

# The Sabbatical Q&A

## 1. What is Sabbatical?

The meaning comes from the word, "Sabbath." It is used in the Bible to describe creation. In the secular world, especially in the collegiate, university atmosphere, a sabbatical is a period of paid leave granted to a professor for study or travel, traditionally one year for every seven years worked. The original college professors were clerics, ordained members of Religion and Philosophy.

## 2. Why a Sabbatical?

In essence, a sabbatical is quite common for clergy and an important part of both the renewal of clergy and a congregation. It is not considered a vacation and should not be referred in any instance. Renewal, in this case, comes from both the Clergy and the Congregation as they listen and take intentional rest in God for this specific season of "Sabbatical."

## 3. How long is a Sabbatical?

Sabbaticals, on average are between 4-5 months. In Fr. Roberts' signed and approved Letter of Agreement (2013) by Calvary, it was specified the Rector would be "granted" leave for a paid sabbatical every sixth year of his tenure. overall, He has yet to receive a sabbatical in his fifteen (15) years in the priesthood. He is on year nine (9) at Calvary and will receive a sabbatical just prior to his ten-year Jubilee.

The grant application has a duration of 16 weeks, taking place from July to October, 2023.

## 4. What is the total cost to Calvary?

We applied in 2018 and 2021 grant for \$50,000 each year to a widely known endowment offered across the USA to Christian Clergy. The Lily Endowment Clergy Renewal Programs at Christian Theological Seminary has been funding clergy to take sabbaticals for over fifty years. The Lily family has an Episcopal heritage, but their philanthropy extends to all Christian mainline denominations. The CRF is an endowed fund supporting Clergy and their Congregations for the purpose of growth and renewal. Calvary was not awarded the grant but the application and planning that went into it, prepared our church in many ways.

The Vestry and Fr. Roberts, along with the leadership provided by The Sabbatical Committee agreed the cost of the 2023 Sabbatical is not to exceed \$35,000.

## 5. How will the Sabbatical be funded?

The Church family will be asked to fund the Sabbatical. The consensus of the Finance Committee and the Vestry was that we would budget \$15,000 from donations designated to the Sabbatical in 2023 and the difference of the full cost be appropriated from our investment categories if needed. A general budget will be provided to the parish on our website as well as in this detailed report.

**6. How can we continue to have strong leadership when our Rector is away?**

Our church will be afforded a supply priest, not only to preach and celebrate on Sundays but also midweek to handle all pastoral and spiritual matters. In addition, the church is afforded guest speakers on scheduled dates to which will motivate and encourage transitional growth among our many volunteers.

**7. What guarantee is there that Fr. Roberts will remain with Calvary an additional 1-2 years after returning from Sabbatical?**

The grant specifically stated that a sabbatical cannot be considered if the clergy intends to leave within a year after returning. The whole need for the sabbatical is that Fr. Roberts will be able to stay for many years to come. One point worth making is that Fr. Roberts observes 40% of our members who leave and go north for the summer every year to be renewed while he continues in Indian Rocks Beach, leaving no more than 3-4 weeks per year, which are for vacation. Vacation is quite different than a Renewal.

**8. What will Calvary be expected to do during the absence of the Rector?**

Continue to worship, fellowship and exercise a consistent pattern of gathering. The emphasis on church renewal will be strengthened through intentionally planned "small groups" to develop and nurture mutual affection. Biblical references and questions promoting the mission of our church will be a central point of discussion. Details regarding the topics presented by special guest speakers are forthcoming.

**9. What will happen when Fr. Roberts returns?**

We will enjoy a time to celebrate and share with one another what has been learned over this time.