women of the Church they are not just formed as a human community. They share the communion of God’s own life as Trinity: ‘May the all be one, just as, Father, you are in me and I am in you, so that they also may be in us...’⁷ St Paul speaks of this as the great mystery of God’s plan, that he would bring everything together under Christ as head, everything in the heavens and everything on earth.⁸

Relationship as the Mission of the Church

There is no division here between the mission of the Church and its way of life. It is a communion of love, committed in love to the mending of divisions, the healing of wounds, the praise of God, and the celebration of faith, hope and love.

The relationships between the men and women of the Church, and their relationships with the world, are in this sense the very mission of the Church. Out of love we desire the deepest well-being of the other.

We commit ourselves to relationships that embody respect, love and service. ‘You know that among the gentiles the rulers lord it over them, and the great men make their authority felt. Among you this is not to happen. No; anyone who wants to become great among you must be your servant, and anyone who wants to be first among you must be your slave...’⁹

The Church, by its life, mission, relationships and worship, is a sign and an agent of the communion that is God’s plan for creation.

⁶ John 13:34f.

⁷ John 17:21.

⁸ Eph 1:10.

⁹ Matt 20:25-28

1. A Communion of Love

By daily acts that often surprised his contemporaries, Jesus made God's love for every human person very clear. He made a special effort to make it clear in the case of those who might have doubted it the most: the poor, the vulnerable, the sick, the young and those publicly regarded as sinners. He showed to them in particular that they were invited into the communion of God's love. For this reason, the Church also, in all of its actions, makes clear the dignity and value of every human person, especially those most vulnerable. The Church is committed to protect and respect the rights of all persons, among them children, youth, members of cultural and ethnic minorities and all whose rights and dignity are devalued or at risk.

Clergy and Religious, in their particular ministries, have a responsibility to protect, honour and advance the dignity of every human person. They are often welcomed into the lives of people at sensitive and important moments, when people are more than usually vulnerable. Their relationships with people in these moments are guided by a spirit of love, sensitivity and personal disinterest that has the well-being of the other as its foundation. Sometimes the desire for personal relationship or nourishment will be set aside for the sake of a greater love.

Care for others is expressed in many ways: words, silence, presence and touch all might convey love and solidarity.

The area of physical touch calls for great sensitivity. Throughout his life Jesus held, embraced, reached towards and laid hands on those he loved. God is pictured as holding people against a cheek or in the palm of a hand, and nursing them within folded arms. Touch can communicate healing, love and respect. Touch may also be ambiguous, confusing, even threatening to those who are vulnerable. It can be used as a means of control, harassment or abuse. The use of touch in pastoral relationships needs to be guided by prudent judgment that has the deepest wellbeing of the other as its basis.

1.1 In their lives and ministries Clergy and Religious witness God's love for every human person by sensitivity, reverence and respect in their relationships.

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- treating all to whom one provides pastoral support with respect and courtesy;
- actively discouraging in others, especially those who work for us and with us, and avoiding in oneself, all forms of harmful discrimination and expressions of prejudice;
- honouring the equality of women, men and children;
- resolving disputes through respectful dialogue, negotiation and/or professional mediation.

To safeguard integrity, and to preserve clarity of sexual and professional boundaries with regard to this principle, it is essential that Clergy and Religious:

- avoid any behaviour that could reasonably be interpreted as harassment; harassment encompasses a broad range of behaviour, including but not limited to:
 - physical, verbal, written or psychological abuse
 - displays of inappropriate material
 - bullying
 - racial and religious insults
 - derogatory ethnic slurs
 - unwelcome touching and inappropriate behaviour
 - sexual jokes and comments
 - requests for sexual favours

Harassment can occur as a result of a single incident or a pattern of behaviour where the purpose or effect is to create a hostile, offensive humiliating or intimidating environment.¹

1.2 Clergy and Religious witness to the inclusive embrace of God's love

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are (this is not an

¹ See SACBC Child Safeguarding Code of Behaviour

exhaustive list):

- reaching out to all people, especially those who feel alienated or marginalized;
- being sensitive to the diverse forms of spirituality and theology in the Church;
- responding sensitively to the issues that arise when different cultures meet, and respectfully welcoming minorities;¹¹
- encouraging inter-church and inter-faith dialogue.

1.3 Clergy and Religious witness and minister God's nurturing love for every person

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are, at least:

- behaving in ways that nurture the growth and vocation of all;
- behaving and speaking in ways that indicate a respect for the role and function of all;
- working in ways that respect different charisms, spiritualities, qualifications and ministries;¹²
- avoiding every impulse to 'lord it over'¹³ those whom they serve;
- avoiding the fostering of dependency or subservience by encouraging collaboration and mutual respect.

