

LITURGICAL HANDBOOK FOR DEACONS



2022

ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF PETERBOROUGH
Peterborough, ON

PREFACE

This liturgical guide for deacons has been developed to be a practical tool for the preparation of deacon candidates and for the ongoing formation of those already ordained to the diaconate. It is a teaching resource for candidates and deacons. It is also intended to be a reference for pastors who have deacons assigned to the parish and especially for priest celebrants who have deacons assisting them at Mass. It is hoped that this document will help unfold the beauty of the sacred liturgy, promote understanding, prayerfulness, reverence, and unity in the liturgical service of deacons.

The guide is intended to be a “living document” which will be reviewed, amended, and revised as needed to remain accurate, current, and useful. It will always be a work in progress as new and better ways are found to form deacons liturgically.

The steps leading to the development of this guide were begun with the permission of Bishop Daniel Miehm. His directions to the committee were to draft a liturgical guide that (1) involved consultation with the primary stakeholders, (2) was developed under the leadership of the diocesan liturgist and Master of Ceremonies, (3) that included consultation with the Permanent Deacon Formation Committee and (4) was practical for the use of deacon candidates, deacons, priests, pastors and the bishop. Members of the study committee were: Fr. Jerry Tavares, Fr. Paul Massel, Fr. Joseph Devereaux, JCL, Fr. Ray Rick, JCL, Deacon William Radigan, and Dr. Douglas Finbow, PhD, STD.

The study committee developed a model for the format and content in the form of a first draft, which was subsequently circulated, reviewed and commented upon by individuals with expertise in liturgy and/or the diaconate. Bishop Miehm reviewed several early drafts. This most recent draft is the outcome of this collaborative process.

The process utilized included consultation with the following bodies and offices:

- a. Deacon Council
- b. Presbyteral Council
- c. Office of Liturgy
- d. Office of the Chancellor
- e. Office of the Bishop

A conscious effort has been made to assure the conformity of this guide with the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM)*, *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, *Apostolic Exhortation of Benedict XVI on the Eucharist Sacramentum Caritatis*, the *National Directory for the Ministry, Formation and Life of Permanent Deacons in Canada*, and other directives of the Church.

This document is offered as a formation resource to help promote excellence in the liturgical service of deacons and does not supplant or alter the *GIRM* in any way. It is offered to deacons and the priests with whom the deacons serve at Mass as a guideline to help them implement the *GIRM* in light of the liturgical documents of the Church. Readers are invited to point out any statements in this guide that do not seem to be consistent with this objective of conformity or to make other suggestions for the improvement of the guide.

In communion with his bishop and the presbyterium, the deacon fosters the sanctification of the Christian community which has the “source and summit” of its life and worship in the Eucharist. Just as the Church “draws her life from the Eucharist,” so too does the deacon. At the celebration of the liturgy, he is a visible sign of the profound relationship between the Church’s worship and service in charity and justice to one’s brothers and sisters. The deacon’s liturgical ministry reminds the whole Church of her diaconal mission to serve as Jesus did.

—*National Directory for the Ministry, Formation and Life of Permanent Deacons in Canada* n.15.

When the deacon comes to serve, he must empty himself from all selfish concerns. He must see himself as servant of the liturgy and never its master. He must minister to the priest and to the altar with the humility of him whose very body and blood were offered on the altar of the cross.

When he comes to proclaim the Gospel, the deacon must empty himself of all his worldly wisdom that he might be filled only with the wisdom of God. He must decrease so that the Word of God might take root in him and those who hear his voice may hear not him, but Christ Jesus who lives in him. His acclamation of ‘the Gospel of the Lord’ must ring authentic and true.

When he proclaims intercessions or invites the people to prayer, the faithful must recognize in him the trustworthy and compassionate man to whom they may go with any of their needs. The poor must know him as their friend. Orphans must see him as their father, and all who are alone, afraid or confused must see in him a refuge in the model of Christ Jesus. All must have such trust in his prudence and charity that his wise guidance is spontaneously welcomed.

Finally, all who receive the Savior’s Precious Blood from his hands must receive the chalice as from one who knows the meaning of sacrifice, of being poured out for God’s people, and of striving for holiness of life. The deacon too must take up the cup of salvation as one whose very life is a hymn of praise to the Lord. For the cup he bears is his salvation and a model of the life to which he is called as a deacon.

What the new *Roman Missal* and the Church ask of the deacon is to become more like Christ. To participate in his paschal death and resurrection: by how he lives and how he prays, by what he does and who he has become.

This is the mystery of diaconal ministry at the altar. It is the mystery of the Church and the mystery of all who are called to the Supper of the Lamb!

— Msgr. James Moroney, *The Deacon and the Liturgy: A Search for Identity*

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Chapter One: Liturgical Principles for Diaconal Ministry

The Liturgical Presence of The Deacon

The deacon has a particular role in the liturgical action of the Church. *Lumen Gentium* states that “Strengthened by sacramental grace, in communion with the bishop and his group of priests, deacons serve the People of God in the ministry of the liturgy, of the word, and of charity.” (L.G.#29)

The liturgical presence of the deacon will be different at celebrations where someone else presides and the deacon assists that presider, versus the occasions when the deacon presides.

Whenever there is a priest or bishop present at a liturgical celebration, he presides and the deacon always assists. The focus of the assisting deacon is always on the action of the liturgy (Altar, Chair, etc.) unless the deacon is performing a function for the assembly (proclaiming the Gospel, giving liturgical directions, etc.). The deacon does not share any of the duties or prayers that belong to the presider, nor does he directly address God; he assists. All liturgical options that are available for the diaconal role during the liturgy are at the option of the presider, not the one who assists. (i.e. chanting the penitential tropes or intercessions should be discussed with the presider before the celebration and not done during the celebration without his knowledge). Deciding which options to use is a function of presiding.

The deacon’s role is one of humble service and he should, in good conscience, follow the direction of the presider, even if the direction is in contradiction to this manual. A respectful, private conversation may take place after the celebration to discuss variations from the norms if necessary.

At those liturgical celebrations where the deacon is the presider, he takes on a different demeanour. He is no longer one who assists, but the one who leads those assembled in prayer. Now his focus is on those assembled and on God when God is addressed in prayer.

Liturgical Principles for The Deacon as the Presiding Minister

The deacon has been ordained to nurture and increase the people of God; it belongs to him to lead the community in prayer when the pastor (or parochial vicar) is not available to lead them.

1. When the deacon leads the assembly in the celebration of a Sacrament or prayer, his focus is on the Lord Jesus Christ and the assembly. When the deacon assists a presider, the deacon’s focus is on the presider, it is on the assembly only when the assembly is being addressed.
2. Music is an integral part of all liturgies; it helps all who celebrate to enter into the prayer. All music is to be natural and the use of recorded music is generally not permitted. The use of recorded music should be an exception, where pastorally appropriate, and at the discretion of the pastor.
3. Within the community’s worship space, the deacon has a unique chair from the priest and other ministers. When the deacon leads prayer, he is to use his chair and **not** the presidential chair. This will show the distinction between priests, deacons and other ministers.

4. Liturgy is participatory and should be engaging in a way that involves the gathered community in the experience of prayer. All the actions of everyone involved in the liturgy (presider, lector, psalmist, musicians) should animate and engage the hearts of the faithful with all the emotions present in the feast, in the readings and in the action of the Eucharist.

Liturgical Vesture for Deacons

1. Albs worn by deacons are to be white (or cream) in colour not wheat-coloured or gray. The alb should tend to be simple and not ornate nor have excessively full sleeves. The alb may be tied at the waist with a cincture. The alb should cover the street clothes at the neck. If it does not, an amice should be worn. The alb should be long enough to reach the bottom of the pants leg but not so long that it poses a tripping hazard.

2. A deacon stole is worn over the left shoulder, drawn across the chest, and fastened at the right side. The stole should be of the proper liturgical colour. The stole is always worn under the dalmatic and is never worn without the alb.

3. A dalmatic is worn over the stole (the stole is never omitted) and is never worn without an alb and cincture. The dalmatic is the normal vestment of the deacon for the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. The GIRM states it “*may be omitted either out of necessity or for a less solemn liturgy*” (i.e. weekday Mass, Liturgy of the Hours, etc.). (GIRM n. 119 (b) It is proper to wear the dalmatic for a more solemn celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours such as Sunday Vespers.

4. When the deacon presides at a funeral vigil or committal service, alb, cincture, and stole (violet, white, or black) are proper. “The paschal victory that Christians gain over death is illustrated more clearly with white vestments. While not forbidden in the general norms, the use of purple or black vestments for funerals is discouraged in the Diocese of Peterborough. It is understood that Deacons should match the vestment colour worn by the priest-celebrant.” (Canadian Ordo, Pastoral Note 23.) Local custom, or ecumenical hospitality, may call for regular business attire.

5. When the deacon presides at the Sacrament of Matrimony, Sacrament of Baptism or Benediction, the alb, cincture, white stole and cope (optional for Matrimony & Baptism) are proper vesture. If the deacon receives the exchange of vows during a nuptial Mass, the proper vestment is the dalmatic.

6. According to Canon Law the Roman collar is not mandatory attire for deacons. (CJC 282, 288). In the Diocese of Peterborough, the bishop grants permission for deacons in the Permanent Diaconate to wear the Roman Collar in specific situations when exercising their ministry at the parish with the pastor’s agreement, and in other ministerial/service settings according to their judgment about its appropriateness.

