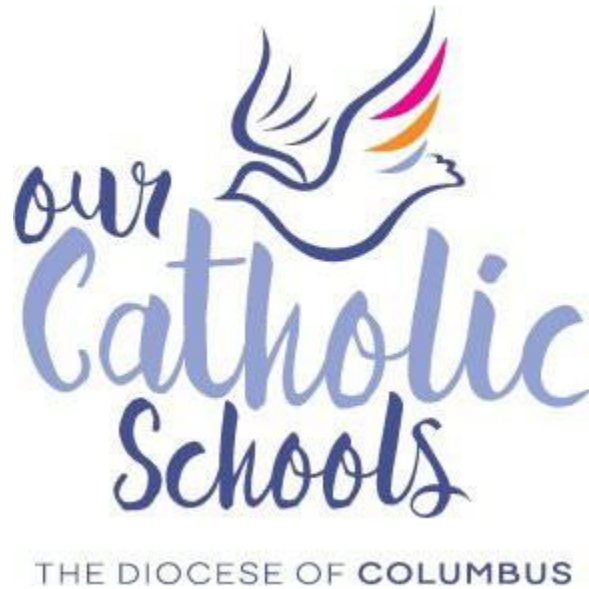

Guidelines for High School Masses



Diocese of Columbus

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FOREWORD

A CALL TO REVERENCE

From time-to-time, individuals who prepare for Mass for a parish or a group confuse the purpose for the celebration of Mass. Whenever we hear someone call a Mass by a special theme (i.e. youth Mass, school Mass, men's or women's Mass, etc.) we lose sight of the true purpose for the celebration of the Mass. The only theme we celebrate is the passion, death, and resurrection of our Lord. We gather to give thanks and praise for the gift God has given us through his Son. This is the faith we celebrate; there is no other theme for our celebrations. This is not to say that our prayers, especially those of the general intercessions and our private prayers, do not reflect a specific need.

If every Mass has the same theme, how do we keep the celebration fresh and vibrant? There are several elements of our liturgies that vary from one week to the next. The liturgical year is split into several seasons: Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, and Ordinary Time. These seasons bring a different dynamic to the way we give glory and praise to our Lord. The different seasons offer different opportunities to change the environment, helping us visually in our celebrations. The readings prescribed for our celebrations found in the Lectionary address the various events in the life of Christ, along with other passages, forming us, and teaching us to live as people of the Eucharist. Even our music is chosen based on the antiphons, readings, prayers, and the season in which we are celebrating this one and only theme. The homily is developed to bring these elements together (scripture, the season, our prayers, and music); leading us to the celebration of the Eucharist and from the Eucharist to being Eucharistic people.

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INTRODUCTION

A liturgy with students is a perfect way to continue the formational experience outside of the classroom. When students have the chance to attend Mass, they can apply the things that they have been taught to an experience and to an encounter with God. Early childhood students are introduced to the most common public celebration of the faith. Middle childhood students can receive the Body and Blood of our Lord so that they are able to carry forth the mission of Christ on Earth and become an example for the younger students. Adolescent and young adult students can fully participate in their faith by applying the knowledge and spiritual graces received through Confirmation.

A Mass with students is also important to the faith community. No liturgy celebrated should be modified to accommodate one specific group of people. Therefore, a Mass in which students are present is simply an extension of the greater Church. The Mass is always celebrated for the benefit of the Catholic Community. It helps to build an understanding of "Church" and builds the human desire for a spiritual awareness. Any Mass celebrated specifically for a student community instead of the whole community detracts from this understanding and must be avoided.

Guideline 100.40 of the recently published *Catholic Diocese of Columbus Policies and Guidelines for Parish Youth Ministry Programs* says that "Special liturgies for youth run counter to what we believe about the Eucharist." It continues:

All liturgies should welcome young people, as all people. If 'youth-friendly' means appropriate music, a relevant homily understandable to all ages, and including young people in liturgical roles, then all will benefit. However, if 'youth-friendly' is taken to mean liturgies where the liturgical roles, music, and homily are principally, or even exclusively, directed toward youth, the inclusive nature of the liturgy is lost.

While this guideline is titled "Youth and the Sunday Mass," these principles are followed for Masses with students as well. Please note that the guideline also acknowledges Canon 837 of the *Code of Canon Law*, which states:

Can. 837 §1. Liturgical actions are not private actions but celebrations of the Church itself, which is the sacrament of unity, that is, a holy people gathered and ordered under the bishops. Liturgical actions therefore belong to the whole body of the Church and manifest and affect it; they touch its individual members in different ways, however, according to the diversity of orders, functions, and actual participation.

§2. Inasmuch as liturgical actions by their nature entail a common celebration, they are to be celebrated with the presence and active participation of the Christian faithful where possible.

The *General Instruction of the Roman Missal: 3rd Typical Edition* (GIRM) goes along with

the Canon when it mentions "The Duties of the People of God." It reads:

93. A Priest, also, who possesses within the Church the sacred power of Orders to offer sacrifice in the person of Christ,[cf. *Lumen Gentium* 28; *Presbyterorum Ordinis* 2] presides by this fact over the faithful people gathered here and now, presides over their prayer, proclaims to them the message of salvation, associates the people with himself in the offering of sacrifice through Christ in the Holy Spirit to God the Father, and gives his brothers and sisters the Bread of eternal life and partakes of it with them. Therefore, when he celebrates the Eucharist, he must serve God and the people with dignity and humility, and by his bearing and by the way he pronounces the divine words he must convey to the faithful the living presence of Christ.
94. After the Priest, the Deacon, in virtue of the sacred Ordination he has received, holds first place among those who minister in the celebration of the Eucharist. For the sacred Order of the Diaconate has been held in high honor in the Church even from the early time of the Apostles.[*Sacrum Diaconatus Ordinem*; *Pontificale Romanum*, *De Ordinatione Episcopi, presbyterorum et diaconorum*, 173] At Mass the Deacon has his own part in proclaiming the Gospel, from time to time in preaching God's Word, in announcing the intentions of the Universal Prayer, in ministering to the Priest, in preparing the altar and in serving the celebration of the Sacrifice, in distributing the Eucharist to the faithful, especially under the species of wine, and from time to time in giving instructions regarding the people's gestures and posture.
95. In the celebration of Mass, the faithful form a holy people, a people whom God has made his own, a royal priesthood, so that they may give thanks to God and offer the spotless Victim not only through the hands of the priest but also together with him, and so that they may learn to offer themselves. They should, moreover, endeavor to make this clear by their deep religious sense and their charity toward brothers and sisters who participate with them in the same celebration. Thus, they are to shun any appearance of individualism or division, keeping before their eyes that they have only one Father in heaven and accordingly are all brothers and sisters to each other.
96. Indeed, they form one body, whether by hearing the word of God, or by joining in the prayers and the singing, or above all by the common offering of Sacrifice and by a common partaking at the Lord's table. This unity is beautifully apparent from the gestures and postures observed in common by the faithful.

These passages serve as a basis for the rest of this handbook, which is divided into four parts. The first part discusses the theological ideas behind the celebration of the Eucharist. It includes commentary on things to consider before preparing a liturgy with students. The second part contains many topics that should be considered during the

actual preparations of a liturgy at which students are present. It further discusses the nature of our worship through elements that are most common to preparing a liturgy. There are often many questions that are raised through these topics, and it is the desire of this section to offer some clarity and answers on these important issues that supplement the worship experience of our students. Part three discusses the Order of the Mass and offers commentary on the appropriate liturgical actions that take place during the specific parts of our worship. Part four is an appendix of resources and references for liturgical preparation.