1.4 Pastoral love requires that Clergy and Religious respect the physical and emotional boundaries appropriate to relationships with adults and minors.

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are, at least:

- exercising sensitivity with regard to the physical and emotional space others require in pastoral encounters;
- exercising a prudent judgment, that has the well-being of the other as its goal, in initiating and responding to physical contact, such as giving a comforting hug or an affirming touch;

¹¹ cf., *Vita Consecrata*, art.80.

¹² cf. 1 Cor 12:12-27

¹³ Matt.20:25ff.

- exercising prudent judgment in the expression of affection and regard and in the giving of gifts.
- responsible use of all digital communication (social networks, blogs, texting, internet, etc ...)
- providing pastoral ministry only in places that offer a sufficiently safe environment where there is openness and visibility; (under no circumstances providing pastoral ministry in the sleeping quarters/bedrooms of one's community house, of the presbytery/parish house-retreat centre or in the room of another)

1.5 Clergy and Religious witness to God's care for the most vulnerable by their concern for the dignity and safety of children and youth.¹³

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are, at least:

- avoiding any form of over-familiarity or inappropriate language;
- ensuring, in accordance with local codes of practice, appropriate monitoring by another adult when providing pastoral ministry to a minor;
- avoiding, whenever reasonably possible, being alone with a minor or group of minors in sleeping, dressing or bathing areas and making sure to exercise prudent judgment and behaviour when another adult cannot be present;
- familiarising oneself with the causes and signs of child abuse or neglect, the steps to be taken for the protection of children, and the procedures to follow if abuse or neglect is suspected or observed;
- familiarising oneself with the procedures outlined in local codes of practice and the documents of the relevant safeguarding authorities.

To safeguard integrity, and to preserve clarity of sexual and professional boundaries, it is essential that Clergy and Religious in the exercise of their ministry follow the codes of practice in force in each particular work, ensuring that those codes adequately protect them as well as those whom they seek to serve:

¹³ John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 27.

- behave with due prudence, never staying overnight unaccompanied in the same room as a minor or vulnerable person unless it is impossible to avoid. In that circumstance every provision needs to be made to provide a safe environment, e.g. the permission of a parent or guardian, and appropriate openness and visibility;
- never administer corporal punishment;
- use electronic and print media responsibly;
- never use the internet or social media for sexual purposes;
- do not supply or serve alcohol or any controlled substance to a minor.

2. At the Service of Communion

Jesus served God's plan by serving the men and women of his time. He came 'as one who serves'¹⁴, and he invited those who followed him to do the same, 'washing each other's feet'¹⁵ as he had done. His followers would not 'lord it over'¹⁶ one another, but each would count themselves least of all for the sake of the others. The lost would be sought, the wounded healed, the sinful forgiven, the walls of division brought down, so that 'all may be one'¹⁷ in the communion of love that unites human beings. Clergy and Religious witness to a spirit of service by their way of life and by their pastoral conduct.

2.1 Clergy and Religious are called to witness to a spirit of service. Because of the trust they are given and the visibility of their witness and leadership, they are conscious of the unique power and responsibility they have in pastoral relationships.

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- relating to all people in a spirit of humility, reverence and respect, with a commitment to the deepest well-being of the other;
- creating cooperative and harmonious relationships in the communities in which one lives and works;
- respecting the call to collaborative effort between women and men in accord with the Gospel;
- encouraging and supporting all members of the community in the fulfilment of their vocations;
- consulting widely, seeking consensus and providing feedback where possible, before making important decisions;
- exercising caution in the use of one's status or institutional power, never using these for one's own advantage;

¹⁴ Luke 22:27.

¹⁵ John 13:1-20.

¹⁶ Matt 20:25ff

¹⁷ Ibid. 17:21.

- taking up leadership and service in a community with respect for the life, customs, history and vision of the persons who already make up that community;
- seeking opportunities to share decision-making responsibilities;
- discouraging the development of personality cults centred on oneself;
- creating environments where others feel confident to offer constructive criticism.

2.2 In addition to their own professional development and formation, Bishops and Religious Superiors, and others in positions of responsibility are called to a service of support to those for whom they exercise pastoral care.

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle would be the provision of:

- educative and support structures that assist Clergy and Religious to achieve the standards set out in this document;
- opportunities for formation, development and renewal;
- selection and initial formation processes that support their Dioceses and Religious Congregations to address the concerns and issues in this document and in *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, and *Vita Consecrata*, and in keeping with their particular charism within the life of the Church
- clear communication concerning roles, expectations and outcomes;
- fair and consistent treatment;
- healthy and safe working and living conditions;
- appointment procedures which are impartial and in response to the needs of their Dioceses or their Religious Congregations, and are consultative according to the norms of those Dioceses or Congregations, and which serve the communion and mission of the Church;
- personnel management practices based on fairness and equity;
- appropriate grievance procedures;
- structures that ensure adequate human and financial support.

