

## **SAID ED June 22, 2008**

Next Tuesday Sr. Joan Cawley, SSJ will assume the role of Pastoral Administrator of the Church of the Resurrection. This new style of parish leadership is done in accordance with Canon Law. It provides for the entrusting the leadership to others who are not ordained priests. This week I share with you some information about what is already happening in many parishes around our diocese and country. What follows is a series of questions and answers about the role of Pastoral Administrators.

What is a Pastoral Administrator?

A layperson, sister or deacon appointed by the bishop to be the leader of a parish.

What is the role and responsibilities of a Pastoral Administrator?

The Pastoral Administrator is the spiritual leader and chief steward of the parish, “entrusted with the Pastoral care of the community” (Canon 517.2). The Pastoral Administrator is responsible for: ensuring the vibrancy of Sunday worship; overseeing evangelization, catechesis, other ministries and programs; fostering ecumenical and community outreach; working closely with the Parish Pastoral Council; overseeing preparation of an annual budget; supervising church staff; buildings and grounds; and parish stewardship – in short, all aspects of parish life.

What are the qualifications for a Pastoral Administrator?

In the Diocese of Rochester candidates are required to have achieved a high level of theological education and training which includes: an advanced degree in divinity or similar degree, and several years of ministerial, administrative and leadership experience.

In addition to meeting the educational and experiential requirements the diocesan personnel office must certify that the individual is capable of serving as a Pastoral Administrator.

Who provides for the Sacramental needs of the parish with a Pastoral Administrator?

This role is carried out by a priest who works as part of the ministerial team led by the Pastoral Administrator. In this case, Fr. George Heyman will be the Sacramental Minister at Resurrection. His primary focus is to celebrate the Eucharist and other sacraments. He is a member of the faculty of St. Bernard’s School of Theology and Ministry.

Is the role of Pastoral Administrator new or unique to Rochester Diocese?

Other dioceses in the USA and Canada have implemented this type of leadership for many years (since the 1990's in Rochester) even though they may have different titles (e.g., Parish Life Director, Parish Life Coordinator). In the diocese of Rochester there are presently 14 Pastoral Administrators.

What differentiates a Pastor from a Pastoral Administrator?

Very little. Pastors and Pastoral Administrators fulfill the same leadership and administrative roles; however, the Pastoral Administrator cannot administer sacraments reserved to the priest. The title of "pastor" is reserved for priests, according to the Church's Code of Canon Law. However, Canon 517.2 authorizes bishops to appoint people other than priests to key leadership roles.

How does the role of Pastoral Administrator serve our diocese and the Church?

The very existence of the role of Pastoral Administrator is a sign of the flowering of the Second Vatican Council's call to the laity to come forth and serve and to energize and renew the universal church.

The role of Pastoral Administrator has given women and men who are not priests a significant opportunity for service and leadership in our Church and on the parish level.

For additional information, consult: [www.dor.org](http://www.dor.org) and click on Pastoral Planning and/or Human Resources.

Have a great week!

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