Perhaps the most important thought to remember when preparing a liturgy with students is the final statement from the Diocesan Guidelines, "It should be remembered that the youth are not the future of the Church. They are just as much the present as other generations are and should be welcomed as such."

PART I—BEFORE WE BEGIN

WHAT DO WE CELEBRATE? WHY DO WE GATHER?

For Catholics, the celebration of the Mass is our most important communal action. It is the summit of the expression of our faith in God. Because it is the summit, we cannot expect to set aside our textbooks and lesson plans and begin the Mass as we would another class or another subject. There is always preparation, not just for the environment, music, or other functional elements of the Mass, but an interpersonal preparation that begins slowly and individually.

The celebration of the Eucharist is not something we “go to” or “attend.” It is an event to which we are individually called by God to join with others as the body of Christ. We are called to a space that is set aside and where we anticipate holy actions to occur. These holy actions are events between the assembled body and Christ the head. These holy events require dialogue and everyone’s active participation. Each participant is to be predisposed to enter into this celebration through an understanding of liturgy and a receptive attitude.

THE LITURGICAL SEASONS

The Church’s liturgical calendar is different but related to the Gregorian calendar. While the Gregorian calendar might order our schedules, the liturgical calendar guides our prayer and leads us on a spiritual journey to the heavenly banquet. The liturgical year begins four Sundays before the *Nativity of our Lord* (Christmas). While our Gregorian calendar is divided by months and weeks, the liturgical calendar is divided by seasons and Sundays with solemnities, feasts, and memorials giving it uniqueness.

The Church year is composed of the seasons of *Advent*, *Christmas*, *Lent*, *Easter*, and *Ordinary Time*. Each season has a unique emphasis on God’s plan for our salvation. The seasons are marked by a liturgical color: *Advent* (violet/purple), *Lent* (violet/purple), *Christmas* and *Easter* (white or gold), and *Ordinary Time* (green). The color *rose* may be used to mark the third Sunday of *Advent* and the fourth Sunday of *Lent*.

Advent begins the Church year on the fourth Sunday before *Christmas*. The season prepares us to celebrate the Incarnation - God taking on our human nature. At the same time the season anticipates the second coming of Christ.

The season of *Christmas* celebrates the birth of Jesus and concludes with the feast of our Lord’s baptism in the Jordan River. This is not an annual “birthday” celebration of Jesus, but the celebration of God’s Incarnation - the Word taking human form in the birth of Jesus.

Lent begins on *Ash Wednesday* and concludes at the start of the *Triduum*. The season of Lent speaks to both baptism and repentance. It is a season where those wanting to become members of our faith through the RCIA programs are presented to the bishop at

the diocesan celebration of the Rite of Election, as part of their faith journey and preparation for entering the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil.

The *Paschal Triduum* consists of the three days leading up to *Easter* – celebrating the Passion, death, and Resurrection of Christ. *Easter* falls on the Sunday following the first full moon of spring. The celebration of *Easter* extends for 50 days and concludes with *Pentecost*, when we celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit into the Church.

The rest of the calendar is called “Ordinary Time.” *Ordinary* does not mean that the Sundays are not special or that they are in some way common. The Sundays of *Ordinary Time* are numbered, that is they are arranged in an order. Each Sunday celebrates various teachings of Christ. *Ordinary Time* begins between the season of *Christmas* and *Lent*, then continues after *Easter* through the end of the liturgical year. The final Sunday of *Ordinary Time* and the liturgical year is *Christ, King of the Universe*. The honor we give to the liturgical seasons allow us to proclaim Christ as Lord of all times and seasons. Sunday is often referred to as the *eighth* day or the first day of the new creation. School Masses do not take the place of the celebration of Sunday Mass, which grounds us to the liturgical year.

THE "ORDO" AND THE LITURGICAL CALENDAR

Eucharistic celebrations are celebrations of *Easter*. These celebrations are arranged according to the Roman (Liturgical) Calendar that the universal Church follows. They follow special liturgical seasons, and they are grouped into a special order of their significance. Solemnities are the principal days in the calendar (i.e., *Easter*, *Christmas*, *Epiphany of the Lord*, *Ascension of the Lord*, *Pentecost*, and all *Sundays*). They also include the days honoring the *Nativity of Saint John the Baptist* on June 24, the martyrdoms of *Saint Peter and Saint Paul* on June 29, and the *Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary* on December 8. The principal patrons of the Diocese of Columbus (*St. Francis de Sales* – January 24, *St. Anne*, the mother of Mary – July 26, and *St. Anthony* – June 13) and the anniversary of the dedication of St. Joseph Cathedral on October 20 are all celebrated as solemnities in the Cathedral, *Feast* in any parish or school in the diocese.

Several of these solemnities are of elevated importance to our faith as Catholics. These are called *Holy Days of Obligation*: *The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception* (December 8), *The Nativity of the Lord* (Christmas - December 25), *The Solemnity of Mary the Mother of God* (January 1), *The Ascension of the Lord* (Transferred to the Seventh Sunday of Easter), *The Solemnity of the Assumption* (August 15), and *The Solemnity of All Saints* (November 1). On these *Holy Days* we have the obligation to attend Mass as we would on Sunday - dedicating the day to our Lord. Note that the obligation to attend Mass is set aside for three of these *Holy Days* when January 1, August 15, and/or November 1 fall on a Saturday or a Monday. The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception is the patronal feast of the United States and Mass attendance is always obligatory except when the Solemnity falls on a Sunday of Advent, thus necessitating that the feast be celebrated on the next day.

The next rank in precedence of importance is *Feast*. Feasts honor some events in the life

of Christ, such as the *Presentation of the Lord* on February 2 and the *Transfiguration of the Lord* on August 6. Others remember the Blessed Virgin Mary, apostles, or the archangels, such as the feasts of *Our Lady of Guadalupe* on December 12, *St. Matthew* on September 21, and *St. Michael, St. Gabriel, and St. Raphael* on September 29.

Memorials call to mind other saints of universal influence, such as *St. Mary Magdalene* on July 22, *St. Thomas Aquinas* on January 28, and *St. Augustine* on August 28. Memorials are *obligatory* and are always celebrated on the prescribed day. Optional memorials appear on the universal calendar and their celebration is *optional*. On *ferial days* (days which have not been assigned a specific solemnity, feast, or memorial) the celebrating priest is at liberty to say the Mass of the preceding Sunday, the Mass proper to any Saints not normally commemorated on that day, or he might say a Votive Mass of his own choosing.

THE G.I.R.M.—A SOURCE OF DIRECTION

The *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (GIRM) forms the preface to the *Roman Missal*. The rules, norms, and guidance contained therein, regulates the celebration of the Eucharist as the “source and summit of the Christian life.” It is the starting point for anyone who prepares the celebration of Mass.

The *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* is part of the “Liturgy Documentary Series 2” available from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Office of Publications.

THE RUBRICS—THE “HOW” OF THE LITURGY

Embedded in the ritual text of the *Roman Missal* are specific instructions that give direction to the presider and for the community. These embedded instructions are generally printed in red ink, thus their name - *rubric*.