2.3 Clergy and Religious serve the communion of the Church by service in a number of ministries, including presiding at prayer, sacraments and the Eucharist. In all these moments they are at the service of a community of active and equal persons, seeking to enable the best and fullest expression of the community's prayer, praise and communion with the life of God.¹⁸

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- preparing for and participating in liturgies and services of prayer, either as president or minister, with reverence, humility and respect for all persons in the community;
- supporting and participating in processes that prepare and assist people to celebrate, in prayer and in the sacraments, as fully as possible;
- in the case of Diocesan or Religious priests, celebrating the sacrament of reconciliation in ways that respect penitents' right to privacy and to a safe environment. This will include providing options for openness and visibility for those who desire them, or where it is required by local codes of practice;
- continuing development of one's knowledge of liturgical norms, theology and practice;
- preparing carefully, and developing skills for all the occasions in which the word of God is preached or proclaimed.¹⁹

¹⁸ cf., *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, art.14.

¹⁹ *Code of Canon Law*, Canon 762; 769;279§3.

3. Ministers of Communion: A Life of Commitment

Following in Jesus' footsteps, Clergy and Religious promise their lives to the service of God's plan, to 'reconcile all things to him, everything in heaven and on earth, by making peace through his death on the cross.'²⁰ They are, by the witness of their way of life and their pastoral work, ministers of communion. This is a vocation and a way of life that continually invites openness, growth, humble reverence and ongoing commitment.

3.1 Led by the Spirit, Clergy and Religious continually open themselves in response to a vocation that comes from God and is lived in the midst of the Church and the human community.

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- faithful commitment to prayer, meditation, spiritual reading, scripture and the celebration of the sacraments;
- commitment to a life of faith, hope and love;
- prayerful reflection on, and commitment to, the Evangelical Counsels lived according to their vocation and way of life - for Clergy, a commitment to simplicity of life and the promises of celibacy and obedience²¹; for Religious, the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience²²
- reflection on and commitment to their vocation as articulated – for Clergy, according to the Church's teaching and promises made at ordination; for Religious, as expressed in the writings of their founder, their Constitutions and more recent documents of their Congregations;
- participation in the process of spiritual direction;
- undertaking annual retreats and ongoing spiritual formation;
- development of one's knowledge and understanding of scripture, theology, Church teaching and tradition.²³

3.2 As part of their vocational commitment Clergy and Religious also continue to develop the pastoral and professional skills their ministries require.

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle would be:

- participation in support processes such as, for example,
 - a specially formed support group
 - an existing group or programme - for Clergy, eg: deanery meetings, meeting of priests, meeting of priests of their diocese, diocesan retreats; for Religious, eg: community meetings, province meetings, province retreats and renewal programmes on offer from time to time

²⁰ 1 Col 1:20.

²¹ *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, par 27f

²² *Vita Consecrata*, par 90f

²³ *Code of Canon Law*, Canon 279§1;663§3.

- a one-to-one support relationship with a colleague
- participation in continuing education programmes;²⁴
- participation in regular spiritual direction;
- professional supervision where appropriate
- establishing processes to evaluate the quality of one's work, including assessment by one's peers and those one serves;
- engaging in guided self-appraisal;
- participation in local and national or professional associations of one's peers;
- implementing the outcomes of such reflection and evaluations.

3.3 It is healthy for Clergy and Religious to develop relationships beyond those of their pastoral relationships wherever that is possible, so that pastoral relationships do not bear the burden of providing affirmation and affective support to the minister.

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- the development of a network of supportive peers and friends with whom one has no formal pastoral relationship;
- cultivation of a sensitivity to the inequalities and risks that might accompany a personal relationship with any person with whom one has or had a pastoral relationship; exercise of similar care with regard to establishing a pastoral relationship with a close friend;
- ensuring that one's actions serve the wellbeing of the other in the situations described above;
- reflecting on any such relationships with one's support person, or group or local or Bishop or Provincial Superior or Vicar General, or Dean as appropriate, to review how effectively the boundaries between the pastoral and the personal have been maintained.

3.4 Commitment to one's vocation as a minister of communion means that Clergy and Religious will act with integrity in all their human relationships.

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- establishing relationships that are able to develop and mature within the context of gospel values;
- establishing and maintaining relationships that are characterised by openness, honesty and integrity;
- not establishing a relationship through an abuse of power.

