

*Diocese of Springfield in Massachusetts*

# Liturgical Guidelines for Mass with the Bishop

We read in the Ceremonial of Bishops: “The Bishop himself is the chief steward of the mysteries of God and the overseer, promoter, and guardian of all liturgical life in the particular church entrusted to his care.” Therefore, the preeminent manifestation of the local Church is present when the Bishop celebrates the Eucharist, surrounded by his presbyters and ministers, and with the full, active participation of all God’s holy people. Thus a Eucharistic liturgy at which the Bishop is the principal celebrant takes on a special character and dignity. The following guide is offered to assists those planning a Mass with the Bishop. Communities are encouraged to contact the Office of the Bishop as soon as possible once a date of a special celebration (excluding Confirmations) is anticipated in order to avoid scheduling conflicts. The Office of the Bishop can be contacted by phone (413-452-0803) and email (bishopsoffice@diospringfield. org). Once a celebration has been scheduled, and the community prepares to celebrate with the Bishop, the “Liturgical Planning Form”, which can be found at http://www.diospringfield.org/administration/bishops-office/.html, is to be completed and returned no later than two weeks prior to the date of the scheduled event. If there is also a program for the liturgy, please attach a copy with the “Liturgical Planning Form”. It is the role of bishop’s Master of Ceremonies or the Office of Divine Worship to assist the local coordinator and approve the final plans for the liturgy.  *We ask your cooperation in planning for this important event by following these guidelines.* *If you have questions, please contact the Office for Worship. (413-452-0846)*

## GENERAL

1. The liturgy will be celebrated according to appropriate norms and liturgical directives. You may find it helpful to refer to the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal, Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship,* and *Built of Living Stones*.
2. Please reserve a parking space for the bishop near the Church.
3. The bishop will bring his own ritual book if needed (for example, the Confirmation Ritual) but the parish is to provide the Roman Missal, lectionary, and Book of the Gospels (if applicable)
4. A *Master of Ceremonies* will be appointed by the Bishop’s Office.
5. In order to reduce distractions during the liturgy, prior to Mass make an announcement (or print a request in the participation aid) to turn off cell phones and other devices that could distract from the liturgy. The Bishop will make himself available for individual or group photographs after mass. Individual and group photographs are not to be taken during Mass. A staff person should be present to facilitate both group and individual photographs. Flash photography is prohibited as well as individuals moving out of their pews to take photos. No part of the liturgy may be recorded, videoed or streamed on the internet without permission by the bishop.
6. Please arrange for a quiet area in which the bishop can vest without distractions.
7. Bishop Byrne prefers a clip on microphone or hand held to an ear piece.
8. The liturgy will begin on time. Processional music should begin at the publicized time of the liturgy.
9. Funerals of Clergy: Funeral liturgies are generally coordinated with short notice. This creates certain challenges. However, the Bishop’s Office should be contacted immediately as well as the Office of Worship who will execute the Funeral Liturgy while the parish provides the wake service. **All funerals of diocesan clergy will be scheduled for 11 am** unless extenuating circumstances dictate otherwise. It is of the greatest importance that the funerals of diocesan priests and deacons be model liturgies. The Office of Worship and Music will be on hand to assist, implement and facilitate the funeral. The wake service may be provided by the parish or institution. Please follow these guidelines carefully when preparing such funeral liturgies.

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## LITURGICAL ENVIRONMENT

1. The Church teaches us that “the altar is Christ” [RCDA, Ch. 4, No. 4], [BLS 56]. Therefore, it should reflect the nobility, beauty, strength, and simplicity of the One it represents. The altar should be visible to all, and not obscured with flowers, flags or statuary.
2. Incense: Incense dignifies and heightens the liturgical experience when used appropriately. However, increasing numbers of individuals are experiencing allergies and respiratory difficulties. The MC will instruct the servers on the appropriate and pastoral use of incense in the liturgy.
3. Sacred vessels are held in special honor; therefore, they should be made from precious metal. In the dioceses of the United States of America, sacred vessels may also be made from solid materials that, according to the common estimation in each region, are precious, for example, ebony or other hard woods [*General Instruction of the Roman Missal 327-334].*

