

Guidelines for Receiving Clergy Visitors from outside the DOS and Visiting Outside the Diocese of the South

The following guidelines are obligatory for all clergy in the Diocese of the South when receiving clerical visitors from outside the Diocese of the South and when visiting parishes, communities, or monasteries outside the Diocese of the South.

- 1) **Coverage:** All clergy must let their dean know any time they leave their parish on a Sunday, ensuring that all appropriate coverage requirements have been addressed.
- 2) **When approached by a visiting clergyman who is a member of the OCA:**
 - a. First, check the OCA website to validate his presence there, and require some substantiated proof that his bishop knows of his intention to visit.
 - b. Then, send a “you are welcome” email and include dos admin (gerasim@dosoca.org, Chancellor@dosoca.org, alexander@dosoca.org and your dean) expressing anticipation of the visit and concelebration (if appropriate).
- 3) **For all clergy who are outside the OCA:** you should ask that a letter of good standing from his bishop be sent to alexander@dosoca.org, gerasim@dosoca.org, chancellor@dosoca.org and your dean.
- 4) **If DOS Clergy plan to serve anywhere outside of the Diocese (OCA or Otherwise):**
 - a. First, get an explicit blessing from the ruling bishop of the DOS in the form of a letter of good-standing and introduction (request this from office@dosoca.org, secretary@dosoca.org and chancellor@dosoca.org).
 - i. This letter will introduce you to the other ruling bishop (whether the other bishop is in the OCA or not).
 - ii. You should let the ruling bishop know the dates of your visit, the purpose and any other appropriate context that might be included in the letter of good standing.
 - b. Do not visit the other community without receiving written indication that the visit is blessed by the other diocese’s / jurisdiction’s bishop.
- 5) **Exceptions (Local Clergy):** Local (within 90 miles of your parish or mission), “well known” clergy whose bishops are members of the *Assembly of Canonical Bishops* in America may be received (and you may visit them) with less formality for special occasions, patronal feasts, weddings, baptisms etc.. You must, however, receive written indication (at least via email) that their bishop approves of the visit. You should keep this confirmation on file in the event that there is any question about protocol. A complete list of jurisdictions may be referenced here: <https://www.assemblyofbishops.org/directories/jurisdictions>
- 6) **Long Term / Standing Blessings:** There will be occasions where repeat visits, extended travels or other circumstances call for a letter that is more enduring (though not permanent). Please inquire with the DOS Administration in these, unique cases, and these should always be formalized in writing.
- 7) **OCA Guidelines:** [The OCA Clergy Guidelines](#) should be referenced for all other relevant matters, especially items 18-22 (enumerated below)

OCA CLERGY GUIDELINES (18-22):

18 If a priest needs to absent himself from the diocese for any extended period of time, he must first receive the explicit permission of his diocesan bishop, ideally in a formal letter certifying his good standing.

19 When a priest plans to make a visit or vacation outside his own diocese, the visiting priest must also contact the diocese and the local priest he is visiting and be prepared to show his letter of good standing obtained from his diocesan bishop.

20 When visiting other parishes, even on vacation, a priest should always wear cassock, riasa, and, as appropriate, pectoral cross. He should enter into the sanctuary, venerate the Holy Table, greet the parish priest and other clergy present, and either remain in the altar, if invited to serve, or take a place assigned to the clergy.

21 A priest may not accept an invitation from the laity of another parish to celebrate a liturgical service or offer a homily.

22 The parish priest is responsible for invitations to priests and deacons to serve in his place or to concelebrate as blessed by his diocesan bishop.

Approved / Adopted:



Alexander, Archbishop of Dallas and the South

August 19, 2023