

## Introduction

*Conduct yourselves in a way worthy of the gospel of Christ so that, whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear news of you, that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind struggling together for the faith of the gospel.*

### Philippians 1:27

Paul's challenge to the Church at Philippi rings true in our Church today. As church personnel in the Archdiocese of Baltimore, we too must conduct ourselves in a way that is "worthy of the gospel of Christ." We are further challenged in this letter to the Philippians to do "whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious" (Phil 4:8). We are called both to **be** people of virtue, and to **act** in ways that are consistent with gospel principles.

While we recognize that there are many levels of supervision in parishes, schools and institutions, for the purpose of this *Code* the term "supervisors" refers to the recognized leader of the institution (eg: pastor, pastoral life director, principal, or Central Services director). The *Code* addresses the character of church personnel, as well as the principles and expectations that guide their efforts.

There are certain core principles and expectations that apply to all church personnel. There are also principles and expectations that are role-specific. For example, all church personnel are committed to the best interests of others. This is a core expectation. This expectation applies to all church personnel: the youth minister or the parish priest, the volunteer catechist or the school principal, the parish accountant or the volunteer cantor. In short, it applies to anyone who has a role, volunteer or professional, in the parish. While all church personnel share in this core expectation, there are also role-specific expectations. For example, the parish accountant has a role-specific expectation to comply with generally accepted accounting principles. A priest has a role-specific expectation to honor the seal of confession.

There are four core principles that provide the basis for the *Code of Conduct for Church Personnel*. They are:

- *Church personnel are expected to represent the Church in faithful, authentic and loving ways.*
- *Church personnel are expected to seek and maintain competency in areas in which they are exercising their roles.*
- *Church personnel are expected to foster the dignity of each person and be committed to the best interests of others.*

- ***Church personnel are duty bound to hold one another accountable to conduct and standards appropriate to their respective roles.***

The *Code of Conduct for Church Personnel* is richer because it has been informed by the best practices of clergy, lay ecclesial ministers, educators, religious, volunteers and other church personnel. These practitioners truly do conduct themselves in a “way worthy of the gospel of Christ.” The *Code* sets expectations for church personnel in the Archdiocese of Baltimore. These expectations will help to enhance ministry and service in the Archdiocese of Baltimore. And so, “to this end, we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling and powerfully bring to fulfillment every good purpose and every effort of faith, that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, in accord with the grace of our God and Lord Jesus Christ.” (2 Thessalonians 1:11-12)