

Policy Regarding Retiring Clergy in West Texas

December 1, 2025

When a priest or deacon retires from a position in West Texas, one goal is to joyfully celebrate and honor the ministry of the retiring clergy, and his/her family, as they make the transition into the next stage of their lives and ministries. An equally important goal is to assist the congregation in making a healthy transition into a new pastoral relationship during the interim period, and when a new priest or deacon is appointed or called to serve the congregation.

Effective December 1, 2025, it is the policy of the Bishop of West Texas that when a priest or deacon retires from ministry in a congregation or other ministry, he/she must refrain from participation in all activities of the congregation for a period of 12 months after a new priest/deacon starts his/her ministry, unless specifically invited by the new clergy and with permission of the bishop.

While the following is not intended to be a complete list, “all activities” does include:

- a. **Worship Services:** Sunday and weekday services, weddings, funerals, baptisms, quincineras, school chapels, etc.
- b. **Formation Activities:** In-person or on-line Bible studies, Sunday School classes, Lenten dinners, forums, youth classes, etc.
- c. **Pastoral Ministries:** hospital visits, nursing home visits, home visits, healing services, reconciliation of a penitent, etc.
- d. **Social Functions:** Men’s or Women’s groups, parties/fiestas, social functions, outreach ministries, game nights, mission trips, fundraisers, school functions, etc. If you receive a social invitation you should notify the new clergy.
- e. **Serving on boards/committees/commissions:** The priest or deacon must also resign from service and participation on any and all boards, committees, commissions, task forces and all other such bodies in the congregation.
- f. **Online activities related to the congregation/school/ministry:** social media postings, comments, blogs, e-mails.

Questions regarding this policy should be directed to the Rt. Rev. Dr. David G. Read, D.D.