



DIOCESE OF OGDENSBURG

Moderator of the Curia

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REVISED DIOCESAN POLICY CONCERNING DIOCESAN ASSESSMENTS ON BEQUESTS TO PARISHES

For several decades, all bequests to parishes were included in the income on which a parish pays diocesan assessment. Following consultation with the Presbyteral Council and based on the members' recommendation, the procedure for collecting the assessment on bequests was changed in 1996. Assessment is now collected on the full amount at the time an unrestricted bequest is received, rather than having the bequest factored into the assessable income of the parish. This previously resulted in the bequest impacting assessment for a total of five years.

The diocesan assessment on any unrestricted bequest to a parish is payable at the time the bequest is received. The current assessment rate is 8.5%.

This assessment *is not* applied to funds that are restricted, e.g. bequests left for Masses, or money that is restricted by the donor in such a way that the gift is not to be used for the general purposes of the parish. The assessment *is* applied to non-cash bequests such as stocks and bonds, and is payable in the year in which the non-cash item is received. According to diocesan policy, such holdings should be liquidated when they are received and the proceeds used toward parish expenses or debt, or deposited in the Diocesan Loan Account.

When notification of any bequest is received by the parish, the following procedures are to be followed:

1. Inform the Moderator of the Curia immediately that the parish has been named a beneficiary in a Will. A copy of the Will, or at least the pertinent paragraph detailing the specific bequest, should be forwarded. This copy is to be forwarded even if the bequest is restricted and no diocesan assessment payable. As part of that notification, complete the *Parish Bequest Form (Pastoral Handbook IV.23a)* in duplicate and forward one to the Moderator of the Curia.
2. Once proceeds from a bequest have been received, notify the Moderator of the Curia of this fact, by forwarding an additional copy of the same *Parish Bequest Form* indicating the amount of the payment received. Payment of Diocesan Assessment on the amount received is due then, even if some further payment on the bequest will be received at a later date. If Assessment is due the Diocese, please forward your check and the form to the Diocese at our lockbox address (Diocese of Ogdensburg, PO Box 106, Canajoharie, NY 13317). If no payment is due, send the form directly to the Moderator of the Curia.
3. Once final payment of the bequest has been received, forward a final copy of the same *Parish Bequest Form* with the notation that the bequest is complete. Payment of any outstanding amount due in assessment on bequests is to be made then. A form with payment should be forwarded to the lockbox address. A form with no payment due should be sent to the Moderator of the Curia.

Note that proceeds from charitable gift annuities, life insurance policies, and similar gifts to parishes are treated in the same manner as bequests and are assessable on the same basis. If questions arise about any of these provisions, please contact the Moderator of the Curia.