



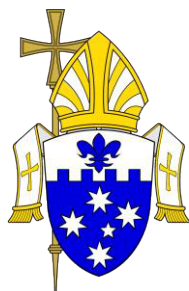
# **PERSONAL & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF PRIESTS**

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**Handbook  
of Policies and Procedures**

**Catholic Diocese of Townsville**





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## A Message from the Bishop

I am delighted with this *Personal & Professional Development of Priests* policy contained herein. It is the product of some fine work undertaken to ensure that our Priests have opportunities to be formed in an ongoing way for “Permanent formation is a requirement of the priest’s own faithfulness to his ministry ....” (*Pastores dabo vobis* 70).



The urgency to engage with all clergy in this regard received a renewed impulse thanks to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The final report to the ACBC and CRA recommended that clergy and religious “undertake mandatory regular and professional development ....” in specific areas (Recommendation 16.25).

What is set out in this document gives me confidence that we are taking the whole matter of ongoing formation seriously in the hope that this will lead to a truly “healthy” presbyterate - that fully and enthusiastically engages regularly with their own self-assessment and ministerial effectiveness.

I commend these policies and procedures to you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads “+ Timothy J Harris”. The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

MOST REV TIMOTHY J HARRIS  
Bishop of Townsville

# Master Policy:

## Personal & Professional Development of Priests

*Permanent formation is a requirement of the priest's own faithfulness to his ministry,  
to his very being. It is love for Jesus Christ and fidelity to oneself.*

*But it is also an act of love for the People of God,  
at whose service the priest is placed.*

*(Pastores Dabo Vobis 70)*

*The entire particular church has the responsibility,  
under the guidance of the bishop,  
to develop and look after the different aspects of her priests' permanent formation.*

*(Pastores Dabo Vobis 70)*

### Objective

To ensure that the personal and professional development of priests is central to the life of individual priests and of the Catholic Diocese of Townsville.

### Policy Statement

The Catholic Diocese of Townsville will support its priests in their ongoing human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral formation.

### Applicability & Responsibilities

This policy applies to all priests in good standing of the Catholic Diocese of Townsville and all priests within the Diocese who hold an office for the good of the Diocese.

The individual priest is primarily responsible for his own ongoing formation  
*(Pastores dabo vobis 79).*

The Bishop is responsible for ensuring that ongoing formation takes place in a systematic fashion. It is his responsibility “to outline a project and establish a program which can ensure that ongoing formation is not something haphazard but a systematic offering of subjects, which unfold by stages and take on precise forms” (*Pastores dabo vobis* 79). He is to take care “that the means and institutions which they need to foster spiritual and intellectual life are available to them” (*Code of Canon Law* 384).

The Director of Clergy Life and Ministry together with the Clergy Life and Ministry Committee is responsible for ensuring that the Bishop’s vision for personal and professional development of priests is enacted.

## COMMUNICATION & IMPLEMENTATION

The policy has been discussed with all stakeholders and accepted by the presbyterate and the Bishop. The Bishop has promulgated the policy and, with the guidance of the Director, Clergy Life and Ministry and support from Clergy Life and Ministry Reference Group, the policy is to be systematically introduced over the course of twelve months and implemented subsequently in a continuous and ongoing way.

### Compliance, Monitoring & Review

Priests are expected to contract professional supervision and to send a copy of the contract to the Director of Clergy Life and Ministry.

Priests are expected to keep a Personal and Professional Development Learning Log and be able to demonstrate 30 units of professional development in the course of a year, including a minimum number of units in specified areas designated from time to time by the procedures accompanying this policy.

Priests are expected to develop an annual Personal and Professional Development Plan and send a copy of the plan to the Director of Clergy Life & Ministry.

The policy will be reviewed regularly, commencing one year after its introduction.

## Reporting

The Director, Clergy Life and Ministry will provide a report to the Bishop, at least annually, on the progress of the implementation of this policy.

## Date of Next Review

One year from the introduction of the policy.

## Related Procedures

This policy is accompanied by the following Procedures for the Personal and Professional Development of Priests:

1. Personal and Professional Development Framework
2. Supervision
3. Mentoring
4. Ministerial Reviews
5. Spiritual Life

The following documents are relevant to this policy:

*Integrity in Our Common Mission: National Code of Conduct for those exercising pastoral ministry in the dioceses of the Catholic Church in Australia* .2023

*National Catholic Safeguarding Standards, Ed.2.* Australian Catholic Safeguarding Ltd. 2022.

*National Catholic Safeguarding Standards Edition 2 – Implementation Guide Standards 5, 7, 8 &10.* Australian Catholic Safeguarding Ltd. 2024.

*Pastores Dabo Vobis, On the Formation of Priests in the Circumstances of the Present Day,* 25 March 1992.

*Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedures,* Diocese of Townsville. (All clergy are required to undertake annual training in Safeguarding)

# 1. Procedure:

## Personal and Professional Development Framework

### Introduction

Ever since the 1992 apostolic exhortation *Pastores dabo vobis*, ongoing formation in the four pillars (human, intellectual, pastoral, spiritual) has been an implicit requirement for continued exercise of ordained ministry within the Catholic Church. While Pope John Paul II was keen to emphasise the manner in which such ongoing formation was implicit in the sacrament of holy orders, he nevertheless recognised the “purely human reasons which call for the priest to engage in ongoing formation.” He said,

*This formation is demanded by his own continuing personal growth. Every life is a constant path toward maturity, a maturity which cannot be attained except by constant formation. It is also demanded by the priestly ministry seen in a general way and taken in common with other professions, that is, as a service directed to others. There is no profession, job or work which does not require constant updating if it is to remain current and effective. The need to “keep pace” with the path of history is another human reason justifying ongoing formation.*

As well as underscoring the importance of an holistic approach to such ongoing formation aimed at helping “the priest to be and act as a priest in the spirit and style of Jesus the good shepherd,” the document also highlights the different needs of priests at different stages on their journey whether on the basis of age or condition of life or duties. This is a reminder that no “program” of ongoing formation can respond to every need of every priest.