²⁴ *Code of Canon Law*, Canon 279§ 2, *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, Chapter VI; cf *Directory on the Ministry and Life of Priests*, Chapter III; *Vita Consecrata*, art.69.

3.5 By virtue of their commitment, Clergy and Religious give witness to a way of life that respects the dignity and worth of everyone they meet in the exercise of their ministry. Consequently, they act with integrity in all their relationships and interactions with others.²⁵

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle:

- avoidance of all actions or language that could reasonably be interpreted as sexually provocative;
- never seeking to initiate sexual behaviour;
- rejection of any invitation to participate in sexual behaviour;
- as far as reasonably possible, avoidance of situations and relationships that place undue stress on one's ability to remain committed to chastity.

3.6 As ministers committed to the proclamation of the Gospel, Clergy and Religious will act with integrity in their use of the newer forms of Social media.²⁶

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- recognition that, by virtue of their vocation, they have made the move from private to public person
- whilst recognising the benefits of the new social media for communication, be disciplined in the amount of time they devote to it especially when at the expense of person-to- person relationships
- a consciousness that the focus of evangelisation for them is that identified in their appointment, work or mission
- never speak disparagingly about another person on social websites or blogs as it is against natural justice and charity
- take professional advice in regard to the setting up of social networking accounts so as to ensure appropriate confidentiality
- recognise that all information placed in social media can ultimately become public and therefore to exercise prudence in talking about self, others or the Church
- never use photos, videos, or personal information of another without written permission of the person concerned
- write about others with respect and courtesy

²⁵ Cf., *Presbyterium Ordinis* art.16

²⁶ Cf. Pontifical Council for Social Communications *"The Church and the Internet"* February 2002

4. Ministers of Communion: Developing and Maintaining Competence

The Spirit leads Clergy and Religious in various ways into the service of God's reign of love, to witness and to minister the healing and communion God desires for creation. Because of this many people are drawn to us in the hope that their 'grief and anguish'²⁷ might find healing. They come to the Church's ministers in trust and vulnerability, and are received with a love that has their deepest well-being as its goal.

In addition to love and faith, many of these situations call for the pastoral application of professional skills. 'Professional skills' indicates recognised competence in areas such as psychology, social work, spiritual direction and counselling. In keeping with their vocation, Clergy and Religious develop and maintain the skills their particular ministry or way of life requires. The demand of love also means that ministers recognise the limitations of their skills, and ensure that those in need have access to the best possible resources and care when their own limit is reached.

4.1 In response to their vocation, Clergy and Religious are committed to develop and maintain the pastoral skills that their particular ministry or way of life requires.

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- keeping abreast of literature in the area of pastoral care;
- attending seminars/in-service programmes related to pastoral care;
- reflecting regularly on one's pastoral practice with a competent supervisor or colleague, with one's bishop or religious superior
- ongoing development of one's knowledge and understanding of Scripture, Church tradition and teaching;
- remaining updated in the social sciences and disciplines that contribute to pastoral skill.

4.2 Similarly, Clergy and Religious develop and maintain the professional skills their particular ministry or way of life requires.

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- regularly undertaking appropriate professional development;
- keeping up-to-date with the literature and developments relevant to their ministry, vocation and state of life
- active membership of relevant professional associations.

²⁷ *Gaudium et Spes*, art. 1.

4.3 Out of desire for the well-being of those who come to them, Clergy and Religious recognise the limits of their own skills. While often called upon to give advice, they should offer counselling only when professionally qualified to do so.

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- clarifying the context, purpose and expectations accompanying a request for spiritual direction, counselling, support or advice;
- understanding the processes of counselling and spiritual direction, and recognising one's limitations in those areas;
- maintaining an awareness of the professionals to whom one can refer people with specific needs;
- assessing the needs of a person who seeks assistance with any complex personal or relationship problem, and, when necessary and in a pastorally sensitive manner, then referring the person on to an appropriately qualified professional;
- not using psychological tools or tests unless accredited and supervised in their use;
- not acting as a spiritual director or counsellor unless appropriately trained and supervised, especially in being able to recognize and respond appropriately when one is out of one's depth

4.4 The vocation to serve as ministers of healing means that Clergy and Religious will be sensitive to the risks in accompanying relationships in which professional and personal lines are blurred. In such relationships, the well-being of the other, the avoidance of any risk of exploitation, and the maintenance of professional judgment will determine the ministers' decisions.