These rubrics indicate the gestures, postures, and movements for all the ministers and the assembly within the celebration. Most of these are not optional. Therefore, knowledge of these rubrics is of great importance to all and especially to those who prepare the celebration of the liturgy.

NATIONAL NORMS FOR THE RECEPTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

The Eucharistic liturgy uses signs to convey sacred realities. Bread and wine are used in a preeminent way. After their transubstantiation they are the Body and Blood of Christ which is received in Communion. It is by taking and sharing the Eucharistic species – “signs perceptible to the senses” – that we obey the Lord’s command to grow in the likeness of the Christ, whose Body and Blood they both signify and contain.

Reception of Holy Communion is a transforming element of the Eucharistic celebration. We are transformed by our participation in the communion of the Church, having received the Precious Body and Blood of our Savior. The world will be transformed if we allow ourselves to be transformed by the Eucharist.

The Catholic Bishops have established norms for the reception of Communion. These norms are important to help with the several dynamics of our celebration. They promote uniformity, reverence, and, with the help of the Holy Spirit, transformation.

The Norms for the Distribution and Reception of Holy Communion Under Both Kinds in the Dioceses of the United States of America is part of the "Liturgy Documentary Series 13" available from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Office of Publications. All may receive Communion on the tongue. See appendix.

LITURGICAL LANGUAGE

Liturgical language is important for the life of the Church. In the liturgy, the words addressed to God and the words spoken to the people voice the Faith of the Church. They are not simply the expressions of one individual in one place at one time in history. The words used in the liturgy also pass on the faith of the Church from one generation to the next. The Church takes seriously its responsibility to provide translations of liturgical texts that are accurate and inspiring.

The liturgy is the source of the divine life given through the Church as the sacrament of salvation. The Church does not leave the words used in liturgy to the theology or pastoral sensitivity of any individual celebrant. The words of the prayers of the liturgy may not be changed or improvised conveying, as they do, the Tradition of the Church. The words used in the prayers of the liturgy cannot be casual or improvised. Therefore, only Scriptural translations of verbatim texts approved by the Church are to be used at Mass for all Scripture readings in the Liturgy of the Word, including the Responsorial Psalm.

PART II—TOPICS FOR CONSIDERATION DURING THE PREPARATION PROCESS

WHO SHOULD PREPARE THE CELEBRATION OF THE LITURGY

The diocesan bishop is the Chief Liturgist of his diocese. The parish priests are assigned to parishes to carry out the work of the bishop. If any lay people are involved in preparing the celebration, it is because they were first given the authority or permission to carry out the preparations by a priest or the bishop.

It could be argued that everyone who participates in liturgy can be called a liturgist. This is a very naive understanding of the tasks involved in preparing a liturgical celebration. Even a lifetime of participating in liturgical celebrations does not prepare one to prepare a liturgical celebration.

Preparing a liturgy requires study and knowledge of the instructions and rules for its proper order and celebration. One needs knowledge of the celebration with the universal Church through the seasons and the Church's calendar.

The prayers and readings for the liturgy shed light on the music, which is one of the various elements that helps to form our celebration. The environment is another element that visually prepares the assembly to enter into the celebration. Also required are adequate and well-trained ministers that will allow the celebration to flow smoothly and not be a distraction.

TYPES OF LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS

The term "liturgy" can refer to many types of worship. When using the term "liturgy," it could mean the "liturgy" that is the Mass or Eucharist, but it can also mean the Divine Office, known as the Liturgy of the Hours, or a Prayer Service celebrating the Liturgy of the Word of God. However, using the terms "Mass" or "Eucharist" or "Eucharistic Sacrifice" will always and only refer to the sacrament in which we receive the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ in Communion through the consecrated ministry of a Priest. The Catechism of the Catholic Church connects the worship of the Eucharist within Mass and Eucharistic Adoration.

"In the liturgy of the Mass we express our faith in the real presence of Christ under the species of bread and wine by, among other ways, genuflecting or bowing deeply as a sign of adoration of the Lord. 'The Catholic Church has always offered and still offers to the sacrament of the Eucharist the cult of adoration, not only during Mass, but also outside of it, reserving the consecrated hosts with the utmost care, exposing them to the solemn veneration of the faithful, and carrying them in procession (CCC 1378; Paul VI, *MF* 56)'").

THE CELEBRATION OF THE EUCHARIST

The Mass is the summit of the expression of our faith in God. It is the most public demonstration of faith that we have as Catholics, and the one with which most non-

Catholics are familiar. This is especially important to remember in our schools where some of the students may not be Catholic.

In order to provide a worthy and pleasing sacrifice to our Lord, we should bring our best to Him when we are called to worship through the Mass. Our students are able to learn lessons from the Mass that they might not be able to learn in the classroom. A properly prayerful atmosphere has the potential to draw young people into the mystery of the Mass. This enriching experience of grace can then become infectious as students approach the rest of their learning. If they leave the Mass filled with joy and hope in the Resurrection, they will bring that joy and hope to the rest of their lives. If they realize that by receiving the Body and Blood of our Lord, they become one with Christ in his mission of salvation, perhaps they will approach the entire school experience with the same decorum and reverence. The fruits of the Mass should be allowed to freely manifest themselves so that the graces obtained may help the students on their path to salvation.

SELECTION OF MUSIC

Music brings forth the beauty of our God-given gift of song. In the liturgy, music performs a ministerial function – that serves both the liturgy and the people who have gathered to celebrate the liturgy – and it carries out that function in various ways:

Music draws us together in unity. When we come together for the celebration of the liturgy, we come from a great diversity of cultures, ethnicities, and life experiences. We are each called to offer our individual gift of song to form one worshipping assembly, the body of Christ celebrating with Christ our head. Through music, the assembly achieves a closer union of hearts through the union of voices. We give over our own individual preferences for pitch, key, tempo, instrumentation, style, and text to join in the prayer of the Church. The unity of our voices begins the process of bonding us, one voice offering praise and thanksgiving to God and opening us to the transformative power of the liturgy.

Music at worship is an expression and sharing of faith. The musical dialogue, psalms sacred music chants, and hymns that we sing in the liturgy give us a means of expressing our faith and our hope in the Resurrection. These musical expressions help to define and support the purpose of each action in the liturgy, enabling us to respond to God's outreach to us and helping us to be transformed into the body of Christ.

Music allows the words of the liturgy to be expressed in chant. The melody of the text becomes part of the message. Music has the ability to express the meaning of a text much more intensively than reciting words alone. It has the additional power of making texts memorable. This quality helps us to take the texts away with us for prayer in our own homes and workplaces.

Music expresses a meaning beyond the words. Melodies have the ability to communicate the gamut of emotions within the flow of notes. It can exhilarate us or

comfort us. Music can express our joy, our sorrow, and our longing for God.

Music sets the tone for the particular feast or season. Nothing can capture our attention at the change of a liturgical season or place the focus on a particular feast of the liturgical year better than an appropriate music selection. The texts of our music not only express our faith but the musical setting also helps us to enter into the spirit of the season or feast.

Theological adequacy must be evaluated in the selection of music. When judging musical texts for theological adequacy, one should be guided by the following wording from the “Directory for Music and the Liturgy for Use in the Dioceses in the United States of America” (USCCB, 2006), which, in part, states that “Individual songs should be consonant with Catholic teaching and free from doctrinal error.” Additionally, do not assume that any hymn or song printed in a popular church hymnal with Catholic somewhere in its name automatically makes the hymn or song appropriate for the Mass. All hymns shall be carefully reviewed using the guidelines provided by *Catholic Hymnody at the Service of the Church: An Aid for Evaluating Hymn Lyrics*. See the appendix for these guidelines. Also, consult the Antiphons of the Church, with texts available in the Roman Missal, *Graduale Romanum* and musical settings available online at various websites. Pop songs are never appropriate for Mass.