Chapter Two: Importance and Dignity of the Eucharist

The General Structure of The Mass (*GIRM* nn. 16-18, 20, 22)

16. *The celebration of Mass, as the action of Christ and of the People of God arrayed hierarchically, is the center of the whole of Christian life for the Church both universal and local, as well as for each of the faithful individually. For in it is found the high point both of the action by which God sanctifies the world in Christ and of the worship that the human race offers to the Father, adoring him through Christ, the Son of God, in the Holy Spirit. In it, moreover, during the course of the year, the mysteries of redemption are celebrated so as to be in some way made present. As to the other sacred actions and all the activities of the Christian life, these are bound up with it, flow from it, and are ordered to it.*

17. *It is, therefore, of the greatest importance that the celebration of the Mass or the Lord's Supper be so ordered that the Sacred ministers and the faithful taking part in it, according to the state proper to each, may draw from it more abundantly those fruits, to obtain which, Christ the Lord instituted the Eucharistic Sacrifice of his Body and Blood and entrusted it as the memorial of his Passion and Resurrection to the Church, his beloved Bride.*

18. *This will fittingly come about if, with due regard for the nature and other circumstances of each liturgical assembly, the entire celebration is arranged in such a way that it leads to a conscious, active, and full participation of the faithful, namely in body and in mind, a participation fervent with faith, hope, and charity, of the sort which is desired by the Church and which is required by the very nature of the celebration and to which the Christian people have a right and duty in virtue of their Baptism.*

20. *Since, however, the celebration of the Eucharist, like the entire Liturgy, is carried out by means of perceptible signs by which the faith is nourished, strengthened, and expressed, the greatest care is to be taken that those forms and elements proposed by the Church are chosen and arranged, which, given the circumstances of persons and places, more effectively foster active and full participation and more aptly respond to the spiritual needs of the faithful.*

22. *The celebration of the Eucharist in a particular Church is of the utmost importance.*

For the Diocesan Bishop, the prime steward of the mysteries of God in the particular Church entrusted to his care, is the moderator, promoter, and guardian of the whole of liturgical life. In celebrations that take place with the Bishop presiding, and especially in the celebration of the Eucharist by the Bishop himself with the Presbyterate, the Deacons, and the people taking part, the mystery of the Church is manifest. Hence, solemn celebrations of Mass of this sort must be exemplary for the entire diocese.

The Bishop should therefore be determined that the Priests, the Deacons, and the lay Christian faithful grasp ever more deeply the genuine significance of the rites and liturgical texts, and thereby be led to the active and fruitful celebration of the Eucharist. To that end, he should also be vigilant in ensuring that the dignity of these celebrations be enhanced and, in promoting such dignity, the beauty of the sacred place, of the music, and of art should contribute as greatly as possible.⁵

Deacons and The Celebration of The Eucharist

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. 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.*

All those involved in liturgy should arrive at a suitable time before the celebration begins in order to prepare

mentally and spiritually. The deacon and/or minister should assist the priest celebrant with practical preparations, pray and/or greet the people.

When fulfilling his ministry within the Eucharistic Liturgy, the deacon should be appropriately vested. It is desirable that the colour and design of the deacon's vestments match the vestments of the presiding celebrant whenever possible, yet they are always distinguishable from the priest's vestments by virtue of the dalmatic having sleeves.

If a deacon is functioning in his proper liturgical role, he always stands and sits to the immediate right of the priest celebrant. If a second deacon is present and functioning, he stands and sits to the immediate left of the celebrant. If there is a third deacon, he may sit next to one of the other two deacons or wherever appropriate. This remains the same whether priest concelebrants are present or not.

Before the liturgy begins, the deacon should discuss with the celebrant the options chosen, including penitential act, use of incense, dismissal, instruction regarding the preference for the use of chant and the need for chanting with the celebrant, the placement of ribbons in the Roman Missal, and others.

Deacons must avoid causing confusion between their ministerial role and the presidential role of the priest at Mass. Some actions and gestures are presidential in nature and the deacon therefore **must refrain** from using them. For example, the raising of the hands in the *orans* position should not be done by deacons during the *Our Father* or at the invitations, "The Lord be with you", or "Let us offer each other the sign of peace". In addition, the deacon makes no gestures with his hands during the Eucharistic Prayer and makes no bows as the priest elevates the bread and wine during the consecration. The only variation from this is if the deacon is unable to kneel during the Eucharistic Prayer, he should make a profound bow as the priest genuflects. (*GIRM* n. 43) Kneeling deacons should not bow. Likewise, the deacon should not recite or even "mouth" the words to the Eucharistic Prayer, the final doxology, or any other spoken parts reserved to the priest.

When he is present at the celebration of the Eucharist, a deacon should exercise his ministry, wearing sacred vestments. (*GIRM* n. 171) In fact, the deacon:

- a) assists the priest and walks at his side;
- b) ministers at the altar, both as regards the chalice and the book;
- c) proclaims the Gospel and may, at the direction of the priest celebrant, give the homily (*GIRM* n. 66);
- d) guides the faithful people by giving appropriate instructions, and announces the intentions of the Universal Prayer.

Chapter Three: Some General Norms for All Forms of Mass

Veneration of the Altar and the Book of the Gospels (*GIRM 273 et al.*)

273. *According to traditional practice, the veneration of the altar and of the Book of Gospels is done by means of a kiss. However, where a sign of this kind is not in harmony with the traditions or the culture of some region, it is for the Conference of Bishops to establish some other sign in its place, with the consent of the Apostolic See.*

Genuflections and Bows:

274. *A genuflection, made by bending the right knee to the ground, signifies adoration, and therefore it is reserved for the Most Blessed Sacrament, as well as for the Holy Cross from the solemn adoration during the liturgical celebration on Good Friday until the beginning of the Easter Vigil.*

During Mass, three genuflections are made by the Priest Celebrant: namely, after the elevation of the host, after the elevation of the chalice, and before Communion. Certain specific features to be observed in a concelebrated Mass are noted in their proper place.

If, however, the tabernacle with the Most Blessed Sacrament is situated in the sanctuary, the Priest, the Deacon, and the other ministers genuflect when they approach the altar and when they depart from it, but not during the celebration of Mass itself. Otherwise, all who pass before the Most Blessed Sacrament genuflect, unless they are moving in procession. Ministers carrying the processional cross or candles bow their heads instead of genuflecting.

275. *A bow signifies reverence and honor shown to the persons themselves or to the signs that represent them. There are two kinds of bow: a bow of the head and a bow of the body.*

- a) *A bow of the head is made when the three Divine Persons are named together and at the names of Jesus, of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and of the Saint in whose honor Mass is being celebrated.*
- b) *A bow of the body, that is to say, a profound bow, is made to the altar; during the prayers *Munda cor meum* (Cleanse my heart) and *In spiritu humilitatis* (With humble spirit); in the Creed at the words *et incarnatus est* (and by the Holy Spirit . . . and became man); in the Roman Canon at the *Supplices te rogamus* (In humble prayer we ask you, almighty God). The same kind of bow is made by the Deacon when he asks for a blessing before the proclamation of the Gospel. In addition, the Priest bows slightly as he pronounces the words of the Lord at the Consecration.*

Incensation

276. *Thurification or incensation is an expression of reverence and of prayer, as is signified in Sacred Scripture (cf. Ps 141 [140]:2; Rev 8:3).³³³*

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 on the altar, to incense the offerings, the cross, and the altar, as well as the Priest and the people;*
- e) *at the elevation of the host and the chalice after the Consecration.*

The Purification

278. *Whenever a fragment of the host adheres to his fingers, especially after the fraction or after the Communion of the faithful, the Priest should wipe his fingers over the paten or, if necessary, wash them. Likewise, he should also gather any fragments that may have fallen outside the paten.*

279. *The sacred vessels are purified by the Priest, the Deacon, or an instituted acolyte after Communion or after Mass, in so far as possible at the credence table. The purification of the chalice is done with water alone or with wine and water, which is then consumed by whoever does the purification. The paten is wiped clean as usual with the purificator.*

Care is to be taken that whatever may remain of the Blood of Christ after the distribution of Communion is consumed immediately and completely at the altar.

280. *If a host or any particle should fall, it is to be picked up reverently; and if any of the Precious Blood is spilled, the area where the spill occurred should be washed with water, and this water should then be poured into the sacrarium in the sacristy.*

Communion under Both Kinds

281. *Holy Communion has a fuller form as a sign when it takes place under both kinds. For in this form the sign of the Eucharistic banquet is more clearly evident and clearer expression is given to the divine will by which the new and eternal Covenant is ratified in the Blood of the Lord, as also the connection between the Eucharistic banquet and the eschatological banquet in the Kingdom of the Father.*

282. *Sacred pastors should take care to ensure that the faithful who participate in the rite or are present at it, are made aware by the most suitable means possible of the Catholic teaching on the form of Holy Communion as laid down by the Ecumenical Council of Trent. Above all, they should instruct the Christian faithful that the Catholic faith teaches that Christ, whole and entire, and the true Sacrament, is received even under only one species, and hence that as regards the resulting fruits, those who receive under only one species are not deprived of any grace that is necessary for salvation.*

Furthermore, they should teach that the Church, in her administration of the Sacraments, has the power to lay down or alter whatever provisions, apart from the substance of the Sacraments, that she judges to be more readily conducive to reverence for the Sacraments and the good of the recipients, in view of changing conditions, times, and places. However, at the same time the faithful should be instructed to participate more readily in this sacred rite, by which the sign of the Eucharistic banquet is made more fully evident.

283. *In addition to those cases given in the ritual books, Communion under both kinds is permitted for:*

- a) Priests who are not able to celebrate or concelebrate Mass;*
- b) the Deacon and others who perform some duty at the Mass;*
- c) members of communities at the Conventual Mass or the “community” Mass, along with seminarians, and all those engaged in a retreat or taking part in a spiritual or pastoral gathering.*

The Diocesan Bishop may establish norms for Communion under both kinds for his own diocese, which are also to be observed in churches of religious and at celebrations with small groups. The Diocesan Bishop is also given the faculty to permit Communion under both kinds whenever it may seem appropriate to the Priest to whom a community has been entrusted as its own shepherd, provided that the faithful have been well instructed and that there is no danger of profanation of the Sacrament or of the rite’s becoming difficult because of the large number of participants or for some other cause.

