

SECTION VI

APPENDIX

THE PARISH LAY SUPPORT COMMITTEE

**NOTRE DAME SEMINARY
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA**

**This Appendix should be copied
and made available to members of the
Lay Support Committee**

IMPORTANT REMINDER:

This entire section of the Handbook should be copied and distributed to the members of your Lay Support Committee at your first meeting.

It is also important (at that first meeting) that you share a copy of your **Learning contract**, especially your **Learning Goals** (II-3) and **Personal Growth Goals** (II-4), with the members of the Committee.

A **complete roster** (VI-1) (names, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses) of the Lay Support Committee, along with a **complete schedule** (VI-1) of your anticipated meetings for the duration of the internship, should be mailed to the Director of Pastoral Field Education by **FRIDAY, JUNE 17.**

Also - please indicate which member of the committee has been selected as the **Chairperson** of the group.

EACH MEMBER OF THE LAY SUPPORT COMMITTEE IS TO COMPLETE
AN **EVALUATION OF THE INTERN**@ FORM FOR BOTH

MID-TERM (Due, Friday, August 12)

(See pages VI 12-13 & 16)

AND

FINAL (Due, Friday, October 14)

(see pages VI-14-15 & 16)

All completed forms should be turned into the Chairperson (or to a designated secretary) and that person is to type out **all** of the responses of the members of the parish staff on **one form**. It is **that** document which will be turned in to the Notre Dame Seminary Director of Pastoral Field Education

BY

MID-TERM (Due, Friday, August 12)

OR

FINAL (Due, Friday, October 14)

Thank you for your attention to this important part of the Intern=s evaluation process.

This booklet is for the use of the PARISH LAY SUPPORT COMMITTEES, Interns and Supervisors. It is intended as a helpful guide and should be used in conjunction with the A Parish Internship Handbook. Some of the material is taken from this Handbook.

Contents:

- 1. A description of the Lay Support Committee.....3-5
(Taken from the Parish Internship Handbook)
- 2. Some questions and answers and helpful suggestions.....6-11
- 3. A copy of the mid-term and final evaluation form to be completed
by the members of the Committee, and collated and submitted
by the Chairperson at Mid-Term and at the end of the Internship....12-15
- 4. A suggested homily feedback form which may be used during the
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PARISH LAY SUPPORT COMMITTEE

1. THE TEACHING PARISH CONCEPT

Your parish has been designated a Teaching parish and as such you are asked to work closely with Notre Dame Seminary and your diocese (or religious order) to help provide training and experience for a seminary student in his last year of pastoral formation. Parishes are chosen because they are able to provide a capable and experienced priest as a Supervisor for the Intern but also because there are a number of ministries, activities and needs in the parish, which can provide a suitable setting for getting parochial experience.

In addition to the Supervisor, the Parish Lay Support Committee also has a special role to play. The Lay Support Committee is a representative group of lay people associated with the Internship who are dedicated to the ministry and mission of the Church and are available to assist the Intern to grow personally, intellectually, spiritually and in social awareness.

It is helpful to communicate the Teaching Parish Concept to the congregation especially as the parish publicizes the coming of the Intern in the parish bulletin, in pulpit announcements and at the first Sunday celebration when the Intern is introduced to the congregation. The task of helping an Intern to grow in his pastoral formation is not only the task of the Supervisor and Parish Lay Support Committee but to a certain extent it is the responsibility of the entire parish.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE TASK AND ROLE OF THE COMMITTEE

Pages VI 5-6 of this booklet are taken from the Parish Internship Handbook and describe the role and function of the committee. Please read those two pages carefully. They should be topic of discussion at the first meeting with the Intern. As part of this description, there are some suggestions for the agenda for the meetings. Please note that the Director of Pastoral Field Education, (or another Faculty Representative), from Notre Dame Seminary will meet with the Intern and the Committee at the time of his field visit to the parish. The pastor is notified of the date of the field visit at least six weeks ahead of time. The entire committee or at least those who are available should meet with the Notre Dame Seminary Representative the night he is present in the parish.

PARISH LAY SUPPORT COMMITTEE

Since the Parish Internship is the specific time designated for an extended and intense experience of parish life, it is important that lay people participate in this formative experience. It is not only the Supervisor who is charged with the formation of the Intern, but the parish community as a whole is seen as a teaching parish and the Intern will learn much by interacting with parishioners, parish organizations and ministries. Each Supervisor together with the Intern is asked to select from the parish community five to eight individuals (or families) who represent a cross-section of the parish to serve on the Parish Lay Support Committee.

The primary purpose of this Committee is to welcome the Intern into the parish community, help with the orientation process and provide valuable feedback during the Internship. The Lay Support Committee can provide important insights into parish life and expectations, and can give the Intern a different kind of feedback than that of the Supervisor. Interns need to understand how they are perceived by others, how effectively they communicated their insights and understanding and how they engage in supporting others in the task of ministry to which all are called. Interns also receive input and feedback from those with whom they minister. These are issues which a Lay Support Committee can uniquely address.