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- being careful to avoid potential conflicts of interest when called upon to advise family members, employees and close friends; refraining from entering into formal counselling relationships with family members, employees and close friends;
- avoiding, as far as possible, close business relationships with persons to whom one is providing intensive and/or one-to-one pastoral ministry;
- exercising prudent judgment before ministering in a situation where a conflict of interest may arise, e.g. when offering counselling, advice or spiritual direction to more than one person from the same family;
- exercising prudent judgment in the giving and receiving of gifts;
- keeping relevant, appropriate, dated notes and records when providing counselling, advice or emotional support.

4.5 Pastoral care requires that a pastoral relationship be terminated when it becomes reasonably clear that the person seeking support is not benefiting. In such a case the person will be offered help to find another source of assistance.

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- reviewing pastoral relationships with a colleague or supervisor to assess their effectiveness when that is in doubt;
- developing and maintaining a referral network;
- being clear about the limits of pastoral relationships when they commence.

To safeguard integrity, and to preserve clarity of sexual and professional boundaries with regard to this principle, it is essential that Clergy and Religious:

- seek professional advice and review of pastoral relationships where one is aware of:
 - feeling continually frustrated or angry in the relationship
 - being sexually attracted to the person one is supporting
 - projecting one's own feelings and issues on to the other person or persons in the pastoral relationship;
- seek professional advice and review of pastoral relationships where the person one is supporting:
 - acts in a sexual manner
 - is continually angry or frustrated in the context of the support relationship
 - shows no movement towards resolution of the issues at hand. In some cases the appropriate response will be to terminate the relationship, making an appropriate referral to another suitably qualified professional.

4.6 Keeping appropriate records is an aspect of pastoral care.

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- keeping an accurate diary of appointments, written and/or electronic, ensuring that those kept electronically are backed up;
- retaining one's written/electronic diaries;
- keeping a record of significant phone calls and other communications;
- making and retaining confidential notes of any events in the course of a pastoral relationship that provoke concern in you; with such notes to include a record of the date, time and matter of concern;
- some confidential records may need to be retained if these provide evidence of maintaining appropriate boundaries and relationships;
- preserving employment records and correspondence;
- preserving all records relating to students of past or present schools and colleges in our care;
- storing all records securely.

5. Ministers of Communion: Commitment to Justice

There is a thread of revelation that runs through the Old Testament reminding the people of God that their ritual and activities are incomplete if they do not live and act justly as a community. The prophet Amos expresses this clearly: 'I hate, I scorn your festivals, I take no pleasure in your solemn assemblies ... but let justice flow like water, and uprightness like a never-failing stream.'²⁸ Jesus took up the same message many times in his stories and actions. The reign of God is revealed when the hungry are fed, the naked are clothed,²⁹ the poor and the outcast are gathered back into the communion of God's love and receive their just share in the gifts of creation.

For the Church which is committed to be a sign and an agent of God's reign, justice is central to its way of life and mission.

5.1 Clergy and Religious serve as witnesses and agents of God's justice by living and ministering justly in all things.

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- living a life committed to 'act justly, to love tenderly, and to walk humbly with God';³⁰
- supporting one's community to live justly in its own relationships and structures and in its relationships with the wider community;
- encouraging one's community to support local, national and world-wide actions for justice;
- living in an ecologically responsible way: e.g. paying attention to recycling, to means of travel, to the use of energy, to researching more energy and environmentally friendly ways of lighting and heating, to carbon off-setting;
- collaborating with other Christian churches, faith groups and other organizations;
- knowing and promoting the social justice teachings of the local, national and universal Church;
- encouraging just action among those to whom one ministers.

5.2 Clergy and Religious, who exercise authority in the Church or who have responsibility to supervise the work of others, witness to justice by ensuring just working conditions.

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ensuring that all employment procedures are based on principles of justice and equity, appropriate to each particular situation;
- negotiating clear, documented, agreed descriptions of each person's roles, responsibilities and duties, including one's own;

²⁸ Amos 5:21-24.

²⁹ cf., Matt 25:31-46.

³⁰ Micah 6:8.

- providing safe and healthy working conditions;
- providing adequately resourced access to training, professional development, and appropriate supervision;
- making accessible to employees and volunteers copies of “*Integrity in Ministry*”;
- providing just rates of remuneration for skill, responsibility and performance;
- implementing appropriate grievance procedures against improper or unreasonable administrative acts;
- ensuring that all legislation regarding terms and conditions of employment are observed.

5.3 Clergy and Religious act with integrity and fairness when they deal appropriately and promptly with complaints of sexual, physical or psychological abuse.²

In responding to such complaints, it is essential that Clergy and Religious:

- respond to information promptly and seriously, and with pastoral sensitivity and making sure that the individual or individuals feel listened to and their word accepted;
- immediately contact the Province’s safeguarding co-ordinator for advice;
- in collaboration with the safeguarding co-ordinator, explicitly assure those who allege abuse that immediate assistance will be provided;
- in collaboration with the safeguarding co-ordinator, support the healing of others who, as well as the victims, have been seriously affected by alleged incidents of abuse - family, friends and community of both the alleged victim and offender.
- in no circumstances should an individual Cleric or Religious conduct an investigation himself or herself. This may have serious legal consequences.