## LITURGICAL MINISTERS

1. In order to express the full sacramentality of the Church, it is encouraged that at least one deacon be present to assist the bishop. This should be the deacon assigned to the parish. If he is not available, or if the parish does not have a deacon, one will be provided by the Permanent Diaconate Office. The parish should provide 3 to 5 altar servers to assist at Mass. Lectors are required for the first reading and the second reading (if there is one). The deacon offers the Prayer of the Faithful and lectors only do so in the absence of a deacon. The readings are to be taken from the readings of the day. A second reading ought not to be added if it is not part of the readings of the day. The lector should be provided with a copy of the readings well in advance of the Mass for their preparation

## Introductory Rites

1. Music: Music is an integral part of any liturgical celebration. *God has bestowed upon his people the gift of song. God dwells within each human person, in the place where music takes its source. Indeed, God, the giver of song, is present whenever his people sing his praises. [Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship 1]*. A cantor if possible should lead the song of the assembly. The Eucharistic acclamations (*Holy, Holy; Memorial Acclamation; Amen*, *Lamb of God)*, the Gospel Acclamation and the Psalm are always to be sung with the assembly taking its proper role. Music should be selected in such a way that it serves the liturgy and the song of the assembly rather than drawing attention to those performing it.
2. It is preferred that the procession keep moving. As each member of the liturgical procession reaches the foot of the sanctuary, they are to bow and go directly to their place in the sanctuary, rather than “lining up” in front and bowing together. The entrance hymn should conclude when the bishop reaches the presidential chair which is after he incenses the Altar if it is used. Once the bishop has reached his chair no additional verses should be sung.
3. Bishop will select the Penitential Act; Preface; Eucharistic Prayer; and Final Blessing.
4. Gloria: Preferably sung, if not, recited on Solemnities and Sundays outside of Advent and Lent and all weekday Ritual Masses. (Please note that since the implementation of the *3rd. ed. of the Roman Missal,* the Gloria is sung on weekday ritual Masses in Advent and Lent.)If sung, please use a through-composed setting if possible (one *which* does not repeat the refrain between verses).

**Liturgy of the Word**

1. The readings are to be taken from the readings of the day. A second reading ought not to be added if it is not part of the readings of the day. The first reader should not begin the reading until the bishop has put on his Miter. It is always preferable to sing the responsorial psalm. The Gospel Acclamation / Alleluia begins as the reader reaches their place in the assembly. Do not wait for the bishop to move to begin the Acclamation. If a deacon is assisting at Mass, prior to reading the Gospel, the deacon approaches the Bishop for a blessing, and, after the Gospel is read, takes the Book of Gospels (or Lectionary) to the Bishop so that he may reverence it. The assembly remains standing as the deacon takes the Book to the bishop. In the absence of a deacon, it is preferable that the pastor read the gospel. The one who is to read the gospel, either a deacon or priest, goes to the bishop to ask and receive his blessing. He then proceeds to the Ambo to proclaim the gospel. The deacon is to offer the Prayer of the Faithful. If no deacon is present, only one lector should offer the intercessions. In preparing the intercessions the parish should follow the examples provided in the Roman Missal and Appendix A and B of this guide.

**Liturgy of the Eucharist**

1. The offertory procession is to take place in as simple a manner as possible. Those presenting gifts are to walk down the center aisle to the bishop. The gifts presented should be the bread and wine needed for the celebration of the Eucharist. Extra symbols should not be added. Concelebrants approach the altar after the Prayer over the Gifts (not after the Preface). There is to be no instrumental music during the Eucharistic prayer. Sufficient bread and wine should be consecrated so that all may receive Communion from what is consecrated at that Mass. Recourse to the reserved Sacrament should take place only in an emergency. Communion is to be distributed in as timely a manner as possible. The bishop will give communion to the deacons and the servers. He will then distribute the Eucharist in the center aisle, usually with the pastor. All the other concelebrants, deacons, and, if needed, extra – ordinary ministers of the Eucharist should immediately distribute the Eucharist to the rest of the congregation.

