

MISSIONARY COOPERATION PLAN

Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis

The following guidelines are intended to aid parishes and mission-sending organizations in understanding the purpose and implementation of the Missionary Cooperation Plan in the archdiocese.

We ask that you missionaries share with us your experience as well as the faith experience of the people you serve. Our faith is deepened and broadened as we learn from you. –U.S. Bishop’s Pastoral Statement on World Mission, #74.

Guidelines for Parishes

The Missionary Cooperation Plan (MCP) was conceived to give mission-sending organizations the opportunity to share their mission experience with parishioners, help them solicit funds for their mission efforts and foster a deeper understanding of the universal nature of Church’s mission. The MCP is organized in most dioceses in the USA. The Diocesan Director for Mission is the person who, under the direction of the diocesan bishop, is responsible to facilitate the MCP in each diocese.

The MCP in the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis calls for the following:

1. Mission-sending organizations agree to apply to make appeals through the Center for Mission. They complete the application process and submit Testimonials of Suitability for clergy, religious and lay missionaries coming from outside the archdiocese.
2. Parishes agree to accept missionary presentations and appeals on one weekend each year and agree to take up a monetary collection at all masses for the needs of the particular mission.
3. The Center for Mission serves as the facilitator for the process by receiving applications and assigning parishes to each mission-sending group accepted into the archdiocese.
4. Parishes are informed of mission assignments in January.
5. All monies collected at the parish are sent and made payable to the **Center for Mission**. NO money should be given directly to the mission speaker or sent directly to the mission organization.

NOTE: In the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis, every parish is expected to participate in the annual Missionary Cooperation Plan between the dates of **March 1** and **September 15**, on a date that does not conflict with any other archdiocesan collection. **ANY EXCEPTIONS** to the plan should be negotiated with the Center for Mission Director on a case-by-case basis.

Steps for Parishes

1. **Arranging the Mission Appeal.** It is the responsibility of the mission organization to make first contact with the parish by March 1st and begin to set up a mutually agreed upon date for the appeal. The appeal should take place on a weekend between **March 1 and September 15**. The mission group is to make their own arrangements to get to each parish. Any accommodations and hospitality related to the visit that the parish is able to provide should also be discussed during the first contact including: lodging, meals, travel, etc.... This will help eliminate any misunderstanding regarding provisions and expectations. All safe environment policies must be followed while the mission representative is present. This includes ensuring that the presenter is supervised by an Essential 3 qualified adult.
2. **Accommodating Parish Needs.** Every effort is made to assign mission organizations that can meet the unique circumstances of parishes. Mission groups are expected to send a representative who can speak clear and understandable English. Parishes that require a speaker in Spanish, Vietnamese, etc...

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are also considered when making mission assignments. Often, the missionary is a stranger among us who is trying to adapt to our customs and protocols. Any efforts of welcome and guidance will be greatly appreciated.

3. **Parishes needing Priest replacement.** In some cases, parish pastors request a missionary priest as a weekend replacement to preside at weekend liturgies. Only priests who are legal to work in the United States may serve as a replacement for, or in absence of, the pastor. It is important to discuss the requirements of a visiting priest in advance. Please insure that people are on hand to help the visiting priest navigate parish protocols and customs.

4. **Communications about the Appeal.** Mission speakers are directed to be in contact with their assigned parishes about 3 weeks before appeal to reconfirm. They are also asked to provide the parish with information about the speaker and mission organization so it can be included in the parish bulletin and help in introducing the mission appeal.

5. **Ordained and Lay Speakers during Mass.** Mission preaching during the homily time of the mass is reserved for ordained bishops, priests and deacons. Lay mission preaching is encouraged before mass begins and, if possible, should be incorporated into the homily, prayers of faithful and other parts of liturgy.

6. **Collecting of Funds.** Parishes are expected to take up a collection for the needs of the missionary group assigned to them. This should be done according to the local custom for special collections. If the parish requires envelopes, please contact the Center for Mission. Do **not** use envelopes from mission groups. **All funds should be collected by the parish with one check sent and made payable to: THE CENTER FOR MISSION (777 Forest Street, St. Paul, MN 55106).** Do not give any funds directly to the mission speaker. Do not send any money directly to the mission organization. The Center for Mission distributes collected funds to the mission organization. Parishes are asked to complete an evaluation form and to offer any suggestions for future appeals and parish needs.

7. **If a mission priest performs ministry for parish beyond the appeal.** A suitable stipend should be given to the priest for his services beyond the appeal. The Visiting Clergy Policy of the Archdiocese must be followed for any ministry exercised outside of the appeal, including authorization from the Office of the Chancellor for Canonical Affairs. Missionaries may NOT establish a branch of their organization in the parishes or solicit names or addresses for additional fundraising or make further appeals by letter or other means after the MCP appeal. A missionary may NOT bring, distribute or collect envelopes at the parish.

8. **Questions or Concerns.** If there are any concerns or questions about the MCP process at the parish, please contact the Center for Mission for assistance as needed.

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