



Liturgical Guidelines for the Celebration of Mass with the Bishop.

Issued October 2022

This booklet is intended to help you to prepare for the forthcoming liturgical celebration with The Right Reverend Mark Davies, Bishop of Shrewsbury. Whilst these are specific guidelines for liturgy with the Bishop, the principles apply to all celebrations of Mass.

1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES^[1]_{SEP}

“The diocese forms that part of the people of God entrusted to the pastoral care of the bishop with the assistance of the presbyterate. In allegiance to its pastor and by him gathered together in the Holy Spirit through the Gospel and the Eucharist, the diocese stands as a particular Church, in which Christ’s one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church is truly present and at work.” Indeed, Christ is present, since by his power the Church is gathered together in unity. As Saint Ignatius of Antioch has truly written: “Just as where Christ Jesus is, there also is the Catholic Church, so also where the bishop is, there also should be the whole assembly of his people.” (Ceremonial of Bishops, 1)

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)

As the [Second Vatican] Council also teaches, there is no lawful assembly of the faithful, no community of the altar except under the sacred ministry of the bishop. (Ceremonial of Bishops, 3)

2. PLANNING SHEETS AND ORDERS OF CELEBRATION

The Liturgy Office will send planning sheets needed to the parish, school, or organisation hosting the ceremony. They should be returned to the Diocesan Master of Liturgical Ceremonies at the Curial Offices as soon as possible (normally at least two weeks) before the liturgy is celebrated. This allows for the plans to be reviewed and the information to be presented to Bishop Mark to help his preparation. In addition, if a booklet will be printed for the Mass, it must be approved by the Diocesan Master of Liturgical Ceremonies before finally going to print. Please plan to allow enough time for this process.

3. MASTER OF CEREMONIES

The Diocesan Master of Liturgical Ceremonies will, as far as possible, allocate a Master of Ceremonies to your event, who will make contact with you prior to the celebration.

4. DEACONS

At a liturgical celebration presided over by the Bishop there should be at least three deacons, one to proclaim the Gospel reading, and two to assist the Bishop. If more than three deacons are present, they should divide the ministries accordingly (Ceremonial of Bishops, 26), such division of roles will be organised by the Master of Ceremonies.

If a parish has a deacon, the expectation is that he will minister 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 Altar.”

5. ALTAR SERVERS

Ideally a minimum of seven Altar Servers are required (cross bearer, two candle bearers, thurifer (if incense is being used), mitre bearer, crosier bearer, book bearer). Please select servers that are well trained and experienced. If there are more than seven Altar Servers, the Master of Ceremonies will do his

upmost to ensure they are involved and valued during the celebration. The handling of the crosier and mitre may be best allocated to more senior servers.

The Altar Servers should be vested and ready to be briefed by the Master of Ceremonies no later than half an hour before the beginning of the celebration.

6. INCENSATION

Thurification or incensation is an expression of reverence and of prayer, as is signified in Sacred Scripture (cf. Ps 140 [141]: 2; Rev 8:3).

Incense may be used optionally 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 procession before the Gospel 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 elevation of the host and the chalice after the Consecration.*

(General Instruction to the Roman Missal, 276)

Incense is not used during the Recessional Procession.

If you choose the option of using incense, please ensure your Altar Server and Deacon/s know and are familiar with what is required. Singing or instrumental music should continue during the incensation at the beginning of Mass and during the preparation of the gifts.

In Shrewsbury Diocese, incense is not usually used at Mass in which the Sacrament of Confirmation is celebrated.

If you are unsure, please contact the Diocesan Master of Liturgical Ceremonies for clarification.

7. THE PENITENTIAL ACT

Bishop Mark will usually make use of option one, (the I confess ...) which should be followed by a sung or said Kyrie. If you wish to use another option, please consult the Diocesan Master of Liturgical Ceremonies.

8. THE READINGS

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)

For Sundays, Solemnities and Feasts the Readings allocated in the Lectionary must be used. For Confirmations, the Bishop will allocate Readings to be used for the whole year (unless the celebration falls on a Feast of Solemnity). If you are choosing readings for your celebration, please seek the guidance and approval of the Diocesan Master of Liturgical Ceremonies.

In reverence to the Word of God, please make sure that the Readings are proclaimed by a well prepared reader from the Lectionary or from a suitable file (not from newsletters, orders of celebration, or pieces of paper, etc.).

The Gospel Acclamation should be sung, if it is not sung it should be omitted. Before proclaiming the Gospel the deacon (or in the absence of a deacon the priest) will go to the Bishop to receive the blessing with the words, "Your blessing, Father".