Within this context, unsurprisingly, it is the individual priest who is the primary agent of his own ongoing formation. As John Paul II writes,

*In a certain sense, it is the priest himself, the individual priest, who is the person primarily responsible in the Church for ongoing formation. Truly each priest has the duty, rooted in the sacrament of holy orders, to be faithful to the gift God has given him and to respond to*

*the call for daily conversion which comes with the gift itself. The regulations and norms established by Church authority, as also the example given by other priests, are not enough to make permanent formation attractive unless the individual priest is personally convinced of its need and is determined to make use of the opportunities, times and forms in which it comes.*

At the same time, the Bishop bears responsibility “to outline a project and establish a program which can ensure that ongoing formation is not something haphazard but a systematic offering of subjects, which unfold by stages and take on precise forms.”

## A renewed impulse

The final report of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse recommended that the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference and Catholic Religious Australia should

“implement mandatory national standards to ensure that all people in religious or pastoral ministry (bishops, provincials, clergy, religious, and lay personnel):

- a) Undertake mandatory, regular professional development, compulsory components being professional responsibility and boundaries, ethics in ministry, and child safety.
- b) Undertake mandatory professional/pastoral supervision.
- c) Undergo regular performance appraisals.” (Recommendation 16.25)

In December 2022, the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards Edition 2 was released. Within the Standards, there are a number of items relating to matters of ongoing formation/professional development. Standard 5 is titled, and calls for, “Robust human resource management.” Under this standard relevant criteria and indicators are:

Criterion 5.4: Ongoing supervision and people management includes an emphasis on safeguarding responsibilities.

5.4.1 Professional supervision, mentoring and annual performance reviews for personnel include a focus on safeguarding responsibilities.



Criterion 5.5: Before and during seminary and religious formation, candidates are appropriately screened and supported, including processes for ongoing formation, support and supervision of clergy and religious. .

5.5.4 All clergy and religious in full-time ministry participate in at least 6 hours, with the optimum being 10 hours of professional/ pastoral supervision each year. Clergy and religious not in full-time ministry participate in 6 hours of reflective practice activities each year.

5.5.5 All clergy and religious in ministry, undertake ongoing professional development and regular appraisals.

5.5.6 All newly ordained clergy and newly professed religious are supported with a suitable mentor for at least five years post ordination or final profession.

Criterion 5.8: Where clergy and religious from countries other than Australia are recruited to ministry, programs are in place to support their cultural awareness, screening, induction, professional supervision, and development.

5.8.2 Clergy and religious from countries other than Australia participate in a safeguarding induction program which is documented and occurs as soon as possible after commencement of ministry.

5.8.3 Clergy and religious from countries other than Australia are supported with a suitable mentor for at least the first two years of their time in Australia.

As a result, any Personal and Professional Development Framework must include space for professional supervision for all priests, mentoring of new clergy, annual appraisals, and ongoing professional development.

## Professional/Pastoral Supervision

The National Catholic Safeguarding Standards, Edition 2 defines Professional Supervision as

*a professional activity in which personnel are engaged in reflection and learning, under the guidance of a supervisor. Supervision assists personnel in their accountabilities for professional standards, defined competencies for their role and understanding and implementation of organisational policy and procedures. For clerics and religious, professional supervision assists in the maintenance of boundaries of the pastoral relationship and enhances the quality of their ministry.*

As outlined in the **Procedure for Professional Supervision**, clergy in the Catholic Diocese of Townsville are required to undertake not less than six hours of pastoral/professional supervision each year.

Each hour of one-on-one supervision will count as 1 unit of personal and professional development. Each hour of group supervision will count as 0.5 units of personal and professional development

## Mentoring

The National Catholic Safeguarding Standards, Edition 2 define a mentor as “an experienced and trusted advisor or a person who gives a younger or less experienced person help and advice over a period of time.” These standards recommend mentoring for newly ordained clergy, during their first five years, and for new international ministers, during their first two years in the country.

Mentoring is appropriate and beneficial during any transition period in work or ministry. As such, in the Catholic Diocese of Townsville, such mentoring relationships are also encouraged during a priest’s first two years as a Parish Priest or Administrator. See the **Procedure for Mentoring**.

Each hour of either being a mentor or a mentee will count as 1 unit of personal and professional development.

## Ministerial Reviews

The National Catholic Safeguarding Standards call for annual performance appraisals. Since 1994, the Catholic Church in Australia has called for priests to be offered opportunities for both 360 degree assessments and self-guided appraisals. Such reviews are only fruitful if they assist with the further embedding of fruitful practices or lead to strategies for overcoming competency gaps or strengthening areas of weakness.

In the Catholic Diocese of Townsville, the **Procedure for Ministerial Reviews** encompasses both annual self-reviews and periodic 360 degree reviews. Both of these processes lead to the development of a Personal and Professional Development Plan.

Undertaking a ministerial self-review will be recognised as 3 units of personal and professional development. Undertaking a ministerial 360 degree review will be recognised as 6 units of personal and professional development.

## Professional Development

The National Catholic Safeguarding Standards state that “All clergy and religious in ministry, undertake ongoing professional development and regular appraisals”<sup>1</sup>and furthermore that “All personnel with specific safeguarding responsibilities receive ongoing support and professional development relevant to their role.”<sup>2</sup>

It is the bishop’s responsibility, in communion with the presbyterate, to develop a plan for ongoing formation that systematically addresses the four pillars of formation and especially addresses identifiable knowledge or competency gaps in the presbyterate taken as a whole.

Nevertheless, as the principal agents of their own ongoing formation, it is the responsibility of individual priests each year to devise a Personal and Professional Development Plan which names three or four areas for personal and professional growth and how they will address these areas through their own particular learning plan.

