

**SAMPLE  
POSITION DESCRIPTION**  
*Rector*

**Objective**

To lead the congregation so, through its total life, the parishioners know and share Christ, and the parish as an institution participates in community and diocesan life.

**Nature and Scope**

The Rector is the Principal Pastor and the Chief Executive of this parish, responsible to the Vestry (which the Rector leads as President) and the Bishop, in accordance with the Canons of the Church. Directly reporting to the Rector, and serving at his/her pleasure, are full-time paid staff members. A small number of parishioners share in the administration of the parish through their participation in various parish ministries. The Rector works with the Vestry, its officers and committees on local policy matters. The Rector functions - in relation to other organizations of the parish - as: a "recruiter" of parishioners; consultant on process and content; and educator and enabler (when required) of each organization in its efforts to define and carry out its tasks. S/he may exercise the right of veto on all matters relative to the spiritual welfare of the parish.

The Rector also represents the parish to the community and the larger Church, serving in community organizations, ministerial association, regional, and diocesan organizations. S/he is chief liturgist of the parish, conducting worship and preaching regularly, and pastoral counselor, principally serving in situations of family life crises - both joyous and grievous - as well as on occasions such as baptism and marriage.

The Rector must have above average educational achievement, skill as a preacher, previous parochial experience, a high degree of social affability and awareness, and ability to deal creatively with change and conflict both on the human relations level and in the larger societal context.

Typical challenges the Rector faces in meeting his/her objective are: Parish attitudes of alienation and indifference toward denominational policy and program. A strong minority view within the parish which resists change and expects the church to support this attitude -- and is angered whenever it fails to do so. A financial roller-coaster at times, brought on by various forces, sometimes coupled with the changing membership base of the parish.

In meeting these challenges, the Rector attempts to increase the depth and breadth of the participation of laity in leadership roles, and to share with them the administration of the parish. S/he serves as a communications and interpretation link between the parish and the larger Church. S/he provides pastoral support, and review and evaluation for those to whom leadership has been delegated.

In all parish work the Rector works closely with the Vestry, which oversees all aspects of managing the physical and financial resources of the parish as well as providing the central point of lay coordination of parish goals, priorities, and programs.

## **Accountabilities**

1. Lead worship, preach the Gospel, and administer the sacraments, so that the congregation is given opportunity for spiritual growth and exciting response to Christ.
2. Provide for pastoral care of the parishioners, so that individual and family joys, anxieties, and distress are met with Christian concern.
3. Guide staff, lay leaders and the congregation in establishing goals to which the parish can respond, so that its viability is assured.
4. Motivate lay leaders and staff to develop and implement programs, so that their performance results in the fulfillment of established goals.
5. Challenge the congregation to recognize the needs of others, so that its members respond with their time, abilities, and money within and beyond the parish.
6. Provide a Christian education program through which persons of all ages will learn the content of the Faith and its application to daily living.
7. Participate in community, regional, and diocesan activities, so that the mission of the congregation beyond itself is furthered.
8. Intentionally participate in the community of presbyters of the diocese working in communion with the bishop to build up the mission and ministry of the whole church.
9. Maintain a pattern of life that sets a wholesome Christian example.

According to *The Vestry Resource Guide*:

### **The Rector's Role:**

National Canons Title III. Canon 9, Section 5, states that the rector is responsible for:

- Worship and spiritual life
- Selection and oversight of all assisting clergy
- Use and control of all buildings and furnishings
- Education of all ages in the Scriptures; the doctrine, discipline and worship of the Church' and in the exercise of their ministry as baptized persons
- Stewardship education for all ages
- Preparation for Baptism, Confirmation, Reception and Reaffirmation
- Announcing the bishop's visit with the warden and the vestry, and provide the bishop with information about the congregation's spiritual and temporal state
- Applying contributions not otherwise designated from one Sunday per month to charitable uses
- Reading communications from the House of Bishops at worship
- Recording all Baptisms, Marriages, Confirmations and Burials in the congregation register

In summary, the canons assign virtually all responsibility and authority for the pastoral and spiritual direction of the congregation to the rector. According to the canons, assisting clergy (curates, assistants, associates) have no canonical or legal authority unless it is delegated to them by the rector.