Once the Supervisor has helped the Intern decide on the make up of the Committee, the Intern has the responsibility of working with this Committee. One member of this Committee should be chosen as Chairperson. The Committee does not have a formal evaluative role but rather its purpose is to give support and feedback to the Intern. However through its chairperson it will be asked to give the Seminary and Supervisor of the Intern some evaluative comments at the end of the Internship (see the form on pp. VI-12-15). The Intern shares his learning contract with the Committee and receives input from the group on progress with his learning issues.

Suggested Agendas for the Lay Support Committee Meetings:

It is the responsibility of the Intern and the Chairperson to plan the agendas for the monthly meetings. The informal atmosphere of a home would be good and the Committee should agree ahead of time on the length of the meeting.

Introductory meeting: (June) At this meeting, after becoming acquainted and possibly doing some Scripture sharing, the Intern should share his learning agreement. The information packet on the Parish Lay Support Committee should be given to Committee members ahead of the meeting and time should be set aside to discuss the purpose and scope of the Committee. A copy of the evaluation form (VI-12-15) would also be shared with them. The Committee should assist the Intern in becoming aware of the history of the parish and dealing with his entry into the parish community.

Other meetings: (July, August, September, October) Possible topics might be feedback on sermons, relationships with parishioners, youth, elderly, and offering the Intern some suggestions for personal, professional, and other improvements that will enhance his effectiveness as a priestly leader. The Intern may also use part of these meetings to gain knowledge about the particular character of the parish, discuss issues that may arise and also focus on sharing understandings of the nature and purpose of ministry, scriptural questions, faith sharing, etc.

Final meeting: (July) This is the final meeting at which the Supervisor should be present. A review of the Internship experience should be helpful. The Committee will provide the Intern with valuable feedback helping the Intern see his gifts and strengths; and also point out areas for future growth. A good celebration will be a fitting way to bring closure to this pastoral experience.

Before the Intern leaves the parish the Chairperson of the Committee must give the Intern the evaluative comments of the Committee.

n.b. When the Director of Pastoral Field Education comes to the parish for the on-site visit, please arrange for him and the Intern to meet in the evening with members of the Lay Support Committee. If this is not possible, please contact the Director of Pastoral Field Education before he visits the parish.

SOME QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

How often should the Committee meet?

The guidelines speak about a monthly meeting. If possible about every three weeks might be a better arrangement. Also informal chats and visits with the Intern and committee members between meetings will be helpful.

How long should the meetings last?

The important factor is to deal with the concerns and agenda of the Intern and the members of the committee. It is recommended that perhaps two hours be set aside for each meeting. This will allow time for people to get to know each other and to process the issues of ministry to some depth, as well as some time for socializing.

Where should the committee meet?

Choose a place which is comfortable and will not have distractions. The meeting could be held in a church meeting room or in the homes of the committee members.

SOME HELPFUL SUGGESTIONS

- *At the first meeting (and the last) have the Supervisor present.
- *Clarify the role of the Committee (see pp. VI 3-5).
- *Once the learning goals are finalized they should be shared with the Committee.
- *The issue of confidentiality and the committee=s understanding of this should be discussed.
- *The Supervisor, or preferably the Committee, should choose a chairperson who can work closely with the Intern, prepare the agenda for the meetings and fill out the mid-term and final evaluations.
- *These evaluations should express the consensus of the Committee.

The Committee members may want to meet without the Intern to finalize the comments. The results of the evaluations should be discussed with the Intern before the process is complete.

- *The Committee with the Supervisor should plan the final *Agoodbye@*

The Internship is an important event in the life of the Intern but also in the life of the parish community. The completion of it should have a fitting celebration. (*See ASuggestions for AWelcoming@ and AFarewell@ on next page.*)

SUGGESTIONS FOR WELCOMING THE INTERN AND THE INTERN=S FAREWELL

Prepared by Rev. Robert-Joel T. Cruz

Welcoming the Intern:

1. *Two weeks prior to the Intern arriving in the parish publish his biography, together with his most recent picture, in the Church=s bulletin for two consecutive Sundays.*
2. *Together with his biography inform and educate the people about the current status of the Intern who is very soon to be ordained deacon and eventually priest; as contrasted to other seminarians who are in the earlier stages of formation. There is usually a confusion concerning the status of the Intern, therefore, it is important to clearly explain the status of the Intern.*
3. *On the first weekend, let the Intern introduce himself at all Masses. After each Mass, provide refreshments and invite the people to come welcome and meet the Intern.*

Intern=s Farewell:

1. *Through the Church=s bulletin, inform the people the week before the Internship comes to a close.*
2. *Ask the Intern to write something in the bulletin, a sort of farewell note, to be published his last weekend in the parish.*
3. *The Supervisor with the Support Group plans a farewell party for the Intern and invites the congregation to come to the party.*
4. *During the last weekend, let the Intern talk at all the Masses to formally close his Internship. Provide refreshments after each mass and invite the congregation to say goodbye to the Intern.*

LAY SUPPORT GROUP COMMITTEE ORIENTATION

A. General Internship Goals

1. Professional competence in pastoral skills.
2. Personal and spiritual growth.
3. Theological reflection and integration in ministry

B. Internship is Educational

1. The first priority of the Internship experience is educational in the areas of:
 - a. Pastoral development, understanding and effectiveness in parish ministry.
 - b. Greater self-knowledge of strengths and challenges in ministry.
 - c. Creative integration of theological study with spirituality and active ministry.