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<sup>1</sup> NCSS 5.5.5

<sup>2</sup> NCSS 7.1.4

## The Personal and Professional Development Plan

As active and primary agents of their own formation, priests are ultimately responsible for developing their own program so as to strengthen their gifts and talents, to address their weaknesses, and to help to overcome their competency gaps. The annual Personal and Professional Development Plan, as an outgrowth of the annual ministerial review, is a tool to assist them in this regard.

Each year, as part of their Ministerial Review, and in dialogue with their professional supervisor, each priest will identify three to five areas in the human, spiritual, intellectual and/or pastoral domains that they will address in the coming year. They are invited to set SMART goals related to these areas and to name: how they will achieve these goals; with whose help; with what resources; by what date; and with what expected identifiable and verifiable outcomes.

As they undertake the learning activities and practices which they have identified to help them achieve their goals, they are asked to keep a record of their activities and their key learnings in their Personal and Professional Learning Log.

Each year, priests are asked to send a copy of their Personal and Professional Development Plan to the Director of Clergy Life and Ministry. The anonymized goals set within these plans will enable the Diocese to identify common areas for growth and strengthening across the presbyterate.

## Personal and Professional Development Learning Log

Each priest shall keep a log of his engagement in Professional Development activities. A Learning Log, in spreadsheet form, will be shared with each priest.

Each priest should be able to demonstrate 30 units of Professional Development in the course of a year.

At a minimum, each priest will annually undertake:

- Professional Supervision 6 units
- Child protection, safeguarding, boundaries 3 units
- Diocesan in-services 10 units

For Supervision and Mentoring, it is sufficient to record the date, name of supervisor/mentor, the contact type (face-to-face, telephone, video) and the duration (1 hour = 1 PD unit; 45 minutes = 0.75 PD units). You may wish to record here any topics that were covered.

For other formal or informal learning activities. Please record:

- Date: date activated started or finished.
- Program Name: conference title; diocesan in-service; book name, etc.
- Delivery Type: a drop down box to select face-to-face, online, or informal.
- PD Units: Calculated as described below.
- Topics covered: eg. Homiletics, conflict resolution, healthy boundaries.
- Reflection: A place to briefly recorded key learnings or application to ministry.
- Evidence: Completion certificate; record of attendance; etc.  
For informal activities, you will need to write a brief reflection of key learnings and applications. It is recommended that you do this in Google Docs and insert the link to the document in this cell.

The Learning Log looks like this:

<b>Professional Development</b>						
Date	Program	Delivery Type	PD units	Topics	Reflection on activity	Evidence
			0.00			
<b>Supervision</b>						
Date	Supervisor	Contact Type	PD units	Topics		
			0.00			
<b>Mentoring</b>						
Date	Mentor	Contact Type	PD Units	Topics		
			0.00			

## Calculating Professional Development Units

Normally, professional development units are related to the number of hours engaged in the formative experience, e.g. 7 hours of in-service. For some activities, a maximum number of recognised units is acknowledged in a year for a formative activity, eg. a university course may be recognised for 20 hours of CPD even though you may well have spent many more hours engaged in the activity.

Activity Type	Units/ Hours
University course applicable to pastoral ministry/practice	20 units per course
Certificate III, Certificate IV or Diploma in business, management, leadership, counselling, community service, etc.	10 units for Certificate III, 15 units for Certificate IV, 20 units for Diploma
Live events (e.g., clergy in-service, conferences, seminars, lectures, etc.)	Actual educational time dedicated to the activity. Maximum 20 units per year
Web-based course applicable to pastoral ministry/practice	Actual educational time dedicated to the activity. Maximum 10 units per year.
Readings relevant to pastoral ministry/practice	1 unit per 50 pages. Maximum 10 units per year.
Professional/ Pastoral Supervision	1 unit per hour of individual supervision and 0.5 for group supervision
Mentoring	1 unit per hour of mentoring

## Appendix A: Continuing Professional Development across the Professions

*based on: <http://www.professionalsaustralia.org.au/australian-government/blog/the-importance-of-continuing-professional-development/>*

The need for continuing education is a professional requirement across almost all professions and industry sectors, from social work to medicine, from building to financial planning. It is a requirement for accreditation or registration with peak industry/professional bodies. Practitioners are required to keep a log of hours/units of professional development which either must be submitted for reaccreditation or may be audited by the oversight body.

All peak bodies allow for both formal and informal continuing professional development (CPD).

Formal CPD may include: full and part-time tertiary study including both accredited and non-accredited courses; conferences and seminars; undertaking research; writing papers and delivering work-related presentations; in-service education; and formally arranged mentoring which can include a 'learning contract'.

Informal CPD may include: reading of technical journals and other publications; discussions with colleagues; sharing knowledge and information at meetings; participation in work-related committees; internet research; participation in activities associated with a professional association of which you are a member; and active involvement in a professional association.

Whether the CPD is formal or informal, members are required: to keep a log of attendance (or the date of the learning activity); supporting documentation of certificates; and records of reflections on learning.



## Reflection and CPD

Reflection is about giving careful thought to your experiences at work to help ongoing improvement in your performance. In the context of continuing professional development it includes thinking about your performance at work and the ways in which you can improve. It also involves thinking critically about the professional development activity you undertake in order to evaluate what you have learned its application in your current work role and its value to your employer. CPD-related reflection includes asking yourself questions about:

- aspects of your work performance that could be improved;
- how new knowledge or a new skill could be applied in your current work role;
- who would benefit from your doing so;
- what you would need to do differently in order to successfully apply what you have learned;
- whether you found anything challenging; and
- if you have any habits that would need to be changed in order to apply what you have learned.

Reflection should also involve an examination of your own subjective experience. For example, you learned a new skill on a course you tried it at work and it felt very awkward. You felt tempted to revert to how you did things before. You evaluate the benefits of persisting. By applying reflective practice in this way many professionals have been enabled to deal competently with their own resistance to change.

