I. Purpose

Establish and define the role and responsibilities of Deans in the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis, and their role in service to both the Archbishop and ministers of their geographic area.

II. Definitions

Dean: A presbyter, either incardinated in the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis or an extern in residence for at least a year who holds stable ministerial faculties, who is elected as Dean through a legitimate election held by presbyters with active voice in the Deanery, and whose election is confirmed by the Archbishop.

Deanery: A geographic grouping of neighboring parishes, a grouping of priests assigned to specialized ministry, or a grouping of retired priests. Deaneries are established to help in the coordination of pastoral care, common pastoral action, mutual support in the implementation of diocesan policies, sharing of pastoral concerns, and facilitation of communication. The Archbishop, after consultation with the Presbyteral Council, may establish, modify, combine or suppress Deaneries according to circumstances and pastoral needs. Deaneries are known in universal canon law as a “vicariate forane.” Deanery membership for priests is governed by the Constitution and Bylaws of the Presbyteral Council.

III. Policy

The office of Dean is a pastoral responsibility. Within the Deanery the main duty of the Dean is to convene those who minister in the Deanery in order to strengthen the faith life of our parishes and institutions. In addition to his close working relationship with the priests, the Dean also maintains communication with the deacons, religious, and laity who minister within the Deanery.

The Dean represents the concerns of the priests, deacons, and other pastoral ministers to the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy and Parish Services, and regularly works with other Deans of the Vicariate and Regional Vicars to help develop a spirit of collaboration and mutual support. In fulfilling this responsibility, the Dean does not interfere with the unique relationship which exists between the Archbishop and clergy, as well as religious and laity, but instead enhances the relationship as part of his pastoral care.
Responsibilities of the Dean:

1. The Dean represents his Deanery as an ex-officio member of the Presbyteral Council. Terms of appointment are governed by the Constitution and Bylaws of the Presbyteral Council. Working within the Council, the Dean is to advise the Archbishop on issues of governance and take an active part in the process of consultation within the Archdiocese.

2. The Dean holds regular meetings with the priests of the Deanery.

3. The Dean may be requested to serve as a temporary parochial administrator of a parish in the event a pastor in his Deanery is on sabbatical or a leave of absence, or if a parish is otherwise vacant.

4. The Dean cultivates a close working relationship with lay leaders and lay movements within his Deanery, and promotes Archdiocesan safe environment standards in all ministerial environments.

5. The Dean encourages community building among the priest and deacons of the Deanery, and manifests particular concern for clergy with demanding assignments, who are in poor health, or face other challenges. The Dean is to foster regular communication with the priests and deacons assigned in his Deanery as a proactive measure to become aware of any situations that may require attention for the cleric or the parish.

6. The Dean will inform the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy and Parish Services of the illness or hospitalization of priests or deacons from his Deanery. The Vicar will inform the Archbishop and other relevant parties. The Dean should inform the Vicar and keep the Archbishop and Chancery up to date on key events or developments in the Deanery including important personal matters relating to clergy such as the death of a family member of a Deanery priest or deacon.

7. The Dean will inform the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy and Parish Services of developments in the parishes of their Deanery and initiate ongoing dialogue among clergy as it relates to strategic and long-term planning for the Deanery.

8. When appropriate, the Dean is consulted by the Director of Clergy Personnel concerning the appointment and transfer of pastors and other clergy within his Deanery.

9. During the time of appointment as Dean, Deans are granted the faculty to preside over the installation of pastors in the Deanery which they serve (c. 527 §2).

10. The Dean closely associates himself with the Vocation Office and the Institute for Ongoing Clergy Formation to promote priestly and religious vocations, and to foster retreats, theological meetings and conferences, and programs for professional growth and development of clergy in the Deanery.

11. The Dean, upon request of the Archbishop, will represent him at civic and religious functions.