In all that pertains to Communion under both kinds, the Norms for the Distribution and Reception of Holy Communion under Both Kinds in the Dioceses of the Canada are to be followed.

284. *When Communion is distributed under both kinds:*

- a) the chalice is usually administered by a Deacon or, in the absence of a Deacon, by a Priest, or even by a duly instituted acolyte or another extraordinary minister of Holy Communion, or by one of the faithful who, in a case of necessity, has been entrusted with this duty for a single occasion;*

b) whatever may remain of the Blood of Christ is consumed at the altar by the Priest or the Deacon or the duly instituted acolyte who ministered the chalice. The same then purifies, wipes, and arranges the sacred vessels in the usual way.

Any of the faithful who wish to receive Holy Communion under the species of bread alone should be given Communion in this form.

285. *For Communion under both kinds the following should be prepared:*

a) If Communion from the chalice is done by drinking directly from the chalice, a chalice of a sufficiently large size or several chalices are prepared. However, care should be taken lest beyond what is needed of the Blood of Christ remains to be consumed at the end of the celebration.

b) If Communion from the chalice is done by intinction, the hosts should be neither too thin nor too small, but rather a little thicker than usual, so that after being intincted partly into the Blood of Christ they can still be easily distributed.

286. *If Communion of the Blood of Christ is carried out by communicants' drinking from the chalice, each communicant, after receiving the Body of Christ, moves to the minister of the chalice and stands facing him. The minister says, The Blood of Christ, the communicant replies, Amen, and the minister hands over the chalice, which the communicant raises to his or her mouth. Each communicant drinks a little from the chalice, hands it back to the minister, and then withdraws; the minister wipes the rim of the chalice with the purificator.*

287. *If Communion from the chalice is carried out by intinction, each communicant, holding a Communion-plate under the mouth, approaches the Priest who holds a vessel with the sacred particles, with a minister standing at his side and holding the chalice. The Priest takes a host, intincts it partly in the chalice and, showing it, says, The Body and Blood of Christ. The communicant replies, Amen, receives the Sacrament in the mouth from the Priest, and then withdraws.*

Chapter Four: Deacon during in The Celebration of the Eucharist

Mass with One Deacon

One of the more basic liturgical ministries of the deacon is “to make all the preparation for the sacrifice, and distribute the Body and Blood of the Lord to the faithful.” The following norms are guidelines drawn from the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, and the rite itself, on how a deacon exercises his liturgical function at the Eucharist. Some of the functions of the deacon in the celebration of the Eucharist, (e.g., placement of the corporal and purification of the vessels), may also be done by an instituted acolyte. Therefore, when an instituted acolyte is present, his function should be distinguished from that of the deacon.

The deacon should see to it that the necessary liturgical books, vessels, and vestments are properly arranged for the celebration. He should also assist the instituted acolytes and other servers in their preparation and performance of their liturgical roles, as appropriate. Special attention should be given when incense is to be used.

1. Introductory Rites:

a. Entrance Procession and Reverence to the Altar: (*GIRM* nn. 171, 172): The typical order of the entrance procession to the altar is:

- Thurifer carrying a thurible with burning incense (where customary)
- Cross Bearer with the image to the front
- Candle-bearers carrying candlesticks with lighted candles
- Lectors/Readers (where customary)
- Deacon carrying the Book of the Gospels
- Concelebrants (if any)
- Priest

The deacon walks immediately before the priest in the procession carrying the Book of the Gospels slightly elevated. Otherwise, without the Book of the Gospels, he may walk at the right-hand side of the priest. If there are concelebrants and other vested deacons, the deacon carrying the Gospel book precedes the vested deacons. Extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion do not join the procession. When he reaches the altar, he does not bow or genuflect but proceeds to the altar and places the Book of Gospels flat upon it. He then waits for the arrival of the celebrant and then together with the celebrant, he venerates the altar with a kiss. Nothing else should be placed on the altar at this time, not even the Roman Missal or vessels

If the tabernacle is in the Sanctuary or within close proximity to the altar, the deacon and the celebrant will genuflect to the tabernacle rather than bow to the altar. If physically impaired, a profound bow would suffice.

b. Incensation of the Altar: If incense is used, the thurifer will bring the thurible and boat to the celebrant. The altar server will hand the boat to the deacon. The deacon will open the boat and hold it close to the thurible, while the celebrant places incense in the thurible. When the celebrant is finished, the deacon closes the boat and hands it to the thurifer, who passes the thurible to the deacon. The deacon then offers the

thurible to the celebrant. The celebrant and the deacon move to the center of the altar (with the deacon to the right of the celebrant) and face the altar. There is no bow before and after incensing the altar. (*GIRM* n. 277) If desired by the celebrant, the deacon can hold back the celebrant's chasuble while the celebrant incenses the altar. The deacon accompanies the celebrant in a slow procession to the right, around the altar, leading to the middle of the altar in front.

Upon arriving at the middle of the front of the altar, both the deacon and celebrant bow to the cross. The celebrant incenses the crucifix (during the Easter season, the Paschal candle is also incensed). The deacon and celebrant bow again to the Cross (and in season, the Paschal candle) and the procession returns to the back of the altar.

The celebrant returns the thurible to the deacon, who hands it to the thurifer.

c. Greeting the Assembly: After the incensation, the deacon and celebrant go to their chairs (with the deacon always to the immediate right of the celebrant). The deacon stands beside him while the celebrant greets the assembly. After the greeting, the priest, deacon, or other suitable minister may very briefly introduce the Mass of the day. However, this introduction may also be delegated by the priest to the deacon.

d. Penitential Act: The deacon stands at the right side of the celebrant during the Penitential Act. If Penitential Act "I" or "II" is used, the priest leads the assembly, and the deacon (or choir) leads the Kyrie which follows. The priest always says the absolution.

If Penitential Act "III" is used, the deacon may recite or intone the tropes. (*GIRM* n. 274) However, a choir may do this instead of the celebrant or deacon. The Penitential Act should give the faithful sufficient time to reflect, therefore, the deacon should pause for a moment before reciting the tropes.

If the Rite of Sprinkling is used, the deacon assists the priest; however, he may receive the permission of the celebrant to sprinkle the people himself.

e. Gloria: The deacon continues to stand at the right side of the celebrant during the Gloria and joins with the assembly in prayer.

f. Collect: If an altar server is not present, the deacon may assist the celebrant with the Roman Missal for the collect (opening prayer). Otherwise, he continues to stand at the celebrant's right.

2. Liturgy of the Word (*GIRM* nn. 174-176)

a. The Readings: During the entire Liturgy of the Word, up to the Gospel, the deacon remains seated at his place. During the Responsorial Psalm, the deacon joins in with the cantor and the assembly in the singing of the psalm.

In the absence of a lector, the deacon reads the first two readings and the Gospel.

b. Gospel: If incense is to be used at the Gospel reading, the thurifer brings the thurible and boat to the deacon at the beginning of the Gospel Acclamation. The deacon accepts the boat from the thurifer, opens the boat and holds it close to the thurible. The celebrant places incense on the charcoal. When the celebrant is finished, the deacon closes the boat and hands it to the thurifer.

The deacon makes a profound bow before the celebrant and asks for his blessing, saying in a low voice, “Your blessing, Father”. The priest says in a low voice: “May the Lord be in your heart and on your lips, that you may proclaim his Gospel worthily and well, in the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit”. The deacon signs himself with the Sign of the Cross and replies: “Amen”.

After receiving the blessing, the deacon proceeds to the altar, bows, and lifts the Book of Gospels. He then goes in procession to the place where the Gospel is proclaimed.

The order of the procession is:

- One thurifer carrying the thurible
- Two servers carrying candles
- Deacon carrying the Book of the Gospels

When the procession arrives at the ambo, the two altar servers with lit candles stand on either side and face each other, the altar server with the thurible faces the assembly and stands near the deacon; the deacon places the Book of the Gospels on the ambo, looks at the assembly, and **with hands joined** chants or says: “The Lord be with you.” The assembly responds: “And with your Spirit”. “A reading from the Holy Gospel according to _____.” (Note: This is the only formula and words to be used.) The deacon makes the Sign of the Cross with his thumb on the book, his forehead, his lips, and his heart.

Incense is now used to venerate the Book of the Gospels. The deacon turns toward the thurifer and takes the thurible. He then bows to the Book of the Gospels and incenses the Book (**two swings, three times (center, left, right).**) He bows to the Book of the Gospels again and returns the thurible to the thurifer.

The deacon then proclaims the Gospel reading (may be chanted). After the reading, he chants or says: “The Gospel of the Lord.” He says this **without** hand gestures and **without** raising the book from the stand. The people respond “Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ,” the deacon then venerates the Book of the Gospels with a kiss, saying privately, “*Through the words of the Gospel may our sins be wiped away.*”

When a bishop is the celebrant, the deacon may take the Book of the Gospels to the bishop to be revered. The bishop may bless the assembly with it. Check with the bishop before the mass.

Lastly, the deacon may carry the Book of the Gospels to the credence table or another appropriate and dignified place.

If the celebrant is delivering the homily, the deacon returns to his seat; if the deacon is preaching he returns to the ambo and begins.

After the homily, catechumens (if present) may be dismissed by the priest or deacon.

c. Creed: The deacon remains at the right side of the celebrant and visibly joins in prayer with the assembly. At the words “*And by the Holy Spirit...and became man*” all make a profound bow.

d. Universal Prayer: After the introduction by the celebrant, it is the deacon himself who announces the intentions of the Universal Prayer, from the ambo if possible.

