

# Bishops, church groups set pay scale for priceless priests

Men enter the priesthood not for fame or fortune but because they hear God calling them to serve his flock. However, the question remains “what does an archdiocesan priest make?”

A priest’s salary can range anywhere from a little more than \$18,000 to more than \$31,000 depending on length of service, whether they are a pastor or associate pastor or if they are involved in a special ministry, according to the compensation guidelines of the Archdiocese of Baltimore.

“Diocesan priests do not take a vow of poverty, but I believe we are all called to live the spirit of poverty and not to be attached to worldly things,” said Bishop Mitchell T. Rozanski, eastern vicar. “I think I speak for a majority of the priests when I say, we know when we are ordained that we are not going to make a lot of money.”

According to Bishop Rozanski many priests generally use their salary to buy a car, maintain that car, for leisure activities, vacations and to give to their favorite charities. He said the diocesan priests are all very generous and enjoy helping to support the Lenten Appeal and a variety of different charities.

Along with a yearly salary, priests are also given a professional allowance, housing allowance, medical insurance, dental insurance, car insurance, group life insurance, short-term disability, pension and worker’s compensation, said Bishop Rozanski.

A professional expense allowance provides reimbursement for a priest when he travels to a retreat, a study day or Emmaus group meeting, while the parish reimburses expenses for anything that is related to parish business, according to the compensation guidelines of the Archdiocese of Baltimore. Those guidelines also state that “every priest is entitled to adequate living arrangements normally provided by the parish in a rectory or parish house living situation.”

When it comes to paying taxes, priests are considered self-employed and therefore pay more in social security taxes, said Bishop Rozanski.

“We are satisfied as priests if we have enough (money) to keep up the cars that we drive and have some money to go out to dinner with or go on vacation with, and be able to contribute to different charities,” said Bishop Rozanski.

“In each diocese it’s the local diocesan bishop in consultation with the college of consultors, the priest personnel board and in our case the priest compensation committee to set the salary scales, the professional expense allowance, and the bishop is required by canon law to provide for the welfare of his priests.”

According to canon law each parish must have a finance committee which reviews the budget at the beginning of the fiscal year. The committee monitors the budget during the year and included in that budget is the priest’s salary scale.