In some fields such as teaching, reflective practice is an integral part of professional practice. But for many professionals, it is an unfamiliar skill. The article 'Reflective Practice' provides a more in-depth explanation about what it is the value for professional practice improvement and how to go about using it.

### Example CPD Requirements:

Queensland College of Teachers:	20 hours of CPD per year
Registered Nurses and Midwives:	20 hours of CPD per year
Chartered Engineers:	150 hours of CPD over a 3-year period
Chartered Accountants:	120 hours of CPD over a 3-year period
Financial Advisers:	40 hours of CPD per year
Social Workers:	30 to 50 hours of CPD each year
Psychologists:	30 hours of CPD per year

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, in their document “The Basic Plan for the Ongoing Formation of Priests” recommended, as a *basic minimum*, “Fifty-two contact hours of education per year (in other words, one hour per week).”

## Appendix B: Reflecting on professional reading, listening and/or viewing

based on Queensland College of Teachers guidelines.

<https://cdn.qct.edu.au/pdf/ReflectingOnProfessionalLearning.pdf>

Individual professional learning activities such as professional reading, listening and viewing contribute towards meeting your professional development requirements by enabling you to learn in your own time. Such activities connect you to research, knowledge and practice in other settings and provide examples of practical applications of theory and knowledge.

The *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* provide a framework for the critical reflection that enables you to benefit from professional learning activities such as professional reading, listening and viewing. Evidence for these activities could be in the form of a reflective log which includes bibliographic details and the outcome of learning such as a presentation to colleagues, report or implementation into planning. You may choose to use the following optional template to validate your professional reading, listening and viewing activities.

### For professional reading

- Title of article/book, author, publisher, date, number of pages.
- Area of professional/pastoral ministry to which the work relates.
- Outcome to which reading is linked (presentation, article, professional practice)
- Your reflection

### For listening to/viewing an educational program/video

- Title of video/program and producer/source
- Duration of activity
- Area of professional/pastoral ministry to which the program or video relates.

- Outcome to which listening/viewing is linked (presentation, article, professional practice)
- Your reflection

### To guide your reflection

The following reflective sequence may help you relate what you read, listen to or view to what you already know and do:

- What I have learned (a brief summary of the content of the article/book or program)
- Ways in which the content of the activity relates to my knowledge as a priest or to my pastoral practice
- How this content contributes to my ability to meet the pastoral needs of my parishioners
- Ideas I could use to develop or improve my practice
- Obstacles that might impact on my applying these ideas and how I might overcome these obstacles
- Changes others will see in my practice as a result of this activity
- How I might evaluate if I have been successful in applying ideas and changes
- Ways I could share my learning with colleagues
- Further professional development that could help me implement the ideas.

## Appendix C: Creating a Personal and Professional Development Plan

based on the guidelines of the Anglican Archdiocese of Sydney:

<https://www.sds.asn.au/sites/default/files/Lifelong%20Ministry%20Development%20Guidelines.only.2017.pdf>

### 1. Identify your priorities:

Consider the domains of conviction, character and competence. Think about the ministry role you're now in – which competencies, skills, knowledge or behaviours are most important in that role. Is the role largely tactical, strategic or a bit of both? Is it largely one-on-one ministry, equipping others (staff or lay leaders), teaching large groups, or more behind the scenes?

It is important to consider different aspects of your role as well as your own growth as a Christian person. It's also worth thinking about where you might be in two, five and ten years' time.

### 2. Do some diagnostic work - collect some data:

Once you've settled on a few priorities within your role, now assess yourself. There are several avenues you can go down.

...

- Any 360-degree information you might have – could include a formal 360-degree tool or more informal approach (e.g., personal engagement / interview with people within your ministry environment)
- Church assessment (or audit) – conduct an assessment of the various ministries and functions of the church e.g., a minister assessed online survey, invite a number of church members (staff / lay) to conduct surveys, interview a number of people from church etc.
- Ministry assessment (or audit) – if you have identified a specific ministry or activity to focus on why not conduct an assessment (formal or informal) to

identify key opportunities, e.g., minister assessed online survey, invite leaders or participants in ministry.

### 3. Identify your strengths and areas for development:

From the data, identify some of your strengths. Identify one or two key areas for development that relate back to your priorities. How can you use your strengths to build on your areas for development?

### 4. Complete your Personal and Professional Development Plan:

Fill in the table (example below) for your development area(s) with ideas for activities, dates for completion, and outcomes you expect to see when you've shown development in that area. Remember to keep it SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timeframed.

### 5. Reflection / evaluation of your Personal and Professional Development Plan:

Take the time to reflect on your Personal and Professional Development Plan regularly, and particularly towards the end of each cycle – specifically: How far have you progressed towards your objective? How well have you done? (What went well? What could you have done better?) It is well established that taking time to reflect on our work helps us to learn and develop for the future.

### 6. Make sure you're accountable:

With many demands on a minister's time, it is well understood that personal accountability greatly improves the likelihood of completion of tasks and personal evaluation. We encourage you to make yourself accountable to someone you trust to review your Personal and Professional Development Plan from time to time (e.g., quarterly or six monthly).

This person needs to be someone you trust with your personal goals and achievements (confidentiality) as well as being able and willing to hold you accountable for your commitments. Examples might include a coach, mentor, pastoral supervisor, bishop, lay leader, peer or other person.

## Appendix D: Example Goal from Personal and Professional Development Plan

Goal 1	
Area of Priestly Life and Ministry	Homiletics
Goal	Sunday homilies will be more relevant to the daily lives of parishioners
Action/s Planned	Use two life application commentaries when preparing for homilies. Read book chapters on understanding local context. Meet regularly with small group to pray with the Sunday Scriptures in anticipation and to listen to their reflections on connection to life.
By when	Next ministerial review
With help from	Small group of parishioners
Indicators of Success	Each Sunday homily will include one or two specific relevant life applications. Elicited feedback from small group of parishioners.

### Notes:

List books here.

