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LITURGICAL MINISTRY OF THE DEACON

The liturgical role of the Deacon must always be understood within the hierarchy of orders. The Deacon is not a substitute for priests when they are not available; they have a unique liturgical role identified in the introduction to the liturgical rites and in the rubrics within them.

Deacons, in hierarchal communion with the bishop and priests, serve in the sanctification of the Christian community. In the Eucharistic Sacrifice, the Deacon does not celebrate the mystery; rather, he effectively represents on the one hand, the people of God and specifically, he helps them to unite their lives to the offering of Christ; while on the other, in the name of Christ himself, he helps the Church to participate in the fruits of that sacrifice. While exercising his liturgical ministries, the Deacon is to observe faithfully the rubrics of the liturgical books without adding, omitting or changing of his own volition what they require. (ND 83)

Deacons shall observe devoutly the liturgical norms proper to the sacred mysteries so as to bring the faithful to a conscious participation in the liturgy, to fortify their faith, give worship to God and sanctify the Church. (DMLPD 29) Therefore, knowledge and adherence to the instructions and rubrics of the Universal Church and the liturgical norms issued by the diocesan Bishop through the diocesan offices are the hallmark of the deacon's liturgical ministry.

LITURGICAL PRESENCE OF THE DEACON

The liturgical presence of the Deacon will be different at celebrations where someone else presides and the Deacon assists the Priest, as opposed to the occasions when the Deacon presides.

Whenever there is a Priest or Bishop present at a liturgical celebration, they preside, 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 Priest, he assists. All liturgical options that are available for the diaconal role during the liturgy are at the option of the Priest not the one who assists. (i.e., chanting the penitential tropes or intercession should be discussed with the Priest before the celebration and not done during the celebration without his knowledge.) Deciding which options to use is a function of presiding.

At those liturgical celebrations where the Deacon is the presider, he takes on a different role. He is no longer one who assists, but the one who leads those assembled in prayer. Now his focus is on those assembled and God when God is addressed in prayer, always keeping in mind that his is a role of service, thus maintaining a humble attitude.

LITURGICAL VESTURE FOR DEACONS

1. An alb worn by deacons are to be white (or cream) in color not wheat colored or gray. The alb should tend to be simple and not ornate nor have excessively full sleeves.
2. A deacon stole is worn over the left shoulder, drawn across the chest, and fastened at the right side.
3. A Dalmatic is worn over the stole (the stole is never omitted). The Dalmatic is the normal vestment of the deacon; it should not be routinely omitted (GIRM 338, RS 125).
4. When the deacon presides at a funeral vigil or committal service, alb and white stole are proper, however local custom may call for regular business attire.
5. When the deacon presides at Benediction or the Sacraments of Matrimony and Baptism, the alb, white stole and cope are proper vesture.
6. At present, clerical attire at *liturgical functions* is not worn by permanent deacons of the Diocese of Columbus so as not to confuse the faithful. However, within a liturgical function, deacons should wear the cassock, collar, and surplice when serving in the role of Master of Ceremonies, or as chaplain with a Bishop who is presiding in choir. Please refer to Guideline #3004.0 regarding the pastoral provisions for attire and title.

PLACE OF VESTED DEACONS AT LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS

1. The General Instruction of the *Roman Missal* provides guidelines on the manner in which a Deacon exercises his liturgical function at the Eucharist (see GIRM nos. 171-186). As these norms are provided for those deacons who are to exercise the diaconal ministry within the Eucharist, no directives are provided for those cases when other deacons might be present at the Eucharist, but not called upon to function in a ministerial role.

In spite of some historical precedent, it is recommended that normally those deacons who are present, but not called upon to function in the celebration, should not vest or occupy a specific place in the liturgy. This will prevent the development of a practice that might easily appear to be an imitation of concelebrating. It is clear, in any case, that on those given occasions when the Order of Deacons is present and vested at a Eucharist, they remain in their assigned place during the liturgy of the Eucharist and in no way intermingle with the celebrating priests. To do so would evidence a misunderstanding of the diaconal role and a confusion of ministries among the ordained. Such a practice is never to be allowed.

(BCL Newsletter Volume XVII October P. 39 1981)

2. A Clarification in the October 1981 issue of the *Newsletter* (p. 39), it was noted that when deacons are present for, but are not called upon to function in the celebration of the Eucharist, they normally should not vest or occupy a specific place in the liturgy. As a clarification to that recommendation, it should be noted that there are times when the deacons of a diocese stand as an order, in which case they would vest and be seated together in a specific place. The primary instance when this would be true is at the celebration of the ordination of another deacon. Deacons may function as an order at the Mass of Christian Burial of a member of the diaconal order. Even in these cases, however, as was the principal point being made in the earlier note, the deacons should remain in their assigned place during the liturgy of the Eucharist to avoid any confusion of ministries between them and the priests who may be concelebrating the liturgy.

(BCL Newsletter Volume XVIII July P. 79 1982)

3. Out of common courtesy, the Deacon should always call the Pastor/Priest well in advance to inform him of his desire to assist or participate as a vested minister prior to the specific Eucharistic celebration (i.e., funeral, wedding, parish celebration, diocesan function, etc.), and should receive confirmation from the pastor that he may function as a Deacon at the liturgy in order to avoid all confusion.

4. Deacons are not to assume they will vest at invited Eucharistic celebrations unless it is indicated on the invitation, letter of invitation, or notification to vest, participate, and/or assist. When in doubt, Deacons are to receive clarification from the Office of Divine Worship.

5. It is the prerogative of the bishop and/or chancery official in the name of the bishop, to invite the Diaconate to vest as an assembled body at Diocesan functions.

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 associate pastor) is not available to lead them.

1. When the Deacon leads the assembly at prayer, his focus is the assembly. When the Deacon assists a Priest, the Deacon's focus is to the Priest and to the assembly only when the assembly is being addressed.
2. Music is an integral part of liturgies; it helps all who celebrate to enter into the prayer. All music should be natural; pre-recorded music may never be used.
3. Within the community's worship space, the Deacon has a unique chair from the Priests 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, deacon, and other ministers.
4. Liturgy is participatory. Liturgy is not meant to be entertaining. Actions that create an environment of audience and performance should be avoided.

THE CELEBRATION OF THE EUCHARIST

THE DEACON AT MASS

1. Preparing for Mass

- a. Among the liturgical ministers assisting the Priest, the Deacon, whose order has been held in high honor since the early Church, has first place.¹ When present to exercise his ministry, the deacon processes with *The Book of the Gospels*² or enters and recesses at the Priest's side.³ By custom this is done at the right side.
- b. Vestment colors are determined by the *Roman Ordo* and follow traditional usage. It is desirable that the color and design of the deacon's vestments match the vestments of the presiding celebrant, distinguishable from the priest's vestments.⁴ The parish should provide a dalmatic in each liturgical color for the Deacon as that is the proper vestment for a Deacon to wear for the celebration of the Eucharist.
- c. The duties of the Deacon may be shared among several deacons who are present and vested. When there are two deacons, the duties are normally split between a Deacon of the Word and a Deacon of the Eucharist.
- The Deacon of the Word should carry *The Book of the Gospels* and proclaim the Gospel, Penitential Rite and Prayers of Petition. The Deacon of the Word should make all the appropriate invitations and directions.
 - The Deacon of the Eucharist could make all the appropriate invitations and directions if needed. These duties may be further divided depending on the number of vested deacons.
 - If the duties of other deacons in attendance and vested are limited to the distribution of Eucharist, they should remain in places provided and not gather at the altar until the reception of the Eucharist. The appropriate time to come to the altar to help with the distribution of the Eucharist is at the beginning of the *Agnus Dei*.
 - The deacons should remain in their assigned place during the Liturgy of the Eucharist to avoid any confusion of ministries between them and the priests who may be concelebrating the liturgy. They should assist in the distribution of Holy Communion as needed.
- d. When deacons are present for, but are not called upon to function in the celebration of the Eucharist, they do not normally vest or occupy a specific place in the liturgy.⁵ However, there are times when deacons sit as a body of deacons when not all the deacons have liturgical responsibilities:

- Deacons vest and are seated together for the celebration of the ordination of a deacon and at a Mass of Christian Burial of a deacon.
- They may also vest and sit as a body at the invitation of the bishop (e.g., at Chrism Mass, or the funeral of a permanent deacon).
- Deacons may vest at the invitation of the Bishop, Chancery or Pastor of the parish if they are exercising a liturgical role

Note - when in doubt, check with the Office of Divine Worship

e. The Deacon should be certain that all is prepared for Mass as in accord with the General Instruction of the *Roman Missal* # 118, 288 - 318.

2. The Introductory Rites

- The usual order for the procession is incense first, then candles with cross, other servers, the Deacon with *The Book of the Gospels*, concelebrants, priest celebrant with Deacon of Eucharist at his right.⁶ If deacons in a liturgical role are assisting the Bishop, they walk abreast two steps behind the Bishop. The *Lectionary* is never carried in procession and is always placed on the ambo before the Mass begins.⁷
- As they approach the altar, all ministers reverence the altar with a bow.⁸ If the tabernacle is within the sanctuary, all the ministers genuflect to the tabernacle.⁹ The deacon(s) and the priest approach the altar. After placing *The Book of the Gospels* on it, the deacon(s) and the priest venerate the altar with a kiss.¹⁰ If incense is used, the Deacon of the Eucharist assists the priest. A server will usually hold the *Roman Missal* for the Priest. If there are two deacon(s), they walk with the bishop during the incensation.
- If the Rite of Sprinkling Holy Water is used, the Deacon assists the Priest.
- The *Roman Missal* indicates that there is to be a brief period of silence after the Priest invites those gathered to acknowledge their sins; deacons are to observe this short period of silence.
- The Deacon is never to begin the Confiteor; only the priest begins the Confiteor.
- The *Kyrie* is always begun unless it has already been part of the Penitential Act.
- If the “trope” are used as part of the *Kyrie*, only those found in the *Roman Missal* may be used. Under no circumstances may there be any deviation from the prescribed texts found in “The Order of the Mass” as well as Appendix VI of the *Roman Missal*.