A Note On Legal Compliance

It is essential that Clergy and Religious abide by the requirements of mandatory reporting, both in canon law (*Vos estis lux mundi*) and in civil law (Child Care Act) and other relevant civil legislation. They also take care to ensure that the proper processes of law are neither interfered with, nor hindered. Notwithstanding the civil law requirements, Clergy and Religious are required to alert Church authorities in cases where referral to statutory authorities has been made.

² All requirements of *Sacramentorum sanctitatis tutela* (SST), *Vos estis lux mundi* (VELM), SACBC protocols and statutory reporting laws must be strictly complied with.

6. Ministers of Communion: Integrity in Administration

While the experience of Pentecost was still fresh among them, the first Christians developed a way of life and prayer together that expressed their communion in Christ: 'The whole group of believers was united, heart and soul; no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, as everything they owned was held in common.'³¹ It was a first attempt to exercise stewardship of the community's goods in a way that nurtured ecclesial communion. They followed their Jewish heritage in believing that the gifts of creation and the fruits of human effort were to be used in the service of God's plan and for the good of all people.

Clergy and Religious who have responsibility for property and finance recognise that they are stewards, not owners of those goods. In the spirit of the first disciples, they administer their responsibilities with justice and integrity.

6.1 Clergy and Religious who share responsibility for the administration of property and finance exercise their responsibilities in the service of communion and in the light of Church tradition.³²

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- exercising their administration in the light of the Gospel, and in the spirit of their vocation and way of life;
- exercising their administration in conformity with the Church's teaching regarding its mission and call to justice;
- observing the rules of office relating to administration of property and finances as set out in Canon Law and/or in their constitutions and statutes.
- fulfilling the obligations of Charity and Civil law

6.2 As an aspect of integrity and the living of their commitment to simplicity of life, Clergy and Religious plan and review their stewardship of property and finance.

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are the following examples:

- exercising responsible stewardship and accountability;
- where appropriate, making sure that the canonical requirements for having a parish finance committee is fulfilled;
- drawing up a budget of income and expenditure each year for the community or work or presbytery for which one is responsible;³³
- keeping accurate records of income and expenditure where expected;³⁴
- having all accounts of a community or work or parish audited or monitored each year;

³¹ Acts 4:32.

³² cf., *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, art. 2451.

³³ cf., *Code of Canon Law*, Canon 1284§3.

³⁴ *Ibid.* Canon 1284§3.

- if responsible for a work, providing financial statements and reports on property administration and maintenance at least annually to a board of governors, a management or finance committee, benefactors and stakeholders, as appropriate;³⁵
- complying with all reporting and accountability laws a required by national and Church legislation, with special reference to the policies of the diocese or religious congregation as appropriate.

6.3 As an aspect of integrity and justice, Clergy and Religious avoid using their positions to seek or obtain any financial or other personal advantage.

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- recording, by the issuing of receipts, the acceptance of all financial gifts or benefits for and on behalf of the ministry in which one is engaged;
- refusing gifts, rewards or benefits which might compromise the integrity of one's ministry;
- not soliciting gifts, rewards or benefits for oneself;
- retaining personal gifts according to the norms of one's Diocese or Religious Congregation;
- as appropriate, diligently recording and celebrating Masses for which one has received a stipend and passing on any binated mass stipends to those designated by one's Bishop or Religious Superior
- if responsible for a work, exercising prudent judgment in the giving of gifts or benefits;
- not borrowing or misappropriating money from accounts;

³⁵ cf., *Ibid*, Canon 1284§2:8°.

7. Ministers of Communion: Responsibility for Personal Well-Being

The Gospel commands us: 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.'³⁶ The Church is a communion of persons who, in love, care deeply for themselves and for one another. Each recognises in themselves and in each other the 'image of God' and a 'temple of the Spirit.'³⁷ Because of this we are moved to care for ourselves and one, recognising that our physical, emotional and spiritual health are gifts from God.³⁸

7.1 For the sake of their own well-being, and for the service of the Gospel and the people of God, Clergy and Religious strive to maintain their spiritual health.

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- regularly nourishing oneself through scripture, daily Eucharist, and the regular reception of the sacrament of reconciliation;³⁹
- following a regular discipline of reflective reading, prayer, spiritual direction and other spiritual practices;
- making an annual retreat;⁴⁰
- participation in ongoing formation;
- nurturing one's understanding of, and commitment to, one's vocation – for Clergy, lived through a simplicity of life and promises made at ordination; for Religious - lived according to the vows of poverty, obedience and chastity.