## 2. Procedure: Supervision

### Introduction

Integrity in Our Common Mission 4.2 states that “we are committed to develop the pastoral and professional skills our ministries and roles require”, including “participating in regular professional supervision”.

Integrity in Our Common Mission 3.4 & 4.5 also state that it is a matter of just working conditions to ensure that such professional supervision is provided and adequately resourced.

The National Catholic Safeguarding Standard 5.5.4 calls on the Catholic Church in Australia to ensure that “all clergy and religious in full-time ministry participate in at least 6 hours, with the optimum being 10 hours of professional/pastoral supervision each year” and that “clergy and religious not in full-time ministry participate in 6 hours of reflective practice activities each year.”

### Overview

The diocese will ensure that an adequate number of trained supervisors are available for those clergy engaged in full time ministry.

Each member of the clergy will engage a professional supervisor and covenant with them for one year of regular supervision. The number of supervisory sessions per year is to be not less than six.

A record of the supervisory relationship and of each session will be kept by each member of the clergy.



## Identification, Selection & Training of Supervisors

A list of appropriate supervisors for face-to-face or online supervision will be submitted by the Director of Clergy Life and Ministry to the Bishop for his approval.

Where there exists an inadequate number of skilled supervisors for face-to-face supervision within the diocese, the diocese is committed to either the training of such supervisors or to contracting FIFO supervisors from other parts of the church in Australia or from other external agencies.

## Covenant and Record of Supervisory Relationship

Both Supervisor and Supervisee will establish a file for supervision records.

By the third supervisory session, it is expected that the Supervisor and Supervisee will agree on and sign a Supervision Covenant, outlining the regularity of meetings and their responsibilities for supervision. The Supervisor and Supervisee will place this agreement on file and the Supervisee will send a signed copy to the Director of Clergy Life and Ministry.

Both the Supervisor and Supervisee will keep a log of supervision sessions, including a record of missed or postponed sessions. The Supervisee will keep a record of each session in his Personal and Professional Development Log.

The Supervisor will keep a record of each supervision sessions, briefly recording the matters discussed and any agreed to action items. The Supervisee has a right to see these records at any time.

## Confidentiality and the Supervisory Relationship

The privacy of the Supervisee is to be respected in all matters related to the supervisory relationship.

Nevertheless, there may be times when the disclosure of information is required either by law or because of grave concerns about the mental or physical well-being of the priest. In cases of serious boundary violations, the Supervisor is to contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer. In the case of grave concerns about the

mental or physical well-being of the Supervisee, the Supervisor is to contact the Director of Clergy Life and Ministry.

The Supervisee is to be informed of any occasion in which the Supervisor sees fit to disclose such personal and private information.

## Evaluation of Supervisory Relationship

At the end of each year of supervision, the Supervisor and Supervisee are to evaluate the supervisory relationship.

## Appendix A: Preparing for Supervision

As people in ministry we are responsible for what we prayerfully prepare and present in supervision and for identifying what makes it important enough to spend time on and for what we choose not to share.

Anything is appropriate that arises from actual experiences and can affect, or is affecting, the quality of our ministry. For instance, our role in a particular situation, priorities, time management, insights, people, committees or institutions, changes, pressures, needs.

Any one of the following may be useful in deciding what to choose for the supervisory process:

- The most significant event in my ministry work since my last supervision is...
- This incident/concern keeps pushing itself back into my mind...
- I am aware of very strong feelings about something that has happened...
- When [this] happened it seemed to be a pattern repeating itself...
- I am so [tired, miserable, elated, inspired, challenged, worried]...
- I want to clarify where I stand on a particular issue...
- I want to know how this reflects my thinking about the nature of God ...
- I want to stop something like [this] happening again...
- I want to get something like [this] to happen more often...
- I seem to keep avoiding/putting off...
- It is time to establish or review or evaluate my Supervision Covenant...

When we commence a supervision session, we need to be able to say:

- In ministry at the moment, I feel ...
- This specific pastoral incident occurred ...
- This is my question or challenge...
- This is what I want as an outcome...

Supervision works best if:

- We are open and honest
- Trust and confidentiality are guaranteed
- We report our behaviour, observations, reactions and feelings accurately
- We accept feedback
- We monitor our feelings and responses (including our need to justify, explain)
- We remember that what happens in supervision is our responsibility
- We discern God's presence and purpose
- We remember that the purpose of the whole undertaking is to enhance the ministry we offer
- We integrate our practice into our faith stance or our ministry with our theology.

*From PROFESSIONAL SUPERVISION: A process of Reflection on Ministry Experience,  
The Uniting Church in Australia, Ministerial Education Commission, 2011*

Possible topics to explore in professional supervision (listed alphabetically)

- |  |                                    |
|--|------------------------------------|
| ○ Accountability                         | ○ Compliance matters               |
| ○ Appraisals                             | ○ Competency for ministry tasks    |
| ○ Baggage                                | ○ Confidentiality                  |
| ○ Boundaries                             | ○ Conflict                         |
| ○ Changing placement                     | ○ Consultations and reviews        |
| ○ Child safe                             | ○ Critical incidents               |
| ○ Church councils, committees and groups | ○ Cross cultural issues            |
| ○ Code of ethics and ministry practice   | ○ Dealing with difference          |
| ○ Community engagement and involvement   | ○ Dealing with difficult people    |
|  | ○ Debriefing                       |
|  | ○ Developing projects and programs |

- Diocesan matters
- Discerning direction
- Financial matters
- Ghost of ministers past
- Goal setting
- Identity
- Internet issues
- Issues: e.g. suicide, substance abuse, alcoholism, death and dying, ageing, grief and loss, power, bullying
- Learning and reflection
- Loneliness
- Networking
- Parish matters
- Parochial leadership
- Pastoral situations
- Placement location issues
- Planning and visioning
- Relationships
- Retirement
- Reviewing ministry
- Self-awareness
- Self-care – stress, burnout out, compassion fatigue, vicarious traumatisation, time off, managing life-work pendulum
- Sexual matters
- Singleness and ministry
- Spiritual growth
- Supervision of student ministers/ministry colleagues
- Team matters
- Technology
- Theological reflection
- Time management
- Wider church involvement
- Work load – time management, prioritizing
- Working with people – individuals, groups, team

