

# **Continuing Education Policy for Deacons and Priests**

In accordance with National Church Canons (III 7.5 and III 9.1) the Bishop and Commission on Ministry are charged with the responsibility of developing standards and providing opportunities for the continuing education of deacons and priests in their respective dioceses. Clearly implementing these standards is for your personal benefit as well as being beneficial for the entire church. The Institute for Christian Studies (ICS) and the Clergy Events Committee will make every effort to provide opportunities for continuing education.

In the Diocese of Central Florida the following standards apply effective January 1, 2005:

- All full-time, stipendiary priests shall take 24 Contact Hours of Continuing Education annually.
- All active deacons shall take 12 contact hours of Continuing Education annually.
- A Contact Hour is defined as each hour the student and instructor are together in a learning situation, as distinguished from a Continuing Education Unit (CEU).

Much of this requirement can be accomplished at minimal cost within the diocese itself. For example, the annual Clergy Conference will typically provide eight (8) Contact Hours. Each of the two annual Clergy Days will provide four (4) Contact Hours, if attended. The remainder of Contact Hours will be the individual responsibility of the Clergy.

Continuing Education may include Theological Studies, such as Scripture, Ethics, Theology, Church History, and Liturgy; Professional Studies, such as Leadership Development, Congregational Development, Communications and Finance.

All congregations and institutions of the Diocese of Central Florida remunerating clergy must make adequate provisions of time and money to comply with this policy.

## **Accountability**

A Continuing Education Report Form will be provided by the Diocese to list the Continuing Education activities of the previous Calendar year, and will be due in the Diocesan Office by May 1. This information will be kept on file and will be referenced when clergy seek deployment within the diocese or when references are requested from another diocese. Compliance with the Continuing Education Policy will be noted when clergy are under consideration for vacancies.