The deacon is the primary minister of the Universal Prayer and other options (lector, other lay people) are not to be considered unless it is a special liturgy with special considerations or a deacon is not present. The deacon may prepare the petitions of the intercessions. This should be done according to the norms of the general intercessions and local customs.

This series of intentions is usually to be: (*GIRM* n. 70)

- 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

It is also customary to have the last intention for the dead.

The celebrant concludes the Universal Prayer with a prayer.

3. Liturgy of the Eucharist (*GIRM* nn.178-183)

a. Preparation of the Gifts: (*GIRM* n. 178) After the Universal Prayer, while the celebrant remains at the chair, the deacon prepares the altar assisted by the altar server, **but it is the deacon's place to take care of the sacred vessels.** The deacon should be the only person that places the vessels, etc. on the altar.

The altar server may place the corporal(s) and Roman Missal on the altar. Then the deacon places the chalice, communion cups (if needed), and purificators on the altar. The Roman Missal should be placed according to the choice of the celebrant and open to the appropriate page.

The creases in the corporal are there for a practical reason: to catch Host fragments. The corporal should be placed on the altar with the creases pointing down and the "fold" facing up, cross at the bottom, in the center of the altar with the bottom of the corporal at the edge of the altar nearest to the deacon.

The paten should be placed **off the corporal and just to the right.** The chalice (and any vessel not in the offertory procession) should be placed on the lower corner of the altar where the deacon will pour the water and wine after the reception of the gifts.

Any ciboria containing unconsecrated hosts (and not in the offertory procession) should be placed appropriately on the altar to allow the celebrant to place the ciboria, paten, and chalice on the corporal.

If one chalice is not sufficient for Holy Communion to be distributed under both kinds to the Priest concelebrants or Christ's faithful, several chalices filled with wine may be placed on a corporal on the altar in an appropriate place. It is praiseworthy that the main chalice is larger than the other chalices prepared for distribution.

Note: Corporal or corporals of sufficient size must be used to accommodate the number of sacred vessels used. The deacon should determine that the corporal(s) have been ironed and folded correctly.

The deacon assists the celebrant in accepting the gifts brought in procession. It is permissible for the deacon to receive the gifts by himself if directed by the celebrant. The deacon returns to the altar and offers the paten or ciborium to the celebrant. The deacon pours sufficient wine into the chalice. He then pours a very small amount of water into the chalice. While pouring the water, the deacon prays **quietly** - "*By the mystery of this water and wine may we come to share in the divinity of Christ, who humbled Himself to share in our humanity.*" The deacon then offers the chalice to the celebrant.

If incense is used, the deacon assists the celebrant as at the beginning of the Mass.

After the gifts, the cross and the altar have been incensed, the celebrant and deacon face each other and the celebrant hands the thurible to the deacon. They bow to each other and the deacon incenses the celebrant three times. They bow to each other again.

The deacon then incenses as follows:

- Other clergy (concelebrants) if present in the sanctuary
- Concelebrants seated with the congregation
- Congregation and deacons
- Bishop (if present)

The thurible is then returned to the thurifer and the deacon returns to the right side of the celebrant.

If incense is used, the washing of the celebrant's hands by the instituted acolyte or altar server occurs while the deacon is incensing.

b. Eucharistic Prayer: (GIRM n. 179) The deacon stands to the right and slightly behind the celebrant, usually one step back and one step to the right.

When concelebrants are present, they join the celebrant around the altar just prior to the preface. The deacon should avoid standing between the concelebrants and the altar.

As the celebrant begins the Eucharistic Prayer and invites the faithful to "Lift up your hearts", the deacon should **not** lift his hands and arms in a ministerial gesture but keep them close to his chest in a prayerful position.

The *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* indicates that the deacon is to kneel from the Epiclesis (celebrant extends his hands over the paten) until the celebrant shows the chalice at the end of the Consecration. (GIRM n. 179) As the celebrant rises from his genuflection and intones, "The mystery of faith," the deacon also rises. The deacon remains standing through the rest of the Eucharistic Prayer.

If there is a pall on the chalice, the deacon may assist the celebrant by removing the pall before he kneels. If the celebrant so desires, the deacon may cover the chalice again after they have both risen to their feet.

If there is a health issue and a deacon cannot kneel, he should assume a posture of reverence. In that case, the following applies:

§ After the consecration of the Body, the celebrant genuflects and the deacon should make a profound bow toward the altar. (GIRM n. 179)

§ If there is a pall on the chalice, the deacon may remove the pall immediately following the reverence after the consecration of the Body.

§ After the consecration of the Precious Blood, the celebrant genuflects and the deacon should make a profound bow toward the altar. (GIRM n. 43)

§ The deacon may replace the chalice pall as the celebrant invites the assembly to recite or sing the Memorial Acclamation.

When more than one deacon is serving, all who are able will kneel.

At the Doxology, the deacon stands to the right of the celebrant and raises the chalice while the celebrant raises the paten with the Host until the people have responded, "Amen." The deacon does not recite the Doxology with the celebrant but leads the congregation with the Great Amen. (GIRM n.180)

The deacon should be turned **slightly** toward the celebrant and the chalice should be elevated so that the center of the chalice is at a level with the Host.

After the assembly has responded “Amen,” the deacon should hand the chalice back to the celebrant and he may place the chalice pall on the chalice if the celebrant so desires.

c. The Lord’s Prayer: The celebrant leads the Lord’s Prayer.

During this time, the deacon is at the celebrant’s right side, slightly behind him and visibly joining in the prayer. The deacon **does not** raise his hands and arms in a ministerial gesture (i.e. the priest raises and extends his arms inviting all to pray). The deacon should hold his hands together in a prayerful stance.

After the celebrant has greeted the people with, “The Peace of the Lord be with you always” and they have responded, the deacon, with **hands joined**, chants or says, “Let us offer each other the Sign of Peace”. Then he receives the sign of peace from the celebrant and may offer it to those other ministers who are close to him. (*GIRM* n. 181) If there are concelebrants, the concelebrants who are nearer to the principal celebrant receive the sign of peace from him before the deacon does. (*GIRM* n. 239)

d. Fraction and Distribution of Communion: In ordinary circumstances, the celebrant alone performs the fraction. If there are a large number of hosts, the deacon may assist the celebrant in placing them into additional ciboria during the “Lamb of God.” Whenever possible, when a very large number of hosts are needed, they should be placed into the additional ciboria before the Mass begins, if the celebrant agrees.

If the deacon is bringing reserved hosts from the tabernacle to be distributed, he does **not genuflect** to the tabernacle since the Lord is already present on the Altar. (*GIRM* n. 274)

Just before the priests’ Communion, the celebrant will genuflect. The deacon remains standing and does not bow.

After the priests’ Communion, the deacon receives Communion from the celebrant. The deacon is strictly forbidden from self-communicating. (*GIRM* n. 182)

Depending upon numbers, circumstances, and logistics, the deacon will step away for a moment to allow concelebrants to approach the altar for the Precious Blood. The deacon then assists the celebrant in giving Communion to other ministers (altar server(s), extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion), with the deacon administering the chalice.

The deacon does not serve Communion to the concelebrants.

The deacon then assists in distributing Communion to the assembly. If extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion are helping to distribute Communion, the deacon, as an ordinary minister of Holy Communion, may serve Communion under either kind.

Since priests and deacons are ordinary ministers, they must **not** sit and allow an extraordinary minister to distribute Communion in their place, unless they are infirm and unable to distribute.

After Communion has been distributed, the deacon returns to the altar and collects any remaining consecrated Hosts. This consolidation should be done over a corporal, if possible. All consecrated Hosts are placed in a ciborium and returned to the tabernacle before the deacon continues with the purification of the sacred vessels. The deacon **genuflects** just before closing the tabernacle door. (*GIRM* n. 183)

The deacon carries the chalice and vessels to the credence table where he may purify them in the usual way.

The paten and main chalice may be purified at the altar. Another option is to cover the vessels with a purificator and leave them on a corporal on the credence table to be purified after Mass by the priest, deacon, or an instituted acolyte. (*GIRM* n. 279)

The corporal should be folded carefully so that any possible particles will not be shaken onto the altar or floor. It should not be left on the altar from one Mass to another.

4. Concluding Rite and Recessional: (*GIRM* nn.184-186) Once the prayer after Communion has been said, the deacon makes brief announcements to the people, if indeed any need to be made, unless the priest prefers to do this himself. (*GIRM* n. 184)

If a solemn blessing is used, after the celebrant says, “The Lord be with you,” and the assembly responds, the deacon chants or says, “Bow down for the blessing.”

After the blessing, the deacon dismisses the people. The only formulas to be used are: “Go forth, the Mass is ended” or “Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life” or “Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord” or “Go in peace”.

The deacon reverences (kisses) the altar with the celebrant and leaves on the right side of the celebrant.

The Book of the Gospels is not carried out in the procession at the end of Mass.

Notes: If incense is not used, eliminate those references; nothing else changes.

If a Book of the Gospels is not used, eliminate all references to the Book of the Gospels; the proper place in the entrance procession or recessional for the deacon is at the right side of the celebrant.

Mass with Two (or Three) Deacons (*GIRM* n. 109)

If there are several deacons present, nothing forbids their distributing among themselves and performing different parts of the same ministry or duty.

When there are **two deacons**, it is common that one would be the Deacon of the Word, thus proclaiming the Gospel and also praying the petitions of the Universal Prayer while the other deacon would be the Deacon of the Altar, assisting the celebrant at the chair and altar. This is only one of many ways the diaconal role may be divided at Mass.

