



## The Roman Catholic Bishop of Novaliches

### **Salaries of Staff and Personnel Circular 2020-06**

**To: All Parish Priests and Parish Administrators**

Since the imposition of the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) last March 13, these past eight weeks or so have been a tremendously difficult period for us, taking immense toll on our spiritual, pastoral, psychological, and physical well-being. Furthermore, with our Churches closed and public celebration of Holy Mass suspended, the ECQ has totally disrupted our operations and inflicted enormous damage on our otherwise stable finances. Given these distressing circumstances, some of our parish priests and administrators are understandably thinking of not any longer giving salaries to their staff and personnel while invoking the “no work, no pay” policy applied by many NGO’s and private corporations.

Dear Fathers, no matter how reasonably sound and legally permissible this arrangement might be, it would not be pastorally good nor morally justifiable for us to pursue this course of action without us letting our own staff and personnel with their families down, most especially at this particular hour of their greatest need. There is of course no reminding necessary for us to see how our Church workers depend on us right now and how they count on us to help them get through this difficult period. Moreover, as the Lord’s Community of Disciples, we as Church are strongly urged at this particular point in time especially, to steadfastly give witness to the Gospel values of charity, servant-leadership and faithful stewardship that we all preach and teach. Along this line, may I, therefore, reiterate here for you the following points agreed upon during the Presbyteral Council and Curia meetings last April 28 and May 1 respectively, and beg for your kind understanding and generous cooperation, to wit:

1. That we give our staff and personnel full salaries at least up until May 15, 2020 that supposedly as announced last April 29 would be the last day of the now extended ECQ lockdown.

2. That with the undiminished salaries we give our staff and personnel even though they have not really been able to report to us for work, their remaining vacation leaves and sick leaves however are therewith considered completely utilized and totally expended.

3. That in case there are parishes of which their Parish Funds are all but empty, or that their remaining balance is too small or too short to fully settle the salaries of their staff and personnel, these parishes may use other Church funds still available to them, such as their Mass Funds for example. This of course with the clear understanding that the funds they would avail of remain borrowed funds to be returned to that Fund as soon as things have normalized.

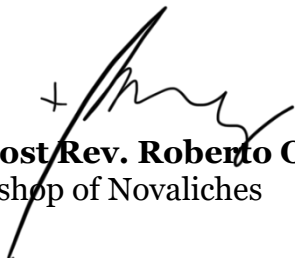
4. That in case there are parishes opting not to tap internal parish resources or that they already have in fact exhausted even these remaining funds, they can always apply for a soft loan from the Diocese with 0% interest. This again with the agreement that the special loan so made would be repaid to the Diocese as soon as things get stabilized on the parish level.

5. That after May 15, 2020, the day referred to above as supposedly the end of ECQ, and there still is no easing of restrictions that have already adversely affected our Church's finances and operations, the Diocese and the Parishes may consider releasing in advance the 13<sup>th</sup>-Month Pay of their staff and personnel, even just half of it if only in order to continue helping them out. Even so, in the end, the parishes may also just have to consider negotiating with their employees regarding REDUCED payment of salaries.


6. Finally, that having exhausted all possible sources of funds to support the full granting of salaries to our staff and personnel, all non-essential parish expenses in the near future such as Christmas parties, raffles and gift-giving, summer outings, etc., are suspended and/or totally cancelled in line with austerity measures to be put in place for the purpose of eventually taking control and regaining financial stability.

Trusting that all of us do stand together as one Diocese on this important matter and that we are on same page in dealing with the same, and, again, looking forward with you—for us to weather together all these kinds of adversities and challenges—sustained as we are by the same hope and confidence that we have in God Our Father, I am.

Given in the Chancery in Fairview, Quezon City, 13 May 2020.

  
**Most Rev. Roberto O. Gaa, DD**  
Bishop of Novaliches

Attested by:

  
**Rev. Fr. Reynaldo Percival S. Flores**  
Chancellor