*Based on Growing and developing as a supervisee:  
A resource for Uniting Church in Australia ministers,  
Queensland Synod Supervision Working Group,  
Material developed by Sue Crittall  
and produced with assistance from Uniting Communications,  
Queensland Synod 2014*

## Appendix B: Supervision Covenant

### This covenant is between:

Supervisee \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (H) \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

*and*

Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (H) \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

### Supervision arrangements:

This Covenant is for the period of \_\_\_\_\_ year(s) beginning on \_\_\_\_\_

and concluding on \_\_\_\_\_. We have agreed to meet at \_\_\_\_\_

weekly intervals (eg every six weeks) starting on \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

at a fee of \_\_\_\_\_ (amount in \$, NA, or waived)

### We have discussed and agreed upon:

- Time, place, frequency and duration
- Confidentiality and its limits
- Preparation for supervision
- Therapeutic orientation
- Dealing with personal issues
- Supervisor's and supervisee's expectations and needs

**Responsibilities of the Supervisor:**

- Being prepared and available for planned sessions
- Time keeping
- Monitoring the supervisory relationship
- Keeping notes of each session
- Making time for session and discussion
- Being punctual and reliable
- Providing a safe space for discussion

**Responsibilities of the Supervisee**

- Being prepared with agenda items and points for discussion
- Being an active participant
- Being punctual and reliable
- Providing adequate notice for lack of availability

**Short Term Goals:** Supervision goals (either learning agreement or specific goals):

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**Long Term Goals:**

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**Dated and Signed:**

## 3. Procedure: Mentoring

### Introduction

In their 2001 document *The Basic Plan for the Ongoing Formation of Priests*, the U.S. Bishops point out the advantages of having a priest-mentor for the newly ordained:

*Experience...indicates that a priest-mentor can be very helpful in the ongoing formation of newly ordained priests. He is neither the first pastor nor a spiritual director but a priest of 'exemplary life and pastoral zeal' (Directory on the Ministry and Life of Priests, no. 82), who, precisely because he is not on-site, can help the newly ordained sort out their experiences and see them with greater objectivity. The priest-mentor brings a wisdom born of experience as well as a sense of the life of the local church. He engages the newly ordained in conversation about his ministry, his sense of priestly identity, rectory life, and other important issues. The priest-mentor is available to answer questions from the newly ordained or to help them process unfamiliar and perhaps difficult situations. (54)*

Similarly, in their 2005 document *Acculturation of Overseas Priests*, the Australian Bishops recommended as the first “support structure”:

*It is highly recommended that an incoming priest have a mentor or similar support person who will spend time with him, particularly in the first year after his arrival. This could be a pastoral associate, a parishioner, a couple or even a family. All parties should understand, in advance, that this arrangement will require a significant commitment.*

The mentoring program of the Diocese of Townsville responds to the needs of priests in transition: from seminary to parish; from associate pastor to proper pastor of a parish; from another land or language to ministry in an Australian context.

### Overview

The diocese will ensure that an adequate number of trained mentors are available for those clergy engaged in full time ministry who will need them.

Each of the following categories of priests will be required to engage a mentor:



### The newly ordained priest

The cycle of transition entails the process of departing, entering, settling and departing again. Consider this statement from the U.S. Bishops' document on ongoing formation: "Were one to compare transition into priestly ministry to other kinds of human experience, it might be like leaving home, graduating from school, beginning a career, getting married, and starting a family – but all at once" (The Basic Plan for Ongoing Formation of Priests).

New living arrangements, perhaps the unfamiliarity of a new city or neighbourhood, new schedules (or lack thereof), differences in supervision, orientation and communication – these and more can create tension, confusion and discouragement in a man who has just come through six years of familiar routines, evaluations, expectations and community life. His social network may not have disappeared entirely (due in part to the Internet and social media), but it has certainly changed.

The newly ordained priest will be in a mentoring relationship for the first five years of his ministry.

### The newly appointed pastor

Becoming a pastor for the first time is an exciting experience for any priest. There are times, though, when a new pastor's responsibilities may feel a little overwhelming. Where previously he could seek guidance from his pastor, now he is the pastor. Though he's now been granted the exterior authority to lead, the newly appointed pastor may not feel comfortable with his interior authority to do so. Growing into the role of pastor takes time.

The newly appointed pastor will be in a mentoring relationship for the first two years of his appointment.

### The recently arrived international priest

Take the challenges and excitement of being newly ordained to the priesthood or being newly assigned as a pastor. Now add to that the additional experience of a new country, new culture and different accent. Many arrive in Australia with a missionary zeal and dreams for their priestly

ministry. Oftentimes culture and accent differences create obstacles to ministry that the newly arrived priest doesn't know how to navigate.

Studies show that a fair percentage of international priests experience not feeling welcomed in the host diocese or parish, feeling lonely, and struggling with different expectations and demands of the laity, among other issues. It is not uncommon for a priest who has served as pastor of several parishes in his home country to be assigned as a parochial vicar or chaplain in his new diocese.

The newly arrived priest will be in a mentoring relationship for the first two years of his ministry in Townsville.

## A Definition of Mentoring

*Mentoring is a process of development whereby one person helps another in making significant transitions in knowledge, work, thinking or learning.*

*Traditionally, a mentor is someone outside the normal working hierarchy, chosen because of his or her breadth and depth of experience, the network of contacts available to the person, and the assistance that could be given with ministry development through support and guidance.*

*Alternatively peer mentoring can be used. This involves colleagues on a similar level providing mutual support and guidance to each other for the purposes of assisting with personal growth and development.*

*(Church of Wales, Clergy Handbook)*

## Identification, Selection & Training of Mentors

A list of appropriate mentors for face-to-face, telephone, or online mentoring will be submitted by the Director of Clergy Life and Ministry to the Bishop for his approval.