SELECTION OF MINISTERS

A variety of ministries are useful in the celebration of the Eucharist. However, there is a hierarchical order to these ministries. Each ministry is to do only the duties assigned to the ministry. These ministers should be the best the community has to offer with skills matching the specific liturgical ministry. They should truly represent the community and never be selected based on membership in a specific organization or class, or any other selection process that divides the community.

The bishop is the chief liturgist and teacher for the diocese. When he presides at a liturgical celebration, he is modeling the proper way for it to be celebrated. Adherence to the instructions and rubrics is his method of teaching and modeling the celebration of the liturgy.

Priests are the bishop's representatives for a portion of the local church. They are the bishop's extension to that community that unites the community to the local church and to the universal Church.

Deacons are the servants of the liturgy. They have specific roles and responsibilities to perform. The proclamation of the gospel is the responsibility of the deacon, along with leading the petitions of the General Intercessions. He is the one responsible for the preparation of the altar aided by the servers.

The sacristan performs a role not generally seen by the assembly. The sacristan prepares

the elements used for the celebration: the vestments, vessels, liturgical books, and the bread and wine to be brought to the altar.

The assembly should always see themselves performing a ministry. They have specific duties they are to perform individually for one another and collectively.

Greeters and ushers serve in the ministry of hospitality. They are to make everyone feel welcome and part of a gathered community.

Altar servers are both models for the community and servants for the priest celebrant. As servants they provide the necessary items for the celebrant and form and lead processions. They are models for the community by their attention to the liturgical actions, their posture, their gestures, and their movement. Servers for High School Masses may be vested in albs or other dignified clothing. Altar servers may be trained through their parish and active as altar servers at their parish and fulfill their obligation to attend Sunday Mass.

The Master of Ceremonies (MC) provides order and direction when there are extra ministers and concelebrants in the sanctuary and when the bishop is present.

Lectors proclaim the scriptural text specific to the celebration. This is more than the reading of words. The lector must bring life to the scriptural message allowing the Holy Spirit to touch the hearts of those who are receiving the message. Students identified for the role of lector are trained through their parish, active in ministry of lector at their parish, and fulfill the Sunday obligation of Mass attendance. This shall be verified through communication from the parish to the school.

The Psalmist, like the lector, presents the psalm text provided in the *Lectionary* for the celebration. Psalmists and cantors will have training for this liturgical ministry through their parish, be active in the ministry of psalmist or cantor at their parish, and fulfill their obligation to attend Sunday Mass. The psalm text is best presented in the most original form in which they were prayed, that is in song and verbatim from Scripture. When sung, the psalmist should possess the ability to sing well and thus be instructed on the logistics of fulfilling this ministry effectively and prayerfully. Although a separate liturgical ministry, this liturgical ministry is sometimes performed by the cantor or lector.

The liturgical ministry of the choir provides support for the assembly as they participate in song. Occasionally, the choir will sing hymns without the assembly. However, this should never be viewed as or presented as a performance.

Instrumentation provided by a musical accompanist is helpful for the assembly in singing the Mass parts and the hymns that support their prayer. Soft music without singing is appropriate during the preparation rite and during a period of meditation following Communion with the exception of Lent. The sanctuary area is not the appropriate place

for musicians.

The Bishop, priests, and deacons are Ordinary Ministers of communion. Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are used only when necessary according to the judgement of the priest presiding at Mass. Extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion will be Confirmed Catholics in good standing, commissioned by the Bishop for their specific parish, and from a feeder parish of the Catholic high school. This will be communicated by the parish to the school. In addition, only administrators, faculty and adult school staff may distribute Holy Communion, when an insufficient number of ordained ministers are present. In necessity and according to the judgment of the priest presiding, adults may be temporarily instituted as Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion for a particular Mass.

The preparations for the Mass are limited to the options listed in the General Instruction on the Roman Missal (GIRM); the *Ordo: Order of Prayer in the Liturgy of the Hours and Celebration of the Eucharist* (commonly called “Ordo”) and the rubrics for the Mass. Therefore, preparers must have the knowledge of these sources (and others listed in Part IV) and should always submit the information in advance to the priest celebrant for his review and final approval. If the presider is the Bishop, the Chancery will provide much of the input to the celebration and the final approval.

SELECTION OF READINGS

The Scriptures have been assigned by the Church and can be found in the *Ordo (The Order of Prayer in the Liturgy of the Hours and Celebration of the Eucharist 20yy*, published annually by Paulist Press). On *optional memorials, marked with a lowercase (m)*, there is a choice between the readings for the day and those found for the section of the *Lectionary* suggested in the *Ordo*. Only on *ferial days* (days which have not been assigned a specific solemnity, feast, or memorial) only the presiding priest may choose other readings that support the Mass he has chosen to celebrate.

ART AND ENVIRONMENT

Seasonal art helps us to embrace our worshiping experience. Seasonal art should always reflect and be attuned to the liturgical season. Natural flowers and plants can be arranged to enhance the primary liturgical points. The focal points are the altar of sacrifice, the ambo, the presider’s chair, and, during the Easter Season, the Paschal Candle. These points should never be overshadowed by excessive floral arrangements or temporary seasonal items.

Pathways in the narthex, nave, and sanctuary should remain clear so that the movement from one place to another can be executed freely without bumping into temporary items.

THE USE OF RITUAL BOOKS

All Catholic high schools must have the most updated Ritual Books for the celebration of the Mass: The Roman Missal, Lectionary, The Book of the Gospels, and the GIRM. Notebooks, binders, and copied or typed material may not be used for Masses. Missalettes and copies of readings should never be used when a *Lectionary* is available.

WHEN THE BISHOP CELEBRATES MASS

The Office of Divine Worship supports the Bishop in his role as the chief liturgist for the Catholic Church in the Diocese of Columbus. Whenever the Bishop celebrates the liturgy within the diocese, it is to be a model for all liturgies celebrated by and for the people of God within the Diocese. The Office of Divine Worship is directed by the Bishop to ensure that the guidelines and rubrics for his liturgical celebrations are followed. The office provides a planning form for Episcopal Liturgies that must be completed as far in advance as possible. Contact the Office of Divine Worship for the correct forms. Timely communication with the Office of Divine Worship is essential for any Mass with the Bishop.

PART III—THE ORDER OF THE MASS

PRELIMINARY PREPARATIONS

There are a lot of preparations that happen before Mass begins. These preparations have to do with all the practical details: linens, vessels, vestments, furnishings, seating for the assembly, and so on. This may also include worship aids for the hymns and Mass parts that will be sung.

INTRODUCTORY RITES

The goal of worship and the celebration of liturgy is to adore God. *Sacrosanctum concilium* states that “the liturgy is considered as an exercise of the priestly office of Jesus Christ. In the liturgy the sanctification of the man is signified by signs perceptible to the senses, and is effected in a way which corresponds with each of these signs; in the liturgy the whole public worship is performed by the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, that is, by the Head and His members. From this it follows that every liturgical celebration, because it is an action of Christ the priest and of His Body which is the Church, is a sacred action surpassing all others; no other action of the Church can equal its efficacy by the same title and to the same degree (no. 7).

