

POLICY DOCUMENTS

INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN MEMBERS OF CLERGY

This Policy Document supplements Canon III.23 of this communion and is binding upon all clergy of EADM (including those who serve in associated Missions and Orders.)

1. General Principles, Definition

- a. This communion in general prohibits relationships of an intimate nature between members of its clergy and treats them as a violation of proper ethics. It does so because such relationships threaten the good order and discipline of the church, because they introduce ties of loyalty that can conflict with the proper discharge of the responsibilities of the clergy, and because they compromise the clergy's duty of canonical obedience. If not controlled, such relationships can lead to situations of favouritism, special treatment and ultimately to the corruption of discipline through misconduct. They also risk contravening the commonly held expectations of Christian moral teaching regarding chastity, which is enjoined upon all members of this communion.
- b. For the purposes of this document, "intimate relationship" is defined as a close relationship between two persons, whether sexual or not, in which physical and/or emotional intimacy is present beyond the normal bounds of platonic friendship.

2. Policy

- a. Members of clergy must not develop intimate relationships with other members of clergy of this communion, including those serving in associated Missions and Orders.
- b. They must inform the Council of Three at the first available opportunity if they become aware that a person with whom they are in an intimate relationship applies for incardination or admission to the clergy of this communion, including its associated Missions and Orders. Such an application will normally be refused save for the exception detailed in subsection (i) below. They should also inform the Council of Three in the event that such an application involves a person with whom they have in the past had an intimate relationship, which situation will be subject to individual consideration.

- i. Rarely, an exception may be made in respect of clergy with established joint ministries who are already married or have entered a permanent civil partnership before applying to join this communion, and special conditions may be attached to such service in each cases by the Council of Three.
- ii. Notwithstanding subsection (i), it is an absolute rule that no person may serve as the ecclesiastical superior of a person with whom he or she is in an intimate relationship.
- c. Members of clergy who form an intimate relationship with a member of clergy of another church must act in accordance with any policy or canonical provision of that communion concerning such relationships and with respect to the wishes and directions of the ecclesiastical superiors concerned.
- d. Clergy who disregard these provisions will be subject to disciplinary proceedings and it will be normal policy that those involved are required to leave this communion.

FOR THE COUNCIL OF THREE

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