21) Per [GIRM 86] “*While the Priest is receiving the Sacrament, the communion Chant is begun . . . The singing is prolonged for as long as the Sacrament is being administered to the faithful.”* Communion and meditation songs should be long enough to cover the time needed to distribute the Eucharist, wash the bishop’s hands, and return the Blessed Sacrament to the tabernacle. The music should not extend beyond that.

The servers should once again wash the bishop’s hands after he distributes the Eucharist.

Bishop will observe a period of silence (without music) after the Communion procession [GIRM 88]. A Hymn of Praise may be sung after the silence in place of a recessional hymn at which point the recessional would be instrumental only.

1. Silence: The liturgy is punctuated with periods of silence to allow the assembly to reflect on the words they have heard. Periods of silence should be observed after the celebrant’s invitation to prayer, the readings, the homily, and the Communion procession.
2. Please make sure that communion ministers are assigned to distribute communion to the music ministers.
3. Distribution of Communion and the Purification of the Vessels:

The Deacon or MC will:

* + consolidate the Blessed Sacrament at the end of the communion rite at the altar, preferably with the corporal still present and repose in the tabernacle,. The deacon or MC will then remove the corporal.
  + Ensure that the sacred vessels are purified in a timely manner after Holy Communion *at the credence table*.

**Closing Rites**

1. Any announcements should be brief, and given after the Prayer after Communion. Concelebrants do not kiss the altar at the conclusion Mass, but rather venerate the altar through a common bow with the bishop before the recessional. If there had been a pre-liturgical procession (of confirmandi, graduates, etc.), they should stay in their places or walk out behind the liturgical procession.

It is the bishop’s preference to use the *Blessing for a Pontifical Mass [RM 143].* Please print this text in the participation aid if possible:

V. *The Lord be with you.*  R. And with your spirit.

V. *Blessed be the name of the Lord.*  R. Now and forever.

V. *Our help is in the name of the Lord*. R. Who made heaven and earth.

1. It will be most helpful if you are able to print a participation aid for the assembly. The Office of Worship is glad to proofread it if that would be helpful.
2. Persons with Disabilities: The USCCB statement issued in 1995 entitled, *Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities,* stresses the need to include persons with disabilities in the celebration of all sacraments and provides general catechetical guidelines for celebrating the sacraments with persons with a variety of disabilities. (*Natl. Directory for Catechesis*, p. 115)Service animals are welcome.

**N.B.** All Covid-19 protocols are in effect until rescinded. Therefore, please adapt until further notice.

**Attendance in Choir**

There are various occasions when it is more appropriate that a priest be the principal celebrant of a Eucharistic Liturgy while the bishop presides “in choir.” Funerals may be one such occurrence. In these cases, the following norms are to be followed:

a) The bishop takes his place in the entrance procession behind the principal celebrant.

b) The bishop is seated in some visible place in the sanctuary, but not with the principal celebrant or concelebrants. A kneeler is to be provided at the bishop’s place as well as a seat for his Master of Ceremonies.

c) The bishop does not approach the Altar as a concelebrant. He is not brought the Eucharist at the Fraction Rite; rather, the principal celebrant brings him the Eucharist after he has communicated himself – presenting the host and chalice to the Bishop as he would to others in the liturgical assembly. The bishop wears a stole for the communion Rite.

d) It is customary and appropriate for the bishop to offer some words/ remarks immediately following the Prayer after Communion. If others are to speak, the bishop speaks last.

e) In the case of a funeral, the bshop is willing to preside over the Final Commendation if invited. Bishop will change into a Cope and stole for this and process out at end with miter and crosier.

f) In the recessional procession, the bishop again follows the principal celebrant.

