



**DIOCESE OF HARRISBURG • Office of Worship**  
**LITURGICAL GUIDELINES FOR MASS**  
*Celebrated by the Bishop* Updated July 25, 2006

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## 1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

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### THE DIOCESAN BISHOP, HIGH PRIEST OF HIS FLOCK

*The diocesan Bishop, the first steward of the mysteries of God in the particular Church entrusted to him, is the moderator, promoter and guardian of her whole liturgical life. For the Bishop, endowed with the fullness of the Sacrament of Order, is the steward of the grace of the high Priesthood, especially in the Eucharist which he either himself offers or causes to be offered, by which the Church continually lives and grows. (Redemptionis Sacramentum, 19)*

*Indeed, the pre-eminent manifestation of the Church is found whenever the Rites of Mass are celebrated, especially in the cathedral church with the full and active participation of the entire holy People of God, joined in one act of prayer, at one altar at which the Bishop presides surrounded by his presbyterate with the Deacons and ministers. Furthermore, every lawful celebration of the Eucharist is directed by the Bishop, to whom is entrusted the office of presenting the worship of the Christian religion to the Divine Majesty and ordering it according to the precepts of the Lord and the laws of the Church, further specified by his own particular judgment for the Diocese. (Redemptionis Sacramentum, 20)*

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## **2. PLANNING SHEETS AND PRINTED PROGRAMS**

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The Office of Worship will send planning sheets needed to the parish, institution, or organization hosting the ceremony. They must be returned to the Office of Worship as soon as possible (normally at least ten day) before the liturgy is celebrated. This allows for the plans to be reviewed and the information to be presented to Bishop Rhoades to help him prepare. In addition, if a booklet will be printed for the Mass, it must be reviewed and approved by the Office of Worship **before** going to the press. Please plan to allow enough time for this process.

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## **3. DEACONS**

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*At a liturgical celebration presided over by the bishop there should be at least three deacons, one to proclaim the gospel reading and to minister at the altar, and two to assist the bishop. If more than three deacons are present, they should divide the ministries accordingly. (Ceremonial of Bishops, 26)*

If a parish or institution has a deacon and he is able to serve, the expectation is that he serves at the Mass with the Bishop. If there are two deacons, the roles may be divided into the customary “Deacon of the Word” and “Deacon of the Eucharist.” If there are more than two deacons, the roles are divided as stated in the *Ceremonial* above.

Please refer to the attached, “Notes for Deacons”

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## **4. ALTAR SERVERS**

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Seven Altar Servers (cross bearer, 2 candles bearers, thurifer, miter bearer, crosier bearer, Sacramentary bearer). Please select servers that are well trained, experienced and prepared to accomplish their assignment. For example, the thurifer should be able to use incense. They should be vested and ready to be briefed by the Master of Ceremonies no later than one half hour before the beginning of the ceremony.

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## **5. INCENSATION**

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*Thurification or incensation is an expression of reverence and of prayer, as is signified in Sacred Scripture.*

*Incense may be used if desired in any form of Mass:*

- a. During the Entrance procession;*
- b. At the beginning of Mass, to incense the cross and the altar;*
- c. At the Gospel procession and the proclamation of the Gospel itself;*
- d. After the bread and the chalice have been placed upon the altar, to incense the offerings, the cross, and the altar, as well as the priest [bishop and concelebrants] and the people;*

- e. *At the showing of the host and the chalice after the consecration.*  
*(General Instruction to the Roman Missal, 276)*

Generally, the Bishop will use incense at the beginning of Mass for the altar and cross, at the Gospel, and at the Preparation of the Gifts.

Incensation during the showing of the host and chalice after the consecration, while always an option, is usually reserved for the highest of feasts and celebrations. In such liturgies, if a deacon is serving, he does the incensation at the showing of the host and chalice.

Singing or instrumental music should continue during the incensation at the beginning of Mass and during the preparation of the gifts.

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## **6. THE READINGS**

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*Three readings, that is, from a Prophet, an Apostle, and a Gospel, are assigned to Sundays and solemnities. By these readings, the Christian people are brought to know the continuity of the work of salvation according to the wonderful, divine plan. These readings are to be followed strictly. During the season of Easter, according to the tradition of the Church, in place of the reading from the Old Testament, the reading is taken from the Acts of the Apostles. (General Instruction to the Roman Missal, 357)*

In reverence to the Word of God, please make sure that the readings are proclaimed from the Lectionary (not from photocopies, etc.) by a trained and prepared lector. Please note the Responsorial Psalm needs to be a lectionary text rather than an adaptation of a Psalm.