7.2 Clergy and Religious exercise a stewardship over their own physical and emotional health.

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- regularly having a personal conversation with one's Bishop, Superior or delegate
- making full use of spiritual direction and, if possible, appropriate, supervision;
- periodically discussing one's physical and emotional health with one's Bishop, Superior or delegate;
- seeing that one's overall health is regularly checked by appropriately qualified persons;
- seeking timely professional help and the support of a Bishop, Superior, Vicar General or spiritual director, trusted colleague or friend, when in difficulty in one's pastoral or personal life.

³⁶ Luke 10:27ff.

³⁷ cf., 1 Cor 6:19-20; 15:44-45.

³⁸ *Gaudium et Spes*, art. 14:1; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, art. 2288.

³⁹ *Code of Canon Law*, Canon 276§2;663§2.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* Canon 276§2:4°; 663§5.

7.3 Out of reverence for the gift of life and well-being, Clergy and Religious seek to live healthy lives.

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- taking regular balanced meals, regular exercise and adequate sleep;
- giving time to those with whom one lives in a community or shares the presbytery and taking an interest in the welfare and work of our Diocesan and Religious colleagues and beyond;
- taking scheduled days off and annual holidays;
- moderate and appropriate use of alcohol and prescribed medicines;
- nurturing friendships apart from one's pastoral relationships;
- supporting colleagues who appear to be in difficulty in their pastoral or personal life.

7.4 The Bishop or delegates, or Religious Superior and local superiors have a responsibility to promote and encourage the health and well-being,⁴¹ of Clergy and Religious in their care.

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- providing resources and opportunities, in communities and/or places of work, in parishes, to support the spiritual, physical and emotional health of Clergy and Religious and those who work with and for us;
- providing specific opportunities for those who express a desire or need to address issues concerning their health;
- monitoring issues of stress, isolation, and other risks to health among the Clergy and Religious in a Diocese or Province;
- addressing health as a topic in the exercise of their pastoral care towards individuals and those who work with and for a Diocese or a Religious Congregation;
- providing opportunities for ongoing formation and education in the challenges of living out our commitment
- ensuring just working conditions by applying, where appropriate, the behavioural standards as set out in paragraph 5.2;
- providing resources and opportunities for professional development and professional supervision for Clergy and Religious and those who work with and for us, in accordance with
- paragraphs 3.2, 4.1 and 4.2.

⁴¹ cf., *Christus Dominus*, art.16.

8. When Communion is Broken

When from time to time communion is broken by the harmful misconduct of a Cleric or Religious to whom the Church has entrusted leadership and responsibility, then it is important to do everything possible to restore communion as quickly and fully as possible. That responsibility lies with the whole community and in a particular way with the Bishop, Congregational Leader and their delegates. Their first concern is for the care and as far as possible the healing of those who have been hurt by the Church's ministers. Their next concerns are for justice and the healing of the community of the Church, its relations with the wider human community, and for the healing and well-being of those who have caused damage by their behaviour.

This will always mean full cooperation with civil authorities and processes in the cases where that is required, and will sometimes mean that a Cleric or Religious is relieved from pastoral duties and responsibilities, depending on the nature of the harm that has been done and the allegation or complaint is investigated.

8.1 In all situations of serious damage and abuse all Church leaders should:

- have serious concern both for those who have been directly harmed and for others who have been affected, including parents and family of those harmed, and the community where the violation has occurred.
- do everything possible to heal the harm that has been done to the victims.
- take all necessary steps to avoid any harm in the future.
- offer appropriate support and assistance to those who have been harmed.
- in dealing with different situations, the severity of the case needs to be examined.

8.2 When the complaint involves an allegation of abuse of a child or vulnerable adult then, the statutory authorities, the Church's Safeguarding Office, and the Diocesan or Congregation's Safeguarding Officer must be informed immediately and their advice strictly followed. All sections of the Catholic Church, whether in paid employment or in a voluntary capacity, must follow the Church's safeguarding procedures in all situations. In responding to such complaints, it is essential that Clergy and Religious:³

- respond to information promptly and seriously, and with pastoral sensitivity, making sure that the individual or individuals feel listened to and taken seriously;
- in no circumstances conduct, or allow anyone employed by us or otherwise working with us to conduct, an investigation himself or herself. This may have serious legal consequences.

³ All requirements of *Sacramentorum sanctitatis tutela* (SST), *Vos estis lux mundi* (VELM), SACBC Protocols and statutory reporting laws must be strictly complied with.