PROCESSION

An entrance hymn or antiphon enables those assembled to speak with one voice in a communal song. The procession of ministers symbolically brings the assembly together. We stand as we become one body with Christ as our head, giving glory and praise to God. We remain standing through the Collect (also known as the Opening Prayer).

If incense is used, the procession begins with the thurifer (the server carrying the thurible and incense boat). Next in the procession is the crucifer (the server carrying the crucifix) who is flanked by two candle bearers. Those participating in the entrance procession are only those liturgical ministers performing a function in the liturgy itself.

For events such as a May Crowning ceremony or a Baccalaureate Mass in which entire classes of students are directed to participate in opening procession, the classes must process in during a prelude ahead of the Procession so as to give the liturgical procession its rightful role when Mass begins. When the Book of Gospels is carried in by the deacon, it is carried after the non-ordained ministers in procession and precedes the other ordained ministers. If the Bishop is presiding, he follows the priests and is accompanied by one or two deacons. The MC is last with a miter and crosier bearer.

The procession may not include banners, gifts, or other items carried in to be placed in the sanctuary. These items are considered seasonal art and, if used, they are placed before Mass begins. These items may only be placed in the sanctuary with the prior permission of the Presider. Those who carry these items are not ministers for the liturgy and do not belong in the beginning procession for the Mass. If such items must be

brought in, they should be part of an earlier procession before the “opening hymn.” The Lectionary, Roman Missal, or any ceremonial book is never carried in the procession.

SIGN OF THE CROSS AND GREETING

The Mass opens with the *Sign of the Cross*. This is an ancient gesture that has identified Christians for centuries. It is the sign of the triune God: *The Father, The Son, and the Holy Spirit*.

The greeting of the priest celebrant is not that of an encounter in the hallway or other casual meeting. The greeting is steeped in “liturgical language,” and freighted with meaning. The celebrant greets the assembly with “The Lord be with you,” not “good morning” or another common day expression. Our response “and with your spirit” identifies the spirit of God given to his ministry of presiding to guide us along our spiritual journey.

PENITENTIAL RITE

The *Penitential Rite* brings to mind God’s great mercy. God’s mercy is reason alone to celebrate and to give thanks. The *Penitential Rite* is not a shortened sacrament of penance. There are three forms for the penitential rite: A) Confiteor, B) Form 2 C) invocations. Form A and B is followed by the *Kyrie*. A *Sprinkling Rite* may be used in place of the *Penitential Rite*, especially on Sundays during the Easter Season. The *Kyrie* is not used as part of the Sprinkling Rite. A hymn may accompany the sprinkling.

GLORIA

The *Gloria* is not generally used on a weekday unless it is the celebration of a solemnity or feast.

COLLECT

The *Collect* or *Opening Prayer* has two parts. The first part is a call to prayer “Let us Pray.” This is always to be followed by a period of silence that allows the assembly to pray. It is not a cue for the server to bring the *Roman Missal* to the celebrant. After a period of silence, the second part is prayed by the celebrant. This prayer collects and offers the prayers of the assembly as one prayer to God as we begin our celebration.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The purpose of the *Liturgy of the Word* is not so much education as it is formation. We do not gather to learn about God; we gather to encounter God. We do not listen to learn about Christ; we hear Christ speaking to us. The *Liturgy of the Word* is meant to nourish us with a spiritual experience of Christ’s presence.

This should not be the first time those who attend Mass have heard these words. Just as we expect students to prepare for class, we also need to prepare for Mass by having read and reflected on the readings ahead of time. It is best practice to read and reflect on the

readings in all classrooms prior to Mass. Having read the readings and reflected upon them, missalettes with the readings will become unnecessary, because each individual will be open to the Spirit sharing the message, phrase, or word that each of us needs to hear.

Silence is part of the *Liturgy of the Word*. Following each of the scripture passages and the homily, there should be time to reflect on what the Holy Spirit has said to each individual who has come with the attitude of openness and listened obediently.

FIRST READING

This is not a shared ministerial role. The reading is not to be split between multiple lectors or read in multiple languages. The lector chosen is to have the skill to proclaim the scripture passage and to have received the necessary training to execute this ministry well. Just reading the words does little to allow the Holy Spirit to interact with the members of the assembly. Those who serve as lectors must be properly trained as described above. Also, the lector should not be viewing the reading for the first time during Mass. The lector must have the reading in advance and must practice it so that it is delivered with the respect appropriate for the liturgy.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

The Responsorial Psalm is also Scripture. It is not to be replaced with a non-scriptural text - not even a paraphrased version made into a song. The text found in the lectionary is always to be used. It is preferable that the psalm be sung - at the very least, the refrain is to be sung. Whenever the psalm verses are not sung, they are to be proclaimed in the *genre* of the text.

SECOND READING

A second reading is not generally used on a weekday. When a solemnity or certain feasts are celebrated on a weekday, a second reading is included and proclaimed by a second lector. The guidelines for the lector are the same for the First Reading.

ALLELUIA AND GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

The assembly prepares to hear the gospel proclaimed by standing and singing then acclamation prescribed in the *Lectionary*, thus acknowledging and honoring Christ's presence in the word.

GOSPEL PROCLAMATION

The liturgy, through frequent repetition, teaches and impresses upon us the great reverence to be shown the reading of the Gospel. It is set off from the other readings by marks of honor. It is not read by a lector, but rather by the deacon, who is appointed to read it. Only when no deacon is present does the honor of proclaiming the Gospel fall to a priest. The deacon prepares himself through prayer and a special blessing given by the celebrant.

Members of the assembly, by their acclamation, acknowledge and confess Christ to be present and speaking to them. They stand as they listen to the Gospel and prepare their minds to hear the Word, to ever profess the Gospel from their lips and carry the gospel always in their heart - signing themselves with a cross on their forehead, their lips and over their heart. There are marks of reverence given to *The Book of the Gospels* itself. It is carried to the ambo accompanied with candles and incense and incensed before the Gospel is proclaimed. The book is highly decorated compared to other liturgical books. So clearly is *The Book of the Gospels* a sign of Christ's presence in the liturgy, that it is revered with the same holy kiss given to the altar.

The way *The Book of Gospels* is carried and handled highlights the book as a special symbol. *The Book of the Gospels* is either placed on the altar before Mass or it is carried in procession and placed on the altar as Mass begins. When it is carried in procession by the deacon it follows all the lay ministers and precedes the clergy. The reverence given the book helps us understand the proclamation of the Gospel within our Eucharistic celebrations and our response to the gospel in our daily lives.

After the Gospel is proclaimed, the deacon (or priest) says "The Gospel of the Lord." Lifting the book during this statement directs our focus to the book itself. When the Book is left on the ambo, this claim is directed to the proclamation of the Gospel we have just received. Though the book is carried in, it is never carried out. *The Book of the Gospels* contains a specific message to be proclaimed to the assembly. Following the proclamation, we contain that message.

The book's physical adornment, the gestures we make, and all the actions that surround the way we handle *The Book of the Gospels* help us understand and hear Christ's presence in the proclamation.

HOMILY

Only a bishop, priest, or a deacon may give a homily. A religious sister or person who is not ordained is not permitted to present a homily. The function of the homily is to break open the Word of God so that it can be applied to contemporary life in the local community. It is very tightly connected to the Eucharist, and it is through the Eucharist that transformation takes place. This is not the time for music, videos, plays, or other activities that focus our attention away from the message being presented.