**Celebrating the Sacrament of Confirmation with the Bishop**

**General**

Twice each year, in April for the Fall and in October for the Spring, the Office of Faith Formation will send a Confirmation Request to each Parish. In completing this form, the Parish is to provide the Office of Faith Formation with three possible dates for the liturgy. The Office of Faith Formation will work with the Bishop’s Office to schedule Confirmation based on the bishop’s availability. Once a celebration has been scheduled, and the community prepares to celebrate with the bishop, the “Liturgical Planning Form”, which can be found at [http://www.diospringfield.org/bishops-office/](../MC), is to be completed and returned to the Office of Divine Worship no later than two weeks prior to the date of the scheduled event. If there is a program for the liturgy, please enclose a copy with the “Liturgical Planning Form”. It is the role of bishop’s Master of Ceremonies or the Office of Divine Worship to assist the local coordinator and approve the final plans for the liturgy.

Letters from the candidates requesting Confirmation should be sent to the pastor and not the bishop. In turn, it is the pastor who should present the candidates during the rite. Candidates should be presented to the bishop as a group and should not be named individually.

The bishop may meet with the candidates and their sponsors before the liturgy. Please do not line them up or seat them until the bishop has had an opportunity to speak with them.

The bishop will bring his own Chrism. Please have a small table in the Sanctuary in front of the Altar on which the Chrism and Ritual may be placed.

There should be sufficient seating in the sanctuary for bishop, the pastor, the deacon, and other priests who concelebrate.

In selecting music, it is important to remember that many visitors and guest will be present and the music should be accessible and familiar.

The Candidates and their sponsors should be seated together in the first few pews, so that the bishop can speak to them during his homily.

The Ritual for Confirmation includes suggestions for the Prayers of the Faithful. Please consult Appendix A and B of this document in your preparation.

Under no circumstances are the Confirmandi to wear stoles. The stole is a symbol of ordained ministry, not of Confirmation. The Confirmandi should not wear special garments, but rather, if possible, appropriate “dressed-up” attire.

If the Confirmation occurs on a Sunday or Solemnity the readings and prayers for the Mass are taken from the Mass of the Day, not from the Mass of Confirmation.

**Ministers**

It is appropriate to invite your most skilled cantors, lectors, and altar servers to participate in the liturgy. All ministers should take special care to wear appropriate “dressed – up” attire. Hospitality ministers can be especially helpful to welcome and guide visitors and guests.

**Choice of Mass/ Liturgical Texts**

All presidential texts must come from the Roman Missal or Rite of Confirmation. The readings must come from the Lectionary approved for use in the United States.

Either the Ritual Mass of Confirmation or the Mass of the Day is celebrated. Sundays and Solemnities always take precedence.

The Ritual Mass of Confirmation may be used except on Sundays, Solemnities and the Days in the Easter Octave. If the Ritual Mass is celebrated the vestment color is Red.

If the Mass of the Day is celebrated the vestment color of the day is used.

**Introductory Rites**

Please note that the Third Edition of the Roman Missal calls for the Gloria when the Ritual Mass of Confirmation is celebrated. It is preferable that the Gloria be sung.

**Rite of Confirmation**

After the Gospel, candidates are presented by the pastor to the bishop. He is to use these or similar words: “Bishop, I wish to present the Confirmation Class of (year) from the Catholic community of (name of parish).” Candidates stand for introduction but are then seated for the homily. Sponsors do not stand for this part.

After the homily the Candidates stand for the Renewal of Baptismal Promises; responding “I do” to each. The Candidates remain standing for the Laying on of Hands, to which they respond “Amen.” Each Candidate moves to the Bishop individually for the Anointing with Chrism. The Sponsor places their right hand on the candidate’s right shoulder. The bishop says, “Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit”, to which the candidate responds “Amen.” The bishop then says to them, “Peace be with you”, to which the Confirmed responds “And with your spirit.” Candidates should respond to the bishop in a clear and committed voice. The bishop will then exchange the sign of peace with the Confirmed and their sponsor.

The bishop’s voice should be clearly heard during the anointing. Therefore, either there should be no music during the anointing or it should be quiet enough that the bishop’s voice is not obscured.