3. The Liturgy of the Word

- The proclamation of the Gospel is a ministerial function which typically belongs to the deacon when the deacon is present.¹²
- When incense is used, the Deacon assists the Priest during the singing of the alleluia or other

chant. Then he bows before the Priest, asks for the blessing and says in a low voice, “*Your blessing, Father*”. The Priest blesses him, “*The Lord be in your heart...*”. The Deacon answers, “*Amen.*” If *The Book of the Gospels* is on the altar, the deacon takes it, holds it at the level of his heart, and goes to the ambo, preceded by ministers carrying incense and/or candles.¹³ The Deacon greets the people with hands joined, announces the Gospel reading, then incenses the book with three swings (center, left then right) and proclaims the Gospel.¹⁴ All readings are done from the same ambo.¹⁵ After the Gospel proclamation, the deacon kisses *The Book of the Gospels* saying quietly, “May the Word of the Gospel wipe away our sins.” If the Bishop is the celebrant, the Deacon bows before the Bishop, asks for the blessing and says in a low voice “Your blessing most reverend Father,” and processes to the ambo with *The Book of the Gospels* in the same manner as above. The Deacon does not kiss *The Book of the Gospels* but brings it to the Bishop for him to kiss, and then, at more solemn celebrations, gives it to the Bishop so that he may impart a blessing to the people with it. ¹⁶ *The Book of the Gospels* is then taken to the credence table or another suitable place. Under no circumstances is the Deacon ever to impart a blessing with *The Book of the Gospels*.¹⁷

c. The homily should ordinarily be given by the Priest celebrant himself. However, he may occasionally entrust it to the deacon with no expectation on the part of the Deacon to preach.¹⁸

d. Following the homily, there is an appropriate time of silent reflection on the readings. The Profession of Faith follows when directed by the liturgical calendar or *Roman Ordo*.¹⁹ During the words “... *and by the Holy Spirit . . . and became man*” all make a profound bow; but on the solemnities of the Annunciation and of the Nativity of the Lord, all genuflect.²⁰

e. The Priest introduces the Universal Prayer.²¹ The Deacon ordinarily announces the intercessions.²² They may be announced from the ambo or other suitable place by the Deacon, or by a cantor, lector or one of the lay faithful.²³ The Priest offers the concluding prayer. The number of the intercessions should be limited to those specified in the GIRM (#70) and Appendix V. There are normally no more than five intercessions.

4. The Liturgy of the Eucharist

a. At the Presentation of the Gifts, while the Priest remains at the chair, the Deacon prepares the altar, assisted by other ministers with the Missal, corporal, purificator, pall, paten and all the communion chalices.²⁴ The bread and wine to be consecrated may be brought forward in the offertory procession. The Deacon assists the Priest in receiving the gifts of the assembly.²⁵

b. When the gifts are brought to the altar, the offerings are prepared. A sufficient amount of wine is placed in the chalices and a few drops of water are added to the wine. ²⁶ The chalices are arranged on the altar in such a way that will not be spilled. The wine may also be placed into

secondary chalices at the credence table well before Mass and brought to the altar at the time of offering.²⁷

c. When incense is used the Deacon assists the Priest in preparing the thurible. After the Priest incenses the gifts, the deacon incenses the Priest, concelebrants, the other ministers, and people with three swings of the thurible.²⁸

d. During the Eucharistic Prayer, the Deacon is at the right side of the Priest.²⁹ This is true even when there are concelebrants. The proper positioning of the deacon is not with the concelebrants. At the epiclesis, the Deacon removes the pall from the chalice and then kneels. He remains kneeling until the completion of “The Mystery of Faith, at which time he stands and replaces the pall on the chalice. The Deacon may assist by turning the pages of the *Roman Missal* for the Priest if the Priest so desires.³¹ For deacons who are infirm and unable to kneel due to physical incapacity, may stand. They should bow profoundly during the entire time of the consecration.

e. As the Final Doxology is sung or spoken only by the Priest and concelebrants, the Deacon holds the chalice as the celebrant raises the plate of consecrated Hosts, until the people have responded “Amen.” As the priest lowers the consecrated Hosts, the Deacon lowers the chalice.

f. At the Sign of Peace, the Priest says the prayer for peace and greets the assembly. The Deacon may invite the assembly to share the sign of peace using only the words printed in the *Roman Missal*. Then the Deacon receives the Sign of Peace from the Priest and may offer it to those other ministers who are nearest to him.³²

g. After the Sign of Peace, the Hosts are apportioned into as many vessels as are needed, during the *Agnus Dei*.³³

h. Before the Priest (and concelebrants) consume the consecrated Host and drink the Precious Blood the Deacon steps back from the altar. After the Priest consumes the Eucharist, the Deacon then comes forward and receives Communion from the Priest. The Deacon does not consume in the same manner as the Priest; he consumes after the Priest from the Priest himself.³⁴ The Deacon makes a profound bow for both the consecrated Host and the Precious Blood before receiving.³⁵ The Priest assisted by the deacon with the chalice then give Holy Communion to the extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion who make the same gesture of reverence before they receive. The Priest and Deacon then give each of the extraordinary ministers a vessel of consecrated Hosts or a chalice with the Precious Blood.³⁶ All go to their stations.

i. The Deacon is always the minister of the Precious Blood when it is offered to the assembly, unless pastoral necessity requires otherwise.³⁷ After each communicant has received the Precious Blood, both sides of the rim of the chalice are wiped with the purificator.³⁸ However, deacons are ordinary ministers of the Eucharist and may also distribute the sacred Hosts.

j. The Deacon or Priest brings reserved Hosts from the tabernacle. Ordinarily, reserved Hosts are used when it becomes apparent that additional Hosts are needed. The deacon is to follow the directions of the Priest on this matter of pastoral discretion.⁴⁰

k. After Communion, any remaining Precious Blood should be consumed at the altar; it must not be taken to the sacristy to be consumed.⁴¹ The Precious Blood cannot be poured into the sacrarium or disposed of in any other fashion.⁴² The consecrated Hosts that remain are taken to the tabernacle.⁴³

l. The vessels may be purified at the altar, credence table or after the Mass.⁴⁴

5. The Concluding Rite

a. The Priest and the Deacon return to the chair for a brief period of quiet prayer.⁴⁵ The Priest then prays the Prayer after Communion.

b. Announcements, following the Prayer after Communion, may be made by the Priest, the Deacon, or another suitable person.⁴⁶

c. When the Solemn Blessing is given, or the Prayer over the People said, after the Priest says “The Lord be with you” and the people respond, the Deacon says “Bow down for the blessing.”⁴⁷

d. Immediately after the blessing, the Deacon, with hands joined dismisses the people with one of the four options given in the *Roman Missal*. The words of these dismissal formulae are not to be altered in any way.⁴⁸ If the Priest chants the Blessing, then the Deacon should chant the dismissal.

e. The presiding priest and the deacon then venerate the altar with a kiss.⁴⁹ They then join the other minister and reverence the altar with a bow. If the tabernacle is within the sanctuary, all the ministers genuflect to the tabernacle.⁵⁰ Then they process out in the usual manner.

f. Neither *The Book of the Gospels* nor the Lectionary is carried out in the procession at the end of Mass.⁵¹

g. The pace of the recessional is not rushed. The deacon walks at the side of the Priest. However,

when the Bishop is present, the deacons walk slightly behind him.

6. Following Mass

a. The Deacon takes time for hospitality with those gathered for the celebration and upon returning to the sacristy oversees the proper purification of vessels, return of vestments to the racks. He assists the Priest as needed in the normal care of the worship space after Mass as needed.

END NOTES:

1. *General Instruction on the Roman Missal* - Third Typical Edition (GIRM) #94.

2. *The Book of the Gospels* is venerated above all the books of readings by the Church. Its binding is worthy, dignified, and beautiful. It is a sign of Christ present in the liturgy. It is revered with the same holy kiss given to the altar. *The Book of the Gospels* is a sign of the presence of Christ in his word and proclaimed with great honor in the Church's liturgy. It is borne by the deacon in solemn procession for the veneration of the entire congregation and accompanied by candles and incense at Mass.

The presentation of *The Book of the Gospels* to the newly ordained Deacon symbolizes the office of the Deacon to proclaim the Gospel in liturgical celebrations and to preach the faith of the Church in word and deed. The enshrinement of *The Book of the Gospels* whenever the Church gathers in a council or synod is a sign of the presence of Christ himself as teacher and guide.