CREED

The Creed is not recited at weekday Masses. Only when a solemnity is celebrated on a weekday is it used. When it is used, everyone is to bow while reciting "by the power of the Holy Spirit he was born of the Virgin Mary, and became man" and to genuflect at these words if attending Mass on the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord (March 25) as well as at the Masses for Christmas.

GENERAL INTERCESSIONS

Those gathered at Mass are invited to share in their baptismal priesthood by offering prayers to God for the salvation of all. The General Intercessions may be said in Masses where a congregation is present and are the last element of the Liturgy of the Word.

As a rule, the series of intentions is to follow this format:

- 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.

Examples of appropriate petitions can be found in Appendix I of the *Roman Missal*.

A petition for vocations should also be added especially since we are able to cultivate vocations within the schools. The sooner a seed is planted, the more and more our children will think about a vocation. The following petition **must** be said at all Masses with students.

- e) For vocations to the priesthood and religious life; may those hearing the call have the courage and support to answer with confidence and love. We pray...

Some key things to remember when composing the individual petitions are: 1) the format mentioned above, 2) the brevity of each intention, and 3) that we are asking for God to change us in a certain way. God is immutable (unchanging). If we ask God to change, then we in some way deny His existence as God. Therefore, it is important to ask God to change us so that we may help Him make a change in the world.

It is most important to remember that the General Intercessions are in fact just that: general. It is not the time to announce the intention of the Mass. (The intention of the Mass is the intention of the priest celebrant and not the community. The members of the community come with their own intentions, and more than likely, this is not the intention of the Mass.) It is also not proper to pray for the sick or those who have died by name. This makes our intercessions specific, and somewhat defeats the purpose of the General Intercessions. It is important to pray for the dead, but if we pray for all who have died, we are more effective in our understanding of the prayer.

The General Intercessions are always begun with an invitation to prayer, offered by the priest celebrant, in which the faithful are invited to join their prayers to those being offered by the congregation as a whole. Intercessions may and often should be, read from the back of the Roman Missal. Likewise, the intentions should remain sober and succinct while still expressing the prayer of the entire community. When a deacon is present, he reads the petitions of the General Intercessions. If a deacon is not present, then the lector or another member of the congregation may read the intercessions. The congregation affirms that the intention being read is indeed provided on behalf of

the community by responding to each intention in full voice. The General Intercessions end when the priest has offered the concluding prayer. In the concluding prayer, all the intentions are gathered together, and the congregation acknowledges the power of God to answer all of our prayers in His own time.

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Christ instituted the Paschal Sacrifice at the Last Supper. Therefore, the Sacrifice of the Cross is continuously made present in the Church. When the priest, *in persona Christi*, carries out the memory of the Last Supper, we are drawn more completely into the life, death, and Resurrection of Christ.

Christ took the bread and the chalice and gave thanks; he broke the bread and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take, eat, and drink: this is my Body; this is the cup of my Blood. Do this in memory of me." Accordingly, the Church has arranged the entire celebration of the Liturgy of the Eucharist in parts corresponding to precisely these words and actions of Christ:

1. At the Preparation of the Gifts, the bread and the wine with water are brought to the altar, the same elements that Christ took into his hands.
2. In the Eucharistic Prayer, thanks is given to God for the whole work of salvation, and the offerings become the Body and Blood of Christ.
3. Through the fraction and through Communion, the faithful, though they are many, receive from the one bread the Lord's Body and from the one chalice the Lord's Blood in the same way the Apostles received them from Christ's own hands. (*GIRM* – paragraph 72).

The Eucharistic Prayer is a narrative in which words are surrounded by gestures and signs and is a sacrificial elaborate meal set in a particular place and with particular people. In this elaborate act of remembering, still in virtue of Jesus' Resurrection, that original event becomes the event of the community that celebrates. Sunday after Sunday, feast after feast, celebration after celebration, the Eucharistic prayer is the same account. It is the central story of our gathering.

PREPARATION OF THE ALTAR AND PRESENTATION OF GIFTS

At the beginning of the Liturgy of the Eucharist, bread and wine are prepared – not ordinary bread and wine, but bread and wine set aside to be offered. Just as the gifts of bread and wine are not ordinary, the community that offers these gifts are not just any community, but a community set apart. They offer this bread and wine according to the norms of the Church that has been set apart and they offer their lives, given in baptism. They are a people who are the body of Christ celebrating with its head, Christ Jesus.

The deacon is responsible for preparing the altar during Mass. The deacon, with the help of the altar servers, places the Roman Missal, a corporal, the chalice, and a purificator on

the altar. The sacristan will have taken care of the altar cloth, candles, and any floral arrangements before Mass begins. There are to be no flowers on the altar itself.

Only the sacrificial elements of bread and wine to be consecrated are brought to the altar. Water, not one of the gifts, is only added to the wine at the altar. Any monetary sacrifice of the gathered assembly is placed at the chair of the celebrant, never on the altar or before the altar. The monetary sacrifice represents the collective work of the community.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

There are many Eucharistic Prayers: Prayers I through IV, two Eucharistic Prayers of Reconciliation, etc. Prayers I through IV will be used the most.

After the “Great Amen” that closes the Eucharistic prayer, the assembly is standing before the altar with its priest at the center of a mystery. Hidden in this image is the assembly standing with Christ in heaven before the throne of God.

THE PEOPLE’S RESPONSES DURING THE EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

As the General Instruction on the Roman Missal (GIRM) states: “the Eucharistic Prayer requires that only the Priest say it, in virtue of his Ordination. The people, for their part, should associate themselves with the Priest in faith and in silence, as well as by means of their interventions as prescribed in the course of the Eucharistic Prayer: namely, the responses in the Preface dialogue, the Sanctus (Holy, Holy, Holy), the acclamation after the Consecration, the acclamation Amen after the concluding doxology” (147).

Therefore, the people should sing those parts pertaining to them, and musical melodies should be selected to foster participation. To connect the school students with the wider parish community and even the diocesan community (Mass III in Honor of St. Benedict), the music for these Mass parts used at the weekend parish Masses should also be used at the Masses with school students. Additionally, parishes and school communities should learn and chant the simple Latin chants of these Mass parts, i.e. the Sanctus, Mysterium Fidei and Agnus Dei, as outlined in Pope Paul VI’s *Jubilare Deo*, which was issued in 1974.

Special Notes about Music during the Eucharistic Prayer and Lamb of God: The Priest Celebrant must recite or chant this prayer without any musical accompaniment or background music. Paragraph 78 of the GIRM states: “The Eucharistic Prayer requires that everybody listens to it with reverence and in silence.” Additionally, the Lamb of God may be sung or chanted verbatim, not as part of a medley and not invoking specific or varied names of God, e.g. no Jesus, Lamb of God or Jesus, Prince of Peace. (See Vatican decision from Congregation for Divine Worship, dated September 12, 2012.)

LORD'S PRAYER

The Lord's Prayer is recited here because it is the foundation of all the prayers prayed throughout our Christian lives. Here its original and fullest meaning is revealed and defined. These are the very words that Jesus taught us to pray, and they could not be more forcefully directed to the Father than in the present moment of the Mass as we prepare to receive the Body and Blood of the Father's Son.

