



Official Communiqué

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THE SALARIES OF THE PASTORAL PERSONNEL

Dear Collaborators,

Over the years, many consultations have been made in order to provide the pastoral personnel of our Diocese with salaries commensurate with the needs of those concerned, with the specific character of the institution which is ours and with the financial situation of the diocesan corporation and of the Fabriques. The decisions made subsequent to these consultations were decreed in Episcopal Regulation Nos. 5 and 7 as well as in the regulation governing the conditions of work of the mandated and support personnel working at the Diocesan Center.

A comparative overview of the salaries granted within a single category of personnel could lead to the conclusion that there are disparities in treatment and that the salary scale is not always respected. Actually, the successive adjustments that have been made, the passage from one salary scale to another and the respect of acquired rights sometimes result in the need to study each case individually in order to recognize that there is no lack of salary equity. The fact remains that certain gaps have been created over the years, and these gaps risk becoming even wider if we don't adopt a salary policy that is more clearly defined.

In the last few years, two committees have been mandated to study the question and to present desirable proposals to the Bishop. The first committee focused its study on the salaries of priests. It soon became obvious that the proposals could not be applied without extending the study to the entire mandated personnel. Therefore a second committee was created in recent months to study the whole question of the salaries of mandated personnel. This report was presented to the Bishop, who wanted to know the opinions of a reaction committee, of the *Conseil diocésain d'administration financière+ and of his immediate collaborators.

It is now possible for me to implement a number of proposals. Others cannot be put forward without a wider consultation, to be conducted in the fall, among the Fabriques, the pastoral agents and the priests. Here, then, is a list of the decisions that have been

made for now, and of those that may be made following the consultation scheduled for the fall.

A. Changes made to the Diocesan Regulations concerning the salaries of Personnel, effective August 1st, 1999 (September 1st, at the Diocesan Center)

1. An indexation of \$260. is granted to all members of the mandated personnel (priests, religious sisters and brothers, and lay pastoral agents) according to the cost of living index.
2. An additional 2% increase, prior to the liability premium where applicable, is granted to the following personnel :
 - a) The lay pastoral agents whose salary is below \$26,000.; the total increase should not raise the basic salary above \$ 26,000.;
 - b) The active priests, as an initial step towards granting them a salary similar to that of the priests of surrounding dioceses and to that of lay pastoral agents;
 - c) The religious sisters and brothers, as an initial step towards granting them a salary similar to that of lay pastoral agents, as requested by the major Superiors of the Canadian Religious Conference - Quebec (CRC-Q).
3. All eligible lay pastoral agents working in parishes will have access to a collective insurance plan and to a retirement plan between now and December 31st, 2001.
4. The Mass stipend paid to the priest who celebrates the Mass *pro populo+ (for the intentions of the parishioners) will no longer be a part of the salary; it will be deposited by the Fabrique in the *Mass Fund+. The Mass stipend will then be paid to the priest who celebrates this Mass.

B. Decisions to be made following a wider consultation

1. To establish a new salary system so as to integrate the pastoral agents who do not yet have a first certificate, raise the minimum salary, reduce the differences of treatment between employees of the same category and set a maximum salary.
2. To upgrade the salaries of active priests in such a way that, within three years, those salaries will be comparable to those of the priests of surrounding dioceses. This readjustment of the salary of active priests must be made in consideration of the other sources of revenue of the priests over 65 years of age (pensions, annuities, employer=s contributions to the complementary retirement plan).
3. To upgrade the salaries of religious sisters and brothers in order to integrate them into Regulation No. 7 within three years.
4. To combine Regulations Nos. 5 and 7 and the one governing the conditions of

work of the Diocesan Center personnel.

5. Eventually to integrate the pastoral agents of the Diocesan Center into Regulation No. 7, without prejudice to the existence of liability premiums or to any adjustments deemed appropriate by the Bishop.

The consultation among the groups concerned must take place this fall. It is entrusted to the *Direction des Ressources Humaines+ , which will set up a team in charge of this operation, so that the decisions made may be operational as early as in the year 2000-2001.

I would like to inform the Fabriques that in the coming year, 15% (instead of 12%) of the proceeds of the diocesan fund-raising campaign (the objective of which is \$ 500,000.) will be deposited in the *Caisse d=entraide des Fabriques+ for the purpose of assisting needy Fabriques, particularly in view of the salaries to be paid.

My gratitude goes to the people who worked at the studies on the salaries of mandated personnel, and I ask for everyone=s cooperation that we may complete this project to the satisfaction of all.

Given in Longueuil on the twenty-eighth day of the month of June of the year nineteen hundred and ninety-nine.

↙ Jacques Berthelet, c.s.v.
Bishop of Saint-Jean-Longueuil

Jean-Pierre Camerlain, priest
Chancellor