8.3 In other serious situations when the matter is of a criminal nature, the statutory authorities must be informed immediately. The Bishop and/or Religious Superior must also be informed.

Examples include:

- intimidation or violence
- exploitation [including financial exploitation].
- serious misuse of communication technology
- fraud and other misuse of finances.

8:4 Relationships between a minister and a person may be damaged in other ways in any of the vast variety of settings where the Church's ministry is carried out. This can often occur when people are engaged with important liturgical or celebratory events, or when false expectations have begun to develop about friendship or relationship with a minister.

- all complaints, no matter how small they may appear, must be taken seriously. Written or verbal acknowledgements and/or responses should be made as soon as possible.
- in a spirit of forgiveness the two parties should try to settle their differences by meeting and talking through the issues. It is preferable that this happens as soon as possible.
- in some cases a third party may be necessary to facilitate such a conversation. If this is not possible then the situation may be referred to the appropriate higher authority.

8:5 When one is dealing with more serious damage to persons or relationships, and in situations of injustice, exploitation or other serious inappropriate behaviour, recourse needs to be made to the Bishop or Congregational leader or to the person with overall responsibility for the particular ministry.

Dioceses and Religious Orders and all Church institutions should have procedures in place to deal with serious complaints and help resolve disputes. Examples would include:

- a suspicion that a Priest or Religious is drinking heavily.
- a suspicion of harassment of others by an employee.

8.6 Since this document applies to all Clergy and Religious, the Bishop, Congregational leader and their delegates ensure that they are subject to its provisions. They submit themselves to all the principles, standards and procedures of *Integrity in Ministry*.

The safeguarding policies and procedures of the Southern African Conference of Catholic Bishops in cases of sexual abuse are contained on the conference website at www.sacbc.org.za under *Protocols*.



**Southern African Catholic
Bishops' Conference**



Catholic Archdiocese of Pretoria
South Africa

Integrity in Ministry

Faithful to the call of Jesus Christ to ministerial priesthood, I certify that I have read and that I understand the SACBC Integrity in Ministry at the Service of Communion document. As a priest serving within the Archdiocese of Pretoria, I will abide by the principles embodied in the document in my personal, public and ministerial life.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Please return signed and dated copy to the Chancellor's Office.

APPENDIX 1

Integrity in Ministry and the Code of Canon Law

The provisions of *Integrity in Ministry* go beyond the provisions of the Code of Canon Law and yet they are based on the Code.

Canons No. 208-223 set out the basic obligations and rights of all Christ's faithful. The first of these reads: 'Flowing from their rebirth in Christ, there is a genuine equality of dignity and action among all of Christ's faithful' (Canon 208). *Integrity in Ministry* indicates a number of the elements of this 'equality of dignity and action.'

In a similar way *Integrity in Ministry* points to elements that might be considered in interpreting and applying several of the following canons, e.g. 212 (the right to make known spiritual needs to pastors and to express views), 213 (the right to the word of God and the sacraments), 214 (the right to one's own form of spiritual life), 220 (the right to a good reputation). In this manner it can help to make these canons more alive within the Church.

The same may be said of those canons that speak of the obligations and rights of clerics (273-289), bishops (381-402), and religious (662-672). In relation to clerics *Integrity in Ministry* indicates useful elements in relation to canons 275 (promoting the mission of the laity), 276 (seeking holiness), 277 (observing celibacy and chastity), 282 (following a simple way of life), 284 (wearing suitable dress), 385 (avoiding whatever is foreign to their state). In relation to bishops there are provisions concerning care for everyone in the diocese (383), special care for priests (384), being an example of holiness in charity, humility and simplicity of life (386). In relation to religious, one may usefully point to canons 663 (contemplation and prayer), 664 (community life), 668 (poverty and the use of temporal goods).

In a quite different field, canon 1741 sets out the reasons for which a parish priest can lawfully be removed from his parish. They include 'a manner of acting which causes grave harm or disturbance to ecclesiastical communion' and 'the loss of the parish priest's good name among upright and serious minded parishioners.' It could never be a matter of simply checking a priest's conduct against this or that particular provision of *Integrity in Ministry*, but taken as a whole the document will assist in giving objectivity to the study of 'a manner of acting which causes grave harm.' It will help in determining whether parishioners are being 'upright and serious minded' in deciding whether a priest has lost his good name.

In short, *Integrity in Ministry* is not in itself canon law and it does not take the place of canon law. At the same time, it will be of assistance in implementing, interpreting and applying canon law. It will do this in cases of perceived misconduct, but it's more important role will be to help us fulfil our roles in the Church and to know that these are being fulfilled to the highest possible standard.

APPENDIX 2

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