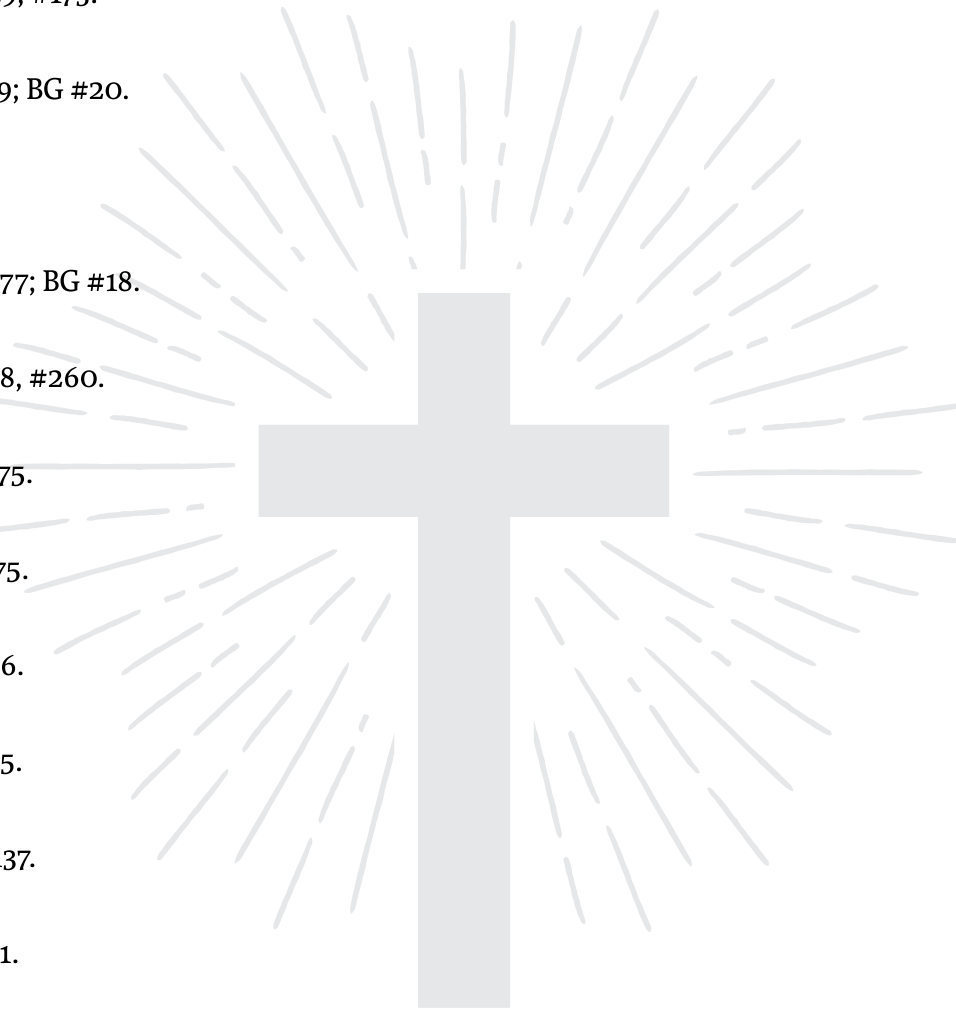
The Church acknowledges the preeminent place of the Gospels by according special marks of honor to their proclamation. The proclamation of the Gospel is reserved to the deacon; only in his absence may a priest proclaim the Gospel. A Gospel procession, which marks the coming of Christ, may be accompanied by marks of reverence, incense and lighted candles, the special minister appointed to read the Gospel (the deacon) prepares himself with a blessing, the faithful stand as they listen to it being proclaimed and acknowledge and confess Christ is present and speaking to them. (*Book of the Gospels* (BG) #7-8; GIRM #60).

3. GIRM #171a, #172.

4. GIRM #119b; *Redemptoris Sacramentum* - On Certain Matters to Be Observed or to Be Avoided Regarding the Holy Eucharist (RS) #125.

5. Bishop's Committee on the Liturgy (BCL) *Newsletter* XVIII 1982.

6. *Cæremoniale Episcoporum* - Ceremonial of Bishops (CB) #128; BCL Newsletter XXIX, February 1993.
7. GIRM #118b.
8. GIRM #49, #122
9. GIRM #274;
10. GIRM #49, #173.
11. GIRM #59; BG #20.
12. BG #7-8.
13. GIRM #277; BG #18.
15. GIRM #58, #260.
16. GIRM #175.
17. GIRM #175.
18. GIRM #66.
19. GIRM #45.
20. GIRM #137.
21. GIRM #71.
22. GIRM #177.
23. GIRM #71.
24. GIRM #178; RS #105-106.



25. GIRM #73, #178; *Norms for the Distribution and Reception of Holy Communion Under Both Kinds in the Dioceses of the United States of America* (Norms) # 37;

26. RS #105-106.

27. RS #105-106.

28. GIRM #277.

29. GIRM #179.

30. BCL *Newsletter* 1990.

31. GIRM #179.

32. GIRM #181.

33. GIRM #83; Norms #37; RS #73.

34. GIRM #182, #244, #246; Norms #39.

35. GIRM #160.

36. GIRM #160; Norms #39.

37. GIRM #182; Norms #26.

38. Norms #45.

39. omitted

40. GIRM #85; Norms #30; RS #89.

41. GIRM #183; Norms #44, #50, #52; RS # 107.

42. Norms #55.

43. Norms #51.

44. GIRM #183; Norms #53; Indult - Prot. 1382,01/L; RS #119.

45. GIRM #43.

46. GIRM #184.

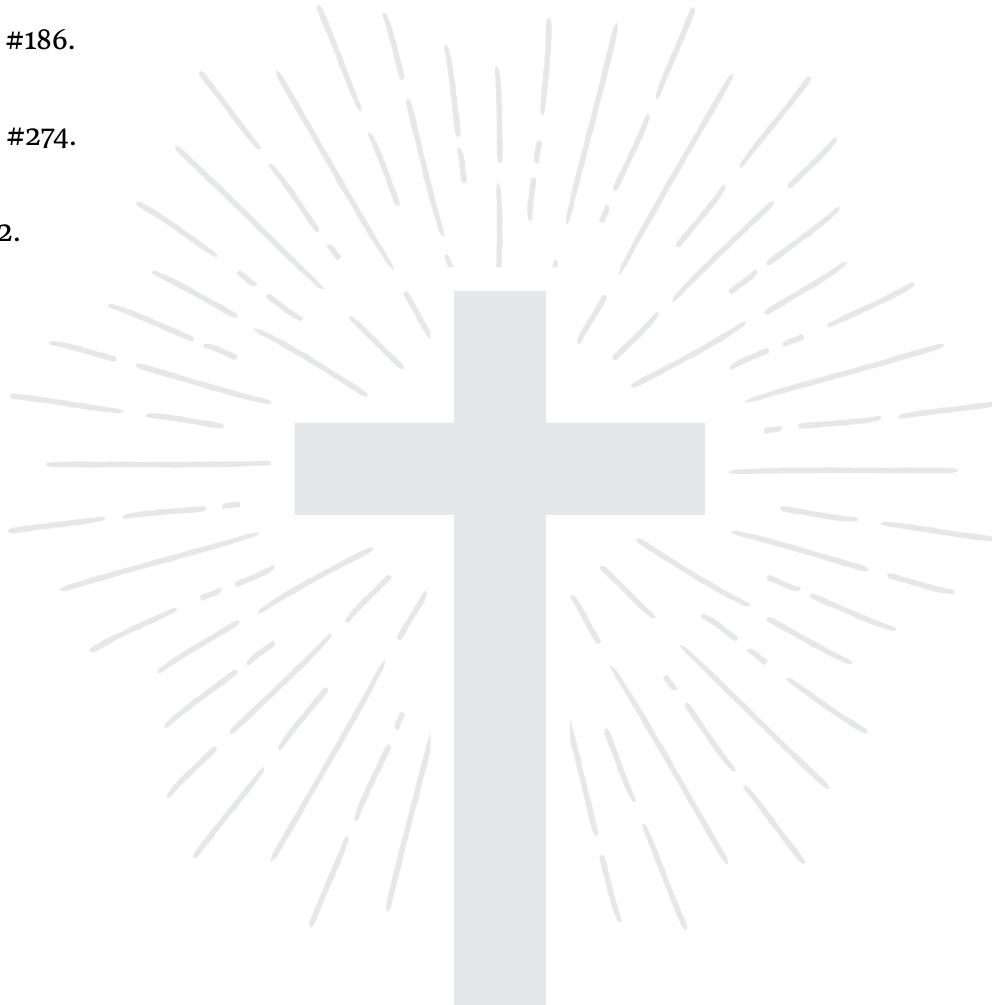
47. GIRM #185.

48. GIRM #185.

49. GIRM #186.

50. GIRM #274.

51. BG #22.



MULTIPLE DEACONS AT A MASS

1. If there are several [deacons present], nothing forbids their distributing among themselves and performing different parts of the same ministry or duty. (GIRM 109)
2. When there are two deacons, it is common that one would be the Deacon of the Word, thus proclaiming the gospel, praying the petitions of the prayers of the faithful, assisting with the *Roman Missal*, and performing all the speaking parts. The other deacon would be the Deacon of the Eucharist, assisting the Priest at the chair and altar. The Deacon of the Eucharist does not have to have any of the speaking parts unless it is decided before Mass with the other deacon. This is only one of many ways the diaconal role may be divided at Mass.
3. Other than the Passion, the proclaiming of the gospel is one duty that cannot be shared between multiple deacons.
4. The Ceremonial of Bishops states that at celebrations presided over by the Bishop there should be at least three deacons, one to proclaim the gospel reading and to minister at the altar, and two to assist the bishop. (CB 26)
5. When larger numbers of deacons are present, several could be assigned to distribute the precious blood at communion and not assist with the other diaconal duties. The deacons assisting the Priest and proclaiming the gospel should always help with the distribution of communion.
6. There are times when there may be more deacons than assignable diaconal duties when the deacons are asked by the bishop to vest and sit as a body of deacons (see 4000.3). At these celebrations, not all deacons will have liturgical duties and will remain together as a body of deacons.

THE DEACON AND THE PENITENTIAL TROPES

There are several options for the Penitential Act at Mass. One option allows for the Deacon to make three invocations. The first and third are concluded with Lord have mercy while the second is concluded with Christ have mercy. These are short, simple invocations, not long theological statements. The options in the *Roman Missal* are to be used without fail. No one may compose his own tropes.



THE DEACON AND THE UNIVERSAL PRAYER

The Deacon normally leads the petitions of the General Intercessions. In composing the intercessions, the deacon should take into account the needs of the community. The use of the Intercessions found in the appendix of the *Roman Missal* serves as an example for composition and may be used rather than forming other petitions.

1. As a rule the sequence of intentions is: a) for the needs of the Church, b) for public authorities and the salvation of the world, c) for those oppressed by any need, d) and for the local community, e) for the faithful departed (GIRM, 70). Normally, there should be no more than five (5) intercessions.
2. The petitions are not limited to these five areas to be addressed. However, the petitions should be descriptive, short and never be used to inform the community.
 - a. They should be descriptive in that the gathered community should be able to clearly visualize the need for which the petition addresses.
 - b. They should not be so long that the community loses the point of the petition when asked to confirm the petition with their response.
 - c. These petitions should be needs that the community is aware of and not a process of informing the community of those who are sick or have died over the past week.
3. Apart from Good Friday, the intercessions are normally read, not chanted.

THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY

THE DEACON ASSISTING AT THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY WITHIN MASS

When a Deacon is present for the celebration of Marriage during Mass, he assists as Deacon for the Mass in the usual way: at the penitential rite, reading the gospel, the Universal Prayer, preparing the altar and gifts for the Eucharist, giving directions to the assembly, assisting with the Chalice, dismissing the assembly at the end of Mass, and assisting the Priest in various other ways. The deacon may preach the homily with the permission of the Priest.

Within a Mass, the Deacon does not preside over the Order of Matrimony or give any blessings including the Nuptial Blessing since it is the role of the deacon to assist a Bishop or Priest as they preside.

Exceptions:

1. On special occasions, the Deacon may, by exception and with the explicit permission of the bishop, preside over the reception of consent. The Deacon must receive proper delegation to witness the marriage.
2. In a situation where the Deacon is the father of the bride (or groom), the deacon may, with explicit permission of the bishop, preside over the Order of Matrimony from the questioning through the Exchange of Rings. The Deacon must receive proper delegation to witness the marriage.

The Deacon resumes his usual role at the Universal Prayer (i.e., the Priest introduces the prayer, the Deacon announces the intentions, and the Priest says the concluding prayer).

During the Liturgy of the Eucharist, the Priest presides as usual and gives the Nuptial Blessing, and the Final Blessing.

(from the Bishop's Committee on the Liturgy, October 24, 1994)

DEACON AS PRESIDER AT THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY OUTSIDE MASS

1. Marriage may be witnessed by a Deacon who has received proper faculties from the Bishop, proper delegation from the Pastor, in accordance with the Code of Canon Law and in keeping with the provisions of Canons 1055 through 1165. The ritual, *The Order of Celebrating Matrimony* also provides a “Order for celebrating marriage between a Catholic and an unbaptized person”.

2. BEFORE THE WEDDING CEREMONY

In order to be the official for the Church at the sacrament of Marriage, the Deacon has the following responsibilities:

- a. Obtains a valid civil authorization from the Ohio Secretary of State to officially witness at marriages.
- b. Determines that the couple is free to marry according to church and civil law.
- c. Is prepared to help the couple through the preparation and the sacrament in keeping with the provisions of Canons 1055 through 1165 of the Code.
- d. Possesses and follows all Diocesan policies in preparing the couple for marriage.
- e. Petitions the Chancery Office for appropriate dispensations such as:
Impediment of Disparity of Cult
Permission for a mixed (interfaith) marriage
From Canonical Form of Marriage
- f. Assists the couple in planning the Marriage Liturgy.
- g. Rehearses the wedding party in preparation for the wedding liturgy.
- h. Processes the civil marriage license and notification of proper civil offices.
- i. Processes the notification of the church(s) of Baptism of the marriage of the Catholic parties.
- j. Processes the proper entries of the marriage into the sacramental records of the parish in which the marriage took place.

3. THE CELEBRATION OF THE MARRIAGE LITURGY

In all marriage celebrations and at marriages of interfaith couples, the ministry of hospitality is of great importance. The presiding deacon, as leader of the community gathered in prayer, is ever aware of the ministry of hospitality extended to and shared by all present.

4. VESTMENTS - see 4000.2

5. THE SANCTUARY

- a. The altar is not used for a wedding outside Mass. A suitable small table may be placed near at hand but without obscuring the altar, ambo, and Priest's chair to hold various items used in the liturgy such as the Ritual book, a dish to hold the rings, holy water, and aspergillum. It is commendable that servers assist which would render the use of this table unnecessary.
- b. Chairs, and if needed, kneelers, in sufficient number are arranged facing the altar. Altar candles are lit, and floral arrangements may be used in keeping with the liturgical season.
- c. The deacon moves from his chair to the couple, to the ambo as needed during the rite.

6. THE ORDER OF MATRIMONY

The Deacon follows strictly the instructions given in the *Order of Celebrating Matrimony*.

**MARRIAGES IN A NON-CATHOLIC FORM
CELEBRATED IN A NON-CATHOLIC CHURCH OR PLACE**

1. The deacon who represents the Catholic Church at a marriage of this type between a Catholic and non-Catholic must be thoroughly familiar with and observe the *Code of Canon Law*. Canons 1055 – 1129.
2. Guidelines 4002.1 are to be observed as they apply to this marriage.
3. In this type of marriage, when the application to the chancery for dispensation from canonical form has been granted, the minister of the church or place receives the vows. However, a deacon (or a priest) representing the Catholic Church at a marriage of this type may read from Sacred Scriptures, assist with the exchange of rings, or give a blessing.
4. The marriage file must be kept at the Catholic church of the parish in whose boundaries the marriage took place.
5. Marriages of this type must be recorded in the marriage register of the parish of the Catholic party, and in the official records of the Chancery. Notification of the marriage is to be sent to the parish of baptism of the Catholic party.
6. It is unlawful for the deacon to receive the vows in full or in part in this type of marriage. If the deacon receives the vows, the marriage must be sanated.
7. Alb and stole are suitable vesture for marriages of this type.

**MARRIAGES IN THE CATHOLIC FORM
CELEBRATED IN A NON-CATHOLIC CHURCH OR PLACE**

1. The presiding deacon at a marriage of this type between Catholics or a Catholic and a non-Catholic must be thoroughly familiar with and observe The Code of Canon Law. Canons 1055 - 1129
2. Guidelines 4002.1 are to be observed as they apply to this marriage. In addition, an appropriate dispensation must be obtained from the Chancery that explains in an adequate way the pastoral reasons that a Catholic rite of marriage would take place outside of Catholic Church or chapel. Delegation from the local pastor of the parish, in which the wedding site is located, must be obtained.
3. The file for such a marriage must be kept at the Catholic church of the parish in which the marriage took place.
4. Marriages of this type must be recorded in the marriage register of the parish of the Catholic party, and in the official records of the Chancery. Notices of the marriage are to be sent to parish(es) of baptism of the Catholic parties.
5. Alb and stole with a white cope, if available are suitable vesture for marriages of this type

THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

DEACON AS PRESIDER AT THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM OUTSIDE MASS

I. THE ORDINARY MINISTER OF BAPTISM is a bishop, priest, or deacon, without prejudice to the provision of Canon 530 n.1 (Canon 861). Ideally, baptism is celebrated in the company of relatives, friends, neighbors and the faithful.

Canon 866 requires anyone over the age of discretion also be immediately confirmed unless prevented by a grave reason. Therefore, the deacon is only to baptize children under the age of discretion (age 7).

II. BEFORE BAPTIZING A CHILD, THE DEACON MUST:

- A. Receive the permission of the proper pastor.
- B. Have the information for the baptismal register data written on paper to be recorded after the baptism.
- C. Be certain that the parents have been properly prepared for the reception of the sacrament by their child.
- D. Verify the suitability of the ones selected as God-parents: i.e. fully initiated Catholics living a life consistent with the Catholic faith.
- E. "A baptized and believing Christian from a separated church or community may act as godparent or Christian witness along with a Catholic godparent..." See "General Introduction" *Order of Baptism of Children*.

III. VESTMENTS - SEE 4000.2.

IV. THE RITUAL IS FOUND IN: *ORDER OF BAPTISM OF CHILDREN*.

DEACON ASSISTING AT THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM WITHIN MASS

I. **IT IS RECOMMENDED** that baptism be celebrated at the Easter Vigil or on Sunday to bring out the Paschal character of baptism. Baptism may be celebrated within Mass so that the entire community may be present and the necessary relationship between baptism and Eucharist may be more clearly seen. But this should not be done so often as to weary the community.

- A. Except on the Sundays of Lent, Advent, and Easter, Solemnities, Ash Wednesday, and the weekdays of Holy Week the Ritual Mass of Baptism may be used.
- B. The readings of the Mass are of that Sunday or, if permitted for that Sunday or weekday, the readings may also be taken from those provided for the baptismal rite. On some occasions one reading may be chosen from those provided for the baptismal rite.
- C. see “Introduction” to *Order of Baptism of Children*

II. THE CELEBRATION OF BAPTISM WITHIN MASS

The celebration of baptism within Mass belongs to the Priest. “At the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, the deacon assists those who preside at the assembly . . .” National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States.

A. The Introductory Rites

1. As the liturgy begins, the priest and deacon with the assisting ministers go to the doors of the church where those to be baptized with the parents and godparents await. Meanwhile all may sing a suitable hymn.
2. The priest leads the rite of receiving the children. The penitential rite is omitted.
3. The processions reforms and those to be baptized with the parents and godparents are led into the church to their places. Meanwhile all may sing a suitable song.
4. The Gloria if prescribed is sung.
5. The opening prayer of the Mass is sung or said.

B. The Liturgy of the Word

1. Takes place in the usual way with the deacon proclaiming the gospel
2. The deacon may give the homily based on the sacred texts and considering the baptism which is to take place
3. The Creed is not said because the profession of faith by the entire community before baptism takes its place
4. The Universal Prayers are introduced by the Priest, announced by the deacon using those in the rite of baptism and adding before the Litany of Saints petitions for the universal church and the needs of the world.

C. The Celebration of Baptism continues with the prayer of exorcism, anointing, and other ceremonies described in the rite with the deacon assisting the Priest who baptizes.

D. The Liturgy of the Eucharist

1. Begins after the celebration of baptism in the usual way with the preparation of the altar and gifts.
2. It is suitable that parents and godparents may bring up the gifts.
3. The Eucharistic prayer should include the intercessions (interpolations) for the newly baptized and their godparents (Ritual Masses, Christian Initiation, 3. Baptism)

E. The Concluding Rites of the Mass

1. For the blessing at the end of Mass, the priest may use one of the formulas provided in the Order of Baptism for Children. The priest begins it in the usual way by saying "*The Lord be with you.*" and the deacon saying, "*Bow down for the blessing.*"
2. The deacon dismisses the assembly.

THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

DEACON AT THE PARISH CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENT

According to the Roman Pontifical:

“...Strengthened by the gift of the Holy Spirit, deacons assist the bishop and his presbyterate in the ministry of the word, the altar, and of charity. As ministers of the altar they proclaim the Gospel reading, help at the celebration of the sacrifice, and serve as Eucharistic ministers.

“Deacons should therefore look on the bishop as father and assist him as they would the Lord Jesus Christ himself, who is the eternal High Priest, present in the midst of his people.

“In liturgical celebrations, it belongs to the deacon to assist the celebrant, to minister at the altar with the book and the cup, to guide the assembly of the faithful with suitable directions, to announce the intentions of the general intercessions...

“At a liturgical celebration presided over by the bishop there should be at least three deacons, one to proclaim the gospel reading and to minister at the altar, and two to assist the bishop. If more than three deacons are present, they should divide the ministries accordingly and at least one of them should be charged with assisting the active participation of the assembly.”

1. The bishop has asked that a deacon, assigned to the parish, assist at the parish celebration of confirmation when possible. The Diocese is fully aware that not every parish has an assigned Deacon.
2. The Deacon(s) already assigned to the specific parish should automatically be called upon to assist at all Episcopal liturgies
3. Deacons are to respond directly to the Master of Ceremony regarding their liturgical presence and responsibilities. Ideally, this communication should take place several days prior to the Mass.
4. In the Sacrament of Confirmation within Mass the Deacon:
 - a. assists in all diaconal roles prescribed in the General Instructions of the *Roman Missal*.

b. may help present candidates for confirmation at the direction of the Pastor.
c. the deacon brings the vessel or vessels of chrism to the bishop. When there are presbyters to assist the bishop in giving the anointing, the deacon brings all the vessels of Holy Chrism to the bishop.

d. the deacon continues to assist in the usual manner for the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

5. A deacon cannot sponsor a candidate for confirmation and serve as deacon at the celebration of confirmation.

6. Deacons visiting from other dioceses must obtain a letter of good standing and have the permission of the Bishop in order to serve.



CHRISTIAN FUNERALS

ORDER OF CHRISTIAN FUNERALS AND THE DEACON

I. GUIDELINES FOR DEACONS ARE TAKEN FROM:

Order of Christian Funerals including Appendix 2: Cremation (2019)

II. EXCERPTS FROM THE GENERAL INTRODUCTION OF THE ORDER OF CHRISTIAN FUNERALS

A. “In the face of death, the Church proclaims that God has created each person for eternal life and that Jesus, the Son of God, by his death and resurrection, has broken the chains of sin and death that bound humanity.”

B. “At the death of a Christian, whose life of faith was begun in the waters of baptism and strengthened at the Eucharistic table, the Church intercedes on behalf of the deceased because of its confident belief that death is not the end nor does it break the bonds forged in life. The Church also ministers to the sorrowing and consoles them in the funeral rites with the comforting word of God and the sacrament of the Eucharist.”

C. “The celebration of the Christian funeral brings hope and consolation to the living. While proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ and witnessing to Christian hope in the resurrection, the funeral rites also recall to all who take part in them God’s mercy and judgment and meet the human need to turn always to God in times of crisis.”

D. “Members of the community should console the mourners with words of faith, support and with acts of kindness ... its active participation in the celebration of the funeral rites, particularly the vigil for the deceased, the funeral liturgy, and the rite of committal.”

E. “When no priest is available, deacons, as ministers of the word, of the altar, and of charity, preside at funeral rites.”

III. VIGIL AND RELATED RITES AND PRAYERS

A. Prayers After Death

1. This rite provides a model of prayer used by the minister with the family following death. It may take place in the home, hospital or hospice to comfort and calm the mourners as they begin to face their loss.
2. This rite provides an initial pastoral visit and point of contact for support and assessment for the pastoral needs of a family he may not know. The minister may also be able to form some preliminary judgments to help the family in preparing for the funeral rites and if possibly some first steps in planning.

B. Gathering in the Presence of the Body

1. This rite provides a model of prayer to be used when the family first gathers in the presence of the body when the body is to be prepared for burial or after it has been prepared (perhaps prior to calling hours at the funeral home when family and friends first gather)
2. In this rite, the minister and community seek to be with the mourners in their need with sensitivity and confident faith
3. The minister begins the rite at an opportune moment in an atmosphere of calm and recollection. The use of silent prayer after the scripture can be especially helpful.

C. Vigil for the Deceased

1. the vigil is the principal rite celebrated in the time following death and before the funeral liturgy.
2. usually takes place in the funeral home where the body has been laid out
3. at the vigil the Christian community keeps watch with the family in prayer to the God of mercy and finding prayer in Christ's presence.
4. the vigil may take the form of a liturgy of the word or be taken from the office for the dead. It is not to be taken from a popular devotion. The family should be encouraged to pray the rosary, for example, together either after or before the vigil takes place.

5. Structure of the Vigil

- a. Introductory Rites form the people into a community by a greeting, song, and prayer.
- b. Liturgy of the Word
 - i. The highpoint of this service is the proclamation of the word of God
 - ii. The psalm should be sung
 - iii. If a priest presides, a deacon reads the gospel. Otherwise the presiding minister reads the gospel
 - iv. a homily, not a eulogy, based on the readings is given
- c. Universal Prayer
 - i. in which God is asked to comfort the mourners and to show mercy to the deceased. It takes the form of a litany, the Lord's Prayer, and a concluding prayer. A priest presiding may be assisted by a deacon and deacon presiding may be assisted by an assisting minister
 - ii. after the Prayer of Intercession may speak in remembrance of the dead (eulogy)
- d. It is the policy of the Diocese of Columbus that the preferred time for a eulogy is during the vigil service. However, if the family is not gathered at the vigil, one person, (who is accomplished in speaking and who has submitted the text to the Priest before the funeral) may speak in remembrance of the dead after the Prayer After Communion at Mass.
- e. Concluding Rite - consists of a blessing followed by song, silence, or both.

IV. FUNERAL PLANNING

- A. It is policy to consult with the family as much as is possible and prudent, providing necessary guidance in the choices of texts, rites, music, and liturgical ministers
- B. A funeral Mass may not be scheduled on solemnities that are days of obligation, the day of Holy Thursday, the Easter Triduum and the Sunday of Advent, Lent, and the Easter Season as well as on Holy Trinity and Christ the King Sundays. If a funeral must take place on one of these days it would be for a Funeral Liturgy outside Mass.
- C. There is a wealth of prayers in the *Order of Christian Funerals* (nos. 398 and 399) for the dead and mourners that may be used in the various rites that suit a number of different situations.

V. SYMBOLS

- A. Only Christian symbols may be used in funeral liturgies. Other symbols are to be removed from the casket at the entrance of the church.

B. The Easter Candle, Holy Water and the Pall are used at every funeral.

C. Additional symbols that are recommended are incense, fresh flowers, The Book of the Gospels, a Bible, or a cross may be placed on the pall covered casket

VI. THE FUNERAL MASS

A. Introductory Rites

1. If the body is to be received at the beginning of the liturgy, the Introductory Rites are as found in the Order of Funerals. It is proper for the deacon to help the family place the pall over the casket. The deacon may also process in carrying the cremated remains and placing them on an appropriate stand or table.
2. If the body has already been received in the church, a Mass would begin in the usual way including a penitential rite.

B. The Liturgy of the Word

1. The family may be consulted regarding the selection of biblical readings. Non-biblical readings are not permitted within the context of the Liturgy of the Word.
2. There may be one or two readings before the Gospel. The deacon proclaims the gospel.
3. The deacon may also preach the homily with the permission of the Priest. The homily is to be brief and never any kind of eulogy but to dwell on God's compassionate love and on the paschal mystery of the Lord as proclaimed in the Scripture.
4. The Universal Prayer take the usual form, and the petitions may be announced by the deacon. If the funeral liturgy is outside of Mass, the deacon may introduce and conclude with an assisting minister announcing the petitions. The petitions are for the deceased and all the dead, the bereaved and all who mourn, and for the assembly. The petitions in the *Order of Christian Funerals* are to be used.

C. Within Mass - the Liturgy of the Eucharist

1. The presiding Priest is assisted in the usual way by the deacon
2. A procession made up of the bereaved may bring forward the bread and wine.

D. Final Commendation and Farewell

1. After the Prayer after Communion, it is permissible that one person speaks in remembrance of the deceased at the discretion of the Priest.
2. The Final Commendation and Farewell is the final farewell by the members of the community, an act of respect, a realization of separation tempered with a hope that all will share in the resurrection on the last day

E. Procession to the Place of Committal

Follow the directions given in the *Order of Christian Funerals*.

F. Vesture

1. if the funeral liturgy is a Mass, priest and deacon would wear the usual vestments used at Mass.
2. if the funeral rite is outside of Mass, the vesture for priest or deacon is alb and stole with a cope, if desired.
3. if a deacon is assisting a priest at a funeral liturgy outside of Mass, and the priest is wearing a cope, the deacon may wear a suitable dalmatic if one is available.

VII. RITE OF COMMITTAL

- A. Two forms are found in the *Order of Christian Funerals*. The longer form may be used if there was not a funeral liturgy.
- B. The vesture should be according to local custom.

VIII. FUNERAL RITES FOR CHILDREN

- A. Follow the directions given in the *Order of Christian Funerals*.

IX. CREMATION

- A. Diocesan policy encourages the burying the body of the deceased. Although cremation is permitted by the Church, it does not enjoy the same value as burial of the body.

