

Diocese of Phoenix - Parish Financial Education Policy

Policy statement

In order to accurately account for, safeguard, and meet all canon law, civil law, and policy requirements related to managing the temporal gifts placed at the Parish's disposal, it is required that:

- › The parish bookkeepers/accountants of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Phoenix have formal accounting education;
- › The Pastors and others responsible for financial results understand income statements and balance sheets, the budgeting process, and basic financial management; and
- › All parish staff involved in some way with finances maintain an up-to-date knowledge of diocesan financial policies and procedures.

Related policy information

1. All persons performing parish bookkeeping have passed an Accounting Principles class.
2. Those bookkeepers without formal accounting education at the time this policy is adopted must successfully complete an accounting principles class within one year of the effective date of this policy.
3. Periodic basic financial training is offered at the Diocesan Pastoral Center in the form of a two-day program. The first day is a seminar on "Accounting for Non-Accountants." The second day addresses diocesan financial policies and procedures. This program is mandatory for all priests, parish managers, business managers, bookkeepers, and any other parish staff members working with finances. (Those with accounting degrees need not attend the "Accounting for Non-Accountants" segment.) Seminars will begin in fiscal year 2005-2006.
4. The Parish Finance Liaison at the Diocesan Pastoral Center Finance Department is available to support parishes, as needed, with accounting and financial policy-related questions.
5. The Parish Finance Liaison holds Parish Finance Forums three times per year to address items of interest to bookkeepers and any others involved in Parish finances. Results are summarized and sent to Pastors and finance staff at all parishes.
6. The Parish Finance Liaison is available to provide assistance in helping select a new bookkeeper. In most parishes, bookkeeping alone does not require a full time employee; one qualified individual can often handle the bookkeeping at two parishes.
7. The Parish Finance Liaison is available to introduce new bookkeepers and other new finance-related staff to diocesan financial policies/guidelines and to the support available through the Deaneries and the Diocesan Pastoral Center Finance Department. Most of this can be accomplished via email and phone conversations. In order for this to happen, however, the parishes must inform the Liaison when there is a new staff member in those roles.
8. The Parish Finance Guide, on hand in every Parish bookkeeping office, addresses many basic financial policies and guidelines. (Those policies, procedures, guidelines, and forms are being rewritten and will be presented, as they are approved, in a new online format for immediate access. This will begin in fiscal year 2005-2006.)

+ Thomas J. Olmsted
Bishop of Phoenix

Date