The deacons should be seated at the immediate right and left of the celebrant. For reference in this material, the deacon who sits to the right of the celebrant will be referred to as the “Deacon of the Altar” the deacon who sits to the left of the celebrant will be referred to as the “Deacon of the Word.”

Other than the Passion, the proclaiming of the Gospel is one duty that cannot be shared among multiple deacons.

The variations from the Mass with One Deacon are as follows:

1. Introductory Rites: The Deacon of the Altar enters in procession at the right side of the celebrant. The Deacon of the Word carries the Book of Gospels and enters in front of other vested deacons and the celebrant (and concelebrants).

If incense is used, the Deacon of the Altar will assist the celebrant.

If an altar server is not present, the Deacon of the Word may assist the celebrant with the Roman Missal for the opening prayer. Otherwise, he continues to stand on the left side of the celebrant.

2. Liturgy of the Word: The proclamation of the Gospel is done by the Deacon of the Word.

After the introduction by the priest, it is the Deacon of the Word who normally announces the intentions of the Universal Prayer.

3. Liturgy of the Eucharist: The Deacon of the Altar prepares the altar. He may be assisted by an altar server or by the Deacon of the Word.

The Deacon of the Altar stands to the right and slightly behind the celebrant.

The Deacon of the Word may assist by turning pages in the Roman Missal if appropriate.

Notes: If a Book of the Gospels is not used:

For the entrance procession:

- Deacon of the Altar to the right of the Celebrant.
- Deacon of the Word to the left of the Celebrant.
- If the aisle is too narrow, they may precede the celebrant.

If three deacons are present, they are

- Deacon of the Gospel, Deacon of the Altar, and Deacon of the Word
- Deacon of the Gospel carries the Book of the Gospels in procession and the other two deacons enter and leave with the celebrant.
- In the entrance procession, the Deacon of the Gospel moves directly to the altar, places the Book of the Gospels in the middle of the altar, reverences the altar, and then proceeds to his chair.
- Deacon of the Gospel sits either to the immediate side of the Deacon of the Altar or to the immediate side of the Deacon of the Word. If this is not possible due to space limitations, he should sit in some other appropriate place in the sanctuary.
- The Deacon of the Gospel proclaims the Gospel and the Deacon of the Word announces the intentions of the Universal Prayer.
- The Deacon of the Gospel does nothing else during the liturgy until the Recessional, except the distribution of Communion.

Chapter Five: Deacons and Other Liturgies and Rites

The Sacrament of Baptism

The deacon may solemnly baptize infants with all the rites and ceremonies of the *Rite of Baptism for Children*. The deacon does not baptize adults (over the age of reason [7 y/o] or receive them into the Church through reception of full communion. This is because the sacrament of confirmation should be conferred at the same time and deacons do not administer this sacrament.

For the Rite of Baptism outside of Mass, the deacon shall be vested in alb, cincture, and stole and, if desired, a cope. A dalmatic is not appropriate.

Together with the parish priest, it is also the duty of the deacon (following local parish processes), to assist families in the preparation for the baptism of their children and to help them in the task of Christian formation that they have undertaken.

The deacon, through visitation of parents of children to be baptized and catechetical preparation of parents, may assist the parish priest in determining the readiness of parents to accept the responsibilities of raising their children as Christians. If parents are not yet ready to profess their own faith and/or take on the responsibility of Christian education for their children, the parish priest, keeping in mind what ever regulations have been laid down by the conference of bishops and the policies of the diocese, may determine a longer interval between birth and baptism. The deacon could assist in this task.

The deacon should be thoroughly familiar with the rite so that he may solemnly baptize infants in his parish, keeping in mind the adaptations that the minister of this Sacrament may make according to the norms of the ritual.

For a deacon to perform a baptism outside of his own parish and within the diocese, he must have the permission (written or verbal) of the pastor of the parish in which the baptism is to take place. Deacons may baptize in danger of death.

The Sacrament of Matrimony

To prepare couples for the Sacrament of Matrimony the deacon must follow the policies of our diocese. The deacon may assist at and solemnly bless marriages in the name of the Church. Faculties of the diocese or delegation from the proper pastor is required, as well as the authorization of the civil authorities to assist at marriages. **For a deacon to witness a marriage outside of his own parish, he must have the written delegation of the pastor of the parish in which the marriage is to take place.**

As the Church's witness of the sacrament, the deacon follows the norms and liturgical requirements set down by the *Roman Ritual: The Rite of Marriage*, in the general introduction and in the various chapters. The deacon must also follow diocesan and parish policies and practices regarding the Rite of Marriage.

1. For the Rite of Marriage outside Mass, the deacon shall be vested in alb and stole and, if desired, a cope. A dalmatic is not appropriate.
2. When the marriage ceremony is witnessed outside the context of Mass, the deacon may act as celebrant of the ceremony. He should then fulfill all the offices appropriate to the celebrant. Most appropriately, the

ministries of lector and cantor should be taken by someone else.

3. At a Nuptial Mass, the deacon fulfills his proper role for Eucharist celebrations. Although it should be the exception rather than the rule during Mass, the deacon may also serve as celebrant of the Marriage Ceremony if he is to receive the consent of the couple. The nuptial blessing, however, is given by the priest. Please refer to the *Rite of Marriage*.

Besides the responsibility entrusted to him in the celebration of the Rite of Marriage, the deacon should see to it, if it is his task in the community, that the couple is properly prepared before the celebration through instruction and fulfillment of the canonical requirements established by the Code of Canon Law and the Diocesan Marriage Policy including the registration of the marriage. He should also assist the couple in the choice of texts, prayers, and music for the celebration.

The Sacrament of Confirmation

It is common practice for deacons to be asked to assist at Confirmations with the bishop or his delegate. The ordinary minister of Confirmation is the bishop, but he may delegate a pastor or associate to confer the sacrament (canon 884). For this section, it is assumed the bishop will be the celebrant. If the bishop is not the celebrant, the rite proceeds as outlined here but the particulars relating to the bishop (i.e. miter, crozier, etc.) will be ignored.

The rite as presented in the *Order of Confirmation* will be followed exactly.

The Mass text will normally be the proper ritual Mass for Confirmation found in the *Roman Missal*, with the preface of the Holy Spirit, using red or white vestments. However, on the Sundays of Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter, and other solemnities, the Mass is that of the day with appropriate coloured vestments.”

Preparations:

The deacon should help to ensure that the following is prepared before the Confirmation liturgy. Everything normally needed for Mass with sufficient chalices for distribution of Communion under both kinds.

A lemon sliced in half, plus a large dry bowl with a pitcher of clean water, and a large towel. This must be separate from the bowl and pitcher used for the washing of the celebrant’s hands during the Preparation of the Gifts.

Chrism (from the parish), a small wide-mouth bowl for containing the chrism during the anointing, and a hand towel.

Servers in place to assist with the miter, crozier, and the book.

Note: Whenever the bishop uses the book the deacon should ensure that a server is designated to hold the book. The bishop should not hold the book himself.

The Liturgy:

The Liturgy of the Word is celebrated as usual with the deacon proclaiming the Gospel.

Immediately after the Gospel, the pastor presents the candidates to the bishop. The candidates rise and the bishop may address them. The pastor will instruct them when to be seated.

The bishop (with miter) will address the candidates and the assembly in the homily.

Following the homily, the bishop leads the candidates in the renewal of the Baptismal Promises and Profession of Faith from the book.

Then the bishop (without miter) moves to the center of the sanctuary and invites the priests to join him.

The bishop, reading from the book (held by a server or a deacon) calls down the power of the Holy Spirit. He and the priests impose hands over those to be confirmed.

Following the imposition of hands is the anointing. For the anointing, the bishop wears the miter and carries the crozier. The deacon should stand at his right with the chrism unless the pastor chooses to do so. He should have a hand towel draped over his arm so the bishop can wipe the excess oil from his hand.

Note: Other celebrants may request that the deacon stand to his right with the chrism.

After the anointing, the bishop, without crozier, will wash his hands with the lemon and water that was

prepared before the liturgy. Two servers should bring this to him at the presider's chair.

The Creed is not said.

The book is brought to the bishop and his miter is taken from him. The bishop prays the introduction to the Universal Prayer. It is appropriate that one or two candidates make the intercessions for the Universal Prayer. The bishop concludes with the prayer from the book. After the Universal Prayer, the bishop receives his miter back.

The bishop, with miter, and the other priest concelebrants are seated.

The Liturgy of the Eucharist proceeds as normal with the deacons performing their usual roles.

The Ministry of The Word

The deacon's most solemn ministry of the Word is that of proclaiming the Gospel and preaching at the liturgy. However, as one deputized to bring the Good News, he can extend this ministry in almost unlimited ways. At many gatherings, and at formal and informal meetings, he can communicate a word of joy and hope. Adult education and the education of young people can become a part of his concern. What is appropriate to the Office of Deacon is simply that he proclaims and witnesses God's Word in all his service, ministries, and actions.

The ministry of homiletic preaching for deacons (and priests) depends on faculties given by the bishop and the particular diocesan norms. A deacon may preach at any celebration of the Eucharist or any other celebration of a sacrament in which he is not the presiding minister (provided that the presiding minister assents to this).

The deacon may preach on the following occasions when he is the minister of a liturgical rite or a prayer service:

1. The baptism of infants, and in some of the Rites of Christian Initiation of Adults.
2. The Sacrament of Matrimony.
3. The liturgy of Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.
4. At a vigil service, or church service of Christian burial and in a cemetery service.
5. At the celebration of morning or evening prayer or other rites of the Liturgy of the Hours.
6. At a Service of the Word according to diocesan guidelines.
7. At a celebration of the Communion Service at nursing homes, hospitals, prisons and other approved locations.
8. During the visitation of the sick and the sacrament of Viaticum.

