

Policy on Honoraria and Gifts for Clergy

In the course of conducting priestly duties and interaction with parishioners and members of the community, priests may receive honoraria in the form of cash/checks and they may receive gifts in the form of cash/checks, as well as dinners, and other items. The purpose of this policy is to document the definitions of honoraria, gifts, and fees as it pertains to various parish policies and clergy/parish agreements.

Definitions

Fee - a mandatory payment required by the church from an individual or family who desire to receive certain services and accommodations. Priests may NOT charge a fee for sacramental services from current members of the parish (as defined by parish bylaws and diocesan canons). The parish, however, may require a fee identified for the parish discretionary account for the needy. Priests may charge a fee for services if the person receiving the sacrament is NOT a current member of St Philip's.

Honoraria - an unsolicited freewill offering on the part of an individual or family in appreciation for the work of a priest during a specific service. This is not something the priest seeks out, requests, advertises or expects in return for their work. An honoraria is given above and beyond the required fees charged by the church. A member of clergy or staff may not request an honoraria be made.

Gift - an unsolicited donation from an individual or family to the priest for various and sundry reasons ranging from holiday gifts to birthday gifts as well as other events or occasions.

In Practice

Fees

St Philip's determines all fees and designates which fees are to be deposited in the parish discretionary account in the policies for funerals as well as weddings. Those fees are not considered gifts or honoraria for the priest, they are dedicated funds for the parish discretionary account. Such fees will be collected by the church prior to the funeral or wedding taking place. They are not subject to collection by the priest on behalf of the church.

Honoraria

If an individual or family desires to offer an honoraria to the priest, that honoraria may be received by:

- the church either at the time of paying the mandated fees,
- or as a separate event,
- or the individual or family may also provide the honoraria directly to the priest.

In the event the priest receives the honoraria directly, they will in turn forward the honoraria to the church treasurer who will ensure the amount is reflected in the W2 and will be included in the next payroll check.

Gifts

If an individual or family desires to make a gift to a member of clergy, the priest is free to accept or not accept the gift with all graciousness. Gifts made to the priest are a private matter between the priest and the individual or family.