C. Internship is to enhance learning from experience.

1. Working with people in real-life situations rather than textbooks and lectures becomes a “living document” of learning and growth. However, growth and learning as each of us experience in our own way involves both joy and pain.

D. Central to learning during a time of Internship is a climate of confidentiality.

1. Discussion, questions and reflections are to be kept among the members of the group and the Intern.
2. Enables a level of trust so that the Intern is free to reveal vulnerabilities and weaknesses, personal and professional, in order to learn, receive support and be strengthened to move on in the face of challenge.
3. The Intern and the group are enabled to freely explore and discover together the nature and purpose of ordained ministry in the Church.

* If one is required to always be strong and only competent and confident in everything, then much is lost in the learning process of becoming actualized as a person and a professional.

** Most important is that one is given the liberty to be themselves and free to reveal feelings of both joy and disappointment. This is central to anyone who eagerly seeks to respond to the mystery of God in their life-vocation; whether single, married, ordained or vowed religious.

LAY SUPPORT GROUP COMMITTEE AGREEMENT

1. Welcome the Intern into the parish community and help the Pastor/Supervisor with orienting the Intern to the parish life, parish history, meeting parishioners and families, as well as helping the Intern become familiar with the local area.

2. Offer support and helpful guidance during the Internship. Keep in daily prayer the Intern, Lay Support Group, Pastor/Supervisor, and the ministry of the Church parish.

3. Attend monthly meetings of the Lay Support Group with the Intern. This will be a regularly schedule time to discuss feedback and responses.

4. Provide valuable feedback and constructive input during the Internship (June-October) in order to help the Intern understand:
 - a) How he is perceived by other parishioners, visitors, staff, etc.
 - b) How he effectively communicates his insights and understanding.
 - c) How he engages in supporting others in the task of ministry.

5. Meet with the Director of Pastoral Field Education from the Seminary during the scheduled parish visit.

6. Provide evaluative comments as a committee to the Chairperson at Mid-Term (due August 12) and within the final month of the Internship (due October 14). These consensus comments from the Lay Support Group will be compiled by the Chairperson, shared with the Intern during the final meeting and, then, sent to the Seminary.

THE ART OF FEEDBACK PRINCIPLES

Definitions of Feedback

Constructive feedback is information that helps people to decide whether their behaviors have had the intended effects.

Positive feedback is information that reinforces desired behaviors and encourages repetition of those behaviors by communicating that they had the intended effects.

Negative feedback is information that discourages behaviors by communicating that they did not have the intended effects.

Principles of Giving Feedback

1. Be sure that your intention is to be helpful.
2. If the recipient has not asked for feedback, check to see whether he or she is open to it.
3. Deal only with behavior that can be changed.
4. Deal with specific behavior, not generalities.
5. Describe the behavior; do not evaluate it.
6. Let the recipient know the impact that the behavior has on you.
7. Use an “I statement” to accept responsibility for your own perceptions and emotions.
8. Check to make sure that the recipient understood your message in the way you intended it.
9. Encourage the recipient to check the feedback with other people.

Principles of Receiving Feedback

1. When you ask for feedback, be specific in describing the behavior about which you want the feedback.
2. Try not to act defensively or rationalize the behavior at issue.
3. Summarize your understanding of the feedback that you receive.
4. Share your thoughts and feelings about the feedback.

LAY SUPPORT COMMITTEE MID - TERM EVALUATION
(Please send to the Director of Pastoral Field Education by **Friday, August 12**)

INTERN _____ SUPERVISOR: _____

At this point in the Internship:

1) What do you see as the Intern's strengths?

2) Where might the Intern need to be challenged?

3) Are there other comments you would like to include in this Progress Report?
(Please use the back of this page and/or another sheet of paper.)

5. What do you see as areas needing continuing growth and development? (VERY IMPORTANT!)

6. Please evaluate the Intern's preaching: strengths & weaknesses. (*See Homily Evaluation Form next page.*)

7. If the Intern were to come back to the parish as the Associate (9 months from now) what would you like to see **or** have changed with the Intern between now and then?

Remarks:

(Please share this evaluation with the Intern. The Intern is responsible for returning this form to the Director of Pastoral Field Education.)

Intern's signature

Lay Committee Chairperson

(Date)

(Date)

Remarks by Intern (if any)

HOMILY EVALUATION

1. What did you see as the objective of my homily?
to inform the people?
to convince the people?
to motivate the people to action?
2. What did you see as the main point of the homily?
3. How successfully did I get that point across to YOU?
4. Did I make the scripture readings come alive and relate to the needs of the people?
5. Were my examples sufficient to get the point across? Were my examples relevant to the topic?
6. Did I maintain your interest during this homily?
7. If I had the occasion to preach this homily again, what would you suggest I improve?