A deacon may also preach for retreats, days of recollection, missions, novenas etc. as well as at ecumenical gatherings or services.

The Liturgy of The Hours

The celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours, particularly morning and evening prayer, should increasingly be introduced into the life of parish communities, especially during Advent, Lent, Easter, and on the great feasts. In collaboration with their pastors, deacons may preside at the Liturgy of the Hours and lead the people in daily prayer according to the *General Instruction on the Liturgy of the Hours* (GILH). As clergy who are mandated to pray Lauds and Vespers, deacons are called in a particular way to preside at public celebrations of the Liturgy of the Hours.

The National Directory states, “Whenever possible, [deacons]...should lead these prayers with the community to whom they have been assigned to minister.”

The proper vesture for a deacon is a stole over the alb and cincture; on greater solemnities, he may also wear a dalmatic. The deacon should lead the prayer from his chair (**not** the priest-celebrant chair). As the presider, he should greet the people, recite the introductory verse, recite the antiphon before each psalm, begin the Lord’s Prayer, say the concluding prayer, bless and dismiss the people.

Before beginning the celebration, the deacon should divide the assembly into two halves (A and B) so the psalms can be prayed antiphonally. He may also select a lector for the reading and someone to lead the intercessions.

The assembly stands. The deacon simply starts at the chair or comes into the sanctuary and reverences the altar, then proceeds to the chair and, standing, opens the liturgy by making the Sign of the Cross and saying the introductory verse: “God come to my assistance.” After the people’s response, “Lord make haste...” the deacon leads the doxology, “Glory to the Father...”

The hymn sets the tone for the hour or the feast day. When the hours are celebrated publicly, it is a good practice to include a sung hymn, although the hymn can be chanted or read, too. Musical accompaniment adds solemnity to the prayer and helps the faithful enter into the celebration. After the hymn, all are seated.

The Psalmody follows along with the associated antiphons. For vespers, this consists of two psalms and a New Testament canticle, each with their corresponding antiphon. The deacon says (or chants) the first antiphon and then leads side “A” in the first strophe. Side “B” follows with the second strophe and so forth. The doxology is recited and all repeat the antiphon. A short period of silence should follow and then the deacon may recite the optional psalm prayer.

Repeat this same process for the second antiphon and psalm and then the third antiphon and the canticle.

The reading follows the psalmody and all continue to remain seated. The lector should move to the ambo and proclaim the appropriate scripture reading.

Note that the reading is **not introduced** as it is at Mass (A reading from...”), **nor is it concluded** with the phrase “The Word of the Lord.” It is simply proclaimed and followed by a period of silence.

The deacon may offer a short homily.

After the homily, the deacon (or the reader) leads the responsory by reciting the first line. The assembly responds with the appropriate response. Note that the “Glory to the Father...” is not

followed with the rest of the doxology but with the first response.

After the responsory, all stand and the deacon says (or chants) the antiphon. All recite together the Magnificat (Canticle of Mary), the doxology, and repeat the canticle antiphon. As they begin the Canticle, all make the Sign of the Cross.

All remain standing for the intercessions. These may be prayed antiphonally with the deacon or assigned leader leading the first part of each intercession and the assembly reciting the second part. Or, the intercessions may be prayed as at Mass with the deacon stating the entire intention and the assembly responding with the appropriate response. The deacon may invite the assembly to offer their own intercessions. For Vespers, the final intention is always for the dead.

The intercessions lead into the Lord's Prayer which is led by the deacon. He should make a brief introduction to prayer, such as, "Now let us pray as Christ the Lord has taught us. Our Father...". The concluding "Amen" is **not** spoken.

The deacon says the concluding prayer immediately after the Our Father without any introduction.

Finally, the Hour ends with the Sign of the Cross as the deacon gives the blessing and dismissal as is done at Mass: "The Lord be with you...May Almighty God bless you...Go in peace."

Funeral Rites

The deacon may be asked to preside at vigil services, funerals and burial services. Since, in the Canadian custom, the funeral usually takes place in three stages (at the funeral home, at the church, and at the cemetery), it is proper that the deacon rightly fulfills his office at each stage. The deacon may assist the family in making the proper preparations for the funeral (selection of readings, music, etc.)

The deacon may conduct a vigil ceremony using the Vigil Service in the *Order of Christian Funerals*. This may be held at the funeral home or other appropriate location. At the request of the family, other traditional prayers such as the Rosary may be incorporated into this vigil service.

Eulogies, if requested by the family, are appropriate at the vigil service rather than the funeral.

If a deacon is asked by a family or funeral home to conduct a vigil or funeral service outside the parish church, efforts should be made to inform the proper pastor of the death of his parishioner.

The deacon may be asked to conduct a Funeral Liturgy Outside of Mass using the rite found in the *Order of Christian Funerals*. However, most funerals are conducted within the Mass. At the Mass, the deacon fulfills his proper role for the Eucharistic Liturgy.

Typically, the deacon accompanies the priest to the casket for the introductory rite and assists him with the holy water and the pall.

Following the Prayer After Communion, the deacon stands next to the priest for the final commendation.

If the brief litany or invocations are used, the deacon may offer the petitions.

The deacon may also receive the body at the door of the church and conduct the final commendation if the presider so desires.

The proper procedure for incensing the casket is as follows: facing the casket, they process down the right side of the casket to the back, stop and face the altar and bow; incense, and then bow again; resume the procession up the other side of the casket, and return to the sanctuary.

The deacon may conduct committal services at the cemetery, using the *Order of Christian Funerals*.

Please consult the *Order of Christian Funerals* for all rituals and prayers.

Since cremation is becoming more common, it is important to point out that the ashes must be treated with great respect. When any of the Funeral Rites are celebrated in the case of cremation, prayers that do not make reference to the honouring or burying of the body of the deceased should be chosen instead of those that have these themes. Texts for the Sprinkling with Holy Water, Dismissal, and Committal that are to be used are found in the *Order of Christian Funerals: Supplement for Celebrations with Cremated Remains* (2018).

The Ministry to The Sick

The deacon has always been closely associated with the pastoral care of the sick, the aged, and the dying. While he may not administer the Sacrament of Anointing, the deacon is Minister of Communion to the sick and of Viaticum, the Sacrament of the dying. Thus, the deacon should be particularly sensitive to the needs and wishes of the sick in the parish: in private homes, in nursing homes, and in hospitals. He should work closely with pastors, chaplains and extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion so that Holy Communion may be brought frequently to the sick, weekly, even daily, if this ministry has been entrusted to him. As an ordinary Minister of Communion, the deacon may be asked to assist in the training of the extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion. In his ministry of communion to the sick, the deacon may remove the Eucharist from the tabernacle to be put into the pyx during Mass (after communion) or he may remove the Eucharist later, after the Mass.

Visiting the Sick

1. When visiting the sick, the deacon wears the vesture appropriate to the time and place. For communal services such as at nursing homes, an alb, cincture, and stole are proper. For hospitals and private homes, appropriate attire may be a suit, tie, and diaconal cross or a roman collar.
2. It is appropriate that a purificator, crucifix, and candles (electric, if necessary) are in place for the visitation of the sick.
3. The pyx must be purified using clean water. Water and particles must be consumed immediately and the pyx wiped clean with a purificator. The purificator must be returned to the church for proper laundering.
4. Whenever possible Hosts that remained unconsumed should be returned to the tabernacle. As an ordinary minister of Holy Communion, the deacon may consume those leftover if necessary.

Only the bishop or priest is the celebrant of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. The ordinary ministers of Viaticum are the pastor and his assistants, the priest who cares for the sick in hospitals, and the superior of the clerical religious houses. If no priest is available, Viaticum may be brought to the sick by a deacon. In this case, a deacon follows the rite prescribed in the *Pastoral Care of the Sick*.

Eucharistic Exposition with Benediction

The ordinary minister for the exposition of the Eucharist is a priest or deacon.

The deacon should vest in an alb and a white stole.

When the deacon is the celebrant of the Eucharistic Exposition, the following is observed:

When the exposition takes place with the monstrance, the deacon should wear a white cope. In the case of exposition with the ciborium, the cope may be omitted. In either case, the humeral veil should be worn to give the blessing at the end of adoration.

- The deacon puts on the humeral veil and brings the sacrament from the place of reservation. He may be accompanied by servers or by the faithful with lighted candles if a procession is appropriate.
- A Eucharistic Hymn is sung for the entrance.
- The deacon exposes the Blessed Sacrament; he places the Luna containing the Blessed Sacrament into the monstrance, which is then placed in a position to be seen by the faithful.
- The deacon kneels before the monstrance and incenses the Blessed Sacrament.
- A period of Adoration follows with readings, hymns, psalms, silence, etc.
- A Eucharistic Hymn is sung.
- The deacon kneels before the monstrance and incenses the Blessed Sacrament.
- The deacon rises, says or sings the prayer taken from *Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist Outside Mass* no. 98.
- The deacon, after the prayer, puts on the humeral veil, genuflects, and takes the monstrance or ciborium. In silence, he makes the Sign of the Cross over the people with the monstrance or ciborium and replaces it upon the altar.
- The deacon leads the assembly in reciting the Divine Praises.
- The deacon replaces the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle. and genuflects.
- The assembly may sing or say an acclamation or Eucharist hymn.
- The deacon leaves the sanctuary.

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)

Pre-Catechumenate: “During the period of the pre-catechumenate, deacons, together with priests and catechists, suitably explain the Gospel to the candidates.”³⁰ Deacons may be involved in this period by conducting small discussion groups on the Gospel, and in other ways, with those who are seeking entrance into the church. Deacons should come to know the candidates, helping them to understand the nature of Christian faith and conversion, and helping them in the ways of prayer.

