

DATE: June 30, 2023
TO: Pastors, Parochial Administrators and Parish Administrators
FROM: Andrew D. Brannon, CPA
Chief Finance and Administrative Officer
Diocese of Winona-Rochester
RE: Guidance on Proxy Requests

In an effort to improve the Diocese's responsiveness to your proxy requests, we have looked at ways that we can improve our process. Many times, proxy requests are received at the Pastoral Center with incomplete supporting documentation, which necessitates numerous e-mails going back and forth. To help expedite the process and serve you better, we have created a *Proxy Request Worksheet* to assist you in organizing the information prior to submitting a proxy request.

Reason for a Proxy

A proxy request arises when a parish seeks to perform an act of extraordinary administration totaling \$25,000 or more.

Requests for a proxy satisfy the requirements of both Canon Law and Civil Law. Canon 1281 of the Code of Canon Law requires that the written faculty of the ordinary be obtained for each act of extraordinary administration. Civil law requires, for validity, a majority vote of the Board of Trustees of the parish's civil corporation for the same acts. The proxy gives the Pastor the right to cast the votes of the Bishop and Vicar General at your parish's Civil Corporation meeting during which this matter is discussed.

With the signature of the Ordinary, and the Vicar General, a proxy suffices for both canonical and civil requirements.

Proxy Request Worksheet

The attached worksheet is intended to help you prepare a proxy request. Our hope is that it will serve as a guide so that you provide the Office of the Bishop all the materials needed to facilitate issuance of your proxy. The grey text boxes in the left margin describe four main types of information to include with your proxy request.

Information

Please complete the information section with the parish name, city, and pastor name. If another parish contact is assisting you with the proxy request, please fill in their name and E-mail address.

Description

There are two types of proxies; a fundraising proxy and a project proxy. Indicate whether the proxy will be for fundraising or for completing a project. If no funds are in hand for a proposed project, please submit a fundraising proxy. If funds and pledges are in hand, you may submit a project proxy. For both types of proxies, please provide a title and a brief description of the proposed project.

If you are seeking a fundraising proxy, for a specific project(s), you only need to state your goal (estimated cost of the project[s]), and whether the fundraising and/or project was listed as a Catholic Ministries Appeal (CMA) Project and the CMA year.

If you're asking for a project proxy, please indicate which accounts will be used to fund the project. Please note, in order to proceed with a project, you need to have at least 75% of the funds in hand. The remaining funds can be in the form of documented pledges. "Gen Ledger Acct #" refers to your ParishSoft cash account number, not the bank account number of where your funds are held. Providing the general ledger account number assists us in identifying the adequacy of the funds available for your project.

For project proxies, additional information should accompany the proxy request such as bids, drawings, schematics, schedules, or other relevant material. If complex contracts are involved, please have the contract reviewed by your parish's legal counsel.

Approvals

This section documents the consultation that a Pastor should seek for Acts of Extraordinary Administration. Consultation is provided by:

- Finance Council (Document meeting date)
- Pastoral Council (Document meeting date)
- Parish Civil Corporation Board of Trustees – Your proxy provides the Pastor permission to cast the votes of the Most Reverend Robert Barron, and the Vicar General Fr. Will Thompson at the meeting of the Parish Civil Corporation.

Please have the preparer sign and date the form. We ask for contact information in case we have questions about the proxy request. If you have questions, please contact me, Andrew Brannon, at 507-858-1248 or abrannon@dowr.org, or my assistant, Melissa O'Hara, at 507-858-1241 or mohara@dowr.org.