



## DIOCESE OF FALL RIVER

### POLICY ON MASS STIPENDS AND OFFERINGS

The faithful should be catechized about the theological meaning of the offering given for the celebration of the Mass as well as the importance of almsgiving and the sharing of goods. It should be noted that Mass offerings are never to be viewed as a means of fund raising but rather they are intended as part of the direct support of the priest by the Faithful.

Canons 945-958 of the Code of Canon Law address the issue of offerings given at the Celebration of the Mass. Based on these 14 Canons, Bishop Coleman issues the following policies for the Diocese of Fall River effective January 1, 2008.

1. The Offering for any Weekday Mass, whether "announced or unannounced" is \$10.00. The former policy of 1986 recommended that no announced intentions be taken for weekend Masses. If the custom of the Parish is to have announced weekend Masses, then the offering may not exceed \$20.00 with \$10.00 going to the Parish. No one may request more than these specific amounts.
2. All Mass offerings which have already been accepted or are contained in the Parish Mass Book at the previous offering level must be satisfied.
3. Canon # 951 states that a priest who celebrates Mass more than once a day may accept an offering for each Mass but, with the exception of Christmas, may keep for himself only one offering. The Diocesan policy is that other offerings must be given to the Parish.
4. Canon #953 states that no priest or parish should retain more Mass offerings that can be satisfied in one year. Excess Masses may be given to retired priests or sent to the Missions through the Office of the Propagation of the Faith.
5. Each Pastor is obligated to offer the *Pro Populo* Mass on Sundays and Holydays *gratis*. If another priest offers this Mass, the pastor must give him an offering of \$10.00.
6. If a parish receives a bequest for a large number of Masses, please follow the "Bequest Procedure" in the Pastor's Handbook.
7. Canon #958 states that each Parish is to have a Mass Intention Book listing the intention, the amount received, and the date of the celebration. This book will be examined at the time of the Dean's visitation.
8. Wedding Offerings for parishioners are not-to-exceed \$300.00 and for non-parishioners not to exceed \$500.00 with the exception of the Islands of Martha' Vineyard and Nantucket. The offering includes all other fees (wedding coordinator, sacristan, custodian, etc.), except music fees. With the exception of a \$10.00 offering to the Priest/Deacon the entire amount is to be given to the Parish.

9. The offering for Funerals is not-to-exceed \$200.00, exclusive of music fees. Again, any amount over \$10.00 is to be given to the Parish.