B. Cremation and Committal

1. Are to follow the funeral liturgy.
2. The cremated remains are to be buried in the same manner as the human body. The practice of scattering ashes or keeping them in the home are not permitted.
3. If the body is cremated before the funeral liturgy
 - a. Permission is granted to priests and deacons of the Columbus Diocese without recourse to the bishop to celebrate funeral rites (including Mass) in the presence of cremated remains.
 - b. The cremated remains are to be treated with the same respect given to the human body. They should be placed in a worthy vessel.
 - c. Choose prayers that don't refer to the honoring or burial of a body
 - e. During the introductory rites of the funeral liturgy, the vessel containing the cremated remains may be placed on a small stand or table at the entrance of the church. They may not be covered with the pall. The cremated remains may be sprinkled with Holy Water and then placed on a small table or stand in front of the altar normally occupied by the casket.

THE DEATH AND FUNERAL OF A DEACON

1. Immediately upon the death of a deacon, the Director of Ministry and Life of Deacons is to be notified. It is the Director's responsibility to notify the Bishop and the Vicar General. The Director of Ministry and Life of Deacons is responsible for providing the Chancery Office with the pertinent details of the funeral of a deacon. The Diaconate Office will send the appropriate notice to all clergy of the diocese.
2. From the beginning, the bishop and the family of the deacon has the key role in planning for the funeral of the deacon with the pastor/associate pastor. The role of the Diaconate Office and of the diaconal community is to be one of support and assistance.
3. It is required that deacons and their families have advance directives in place regarding funeral plans. The Office of the Diaconate will provide a Funeral Planning form periodically to be updated and kept on file at the Chancery. Deacons are to also contact the Office of the Diaconate for a form.
4. It is recommended that the Director of the Office of Divine Worship or some other well-qualified persons be requested to serve as the master of ceremonies for the funeral Mass.
5. Available in the Diaconate Office is a funeral pall.
6. The principal reference for planning and celebrating all the rites of the funeral of a deacon is the *Order of Christian Funerals*.
7. The *Order of Christian Funerals* provides several short prayers that may be used in different places including two written especially for a deacon.

CELEBRATIONS WITH THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

PRESIDER AT LITURGY OF THE WORD AND HOLY COMMUNION

The ritual for *Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest* may not be used for a weekday communion service. It is reserved for Sundays when an emergency arises, and a priest cannot be present for the Community's Sunday celebration of the Eucharist.

The Ritual for a Communion Service can be found in the ritual book: *Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharistic outside Mass*, Chapter 1.

All that is directed by *Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist Outside Mass* is to be observed. A communion service cannot be celebrated on Holy Thursday, and during Holy Saturday (other than Viaticum). The following is an outline of the elements of the celebration:

Introductory Rites: The purpose of these is to form the gathered faithful into a community and for them to dispose themselves for the celebration.

Liturgy of the Word: Here God speaks to his people, to disclose to them the mystery of redemption and salvation; the people respond through the profession of faith and the general intercessions.

Before the Lord's Prayer, the deacon goes to the tabernacle or other place where the Eucharist is reserved and, after making a reverence, places the ciborium with the Holy Eucharist on the altar. The sign of peace may be exchanged.

After Communion, "a period of silence may be observed, or a psalm or song of praise may be sung."

Concluding Rites: this points to the connection existing between the liturgy and the Christian life.

**THE DEACON AND BENEDICTION
(EXPOSITION AND ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT)**

The Ritual books that govern this liturgical celebration is *The Order for the Solemn Exposition of the Holy Eucharist*.

THE DEACON AND MINISTRY TO THE SICK (AND VIATICUM)

Source: *Pastoral Care of the Sick: Rites of Anointing and Viaticum*; Catholic Book Publishing; 1983

Excerpts from *Pastoral Care of the Sick: Rites of Anointing and Viaticum*

The concern that Christ showed for the bodily and spiritual welfare of those who are ill is continued by the Church to comfort the sick in time anxiety, to encourage them to fight against illness, and perhaps to restore them to health. This ministry is the common responsibility of all Christians, who should visit the sick, remember them in prayer, and celebrate the sacrament with them.

Priests have the special task of preparing the sick to the celebrate the sacrament of penance, to receive the Eucharist frequently, and to celebrate the sacrament of anointing at the appropriate time. The priest should provide leadership to those who assist him in the care of the sick, especially deacons and other ministers of the Eucharist.

Continued with a clarification that in those rites where priest or deacon is used, in the absence of a priest a deacon may do. Where the word minister is used in the rubric a lay minister, a priest, or deacon may do. When the word priest is used such as in the sacrament of penance or anointing of the sick, only a priest may preside a particular rite.

VISITS TO THE SICK

Deacons and others who visit the sick should help them to pray, read scripture, and share with them the word of God proclaimed at the assembly from which they are separated because of illness

The minister may encourage the sick to offer their sufferings in union with Christ and to join their prayers with that of the Church and the world. They can be encouraged to remember particular intentions.

Section 57 of *Pastoral Care of the Sick* provides an outline and model for the visit.

The sick may be prepared to receive the Eucharist at a future visit. It might be such a thing, that the sick person has been estranged from the Church and been away from the sacraments. In this situation, it would be advisable for the deacon to arrange for the pastor or an associate pastor to visit the sick person and celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation.

VISITS TO A SICK CHILD

1. The readings, prayers, and blessings may be adapted and simplified focusing on that the sick are very special in the eyes of God because they suffer as Christ suffered and they can offer their sufferings for the salvation of the world.
2. The deacon should follow all diocesan guidelines with respect to *Protecting God's Children*.
3. The inclusion of family and friends in these celebrations is important.

COMMUNION OF THE SICK

Because the sick person can no longer be part of the assembly for the Eucharist, the most important visits are those in which they receive Holy Communion. In this communion they are united sacramentally with the Lord and are reunited with the community.

The sick should have opportunities to receive communion frequently, particularly on Sundays and even daily especially during the Easter season.

The Eucharist is to be carried in a pyx and burse. A table is to be prepared covered with a corporal (or white cloth) and lit candles (unless prohibited) on which to place the Blessed Sacrament. A glass of water should be at hand to aid the sick person in swallowing the Host.

When necessary, Communion may be administered under the form of the Precious Blood. The Precious Blood should be carried in a tightly closed container to remove all danger of spillage. After communion the minister should consume any of the precious blood left over and make sure the container is properly purified.

ANOINTING OF THE SICK

Pastoral Care of the Sick contains three rites for this sacrament for varying situations:

1. Anointing outside Mass = the deacon would assist with the readings, penitential rite, the homily, the litany, assisting in the anointing as needed and with the blessing in the usual manner.
2. Anointing within Mass - the deacon would assist in the usual manner as at Mass. The Litany takes the place of the General Intercessions. Mass may be said in the home or at the bedside of the sick person.
3. Anointing in a Hospital or Institution - although the sacrament should be celebrated as fully as possible some situations may make it impossible to do so. This rite is intended for when only a priest and the sick person is present.

PASTORAL CARE OF THE DYING

The rites in this section are used by the Church to comfort and strengthen a dying Christian in the passage from this life. They place an emphasis on trust in the Lord's promise of eternal life rather than on the struggle with illness.

There are rites for those situations in which time is not pressing and rites for emergencies (nos. 232-296).

The Christian community has a responsibility to pray for and with the dying person.

The deacon may also have to respond to the difficult circumstances of a dying child.

1. The parents are often hurt and bewildered to learn their child is dying. The Church's ministry will need to also be directed to the parents and families as they come to terms with this death. This time will continue after death and the Church should continue its ministry as long as necessary.
2. The Christian community, especially those who have lost a child, may come to support the dying child and family. Priests and deacons should invite and oversee members of the community in their support.
3. By conversation, prayers, and readings, the deacon may help the parents and family to see that their child is being called ahead to the joy of the Lord.
4. It is appropriate, after discussion with the parents, that the dying child be prepared and then celebrate the sacraments of initiation.

THE CELEBRATION OF VIATICUM

5. Viaticum whether inside or outside of Mass is a celebration of the Eucharist as food for the passage through death to eternal life. It is the sacrament proper to the dying Christian. It signifies that the dying Christian follows the Lord into eternal glory and banquet of the heavenly kingdom.

6. A distinctive feature of the celebration of viaticum is the renewal of baptismal profession of the dying person.

7. The sign of peace, which may be included, may be a sense of leave-taking, which need not be concealed or denied, but in the joy of Christian hope.

8. THE CELEBRATION OF VIATICUM WITHIN MASS

- a. The ritual Mass for Viaticum or the Mass of the Holy Eucharist may be celebrated.
- b. The rites of the Mass may be simplified. The dying person and family are encouraged to assist in the choice of readings and songs.
- c. The deacon assists in the usual way as at Mass. The litany replaces the general intercessions.

9. THE CELEBRATION OF VIATICUM OUTSIDE MASS

- a. Viaticum outside Mass may be led by a priest, deacon, or lay minister with the following exceptions:
 - i. A priest or deacon may sprinkle the sick person with holy water.
 - ii. A priest gives the Apostolic Pardon.
 - iii. A priest or deacon blesses the sick person and those present. If any of the Blessed Sacrament remains may bless the sick person with it by making the sign of the cross in silence.

COMMENDATION OF THE DYING

10. In viaticum the dying person is united with Christ in his passage out of this world to the Father. Through the prayers of the commendation of the dying, the Church sustains this union until it is brought to fulfillment after death.

11. The presence of a priest or deacon shows more clearly that the person dies in the communion of the Church however other members of the community may be prepared to assist with these prayers.

12. The texts are intended to help the dying person to face the anxiety about death by imitating Christ. Even if the dying person is seemingly unconscious and unable to hear, the attending family and friends will find comfort in the prayers and scripture to give voice to the paschal character of Christian death. It is inappropriate to discuss funeral plans around a dying person who is unable to participate in the discussion.

13. Just as the dying person was signed by the cross at baptism, this sign may be repeated as they near death.

14. Immediately after death, those present may kneel if opportune while the prayers (no. 221-222) are said. The body may be sprinkled with holy water.

PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD

15. These prayers are for the times to be used by a minister who has been called to attend a person who has already died.

16. Since the person is already dead, the deacon would not summon a priest to celebrate the sacraments of penance or anointing. It might be necessary to explain to the family that the sacraments are for the living and not for the dead. Furthermore, the dead are helped by the prayers of the living.

