

POLICY CONCERNING PARISH AWARDS

PURPOSE

This document sets out a framework for parish recognition and awards. The purpose of this framework is to

- Guide the parish Rector and the Parish Council;
- Ensure consistency in bestowing awards; and
- Support petitions to the Ruling Bishop for Diocesan recognition.

BACKGROUND

In January 2011 Metropolitan Hilarion issued a Diocesan policy concerning awards. This policy stated that

- People who work without recompense for the good of their parish should be recognised in a suitable manner;
- In the first instance, it is best that the parish recognises its workers by the presentation of parish Gramotas, icons, Bibles or other gifts at official ceremonies or appropriate occasions; and
- In those cases where parish Rectors consider it appropriate to recognise long and outstanding work of parishioners, the rector may wish to petition the ruling bishop to award an Episcopal Gramota to the intended recipient.

LAITY - DEFINITIONS

The parish will, from time to time, wish to acknowledge service to or support of the parish by parish officials, members, volunteers, teachers, benefactors and sponsors.

- *Parish officials* are the Warden and Senior Sister, members of the Parish Council, Sisterhood Council and Auditing Committee;
- *Parish members* are those who hold formal membership of the parish;
- *Volunteers* are those men and women who contribute their time and ability to parish life and receive no payment for that work. This includes, but is not limited to, conductors, singers, workers in the parish kiosk, cleaners, altar servers, and maintenance workers;
- *Teachers* are those engaged in teaching in parish schools;
- *Benefactors* are those who donate significant sums of money, or donate items of particular value, to the parish;
- *Sponsors* are individuals or organisations that offer goods or services to assist with fundraising or parish projects.

LAITY – CRITERIA FOR RECOGNITION

Parish officials will, in general, be recognised by the parish after ten years of continuous service, and at five-year intervals thereafter. Service for lesser periods may be recognised at

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the discretion of the Rector or Parish Council. For continuous service of twenty-five years, Diocesan recognition will be sought.

Members will, in general, be recognised after twenty years of continuous membership, and at five-year intervals thereafter.

Volunteers will, in general, be recognised by the parish after ten years of continuous service, and at five-year intervals thereafter. Service of particular importance in parish life may be recognised at the discretion of the rector or Parish Council before ten years of continuous service. For continuous service of twenty-five years, Diocesan recognition will be sought.

Benefactors and sponsors will be acknowledged on a case-by-case basis.

LAITY – FORMS OF RECOGNITION

Initial acknowledgement will always be in the form of a commemorative certificate or “gramota”, the design of which should be approved by the Diocesan Council. For parish officials, members, volunteers, and teachers, subsequent acknowledgement may take the following forms:

- A framed icon of Christ, the Mother of God, or some other appropriate image, usually the patron saint of the parish, sisterhood or school, as the case may be;
- A book of the Holy Gospels, or some other appropriate spiritual book, in Russian or in English;
- An icon lamp or home censer;
- A cross or a medallion to be worn.

These items should be presented formally at the end of Divine Liturgy on an appropriate occasion, after which “Many Years” should be intoned for the recipient(s).

Benefactors may be similarly recognised. For sponsors, commemorative certificates should be appropriately framed for display in the place of business. Consideration should also be given to presenting major sponsors with attractive items, such as Russian handcrafts or framed prints, for display in the place of business.

AWARDS FOR LAITY - BUDGET

The Parish Council should ensure that awards are budgeted for and that there is a stock of suitable items available for this purpose.

HIGHER CLERGY – CLERICAL SERVICE

As the Diocesan policy notes, there is an established system of ecclesiastical honours awarded to the higher clergy in recognition of length, diligence and faithfulness of service.

For parish deacons, these awards are as follows:

- The right to wear the double orarion
- Elevation to the rank of protodeacon
- The right to wear the kamilavka

These awards are generally after service of three, ten and fifteen years respectively, although individual circumstances will vary. The double orarion is bestowed at the discretion of the Ruling Bishop; higher awards are bestowed by the Synod of Bishops.

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For parish priests:

- The right to wear the nabedrennik
- The right to wear the violet skufiya
- The right to wear the kamilavka
- The right to wear the gold pectoral cross
- Elevation to the rank of archpriest
- The right to wear the palitsa
- The right to wear the jewelled cross

These awards are generally given at intervals of no less than three years. Awards up to and including the kamilavka are bestowed at the discretion of the Ruling Bishop; higher awards are bestowed by the Synod of Bishops.

Other awards, far less commonly given, recognise particularly long and distinguished service. Such awards include the right to wear the mitre or a second pectoral cross.

Clergy awards are generally given publicly in a liturgical setting, most commonly on the occasion of an episcopal visit to the parish of the clergyman so honoured, or some other significant liturgical occasion. The giving of these awards is an honour in itself and the award will, for the most part, be evident whenever the deacon or priest is vested for the Divine Services.

AWARDS FOR CLERICAL SERVICE – BUDGET

It is customary for the parish in which a clergyman serves to meet the costs of clergy awards. The Parish Council should ensure that awards are budgeted for.

AWARDS FOR CLERICAL SERVICE – DEACONS

When deacons' vestments are ordered, the parish should ensure that the set includes a single and standard double orarion.

As the time for elevation to the rank of protodeacon or award of the right to wear the kamilavka approaches, the Parish Council or Sisterhood should, in consultation with the rector, take steps to obtain a protodeacon's orarion (that is, an orarion embroidered with the words "Holy, Holy, Holy") or a kamilavka.

AWARDS FOR CLERICAL SERVICE – PRIESTS

Each set of priest's vestments customarily includes the nabedrennik and palitsa. The Parish Council or Sisterhood should ensure that all sets of priest's vestments in use in the parish includes these items.

As the time for award of the right to wear the violet skufiya, kamilavka, gold cross or jewelled cross approaches, the Parish Council or Sisterhood should, in consultation with the rector, take steps to obtain these items.

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OTHER ANNIVERSARIES AND PARISH SERVICE – HIGHER CLERGY

Parishes are encouraged to observe other significant anniversaries, or length of service within the parish. Examples include ten or twenty-five years since ordination or since appointment to the parish.

Items that will, in due course, be bestowed as an award, may be presented on such occasions. Alternatively, new variations on such items might be presented, or such items as Gospel books, censers, or blessing crosses.

OTHER ANNIVERSARIES AND PARISH SERVICE – LESSER CLERGY

The lesser clergy are readers and subdeacons. Tonsure to these ranks is generally an acknowledgement of particular accomplishment in or commitment to the liturgical life of the church.

Upon tonsure, readers may be presented with an Apostol in Slavonic or English.

Diligent readers or subdeacons who are suitable candidates will usually be recommended by the rector for elevation to the subdiaconate or diaconate, as the case may be. A diligent altar server or reader may, at the discretion of the Diocesan bishop, be awarded the right to wear the orarion.

For the lesser clergy, anniversaries of tonsure or of parish service may be recognised by the presentation of an appropriate item related to that service: an Apostol in Slavonic or English, a sticharion, or an orarion.

AWARDS FOR LESSER CLERGY – BUDGET

The Parish Council should ensure that awards are budgeted for.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibility for the giving of parish awards rests with the parish rector. In this responsibility he will be supported by the secretaries of the Parish Council, Sisterhood Council, and parish school, being those persons best placed to provide advice on length of parish membership and service.

Authorisation

+ Metropolitan Hilarion



Australian and New Zealand Diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia

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