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## **7. THE PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL**

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*As a rule, the sequence of intentions is to be:*

- a) *for the needs of the Church;*
- b) *for public authorities and the salvation of the whole world;*
- c) *for those burdened by any kind of difficulty;*
- d) *for the local community.*

*Nevertheless, in a particular celebration, such as a confirmation, a marriage, or a funeral, the series of intentions may refer more specifically to the particular occasion. (General Instruction to the Roman Missal, 70)*

The intercessions should be short, sober, and succinct. Composed intercessions for a specific liturgy need to be approved by the Office of Worship. For the Sacrament of Confirmation, the intercessions are provided by the Office of Worship. If a deacon is scheduled to serve for the mass or other liturgy, he is to read the intercessions.

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## **8. PRESENTATION OF THE GIFTS**

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*It is praiseworthy for the faithful to present the bread and wine, which are then accepted at an appropriate place by the bishop or deacon who carries them to the altar. Even though the faithful no longer, as in the past, bring from their own possessions the bread and wine intended for the liturgy, nevertheless the rite of carrying up the offerings still retains its power and spiritual significance.*

*This is also the time to receive money or other gifts for the poor or the Church brought by the faithful or collected in the church. These are to be put in a suitable place but away from the Eucharistic table. (General Instruction to the Roman Missal, 73)*

**No other gifts or symbols may be presented at this time.**

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## **9. LITURGICAL MUSIC**

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### **THE GLORIA**

*The Gloria is a very ancient and venerable hymn in which the Church, gathered together in the Holy Spirit, glorifies and entreats God the Father and the Lamb. The text of this hymn may not be replaced by any other text. It is sung or said on Sundays outside the Seasons of Advent and Lent, on solemnities and feasts, and at special celebrations of a more solemn character. (General Instruction to the Roman Missal, 53)*

Please check with the Office of Worship before scheduling the Gloria other than on Sundays outside the Seasons of Advent and Lent, and on solemnities and feasts. The text of the Gloria must be the official text from the Sacramentary. Please note that this principle also applies to the other chants of the Mass (the Sanctus, Memorial Acclamations, etc.)

### **INCENSATIONS**

Generally, the Bishop will use incense at the beginning of Mass for the altar and cross, at the Gospel, and at the Preparation of the Gifts. Singing or instrumental music should continue during the incensation at the beginning of Mass and during the preparation of the gifts.

### **THE RESPONSORIAL PSALM**

*After the first reading comes the responsorial Psalm, which is an integral part of the Liturgy of the Word and holds great liturgical and pastoral importance, because it fosters meditation on the word of God.*

*The responsorial Psalm should correspond to each reading and should, as a rule, be taken from the Lectionary.*

*In the dioceses of the United States of America, the following may also be sung in place of the Psalm assigned in the Lectionary for Mass: either the proper or seasonal antiphon and*

*Psalm from the Lectionary, as found either in the Roman Gradual or Simple Gradual or in another musical setting; or an antiphon and Psalm from another collection of the psalms and antiphons, including psalms arranged in metrical form, providing that they have been approved by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops or the Diocesan Bishop. Songs or hymns may not be used in place of the responsorial Psalm. (General Instruction to the Roman Missal, 73)*

Please note the Responsorial Psalm needs to be a lectionary text rather than an adaptation of a Psalm. Please contact the Office of Worship with any questions regarding psalm texts.

## **TEXT OF LAMB OF GOD**

*The priest breaks the Bread and puts a piece of the host into the chalice to signify the unity of the Body and Blood of the Lord in the work of salvation, namely, of the living and glorious Body of Jesus Christ. The supplication Agnus Dei, (Lamb of God), is, as a rule, sung by the choir or cantor with the congregation responding; or it is, at least, recited aloud. This invocation accompanies the fraction and, for this reason, may be repeated as many times as necessary until the rite has reached its conclusion, the last time ending with the words dona nobis pacem (grant us peace). (General Instruction to the Roman Missal, 83)*

Only the words “Lamb of God” should be used as the invocation before “you take away the sins of the world”.