Those appointed Mentors will receive adequate training for the task.

Those acting as Mentors will gather at least twice a year to reflect on the experience, to share wisdom and to gain any additional necessary training.

## Qualities and Qualifications

In general, those selected as mentors should meet the following criteria:

- Have been ordained for at least 10 years
- Have been a parish pastor for at least 5 years
- Ideally, have served as pastor in more than one parish or one assignment
- Are respected within the presbyterate
- Have a proven history of follow-through on projects and time commitments
- Are committed to the process of mentoring and the program's expectations
- Have a sense of joy about priesthood/ministry/pastoring
- Have demonstrated a desire to learn, i.e., is keen on life-long learning

## Expectations of the Mentoring Meeting Frequency

The Institute for Priests and Presbyterates recommends that mentors and mentees meet monthly for at least two years. Sixty to 90 minutes is a typical length of time for getting together.

## Reporting on Meetings and Confidentiality

Striking a healthy balance between reporting and confidentiality is key. In order to identify potential problems and to evaluate the success of the process and personnel, the program director should have a sense of how each relationship is progressing. Under normal circumstances, matters discussed between parties should be treated and respected as confidential. At the same time, unlike spiritual direction, the mentor relationship takes place in the external forum. There may be times when an outside party may be needed to assist or intervene.

## Records of Meetings

Both the Mentor and the Mentee shall keep a record of their meetings, whether face-to-face or by other means, in their Pastoral and Professional Development Learning Log.

## Skipped Meetings or Discontinuation

Meetings between mentors and mentees should be understood as taking priority on each one's calendar. Some instances may occur where meetings must be legitimately cancelled or postponed. However, the reasons for skipped meetings might serve as a warning flag.

A pattern of missed meetings on behalf of either the mentor or mentee should be reported to the Director of Clergy Life and Ministry.

## Meeting Scheduling

Defining expectations of whose responsibility and how meetings between mentors and mentees should be scheduled helps to eliminate potential problems.

## Evaluation of Mentoring Relationship

At the end of each year of mentoring, the Mentor and Mentee are to evaluate the mentoring relationship.

## Appendix A: Selected Quotes on Mentoring

*Priestly fraternity excludes no one.... This fraternity “takes special care of the young priests, maintains a kind and fraternal dialogue with those of the middle and older age groups, and with those who for whatever reasons are facing difficulties.” (Pastores dabo vobis, 74)*

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*“...active participation in the diocesan presbyterate, regular contact with the bishop and with the other priests, mutual cooperation, common life or fraternal dealings between priests, as also friendship and good relations with the lay faithful who are active in parish life are very useful means to overcome the negative effects of loneliness which the priest can sometimes experience.” (Pastores dabo vobis, 74)*

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*It is highly recommended that an incoming priest have a mentor or similar support person who will spend time with him, particularly in the first year after his arrival. This could be a pastoral associate, a parishioner, a couple or even a family. All parties should understand, in advance, that this arrangement will require a significant commitment. (Acculturation of Overseas Priests)*

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*The newly ordained find themselves in the challenging role of being a public person. It is a difficult task to learn how to be a loving and caring priest for significant numbers of people while maintaining appropriate pastoral and interpersonal boundaries. Such challenges are best faced under the supervision of a mentor, pastor, or other delegated supervisor. (The Basic Plan for the Ongoing Formation of Priests)*

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*The priest-mentor brings a wisdom born of experience as well as a sense of the life of the local church. He engages the newly ordained in conversation about his ministry, his sense of priestly identity, rectory life, and other important issues. The priest-mentor is available to answer questions from the newly ordained or to help them process unfamiliar and perhaps difficult situations. (The Basic Plan for the Ongoing Formation of Priests)*

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*[Middle-aged priests] can be involved in suitable ways in true and proper ministry especially as expert confessors and spiritual directors. In particular, they can share with others their own experiences, and encourage, welcome, listen and convey serenity to them. They can also be available whenever they are asked to “become effective teachers and mentors of other priests.” (Directory on the Ministry and Life of Priests, 95)*

## Appendix B: Mentoring Agreement

*Note: A copy of this document shall be to be sent to the Director of Clergy Life and Ministry (per Rebecca Ryman at the Catholic Centre), immediately after signing; Mentor and Mentee should each retain a copy of the document.*

Understanding that the Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Townsville has assigned us to a mentoring relationship for the period of \_\_\_\_ years, we, the undersigned, agree to the following:

- Meet every six weeks for at least 60 minutes
- Schedule meetings sufficiently in advance to both parties' satisfaction
- Contact the other party and reschedule appointments in cases of emergency
- Keep a record of meetings in our Personal and Professional Development Learning Logs.
- Meetings are conducted in the external forum. Matter discussed is to be treated as confidential with exception of due concern for the health and safety of either party.
- The Program Director will be consulted if problems arise that cannot be resolved between the parties.
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Mentor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mentee Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## 4. Procedure: Ministerial Reviews

### Introduction

Integrity in Our Common Mission states that “in committing to the pastoral and professional skills our ministries and roles require”, conduct in keeping with the standard includes:

- *participating in regular professional supervision’*
- *establishing processes to evaluate the quality of one’s work, including assessment by one’s peers and those one serves*
- *participating in local and national associations of one’s peers*
- *engaging in guided self-appraisal*

*implementing the outcomes of such reflection and evaluations*

The National Catholic Safeguarding Standards calls for the implementation of annual performance appraisals (Standard 5.5.5).

### Overview

Each priest will undertake an annual self-review. This will form the basis for an annual personal and professional development plan.

Every four years, in place of a self-review, or as otherwise determined by the Bishop in individual cases, each priest will undertake a 360° review.