The Catechumenate: “The deacon may work closely with priests and catechists during the extended catechumenate to provide a ‘fitting formation’... given in stages and presented integrally, accommodated to the liturgical year and enriched by celebrations of the Word. He may provide the catechumens with a suitable knowledge of dogmas and precepts and also offer an intimate understanding of the mystery of salvation in which they desire to share.” Besides assisting in and leading sessions in catechesis, the deacon may also preside at liturgical celebrations of the Word for the catechumens. He may also exercise his liturgical functions in the catechumenal rites, such as the minor exorcisms and blessings of the catechumens. The role of the deacon in the catechumenate is both catechetical and liturgical.

Period of Purification and Enlightenment (Lent): During this period of proximate preparation for the sacraments of initiation, the deacon may share in the role of discerning the readiness of the catechumens for baptism together with the priests, catechists, sponsors and godparents. The deacon may present the catechumens to the community and the bishop or pastor for election on the first Sunday of Lent, and may lead the intercessions and litanies on the third, fourth and fifth Sundays of Lent (Scrutinies), and may actually celebrate the exorcisms, unless it is otherwise determined.

Sacraments of Initiation (Paschal Vigil): The deacon assists the bishop or priest in all the rites of initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist) during the Paschal Vigil.

Post-Baptismal Catechesis (Mystagogia): After the initiation of the neophytes, the deacon with the priests may lead them with the RCIA team to a deeper understanding and experience of the mysteries of Christianity in which they now have a share. This occurs throughout a true catechesis of enlightenment and a special celebration of the Eucharist.

The deacon may also exercise his catechetical and liturgical ministries in the reception of baptized Christians into full Communion with the Catholic Church; in the preparation of uncatechized adults for confirmation and the Eucharist; and in the rites of Initiation of Children of catechetical age (see appropriate chapters of the RCIA).

Chapter Six: Deacons' Roles in Holy Week

During the ceremonies of Holy Week, the deacon is called upon to exercise his ministry in various ways. The following is a list of appropriate functions of the deacon on each of the major days of Holy Week. The actual role(s) of the deacon(s) will depend upon parish practice and the pastor's preference.

1) Passion (Palm) Sunday

a) Procession

- i) The deacon proclaims the Gospel of the entry into Jerusalem found in the Proper of the Day in the Roman Missal.
- ii) He initiates the procession, saying, *"Dear brethren...let us go forth in peace."*
- iii) He assists in the incensation of the altar at the end of the procession.
- iv) He helps the celebrant change from the cope (if used) to the chasuble.

b) Mass

- i) The Deacon of the Word proclaims the Passion. It is appropriate for the celebrant to be involved in the reading of the Passion; he then should take the part of Christ. The Passion may be divided into various parts. If there are no priests or deacons available for these parts, the lay faithful may proclaim these parts.
- ii) There is no greeting or sign of the cross before the Passion; no candles or incense are used.
- iii) When the lay faithful are participating in the reading, only the deacon asks for the blessing before the Passion.
- iv) The celebrant or deacon may give a brief homily after the Passion.
- v) The deacon reads the intentions of the Universal Prayer.
- vi) The remainder of the Mass is as usual.
- vii) If the Solemn Blessing is used, the deacon chants or says, *"Bow down ..."*

2) Holy Thursday

a) Liturgy of the Word

- i) The deacon reads the Gospel as usual.

b) Washing of the Feet

- i) If the washing of the feet takes place, the deacon assists the celebrant in removing the chasuble (if necessary) and may help the celebrant wash and dry the feet.

c) Liturgy of the Eucharist

- i) As usual through Communion
- ii) The deacon may receive the Eucharist from the priest for the homebound sick if it is to be brought to them that same day.

d) Transfer of the Eucharist:

- i) The deacon prepares the ciborium on the altar after Communion
- ii) He assists in the incensation of the Eucharist before the procession.
- iii) He assists the celebrant with the humeral veil and gives him the ciborium.
- iv) He walks next to the celebrant during the procession.
- v) He assists with the incensation of the Eucharist at the place of repose.
- vi) He helps with the stripping of the altar after the procession at an appropriate time.

3) Good Friday

a) The deacon, vested in red stole and dalmatic prostrates (or kneels) along with the celebrant. He proclaims the Passion as on Palm Sunday and may give a brief homily after the Passion.

b) Solemn Intercessions

- i) The deacon chants or says the invitatory (first part) of each of the intercessions.
- ii) He may invite the people to kneel and to stand for the intercessions.

c) Adoration of the Holy Cross

i) First Form:

- (1) The deacon may bring the cross to the celebrant before the altar.
- (2) He assists him in unveiling the cross as the celebrant sings, "*Behold the wood of the cross...*" If invited by the celebrant, the deacon may assist in the singing.
- (3) He may hold the cross for adoration.

ii) Second Form:

- (1) The priest or deacon carries the uncovered cross in procession from the rear of the Church and makes three stops and chants: "*Behold the wood of the cross...*"
- (2) He places the cross at the entrance to the sanctuary and adores it after the celebrant.

d) Holy Communion

- i) The deacon, wearing the humeral veil, brings the ciborium from the place of reposition to the altar and uncovers it.
- ii) He receives Communion from the celebrant.
- iii) He helps in the distribution of Communion.
- iv) After Communion, he returns the ciborium to the place of private reservation.

4) Holy Saturday

a) Light Service

- i) The deacon may assist in the preparation of the new fire and the candle.
- ii) He may help light the candle.
- iii) Carrying the candle, he leads the procession and sings three times: "*The Light of Christ*" or "*Lumen Christi*".
- iv) He assists the celebrant with incense.
- v) He asks for and receives the blessing before the Exultet.
- vi) He incenses the Book and Paschal Candle.
- vii) He chants the *Exultet*.

This is the proper function of the deacon. If the deacon's voice is not adequate, a priest or cantor may sing the *Exultet*. It is not a choir hymn.

b) Liturgy of the Word

- i) The deacon assists with the incense before the Gospel.
- ii) He proclaims the Gospel.
- iii) He may give the homily.

c) Liturgy of Baptism and Confirmation

- v) The deacon may sing the Litany if there are no cantors.
- vi) He may help lower the candle into the water (if this is done).
- vii) He assists the celebrant in all aspects related to baptism.

- viii) He assists the celebrant during the anointing of those to be confirmed.
- ix) He assists in sprinkling the people with the baptismal water.
- x) He reads the intentions of the Universal Prayer.

d) Liturgy of the Eucharist

- i) The deacon's role is as usual.
- ii) He chants or says the dismissal with its double "*Alleluia*".

Chapter Seven: Deacon Vesting Prayers before Serving at Mass

Washing of **hands**, (asking for the grace of purity)

Give virtue, O Lord, to my hands, that every stain may be wiped away, that I may be enabled to serve you without defilement of mind or body.

The **amice**, a rectangular piece of white cloth, is the helmet of salvation and a sign of resistance against temptation. The deacon usually kisses it and passes it over his head before putting it across his shoulders and tying it around the waist.

Place, O Lord, on my head the helmet of salvation, that I may overcome the assaults of the evil one.

The **alb**, a white linen tunic that covers the deacon's whole body, signifies perfect integrity.

Purify me, O Lord, from all stain and cleanse my heart that, washed in the blood of the Lamb, I may enjoy eternal delights.

The **cincture**, a cord that fastens the alb at the waist stands for purity.

Gird me, O Lord, with the cincture of purity, and quench in my heart the fire of concupiscence, that the virtue of continence and chastity may remain in me.

The **stole**, the long band that fits on the left shoulder of the deacon is a symbol of immortality and a sign of the dignity of the deacon in unity with the bishop/priest at the service of the altar.

Restore to me, O Lord, the state of immortality which was lost to me by my first parents and although I am unworthy to approach your sacred mysteries, grant me nevertheless eternal joy.

The **dalmatic**, the outermost vestment worn by the deacon at Mass is the emblem of charity, which makes the yoke of Christ light and agreeable.

O Lord, who said, "My yoke is easy and my burden light," grant that I may carry it so as to obtain your grace. Amen.

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Glossary of Common Liturgical Terms

Ablution	Liturgical washing with water. The ritual washing of the hands of the celebrant at Mass. The cleansing of the chalice used during Mass; and the washing of the feet in the Holy Thursday ceremony.
Ablution Bowl	Small bowl for the rinsing of the fingers and thumbs of those who distribute Communion
Acolyte	An instituted ministry to which an individual is specifically appointed by the bishop to assist the deacon and to minister to the priest. Deacon candidates and seminarians are instituted acolytes as one step towards ordination.
Alb	A long, white, dress-like vestment worn by acolytes, deacons and priests (occasionally others such as altar servers)
Altar	An elevated surface, tabular in form, on which the sacrifice of the Mass is offered. One or more relics of martyrs are commonly set into the altar.
Altar Bell	A small bell or set of chimes. Although no longer prescribed by the rubrics, it is an approved practice to ring the altar bells at the Epiclesis and the Elevation of the Host and the Chalice.
Altar Server	Usually, a pre-teen boy or girl (although teens and adults are included) who serve the priest at Mass and other liturgies. They help to prepare for Mass, assist the priest with vestments, light candles, carry books, ring bells, say prayers, sing and listen. They generally vest in an alb with a cincture, or surplis and cassock.
Ambo	Podium (lectern) from which the Gospel is proclaimed. Usually fixed and suitably crafted.
Amice	A short, rectangular piece of white linen, worn beneath the alb to cover the clerics' street clothes and shoulders. It is worn whenever the alb does not completely cover the ordinary clothing at the neck (<i>GIRM</i> n. 297).
Aspergillum	A perforated metal ball or tube on a handle that holds holy water used by the priest or deacon to sprinkle articles to be blessed. It is also called a holy water sprinkler. It is often kept in a small metal bucket with a handle that holds holy water.
Ambry	A secure, box-like container usually located in the sacristy or baptistery in which the Holy Oils are stored.
Bishop	A successor of the Apostles who has received the fullness of Christ's priesthood.
Boat	A small metal container that holds the incense to be put into the thurible. It is shaped like a boat, a symbol of the church, the boat of St. Peter.

