

Canon Law References

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Can. 532: In all juridic affairs the pastor represents the parish according to the norm of law. He is to take care that the goods of the parish are administered according to the norm of ⇒ can. 1281-1288.

Can. 537: In each parish there is to be a finance council which is governed, in addition to universal law, by norms issued by the diocesan bishop and in which the Christian faithful, selected according to these same norms, are to assist the pastor in the administration of the goods of the parish, without prejudice to the prescript of ⇒ can. 532.

Can. 1281: §1. Without prejudice to the prescripts of the statutes, administrators invalidly place acts which exceed the limits and manner of ordinary administration unless they have first obtained a written faculty from the ordinary.

§2. The statutes are to define the acts which exceed the limit and manner of ordinary administration; if the statutes are silent in this regard, however, the diocesan bishop is competent to determine such acts for the persons subject to him, after having heard the finance council.

§3. Unless and to the extent that it is to its own advantage, a juridic person is not bound to answer for acts invalidly placed by its administrators. A juridic person itself, however, will answer for acts illegitimately but validly placed by its administrators, without prejudice to its right of action or recourse against the administrators who have damaged it.

Can. 1282: All clerics or lay persons who take part in the administration of ecclesiastical goods by a legitimate title are bound to fulfill their functions in the name of the Church according to the norm of law.

Can. 1283: Before administrators begin their function:

1. they must take an oath before the ordinary or his delegate that they will administer well and faithfully;
2. they are to prepare and sign an accurate and clear inventory of immovable property, movable objects, whether precious or of some cultural value, or other goods, with their description and appraisal; any inventory already done is to be reviewed;
3. one copy of this inventory is to be preserved in the archive of the administration and another in the archive of the curia; any change which the patrimony happens to undergo is to be noted in each copy.

Can. 1284: §1. All administrators are bound to fulfill their function with the diligence of a good householder.

§2. Consequently they must:

1. exercise vigilance so that the goods entrusted to their care are in no way lost or

- damaged, taking out insurance policies for this purpose insofar as necessary;
2. take care that the ownership of ecclesiastical goods is protected by civilly valid methods;
 3. observe the precepts of both canon and civil law or those imposed by a founder, a donor, or legitimate authority, and especially be on guard so that no damage comes to the Church from the non-observance of civil laws;
 4. collect the return of goods and the income accurately and on time, protect what is collected, and use them according to the intention of the founder or legitimate norms;
 5. pay at the stated time the interest due on a loan or mortgage and take care that the capital debt itself is repaid in a timely manner;
 6. with the consent of the ordinary, invest the money which is left over after expenses and can be usefully set aside for the purposes of the juridic person;
 7. keep well organized books of receipts and expenditures;
 8. draw up a report of the administration at the end of each year;
 9. organize correctly and protect in a suitable and proper archive the documents and records on which the property rights of the Church or the institute are based, and deposit authentic copies of them in the archive of the curia when it can be done conveniently.

§3. It is strongly recommended that administrators prepare budgets of incomes and expenditures each year; it is left to particular law, however, to require them and to determine more precisely the ways in which they are to be presented.

Can. 1285: Within the limits of ordinary administration only, administrators are permitted to make donations for purposes of piety or Christian charity from movable goods which do not belong to the stable patrimony.

Can. 1286: Administrators of goods:

1. in the employment of workers are to observe meticulously also the civil laws concerning labor and social policy, according to the principles handed on by the Church;
2. are to pay a just and decent wage to employees so that they are able to provide fittingly for their own needs and those of their dependents.

Can. 1287: §1. Both clerical and lay administrators of any ecclesiastical goods whatever which have not been legitimately exempted from the power of governance of the diocesan bishop are bound by their office to present an annual report to the local ordinary who is to present it for examination by the finance council; any contrary custom is reprobated.

§2. According to norms to be determined by particular law, administrators are to render an account to the faithful concerning the goods offered by the faithful to the Church.

Can. 1288: Administrators are neither to initiate nor to contest litigation in a civil forum in the name of a public juridic person unless they have obtained the written permission of their own ordinary.