The Lord's Prayer is echoed in the voice of the priest who continues to pray alone (while the assembly stands with folded hands). He offers an expansion of the last petition: "Deliver us, Lord, from every evil. Keep us free from sin and protect us from all anxiety..." The assembly stands in between the evils of the world and the coming of Christ yet to come. This is expressed in the assembly's response: "For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and forever."

We should not bring into the liturgy elements that belong to other secular or cultural rituals, such as holding hands with one another or the Orans position of outstretched hands that essentially mirrors the priest celebrant. The assembly prays the Lord's Prayer with hands folded in prayer. It is through the *Sign of Peace* that we demonstrate our bond with those who celebrate with us.

SIGN OF PEACE

The sign of peace is a ritual expression of the love that the members of Christ's body must share among themselves as the condition for being united with their head. We acknowledge one another in the peace that comes from the sacrifice offered, and at the same time we are making a sign of the reality in the sacrament we are about to receive. This is a simple gesture with only the simple verbal exchange of peace. This *Sign of Peace* is shared only with those close by. It is not appropriate nor reverent to allow this time of the Mass to become a social gathering. Hugging, talking, moving around the Church, or engaging with others who are not seated in proximity are inappropriate actions during the sacred time of Mass. The Sign of Peace is optional, especially in order to prevent the spread of disease.

MUSIC AND COMMUNION

Paragraph 86 of the General Instruction of the Roman Missal states: "While the Priest is receiving the Sacrament, the Communion Chant is begun, its purpose being to express the spiritual union of the communicants by means of the unity of their voices, to show gladness of heart, and to bring out more clearly the 'communitarian' character of the procession to receive the Eucharist. The singing is prolonged for as long as the Sacrament is being administered to the faithful."

Special care should be taken in selecting music for Communion. The Antiphons prescribed by the Church for centuries are a rich treasure of Scripture, and each day of Mass already has assigned Antiphons with musical settings available. Conversely, the words/lyrics of hymns published in current popular hymnals and labeled as Communion

music does not guarantee clear theological Catholic teaching on the Eucharist. Any ambiguous texts should be avoided, as should all pop songs.

COMMUNION RITE

Only those properly disposed to receive Holy Communion are to come forward.

The reception of communion is to follow the *Norms for the Distribution and Reception of Holy Communion Under Both Kinds in the Dioceses of the United States of America*. See appendix.

For Catholics: As Catholics, we fully participate in the celebration of the Eucharist when we receive Holy Communion. We are encouraged to receive Communion devoutly and frequently. In order to be properly disposed to receive Communion, participants should not be conscious of grave sin and normally should have fasted for one hour. A person who is conscious of grave sin is not to receive the Body and Blood of the Lord without prior sacramental confession except for a grave reason where there is no opportunity for confession. In this case, the person is to be mindful of the obligation to make an act of perfect contrition, including the intention of confessing as soon as possible (canon 916). A frequent reception of the Sacrament of Penance is encouraged for all.

For our fellow Christians: We welcome our fellow Christians to this celebration of the Eucharist as our brothers and sisters. We pray that our common baptism and the action of the Holy Spirit in this Eucharist will draw us closer to one another and begin to dispel the sad divisions which separate us. We pray that these will lessen and finally disappear, in keeping with Christ's prayer for us "that they may all be one" (Jn 17:21).

Because Catholics believe that the celebration of the Eucharist is a sign of the reality of the oneness of faith, life, and worship, members of those churches with whom we are not yet fully united are ordinarily not admitted to Holy Communion this means that those of the Protestant faiths (Baptists, Lutherans, Methodists, etc.) are not eligible to receive Holy Communion. Eucharistic sharing in exceptional circumstances by other Christians requires permission according to the directives of the diocesan bishop and the provisions of canon law (canon 844 § 4). Members of the Orthodox Churches, the Assyrian Church of the East, and the Polish National Catholic Church are urged to respect the discipline of their own Churches. According to Roman Catholic discipline, the Code of Canon Law does not object to the reception of communion by Christians of these Churches (canon 844 § 3).

For those not receiving Holy Communion: All who are not receiving Holy Communion are encouraged to express in their hearts a prayerful desire for unity with the Lord Jesus and with one another while remaining at their seat or pew. The distribution of Holy Communion is not a time to seek a blessing. All will receive a blessing at the end of Mass, therefore no one is to come forward in the Communion line with arms crossed to receive a blessing from a priest or deacon (only clergy may offer blessings). Additionally, there

should not be separate prayer ministers or prayer lines during the time of distribution of Holy Communion.

For non-Christians: We also welcome to this celebration those who do not share our faith in Jesus Christ. While we cannot admit them to Holy Communion, we ask them to offer their prayers for the peace and the unity of the human family.

If there is a tabernacle available and consecrated hosts remain after the Communion Rite, the ciborium(a) should be taken to the tabernacle immediately after the Communion Rite has finished. Otherwise, all Consecrated Hosts must be consumed.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Following the period of silence, all stand as the priest again collects the private prayers of the assembly and presents them to God using the prayer found in the *Roman Missal* for the Mass being celebrated.

CONCLUDING RITE

Just as the *Introductory Rites* transform us more fully into the body of Christ, the *Concluding Rite* charges the Body of Christ to take the message of Christ to the community - to be an agent of spiritual transformation for all the world.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ideally, no announcements will be needed or presented. If it is necessary to have announcements, they should be brief. This is not the time to read the bulletin or to provide the assembly with the next week's activities. Above all, they should never be made during the Communion Rite, and they are never announced from the ambo. If announcements are done, one option is to make them before Mass begins.

BLESSING AND DISMISSAL

The Mass ends as it began, under the Sign of the Cross. The presider traces in blessing over the assembly a large sign of the cross as those assembled mark again the sign on their bodies and say: Amen.

When a bishop has celebrated the Eucharist, He blesses the participants with a more solemn Pontifical formula that invites the faithful to respond as he blesses them with a doxology giving glory to the Lord.

Bishop: The Lord be with you.

All reply: And with your spirit.

Bishop: Blessed be the name of the Lord.

All reply: Now and forever.

Bishop: Our help is in the name of the Lord.

All reply: Who made heaven and earth.

The entire Mass is about our sharing in our very bodies in the mystery of the cross, and this sharing reveals to us the mystery of the Trinity. At the beginning of Mass this sign and the threefold name of God became our door into the mystery. This final sign of the cross is but another door to the reality of the world and our task to be missionaries.

In the Gospel of John (20:21) Jesus sends the apostles on their mission with the words: “As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” The dismissal is our sending as Church into the world.

PROCESSION

The final procession begins with the ministers from the sanctuary (servers, deacon, priest) from this place where holy things have happened. The procession leads the assembly back into the world that needs holiness.

AFTER MASS

There are both practical and spiritual considerations that should be addressed after the Mass has finished. When the Mass is over and the procession has exited the worship space, it is important to remember that we still remain in the place where the liturgy was held. Therefore, a sense of decorum and tranquility should be in the minds of everyone.

It is the adults that should set the proper example by not yelling directions at students or adding any unnecessary confusion to the situation. It is also not a time for socializing or irreverent conversation. Speeches, closing remarks, or presentations of awards or gifts should be avoided at this time, except for special circumstances and only with the prior permission of the Presider.