The Parish should provide a wedge of lemon, a pitcher, a basin, and a towel for the bishop to wash his hands after the anointing; he will do so prior to removing his Miter and introducing the Prayer of the Faithful.

The Creed is not said, as the renewal of Baptismal promises takes its place.

The deacon, if present, offers the prayer of the faithful. Please see Appendix A and B.

**Concluding Rites**

If there had been a pre-liturgical procession of confirmandi, they should stay in their places or walk out behind the liturgical procession. This prevents a back-up in the rear of the church as well as ministers processing out in a half – empty church.

Photography The bishop is willing to take photographs with the Confirmandi after the liturgy. The bishop will usually return to the sanctuary for pictures unless another suitable place is prepared in the reception area for photography. Please tell the Master of Ceremonies before Mass where photos will take place. A staff person should be present to facilitate both the group and individual photographs.

These guidelines are intended to assist in planning and implementing the celebration of Mass with the bishop.

**If you have any questions please contact either Stacy Dibbern, Manager, Bishop's Office. She may be reached by phone at (413) 452-0803 or by E-Mail at** [**bishopsoffice@diospringfield.org**](mailto:bishopsoffice@diospringfield.org) **or Father William Hamilton, Dir. Office of Divine Worship- (413) 452-0846 or by E-Mail at** [**frb.hamilton@diospringfield.org**](frb.hamilton@diospringfield.org)**.**

***Appendix A***

**Preparing the Prayer of the Faithful**

In the composition of the Prayer of the Faithful, the following points should be kept in mind:

1. The series of intentions is usually to be for:

a. The needs of the Church

b. Public authorities and the salvation of the whole world

c. People burdened by any kind of difficulty

d. The local community

2. It is asked that the final petition be for the dead. This acts as a signal to the bishop that the intercessions have come to an end.

3. The petitions are not prayers themselves.

4. These are to be “general” intercessions.

a. They ought to be petitions that the assembly can, by and large, agree on.

b. They ought not to become a “mini-homily” or a place to make a particular point.

c. They ought not single out individuals.

d. They should not be secret (“For a special intention”); otherwise the assembly cannot rightly give its assent. Likewise, the assembly should not be invited to add intercessions.

5. They are petitions, not prayers of thanksgiving; the great prayer of thanksgiving follows shortly.

6. The response by the people should be a general prayer that God would hear the invocation (e.g., “Lord, hear our prayer”) not a separate petition or other statement. If the people are not familiar with the response, it should be announced before the intercessions.

***Please note:***

If a deacon is present for Mass, he is to offer the Prayer of the Faithful.

***Appendix B***

**Prayer of the Faithful for Confirmations Sample Intercessions**

• For these sons and daughters of God, confirmed by the gift of the Spirit, that they give witness to Christ by lives built on faith and love: let us pray to the Lord.

• For their parents and godparents who led them in faith, that by word and example they may always encourage them to follow the way of Jesus Christ: let us pray to the Lord.

• For the holy Church of God, in union with N. our pope, N. our bishop, and all the bishops, that God, who gathers us together by the Holy Spirit, may help us grow in unity of faith and love until his Son returns in glory: let us pray to the Lord.

• For all people, of every race and nation, that they may acknowledge the one God as Father, and in the bond of common brotherhood seek his kingdom, which is peace and joy in the Holy Spirit: let us pray to the Lord

**ABBREVIATIONS**

**BLS—***Built of Living Stones (*2005, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, D.C.)

**CSL**--*Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* (1963, Second Vatican Ecumenical Council*, Sacrosanctum Concilium)*

**HCWEOM**--*Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist Outside Mass* (1976, Catholic Book Publishing Co., New York)

**GIRM**--*General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (2003, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, D.C.)

**STL**--*Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship*(2007, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, D.C.)

**RDCA—***Rite of Dedication of a Church and an Altar* (1989, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, D.C.)

**RM—***Roman Missal, 3rd. ed.* (2011, Archdiocese of Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, Chicago)

**NDC—***National Directory for Catechesis* (2005, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, D.C.)