17. To conclude these prayers may be a simple blessing or a symbolic gesture as signing the cross on the forehead or sprinkling the body with holy water.

PASTORAL CARE OF THE SICK READINGS, RESPONSES, AND VERSES FROM SACRED SCRIPTURE

These readings may be used in the Mass for the sick, while visiting the sick or when praying for the sick. Pastoral need may help to determine the selection and special attention given to the physical or spiritual need of the sick person.

The sense of hearing often continues despite appearances. There is a value to the reading of the scriptures even if there is no discernable response.

CHRISTIAN INITIATION FOR THE DYING

Usually, Christian initiation is celebrated over a period of time to allow the dying person, the family and friends to benefit fully from their celebration using the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults.

In danger of death but able to hear and answer questions, anyone catechumen or not, may be baptized using the short rite in nos. 281-296 by a deacon. Holy communion may also be given at this time. A priest may confirm.

If the death of the person is imminent and the time is pressing, the minister who may be anyone of the faithful, may baptize by pouring natural water on the head of the sick person saying the usual sacramental form.

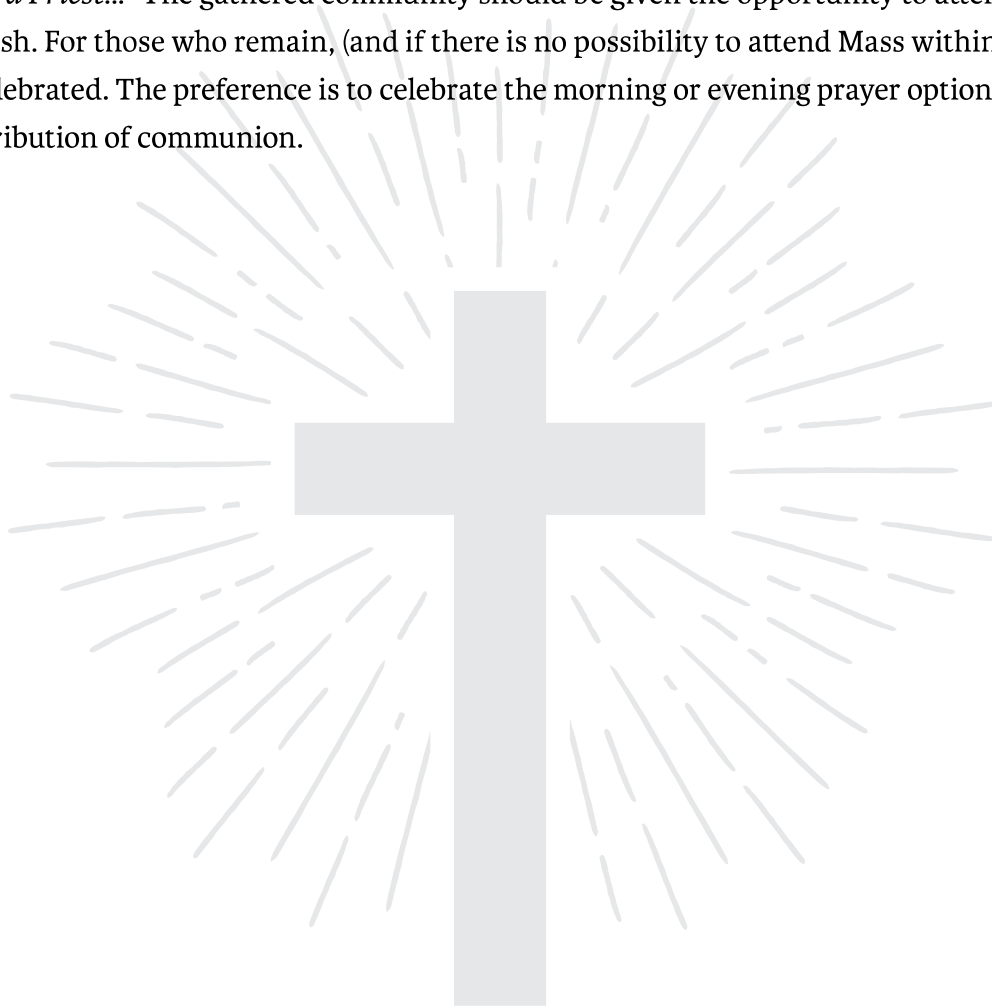
If the one, baptized in danger of death, recovers their health, they should be given a suitable formation, be received at the church at a fitting time, and be given the rest of the sacraments of initiation.



PRESIDING AT A SUNDAY CELEBRATION IN THE ABSENCE OF A PRIEST

It is the hope that priests will make themselves available to preside at the weekend Eucharistic Liturgy whenever and wherever necessary for the people of the diocese.

However, there are occasional emergencies where a priest will not be available for the scheduled Eucharistic Liturgy. When these true emergencies occur, the Ritual states “... *a deacon may celebrate Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest...*” The gathered community should be given the opportunity to attend Mass at a neighboring parish. For those who remain, (and if there is no possibility to attend Mass within the area) the Ritual may be celebrated. The preference is to celebrate the morning or evening prayer options of the ritual without the distribution of communion.

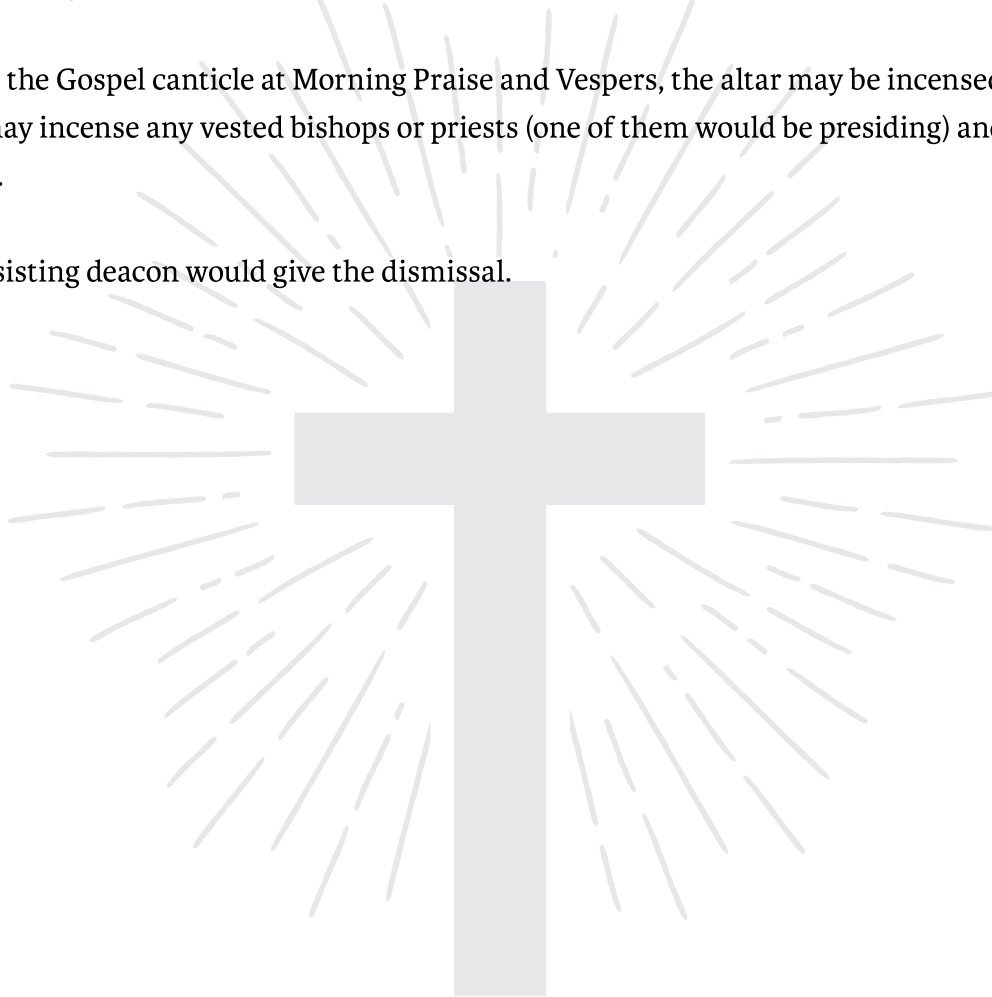


OTHER COMMUNITY CELEBRATIONS**THE DEACON AS PRESIDER AT THE LITURGY OF THE HOURS**

1. The deacon who presides at the celebration may wear a stole over his alb. On greater solemnities, the cope may be worn. The role of the presiding deacon makes no great demand upon his singing talent and should not be beyond the ability of any deacon.
2. Presiding at his chair, the deacon begins the Office with the introductory verse, to begin the Lord's Prayer, to say the concluding oration, and to greet, bless, and dismiss the assembly.
3. Either the deacon or a minister may pray the petitions. Those who function in the role of lector stand in a suitable place (within the community's worship space, the appropriate place is the ambo) to proclaim the reading, whether the readings are long or short.
4. The psalms are prayed or sung). Alternate verses or strophes which may be sung by two choirs or two parts of the group, or responsorial, according to different traditions or practices.
5. At the beginning of each psalm its own antiphon is recited. At the end of the entire psalm, the custom is maintained of concluding with the doxology, for these traditional ending offers an appropriate laudatory, Christological and Trinitarian meaning to the prayers of the Old Testament. After the psalm the antiphon may be repeated.
6. During the Gospel canticle at Lauds and Vespers, the altar may be incensed.
7. All in the assembly stand: while the introduction to the Office and the introductory verse of each Hour is being said; while the hymn is being sung; while the Gospel canticle is being proclaimed; while the petitions, the Lord's Prayer, and the concluding oration are being prayed.
8. Everyone makes the Sign of the Cross at the beginning of the Hours when the, "God, come to my assistance," is prayed; and at the beginning of each of the Gospel Canticles, and at the final blessing.
9. At the first hours prayed during the day, everyone makes the Sign of the Cross on the lips at the beginning of the invitatory at the words, "*Lord, open my lips*".

