



Church Offering and Priest / Deacon Stipend Gifts Explained

St. Patrick Roman Catholic Parish St. Michael Mission

Does the parish/mission charge for sacraments or liturgical services?

No it does not, can not, and will not (Can. 848). Parishioners seeking a sacrament or liturgical service from our parish/mission often times use these occasions to gift the church with an offering or the priest / deacon with a stipend. Although these gifts are given as an expression of support for the church or gratitude to the priest / deacon, they are not payments for sacraments or liturgical services received.

Why does the parish/mission ask for my gift offering?

The parish/mission wishes that it did not have to ask, but unfortunately due to limited income and rising costs it must ask, as some individuals would otherwise never contribute to the support of the parish/mission (CCC 2122).

Does the church really need my gift offering?

Yes, it most certainly does. Our parish/mission depends on your gift offering to supplement income for the upkeep of its buildings and other operating expenses. Our budget is extremely tight and all income is needed in order to remain financially solvent. Your gift matters, is important and is appreciated.

Are parishioners who are seeking a sacrament or liturgical service required to gift the church with an offering?

Although it is appropriate, much needed, and asked that a parishioner consider a gift offering to the church upon receiving a sacrament or liturgical service (like baptism, marriage quincieñera, funeral etc.) it is not required. No one pays for a sacrament or liturgical service.

Are parishioners who are seeking a sacrament or liturgical service required to gift the priest or deacon with a stipend?

Although it is appropriate that a parishioner consider a gift stipend to the priest / deacon upon receiving a sacrament or liturgical service (like baptism, marriage quincieñera, funeral etc.) it is not required. No one pays for a sacrament or liturgical service.

What is a gift offering?

A gift offering is a financial donation that a parishioner gives towards the financial support of the parish/mission in exchange for use of the parish's buildings for a requested sacrament or liturgical service.

What is a stipend?

A priest or deacon does not receive payment for administering a sacrament or liturgical service; salvation is not only for the rich. It is recommended, however, that a donation called a "stipend" be given if it is within the means of those who have requested the sacrament or liturgical service. While a priest is given an allowance to meet his needs and a deacon receives compensation through employment, stipends allow the priest or deacon to have a supplement to their income.

Can a parishioner be denied access to a sacrament or liturgical service due to their inability to gift the church with an offering or the priest / deacon with a stipend?

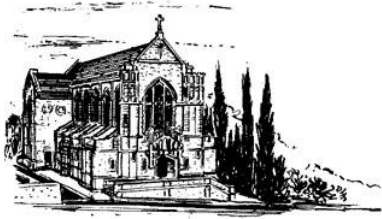
No, especially if those who seek them at appropriate times, are properly disposed, and are not prohibited by law from receiving them (Can. 843). In all situations of true financial difficulty, the overriding principle is that a parishioner must never be denied access to a sacrament or liturgical service because of money. Those experiencing financial hardship are asked to confidentially make their situation known at the time of planning and scheduling with the parish/mission secretary so that all requests for an offering or stipend can be reduced or waived.

What is an appropriate gift amount for the church offering or priest / deacon stipend?

Parishioners can call the parish office and ask the secretary what the recommended church offering or stipend is for a specific sacrament or liturgical service in our parish/mission.

I already give weekly to support the parish/mission, why should I consider another church offering or stipend gift?

These requested gifts are distinct from other common forms of giving in parish life (i.e. Sunday Offertory, Annual Catholic Appeal etc.). These gift offerings express one's gratitude to God. The portion one returns to the Lord recognizes that all good things come from Him. The offering also expresses our collaboration in the building up of the Kingdom. The extensive sacramental, teaching, and charitable works of the Church are a reflection of the generous, sacrificial offerings of the People of God.



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Code of Canon Law

Can. 222 §1 Christ's faithful have the obligation to provide for the needs of the Church, so that the Church has available to it those things which are necessary for divine worship, for apostolic and charitable work and for the worthy support of its ministers.

Can. 840 The sacraments of the New Testament were instituted by Christ the Lord and entrusted to the Church. As actions of Christ and the Church, they are signs and means which express and strengthen the faith, render worship to God, and effect the sanctification of humanity and thus contribute in the greatest way to establish, strengthen, and manifest ecclesiastical communion. Accordingly, in the celebration of the sacraments the sacred ministers and the other members of the Christian faithful must use the greatest veneration and necessary diligence.

Can. 848 The minister is to seek nothing for the administration of the sacraments beyond the offerings defined by competent authority, always taking care that the needy are not deprived of the assistance of the sacraments because of poverty.

Precept of the Church

The fifth Precept: "You shall help to provide for the needs of the Church." (Means that the faithful are obliged to assist with the material needs of the Church, each according to his own ability.)

Catechism of the Catholic Church

2122 The minister should ask nothing for the administration of the sacraments beyond the offerings defined by the competent authority, always being careful that the needy are not deprived of the help of the sacraments because of their poverty.⁵⁶ The competent authority determines these "offerings" in accordance with the principle that the Christian people ought to contribute to the support of the Church's ministers. "The laborer deserves his food."⁵⁷

Sacred Scripture

Matthew 10: 8

Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, drive out demons. Without cost you have received; without cost you are to give.

Matthew 10: 10 - The laborer deserves his keep.

Luke 10: 7 - For the laborer deserves his payment.

Acts 8:9-20

A man named Simon used to practice magic ⁴ in the city and astounded the people of Samaria, claiming to be someone great. All of them, from the least to the greatest, paid attention to him, saying, "This man is the 'Power of God' that is called 'Great.'" They paid attention to him because he had astounded them by his magic for a long time, but once they began to believe Philip as he preached the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, men and women alike were baptized. Even Simon himself believed and, after being baptized, became devoted to Philip; and when he saw the signs and mighty deeds that were occurring, he was astounded. Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent them Peter and John, who went down and prayed for them, that they might receive the holy Spirit, for it had not yet fallen upon any of them; they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them and they received the holy Spirit. When Simon saw that the Spirit was conferred by the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money and said, "Give me this power too, so that anyone upon whom I lay my hands may receive the holy Spirit." But Peter said to him, "May your money perish with you, because you thought that you could buy the gift of God with money.

2 Corinthians 9: 5-15

So I thought it necessary to encourage the brothers to go on ahead to you and arrange in advance for your promised gift, so that in this way it might be ready as a bountiful gift and not as an exaction. Consider this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each must do as already determined, without sadness or compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. Moreover, God is able to make every grace abundant for you, so that in all things, always having all you need, you may have an abundance for every good work. As it is written: "He scatters abroad, he gives to the poor; his righteousness endures forever." The one who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You are being enriched in every way for all generosity, which through us produces thanksgiving to God, for the administration of this public service is not only supplying the needs of the holy ones but is also overflowing in many acts of thanksgiving to God. Through the evidence of this service, you are glorifying God for your obedient confession of the gospel of Christ and the generosity of your contribution to them and to all others, while in prayer on your behalf they long for you, because of the surpassing grace of God upon you. Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

1 Timothy 5: 17-18

Presbyters who preside well deserve double honor, especially those who toil in preaching and teaching. For the scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox when it is threshing," and, "A worker deserves his pay."

Isaiah 55: 1

All you who are thirsty, come to the water! You who have no money, come, receive grain and eat; Come, without paying and without cost, drink wine and milk!