



Conferences and Pastors: 5 Tips for Maintaining Good Relations

Given the demands on pastors today, few can participate in parish lay ministry activities. Conferences must conscientiously maintain close relations with their pastors and keep all lines of communication open.

1. Pastors and parishioners should be regularly informed about the income, expenses and works of the Conference, to assure them that all funds received from the parish are being handled appropriately and responsibly. Though it must respect the confidentiality of those served in the community, such reporting is necessary to secure the trust and cooperation of the pastor.
2. If a pastor cannot attend regular meetings of the Conference, some mutually convenient time should be arranged between the Conference president and the pastor, to share ideas, express concerns and ask questions.
3. The Society has always supported and respected priests. A collaborative relationship must exist between pastor and Conference for our Society to thrive. A Conference should always be careful how it treats the pastor, who has the final say about whether or not the Conference can function in the parish. Pastors who are kept informed about the Society and its works are more likely to encourage and support our efforts.
4. Establishing clear guidelines of operation with every newly assigned pastor is essential. What has been done under the administration of one pastor might make another uncomfortable. As long as the Rule of the Society is not violated, compromise is a necessary and a good thing.
5. Regularly providing a pastor with information about the Society and what is going on - not just in the parish, but also regionally, nationally and internationally - is vital for a solid relationship with a pastor and to his continued growth in knowledge of the Society's mission and purpose. A Conference should help the pastor by providing the parish (most likely through the parish bulletin) with at least an annual report of the works of the Society in the parish community, although more frequent reporting to parishioners is certainly encouraged.