## **COMMUNION SONG**

*During the priest’s (bishop’s) reception of the Sacrament the Communion chant is begun. This singing is meant to express the communicants’ union in spirit by means of the unity of their voices, to give evidence of joy of heart, and to highlight more the “communitarian” nature of the Communion procession. The singing continues for as long as the faithful are receiving the Sacrament. If, however, there is to be a hymn after Communion, the Communion chant should be ended at a suitable time. (General Instruction to the Roman Missal, 86)*

*When the distribution of Communion is finished, as circumstances suggest, the priest and faithful spend some time praying privately. If desired, a psalm or other canticle of praise or a hymn may also be sung by the entire congregation. (General Instruction to the Roman Missal, 88)*

Communion songs and psalms should be chosen that are Eucharistic in theme and that are consistent with our Catholic theology and belief about the Eucharist. It is preferable to use a song with an antiphon and refrain so that the faithful may continue singing in the communion procession without having to carry a hymnal or song sheet.

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## 10. VESTMENTS

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The Bishop will bring his own vestments with him. Concelebrants and deacons are requested to bring their own alb. If they are available, you may borrow the diocesan concelebrant chasubles and deacon dalmatics and stoles. **The parish or group hosting the event is responsible for the transportation of these vestments to and from the ceremony site.** A vestment request form is attached.

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## 11. MATERIALS FOR SACRED VESSELS

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*Sacred vessels for containing the Body and Blood of the Lord must be made in strict conformity with the norms of tradition and of the liturgical books. Reprobated, therefore, is any practice of using for the celebration of Mass common vessels, or others lacking in quality, or devoid of all artistic merit or which are mere containers, as also other vessels made from glass, earthenware, clay, or other materials that break easily. This norm is to be applied even as regards to metals and other materials that easily rust or deteriorate. (Redemptionis Sacramentum, 117)*

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## 12. COMMUNION UNDER BOTH FORMS

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*You may wish to have Holy Communion for the faithful under both forms for this ceremony. If one chalice is not sufficient for Communion to be distributed under both kinds to the Priest concelebrants or Christ's faithful, there is no reason why the Priest celebrant should not use several chalices. For it is to be remembered that all Priests in celebrating Holy Mass are bound to receive Communion under both kinds. It is praiseworthy, by reason of the sign value, to use a main chalice of larger dimensions, together with smaller chalices. (Redemptionis Sacramentum, 105)*

*However, the pouring of the Blood of Christ after the consecration from one vessel to another is completely to be avoided, lest anything should happen that would be to the detriment of so great a mystery. Never to be used for containing the Blood of the Lord are flagons, bowls, or other vessels that are not fully in accord with the established norms. (Redemptionis Sacramentum, 106)*

Because the instruction prohibits the consecration of wine in flagons, chalices for distribution to priests and to the faithful are prepared at the Preparation of the Gifts.

For Masses with Bishop Rhoades, we ask that the auxiliary chalices be prepared with wine and water before mass and be placed on the credence table. They will be brought to the altar during the Preparation of the Gifts

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## 13. THE INVITATION BEFORE THE PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS

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*Upon returning to the middle of the altar, the priest, facing the people and extending and then joining his hands, invites the people to pray, saying, *Orate, fratres (Pray, brethren).**

*The people rise and make their response: Suscipiat Dominus (May the Lord accept). (General Instruction to the Roman Missal, 146)*

If a printed program is being used, it would helpful to include this text:

After the bishop says “Pray, brothers and sisters, that our sacrifice may be acceptable to God the Almighty Father,” the people rise and make their response “May the Lord accept this sacrifice at your hands, for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his Church.”

Please note that if incense is used at the Preparation of the Gifts, the assembly is most likely already standing since they have been incensed.

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#### **14. THE GESTURE OF REVERENCE BEFORE RECEIVING COMMUNION**

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*When receiving Holy Communion, the communicant bows his or her head before the Sacrament as a gesture of reverence and receives the Body of the Lord from the minister. When Holy Communion is received under both kinds, the sign of reverence is also made before receiving the Precious Blood. (General Instruction to the Roman Missal, 160)*

If a printed program is being used, the above text might be included in it.

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#### **15. OTHER DETAILS AND QUESTIONS**

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The Office of Worship is here to serve you in any way we can. Please do not hesitate to contact us with questions, clarifications, or concerns.

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