Book of the Gospels	The Book of the Gospels ranks first among the sacred objects, after the chalice and paten. Because it is a visible sign of Jesus Christ the Word of God, it should be handsomely bound or kept within richly worked covers. It is carried in procession and then enthroned at the center of the altar during the Liturgy of the Word.
Cantor	Chief (talented) singer of an ecclesiastical choir.
Cassock	A long outer garment worn by clerics and altar servers. It is usually black, but for servers red or white cassocks may be worn on special feasts
Cathedral Deacon	A deacon appointed by the bishop who is assigned to accompany and assist the bishop for celebrations in local parishes and other events.
Censer	See Thurible
Chalice	The cup-shaped vessel or goblet used at Mass to contain the Precious Blood of Christ. A cross may be placed on the base of the chalice to denote the side from which to celebrant drinks, thus simplifying the ablutions.
Chalice Veil	A covering for the chalice used at Mass. It matches the colour of the vestments of the day.
Chasuble	A sleeveless outer vestment, slipped over the head and hanging down from the shoulders and covers the stole and the alb. It is the proper Mass vestment of the priest and its colour varies according to the feast or liturgical season.
Ciborium	A cup-like vessel or a bowl with a lid. It contains the Hosts that will be used for Holy Communion. It is also used to reserve the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle.
Cincture	A long cord worn by altar servers, acolytes, deacons, and priests. It is used for fastening albs at the waist. It holds a loose-fitting type of alb in place and may be used to adjust it to a proper length.
Collect	During the sacrifice of the Mass, the last part of the Introductory Rites is a prayer called the Collect. It has also been called the Opening Prayer
Commentator	This person makes announcements and helps the congregation follow the order of the Mass. The lector or deacon can fill this role.
Communion Paten	A dish-shaped device with a handle used by altar servers during Holy Communion to catch any fragments of the Precious Body or to catch the Consecrated Host should it be dropped.
Concelebrant	Priest who celebrates Mass with the priest celebrant.
Cope	A cape-like vestment that is put over the shoulders and hangs to the ankles. It is open in the front and clasped at the neck. The priest may wear this in a procession and deacons may wear it when presiding at Benediction.

Corporal	A white linen cloth on which are placed the vessels containing the bread and wine during Mass. It is folded into a small square about the size of the pall. Modern corporals are large enough to allow for extra cups and patens when the assembly is large.
Crozier	A symbol of pastoral office. It is usually in the shape of a shepherd's staff. It is brought to the sacristy unassembled in a carrying case. The bishop decides whether or not to use it, based on such factors as the level of solemnity and whether he is in his own diocese. Also called a "pastoral staff".
Crozier Bearer	Server who carries and tends the crozier for the bishop. Walks behind the bishop and the MC in the procession
Cruets	Containers (ordinarily glass for easy identification of the wine) used to hold the wine and water used at Mass. Separate pitcher and basin are used for the washing of the hands.
Dalmatic	The loose-fitting robe with open sides and wide sleeves worn by the deacon. Like the chasuble, it takes its colour from the liturgical feast or liturgical season.
Deacon	Ordained man in the Catholic Church called to a life of service. At Mass, the deacon usually proclaims the Gospel, sometimes preaches, prepares the gifts for Eucharist, helps distribute Holy Communion, and gives directions to the people among other duties. He may also preside at infant baptisms, the celebration of Eucharist in the absence of a priest, funeral vigils and other funeral rites, give certain blessings, and bring Holy Communion to the sick among other services to the people
Extinguisher	A tool used to light and extinguish candles. It is a pole-like instrument with a tube at one side on top with a retractable wick for lighting candles.
Finger Towel	A folded rectangular cloth resembling the purificator but much narrower. It is used by the priest to dry his fingers after they have been washed during the preparation of gifts. It is kept with the pitcher and basin used for the washing of the hands.
Holy Oils	Chrism Oil, Oil of the Sick and Oil of Catechumens
Humeral Veil	A long, narrow, shawl-like vestment used to grasp the Monstrance at Benediction and in processions where the Blessed Sacrament is carried.
Lectern	Podium (sometimes moveable) from which announcements are made at Mass or from which cantors and others lead music or responses
Lectionary	A book containing a three-year cycle of readings for Sundays and solemn feasts, a two-year weekday cycle, and a one-year cycle for the feasts of saints. It contains readings for a large variety of other Masses. It also contains responsorial psalms that follow the first readings for each Mass, along with Gospel or Alleluia verses to follow the second reading.

Lector	A person who is appointed to read the Word of God in the liturgical assembly. He/she proclaims the readings from Sacred Scripture, except the Gospel, in Mass, recites the psalms in the absence of a psalmist, and presents the intentions in the absence of a deacon.
Liturgist	A lay, religious or cleric who is trained in and assigned to organize the sacred liturgies of a parish or other church entity. The deacon and M. C. work closely with this person.
Lunette or Luna	A thin, circular receptacle, having a glass face that holds the Consecrated Host used at Benediction. It is made to fit into the monstrance for exposition.
Mass	The Sacrifice of the Eucharist is the central act of worship of the Catholic Church. As defined by the Council of Trent, in the Mass, “The same Christ who offered himself once in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross, is present and offered in an unbloody manner.”
Master of Ceremonies (M.C.)	The individual who is given the chief responsibility for directing a major and solemn liturgy (e.g. a stational Mass, confirmation, installation). Most often, this is a well-trained deacon or priest who works closely with musicians, altar servers and clergy, and especially with the sacristans before and after each celebration. In a complicated ceremony, such as an ordination, two or more M.C.’s are useful.
Miter	A traditional hat and mark of liturgical presidency. This liturgical headdress is worn by popes, cardinals, abbots and bishops of the Latin Rite. It is a folding two-pieced stiffened cap of silk or linen, often richly ornamented with gold embroidery. It has two fringed lappets that hang down the back. The colour of the miter matches the liturgical season or feast of the day.
Miter Bearer	Server who carries and tends the miter for the bishop.
Monstrance	A large, ornate vessel used to hold the Blessed Sacrament for Benediction and Eucharistic processions. By custom, a light veil or white cover is provided for the monstrance when it is not in use. In the tabernacle, the Host in a lunette is kept in a large pyx.
Oil of Catechumens	Oil used to bless those entering the Church through Baptism
Oil of Chrism	Mixture of oil and perfume used at the holiest of moments that define Christian life: baptism, confirmation, ordination, and the dedication of churches and altars. Blessed at the Chrism Mass.
Oil of the Sick	Oil used in the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick.
Ordo	An annual calendar containing abbreviated directions for each day’s Mass and Divine Office. Every diocese or group of dioceses has its own and almost all

	parishes have a copy in their sacristy.
Pall	This is a stiff square white cover that is placed over the paten when it is on the chalice and over the chalice during Mass to protect its contents. Also, the name of the cloth used to cover the casket during the funeral Mass.
Pallium	A narrow band of white wool that forms a circle around the neck with strips extending down the front and back. It is worn over and pinned to the chasuble. Each pallium is given by the Pope as a sign of the Metropolitan's union with Rome.
Paten	A saucer-like dish that usually matches the chalices with which it is used. It holds the bread that becomes the Body of Christ.
Pectoral Cross	The Cross that is worn by the Bishop. It may be the Ordinary Cross on a chain worn with a suit or house cassock or the Pontifical Cross that hangs on a green silk cord and is worn with the choir cassock and for liturgies.
Priest Celebrant	The priest who presides over the celebration of Mass, also known as the Celebrant. There may be more than one priest, called "concelebrant".
Purificator	A triple-folded rectangular white cloth used to cleanse the chalice and to dry the celebrant's fingers after the last ablution (washing). In setting up the chalice, the purificator is placed over the mouth of the chalice, beneath the paten.
Pyx	A pocket watch-shaped case in which Holy Communion used for sick calls is carried. Traditionally it is kept in a small bag or wallet called a burse, lined with silk, with a cord or chain so that it may be carried discretely around the neck. Also, a metal case in which a lunette is kept in the tabernacle.
Roman Missal	The book containing the prayers recited by the priest at the altar during Mass.
Sacrarium	A basin or sink, usually covered, with a drain pipe having no joints or elbows that leads directly to the earth. This allows the reverent disposal of baptism water, water used in purifications, holy oils from a previous year, or ashes made from the burning of liturgical items (e.g. cotton from holy oil stocks).
Stational Mass	A Mass presided over by the bishop.
Stole	A long scarf-type of vestment, which is the mark of the office a deacon or priest. A deacon wears it over his left shoulder and fastens at his right side like a sash. A priest wears it around his neck, letting it hang down in front. Priests wear the stole under their chasuble. Deacons always wear the stole over the alb and never outside of the dalmatic or over street clothes.
Surplice	A wide-sleeved garment, slipped over the head, covering the shoulders and coming down below the hips. It is worn over the cassock for services in which the alb is not necessary and by an MC when serving the bishop.
Thurible	The metal container extended from a chain (or chains) in which charcoal and incense are burned for liturgical ceremonies. It is sometimes called a censer.

Thurifer	The person who carries the thurible (censer).
Universal Prayer	Formerly called the General Intercessions or Prayer of the Faithful.
Veil	See Humeral Veil, White Veil, Vimpa.
Zucchetto	A skull cap worn by the bishop at almost all liturgies. It began as a practical covering worn by all tonsured clerics over their bald spot.