The vessels should be purified and handled as they would be in the parish by an instituted acolyte or ordained clergy. The altar (the prominent symbol of Christ during the Mass) should be treated with the reverence it is due. The cross and processional candles should be put in a safe place, and all liturgical books and other supplies used should go back to where they came from so that they are able to be used again.

As for the spiritual considerations after the Mass, it is necessary to remember that the Mass is not just another class or activity in which the students participate. The movement from Algebra II to American History or lunch is not the same as the movement from Mass to the next thing on the schedule. It is important to let the Holy Spirit work within the students so that the fruits of the Mass may be attained and the reasons for having the Mass are not in vain. A short time of silent prayer after Mass is appropriate before students go to the next class or activity on their schedule. A discussion about their experience of the Mass in their next class can also serve to connect rather than disconnect Mass from their school experience. It helps to further the purpose for the Mass and allows the

students to see that the Mass is indeed not just another activity, but a true and worthy opportunity to be in the presence of the Divine.

THINGS TO BE AVOIDED

SPECIAL BLESSINGS

Because some blessings have a special relationship to the sacraments, they may sometimes be joined with the celebration of Mass. The *Book of Blessings* specifies what such blessings are and the part of the rite with which they are to be joined; it also provides ritual norms that may not be disregarded. No blessings except those so specified may be joined with the Eucharistic celebration (*Book of Blessings*, General Introduction, 28).

AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS

Awards celebrations are not to take place within the celebration of the Eucharist. Award presentations should have their own identity and time of honor outside of the Mass. Speeches, closing remarks, or presentations of gifts should be avoided at this time, except for special circumstances and only with the prior permission of the priest.

PART IV—APPENDICES

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USCCB, *Instruction on the Eucharist (Redemptionis Sacramentum) - Liturgy Documentary Series #15*, 2004, Washington D.C., USCCB Inc.

USCCB, *Introduction to the Order of Mass - Pastoral Liturgy Series #1*, 2002, Washington D.C., USCCB Inc.

USCCB, *Norms for the Distribution and Reception of Holy Communion Under Both Kinds in the Dioceses of the United States of America - Liturgy Documentary Series #13*, 2002, Washington D.C., USCCB Inc.

USCCB, *Sing to the Lord, Music in Divine Worship - Pastoral Liturgy Series #4*, 2008, Washington D.C., USCCB Inc.

GUIDELINES FOR COMMUNION

On November 14, 1996, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops approved the following guidelines on the reception of Communion. These guidelines replace the guidelines approved by the Administrative Committee of the NCCB in November 1986. The guidelines, which are to be included in missalettes and other participation aids published in the United States, seek to remind all those who may attend Catholic liturgies of the present discipline of the Church with regard to the sharing of Eucharistic Communion.

For Catholics

As Catholics, we fully participate in the celebration of the Eucharist when we receive Holy Communion. We are encouraged to receive Communion devoutly and frequently. In order to be properly disposed to receive Communion, participants should not be conscious of grave sin and normally should have fasted for one hour. A person who is conscious of grave sin is not to receive the Body and Blood of the Lord without prior sacramental confession except for a grave reason where there is no opportunity for confession. In this case, the person is to be mindful of the obligation to make an act of perfect contrition, including the intention of confessing as soon as possible (canon 916). A frequent reception of the Sacrament of Penance is encouraged for all.

For our fellow Christians

We welcome our fellow Christians to this celebration of the Eucharist as our brothers and sisters. We pray that our common baptism and the action of the Holy Spirit in this Eucharist will draw us closer to one another and begin to dispel the sad divisions which separate us. We pray that these will lessen and finally disappear, in keeping with Christ's prayer for us "that they may all be one" (Jn 17:21). Because Catholics believe that the celebration of the Eucharist is a sign of the reality of the oneness of faith, life, and worship, members of those churches with whom we are not yet fully united are ordinarily not admitted to Holy Communion. Eucharistic sharing in exceptional circumstances by other Christians requires permission according to the directives of the diocesan bishop and the provisions of canon law (canon 844 §4). Members of the Orthodox Churches, the Assyrian Church of the East, and the Polish National Catholic Church are urged to respect the discipline of their own Churches. According to Roman Catholic discipline, the Code of Canon Law does not object to the reception of Communion by Christians of these Churches (canon 844 §3).

For those not receiving Holy Communion

All who are not receiving Holy Communion are encouraged to express in their hearts a prayerful desire for unity with the Lord Jesus and with one another.

For non-Christians

We also welcome to this celebration those who do not share our faith in Jesus Christ. While we cannot admit them to Holy Communion, we ask them to offer their prayers for the peace and the unity of the human family.

HYMNS WITH DOCTRINALLY INCORRECT VIEWS

Catholic Hymnody at the Service of the Church: An Aide for Evaluation of Hymn Lyrics, published by the USCCB Committee on Doctrine, in 2020, lists several hymns that present incorrect doctrinal views.

These hymns are not to be used in Catholic High School Masses. This list is not exhaustive and the guidelines in this aid are to be adhered to when selecting hymns for Catholic high school Masses.

God is Here! As We His People
Now in This Banquet
All Are Welcome
Let Us Break Bread Together on Our Knees
The Play of the Godhead
Led by the Spirit
God Beyond All Names
Sing a New Church
As a Fire is Meant for Burning
Gather Us In
The Lord of the Dance
O Crucified Messiah
Canticle of the Sun

Commonplace contemporary settings of the Magnificat and Benedictus which end with this Doxology: “All Glory be to God, Creator blest, To Jesus Christ, God’s love made manifest, and to the Holy Spirt, gentle Comforter” are not appropriate.

Only this Doxology is used: “Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.”

Memo on Baccalaureate Masses

To: High School Principals
From: Adam Dufault, Ed.D., Superintendent
Date: April 22, 2025
Subject: Baccalaureate Masses

Dear Principals,

Please review the following information related to the planning of our annual events surrounding graduation. By fostering a culture of reverence and attentiveness, we hope to honor this milestone for our graduates and their families while upholding the sacredness of the Holy Mass.

After consultation with Bishop Fernandes, Fr. Michael Hartge, the Vicar General, and with Fr. Paul Keller, O.P., the Diocesan Director of Divine Worship, I would like to offer some revised guidance around Baccalaureate Masses:

- While the Baccalaureate Mass is celebrated with the intention of the graduates, it is essential that proper reverence and respect for the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist remains the focal point of the Mass.
- As such, the entirety of the *Guidelines for High School Masses* document applies to all Masses, including expectations for adult and student participation, liturgy, and music.
- Local traditions that deviate from the standard order of the Mass are not appropriate for Baccalaureate Mass, nor are activities occurring in the sacred space before, after, or outside of the liturgy appropriate. This is the case whether the Baccalaureate Mass occurs within a Church or in an area of the school. These types of activities are best reserved for other events during the graduation festivities.
- If the Baccalaureate Mass is held at a Church away from the high school, the local pastor must be consulted on the liturgy early on in the planning process. He must have the opportunity to review the liturgical plan at least one month in advance of the event. He also must grant his approval to all aspects of the liturgical plan in advance of the Mass. The local pastor is the final authority on all activities occurring at his parish.

Please feel free to contact me with any logistical and interpretation questions and Fr. Paul Keller, O.P., with any liturgical questions. This memo will be added to the *Guidelines for High School Masses*, available on the Administrator Dropbox and will be shared with the priests of the Diocese. Additionally, please make sure that all who are involved in the planning of the Baccalaureate Mass are informed about this memo.