### Annual Self-Review

At the beginning of May of each year, those members of the presbyterate who are not undertaking a 360° appraisal, will be sent a package including:

- An introductory letter from the Director of Clergy Life and Ministry;
- A Self-Review instrument;
- A Personal and Professional Development Worksheet; and

By the end of June, each priest undertaking a self-review is requested: to complete the Self-Review tool; to meet with their professional supervisor, having sent them a copy of the Self-Review tool one week before; to complete the Personal and Professional Development Worksheet; and to send to the Director of Clergy Life and Ministry a copy of their Personal and Professional Development Plan.

The self-review is intended solely for the priest's benefit and involves no-one other than their professional supervisor. All the information arising from the self-review is confidential unless the priest gives his permission for it to be shared with a third party. At the conclusion of the meeting between the priest and his supervisor, the supervisor will return the self-review tool to the priest.

During the interview, which could last around two hours, the priest gives a verbal account of what he has written, while the supervisor listens, asks questions for clarification, feeds back to the priest underlying issues or connections, and offers nondirective reflections on what he/she has heard.

Together they agree on a course of action which will help the priest to grow in his ministry and personal life. This should cover both personal and ministerial development. The objectives need to be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound.

The Personal and Professional Development Plan, which is a record of these objectives and strategies for achieving them, will be shared with the Director of Clergy Life and Ministry and be kept on each priest's file in the Bishop's office.

## 360° Review

The 360° Review is a process that invites feedback from parishioners and pastoral workers from the parish communities and ministerial assignments of Townsville priests. This process will be undertaken at least every four years.

If a priest is changing assignments and has not undertaken a 360° review within the previous two years, he will be asked to undertake this process. The Bishop may, at any time, in discussion with particular priests, invite them to undertake a 360° review.

At the beginning of the process, the Director of Clergy Life and Ministry will send to the priest a packet including the following:

- An introductory letter describing the process;
- A link to the Self-Review instrument;
- A Personal and Professional Development Worksheet



- A spreadsheet for the names and addresses of nine to twelve members of the parish community:
  - Being three to four parishioners in leadership positions, e.g. Parish staff, Parish Pastoral Council members, Parish Finance Council members;
  - Being three to four members of the school communities, e.g. principals, APREs, chairs of P & F;
  - Being three to four parishioners with whom the priest is involved regularly.
- A letter from the priest, inviting parishioners to participate in his review, for production on ministry letterhead with his signature.

Upon receipt of the spreadsheet of names and the signed letter from the priest undertaking the review, the Director of Clergy Life and Ministry will send an email to the nine to twelve parishioners involved in the review. This will include:

- An invitation letter from the Bishop;
- A signed invitation letter from the priest undertaking review;
- An explanation of the process.

The priest undertaking the review is encouraged to discuss his self-review with his professional supervisor prior to submitting it.

When the priest has received the final report, he will forward a copy to his supervisor and arrange a meeting to discuss the report and to develop his Personal and Professional Development Plan for the coming year.

Within two weeks of meeting, the priest will return the Personal and Professional Development Worksheet, which is a record of these objectives and strategies for achieving them, to the Director of Clergy Life and Ministry.

The priest undergoing the review will meet with the Bishop to discuss the final report and his Personal and Professional Development Worksheet. Both of these documents will be stored in the Bishop's office in the priest's file.

## 5. Procedure: Spiritual Life

### Introduction

*“For a spiritual life that grows through the exercise of the ministry, it is essential that the priest should continually renew and deepen his awareness of being a minister of Jesus Christ by virtue of sacramental consecration and configuration to Christ the head and shepherd of the Church.” (Pastores dabo vobis 25)*

*“In leading their lives, clerics are especially bound to pursue holiness because they are consecrated to God by a new title in the reception of orders as dispensers of God’s mysteries in the service of His people.” [CIC 276.1]*

### Scope

This procedure applies to all priests within Townsville Diocese who hold an office for the good of the Diocese.

### Spiritual Life in the Exercise of the Ministry

Priests are “to nourish their spiritual life from the twofold table of Sacred Scripture and the Eucharist.” [CIC 276.2.2]

Priests are expected to pray the Liturgy of the Hours daily [CIC 276.2.3] for the spiritual good of the people of God entrusted to their care and for, and on behalf of, the whole Church.

Time should be set aside daily for personal meditation and reflection. [CIC 276.2.5]

### Annual Retreat

Priests in the Diocese of Townsville are required to attend an annual retreat [CIC 276.2.4]. The Diocese will provide an opportunity whereby this obligation may be fulfilled. Occasionally, however, with the approval of the Ordinary, they might attend a retreat other than those provided by the Diocese.

## Continuous Spiritual Renewal

Priests are encouraged to have a Spiritual Director. The Director of Clergy Life and Ministry will maintain an up-to-date list of available Spiritual Directors within the Diocese of Townsville. The Bishop will facilitate the availability of priests who are Spiritual Directors.

The Bishop will provide various opportunities for the spiritual renewal of the clergy, such as days of reflection. All priests are urged to participate in these opportunities.

## Sacramental Reconciliation

*"The priest's spiritual and pastoral life, like that of his brothers and sisters, lay and religious, depends, for its quality and fervour, on the frequent and conscientious personal practice of the sacrament of penance. The priest's celebration of the Eucharist and administration of the other sacraments, his pastoral zeal, his relationship with the faithful, his communion with his brother priests, his collaboration with his bishop, his life of prayer - in a word, the whole of his priestly existence, suffers an inexorable decline if by negligence or for some other reason he fails to receive the sacrament of penance at regular intervals and in a spirit of genuine faith and devotion. If a priest were no longer to go to confession or properly confess his sins, his priestly being and his priestly action would feel its effects very soon, and this would also be noticed by the community of which he was the pastor." Reconciliatio et Paenitentia VI*

The Bishop will ensure that suitable confessors are made available for priests so that they may frequently celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation.

Fan into flame  
the gift of God,  
which is in you  
through the laying on  
of my hands.  
(1 Timothy 1:6 ESV)

