

## **APPENDIX VIII**

### **Memorandum of Understanding Diocese of Rochester St. Lawrence Fund**

The diaconate community of the Diocese of Rochester has chosen out of fraternal concern to establish the St. Lawrence Fund ("the Fund") for the relief of diaconal families in need. It is a restricted fund supported and maintained primarily by and utilized solely for the diaconal community of the Diocese of Rochester.

#### **Purposes**

The Fund shall be used to provide financial assistance to deacons and their families in times of financial difficulty with a view to stabilizing them and assisting them into better times. Financial assistance to deacons and their families may be given as gifts of charity or as interest free loans depending upon the circumstances. In any case, since the deacon is called to be a living icon of Christ the servant and a minister of charity, the principle of charity is to be followed faithfully.

#### **Sources**

It is anticipated that the diaconal community will provide the primary support of the Fund through various fund raising mechanisms, such as bequests, annual appeals to the community, and special fundraisers as needed. The Deacon Personnel Board ("the Board") will advocate for the Fund through various means available to it, such as a newsletter, web page, community discussions/ education, and so on. In times of insufficient funds, a special appeal will be made to the diaconal community.

Gifts will be encouraged and accepted from any person or organization wishing to support this work.

#### **Administration**

The Diocese of Rochester shall manage the Fund including: receipt and acknowledgement of gifts, and accounting, investment and preparation of checks for disbursement of the Fund. The Director of Deacon Personnel ("the Director") shall authorize disbursements from the Fund based on the decisions of the Fund Committee ("the Committee") defined below.

The total value of the Fund shall be available for distribution at any time.

Financial statements including, at a minimum, a balance sheet and an income statement will be provided quarterly to the Director for dissemination to the Board and the Committee.

The Board will provide primary oversight of the Fund through periodic review of the financial statements. The Director shall provide an annual report on the use of the Fund to the Board each September for the fiscal year ending on the previous June 30. The Director's report will include the Fund's financial statements and a report that provides data on the utilization of the Fund in a manner that protects that anonymity of the recipients.

## Fund Committee

A Fund Committee ("the Committee") shall be established to receive requests and to authorize distributions of the Fund in support of the Purposes stated above.

The Committee shall consist of no less than three and no more than five deacons, or deacons' wives/widows, as nominated by the Director and ratified by the Board during its annual election of officers. The Director is an ex-officio and voting member of the Committee. The Committee will be kept small intentionally to ensure that confidentiality is strictly observed. Members should be well-known pastoral individuals. The Director and the Board will be responsible for making the members of the Committee known to the diaconal community.

Members shall serve staggered terms of three years, renewable once for an additional term of three years.

The Committee will establish its own method of internal administration with a view to ensuring efficiency and responsiveness to families in need; however, it is anticipated that the Committee's work will include the following elements:

- Situations of financial difficulty shall be referred to the Director or a member of the Committee.
- Once a contact or referral is made, the Director or a member of the Committee will meet with the family to understand the situation and determine the need.
- After information is gathered, the entire Committee shall be informed and consulted.
- After prayerful consideration of the facts of the situation and the resources of the Fund, the Committee will decide whether aid will be provided, how much aid will be provided and the manner in which it will be provided (i.e. charitable gift or no-interest loan).
- The Director will request that a check be drawn in the authorized amount.
- The committee will inform the family of its decision and maintain contact and appropriate follow-up as necessary, especially in the event further financial assistance may be needed.
- The committee will strive to avoid unnecessary bureaucracy and standard formulas for assistance, and work charitably on behalf of the community to provide adequate support to the family given the uniqueness of the situation.