Following the proclamation of the Gospel the deacon (or priest) does not venerate the Book, but brings it to the Bishop for him to venerate and to Bless the People. If a Book of the Gospels is not being used, the Lectionary is still brought to the Bishop for him to venerate, he does not Bless the People with the Lectionary.

8. THE UNIVERSAL PRAYER

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 Universal Prayer, previously referred to as Prayers of the Faithful, Bidding Prayers or Intercessions, should be short and succinct, examples of formularies for the Universal Prayer are given in the Roman Missal from page 1515. These examples include an introductory and concluding prayer, which are good options for the Bishop to use. Composed intercessions for a specific liturgy need to be approved by the Diocesan Master of Liturgical Ceremonies. If a deacon is scheduled to serve for the Mass or other liturgy, he is to read the intercessions.

9. PRESENTATION OF THE GIFTS

It is a praiseworthy practice for the bread and wine to be presented by the faithful. They are then accepted at an appropriate place by the Priest or the Deacon to be carried to the altar. Even though the faithful no longer bring from their own possessions the bread and wine intended for the liturgy as was once the case, nevertheless the rite of carrying up the offerings still keeps its spiritual efficacy and significance. Even money or other gifts for the poor or the Church, brought by the faithful or collected in the church, are acceptable; given their purpose they are to be put in a suitable place away from the Eucharistic table. (General Instruction to the Roman Missal, 73)

The Bishop will, usually remain seated, at the more solemn celebrations, to receive the gifts. The Deacon (or Priest) will then carry them to the altar. No other gifts or symbols may be presented at this time.

10. LITURGICAL MUSIC

The Christian faithful who come together as one in expectation of the Lord's coming are instructed by the Apostle Paul to sing together Psalms, hymns, and spiritual canticles (cf. Col 3:16). Singing us the sign of the heart's joy (cf. Acts 2:46). Thus St. Augustine says rightly, 'Singing is for one who loves', and there is also an ancient proverb: 'Whoever sings well prays twice over'. (General Instruction to the Roman Missal, 39)

There is also the saying that as Catholics we sing the Mass rather than sing at Mass. As a minimum the following parts of the Mass should be sung:

Alleluia (or the appropriate Gospel Acclamation in Lent)

Sanctus (Holy Holy)

Memorial Acclamation

Agnus Dei (Lamb of God)

If these are not sung, the singing of hymns is not appropriate.

It is also preferable for the Entrance Antiphon, Gloria (if appropriate), Psalm, and Communion Antiphon to be sung.

Whether sung or said, the 2011 translation of the Roman Missal texts must be used, this includes the Gloria text.

Please ensure any hymns chosen are appropriate for the liturgical season.

11. VESTMENTS

As far as is possible, the dalmatics worn by the Deacon/s should match the chasuble worn by the Bishop. It is preferable for those Priests concelebrating to also wear a chasuble over the stole.

12. SACRED VESSELS AND DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

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)

Please ensure there are an adequate number of Sacred Vessels for the distribution of Holy Communion to the faithful. *It is praiseworthy, by reason of the sign value, to use a main chalice of larger dimensions, together with smaller chalices. (Redemptionis Sacramentum, 105).* For Masses with Bishop Mark, 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.

Please also ensure there are an adequate number of altar breads prepared for the celebration. Reservation of the Blessed Sacrament in the Tabernacle is primarily to take Holy Communion to the sick and dying (viaticum), it also provides a focus for prayer for the clergy and faithful to adore the abiding presence of the Lord. Holy Communion at Mass should not usually be distributed from the Tabernacle. At Mass at which the Bishop presides, Holy Communion must be distributed from that which is consecrated during the Mass and not from the Tabernacle.

The Deacon is the Minister of the Chalice, it is therefore preferable that the Deacon distribute the Precious Blood to the people. The chalice is not distributed during this time of Covid recovery. Concelebrants receive holy Communion by intinction at this time.

Properly commissioned Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion must only assist in the distribution of Holy Communion to the faithful in the absence of a sufficient number of clergy.

In the Diocese of England and Wales, and of Scotland Holy Communion is to be received standing, though individual members of the faithful may choose to receive Communion while kneeling. However, when they communicate standing, it is recommended that the faithful bow in reverence before receiving the Sacrament. (General Instruction to the Roman Missal, 160) If a printed Order of Celebration is being used, the above text might be included in it.

13. OTHER DETAILS AND QUESTIONS

The Diocesan Master of Liturgical Ceremonies is here to help in any way he can. Please do not hesitate to contact him with questions, clarifications, or concerns.

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