THE DEACON ASSISTING AT THE LITURGY OF THE HOURS

1. A deacon may assist a bishop, priest, or another deacon who presides at the Liturgy of the Hours. The assisting deacon is to wear a stole over his alb.
2. The deacon takes the chair to the right of the Priest and assists the Priest whenever necessary.
3. The assisting deacon reads the scripture and pray the petitions.
4. During the Gospel canticle at Morning Praise and Vespers, the altar may be incensed. The assisting deacon may incense any vested bishops or priests (one of them would be presiding) and then the assembly.
5. The assisting deacon would give the dismissal.



THE DEACON LEADING THE ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

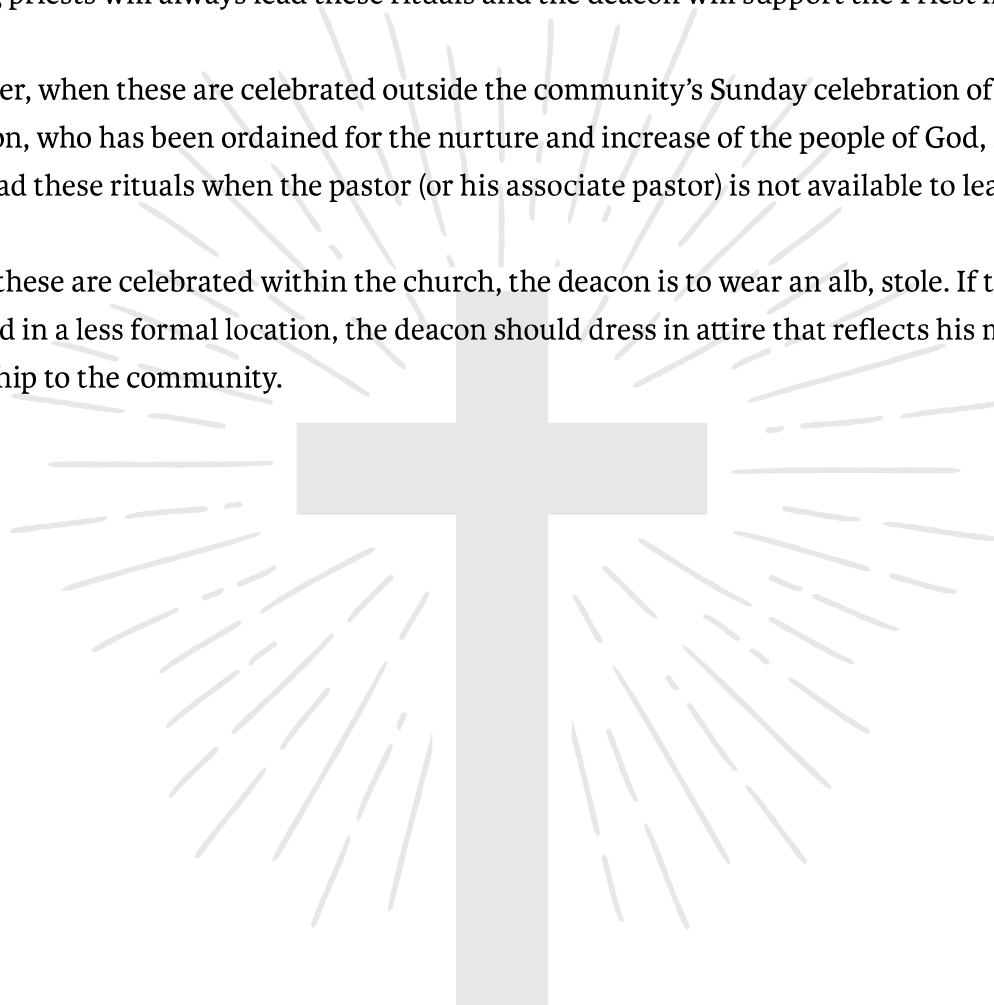
The blessing and giving of ashes may be done outside Mass. In this case the entire liturgy of the word should be celebrated: entrance song, opening prayer, readings and chants, homily, blessing and giving of ashes, general intercessions. (GIRM rubrics for Ash Wednesday)

1. The above option allows the distribution of ashes outside Mass. Because it is outside Mass, deacons can lead this abbreviated service when priests are not available.
2. The deacon vests in alb, stole
3. A simple entrance procession greeting and reminder that the celebration is not a Mass.
4. The entire Liturgy of the Word should be celebrated: readings for Ash Wednesday and homily.
5. The blessing and distribution of ashes follow the homily.
6. There is not to be the distribution of communion at these celebrations.
7. The celebration concludes with the Universal Prayers concluded with The Lord's Prayer, closing prayer from the *Roman Missal*

THE DEACON AND THE MINOR RITES OF THE OCIA

There are several minor rites to mark the journey of discovery and their growth in faith for those who enter the Catholic Church through the OCIA. The entire community is involved in this journey and should be included in the celebration of these rituals of exorcism, blessing and anointing whenever possible.

1. When these rituals are celebrated within the community's Sunday celebration of the Eucharist, the presiding priests will always lead these rituals and the deacon will support the Priest in them.
2. However, when these are celebrated outside the community's Sunday celebration of the Eucharist, the deacon, who has been ordained for the nurture and increase of the people of God, should be the first to lead these rituals when the pastor (or his associate pastor) is not available to lead them.
3. When these are celebrated within the church, the deacon is to wear an alb, stole. If they are celebrated in a less formal location, the deacon should dress in attire that reflects his ministerial relationship to the community.



DEACONS AND THE COMMUNITY'S PUBLIC DEVOTIONS

1. Devotions

There are several devotions in the life of the Church. The Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Stations of the Cross, the Chaplet of Divine Mercy are some of the well-known in contemporary times. However, there are many other forms of praying the rosary and numerous novenas that have had a long history in the prayer life of Christians.

2. Popular devotions of the Christian people are to be highly endorsed, provided they accord with the laws and norms of the Church, above all when they are ordered by the Apostolic See.

Devotions proper to Churches also have a special dignity if they are undertaken by mandate of the bishops according to customs or books lawfully approved.

But these devotions should be so fashioned they harmonize with the liturgical seasons, accord with the sacred liturgy, are in some way derived from it and lead people to it, since in fact, the liturgy, by its very nature far surpasses any of them.

3. Deacons may act as leaders in devotions. There are many different Church approved worship aids that can be used. Deacons should be duly cautious about devotions that could become superstitious or have not received the proper ecclesial approval.

DEACONS CELEBRATING BLESSINGS APART FROM MASS

1. The deacon should have a *Book of Blessings* (published by the Congregation for Divine Worship) and be familiar with it.

2. “The celebration of blessings holds a privileged place among all the Sacramentals created by the Church for the pastoral benefit of the people of God. As a liturgical action, the celebration leads the faithful to praise God and prepares them for the principal effect of the sacraments. By celebrating a blessing the faithful can also sanctify various situations and events in their lives.” *Book of Blessings*, “decree”, May 31, 1984

3. “It belongs to the ministry of a deacon to preside at those blessings that are so indicated in place in this book because, as the minister of the altar, of the word, and of charity, the deacon is the assistant of the bishop and college of presbyters.

But whenever a priest is present, it is more fitting that the office of presiding be assigned to him and that the deacon assist by carrying out those functions proper to the diaconate.” *Book of Blessings*, “General Introduction”, 18 c

4. CELEBRATION OF A BLESSING

a. A typical celebration of a blessing consists of two parts: first, the proclamation of the word of God, and second, the praise of God’s goodness and the petition of his help.

In addition, there are usually rituals for the beginning and conclusion that are proper to each celebration.

In the adaptations of celebrations, careful distinctions must be made between matters of lesser and greater importance. The proclamation of the word of God and the Church’s prayer of blessing are not to be omitted even when the shorter form of the rite is used.

Outward signs such as outstretching, of hands, the laying on of hands, the sign of the cross, the use of holy water, and incensation, accompany the prayer recalling God’s saving acts so that the faith of those present is nurtured and encourage them to take part. To ensure participation and to guard against superstition it is generally not permissible to impart the blessing of any article or place merely through a sign of blessing without either scripture or any spoken prayer. Vesture in communal celebrations is an alb with white stole with a cope on more solemn occasions.

b. In most cases a communal celebration is preferred especially in the context of blessing places and things. Servers, lectors, psalmists, and choir may all fulfill their proper functions.

c. The outward signs of blessing, in particular the sign of the cross, are in themselves forms of preaching the Gospel and expressing. To ensure participation and guard against superstition it is generally not permissible to make the sign of the cross without scripture or prayer.

A deacon may give the following blessings contained in the Book of Blessings, when the blessing takes place apart from Mass.

1. Blessing of a Family

- Annual Blessing in Homes
- Blessing of Spouses (outside Mass) - for Anniversaries
- Blessing of Baptized Children
- Blessing of Unbaptized Children
- Blessing of Sons and Daughters
- Blessing of an Engaged Couple
- Blessing of a Woman before or after Childbirth
- Blessing of the Aged (outside Mass)
- Blessing of Sick Adults
- Blessing of Sick Children
- Blessing of Catechists
- Blessing of a Catechetical Meeting
- Blessing of Organizations concerned with Public Safety
- Blessing of Pilgrims
- Blessing of Travelers

2. Blessing of a New Building

- Blessing of a New Home
- Blessing of a New School or University
- Blessing of a New Library
- Blessing of a Nursing Home or Hospital
- Blessing of an Office, Shop or Factory
- Blessing of a Gymnasium or Athletic Field
- Blessing of Communications Media
- Blessing of Various Means of Transportation
- Blessing of Mechanical Equipment
- Blessing of Tools
- Blessing of Animals

Blessing of Fields and Flocks
Blessing of the Harvest
Blessing Before and After Meals

3. Blessing of a Cross

Blessing of Images for Public Veneration
Blessing of Bells
Blessing of Organs
Blessing of New Church Doors
Blessing of Stations of the Cross

4. Blessing of Religious Articles

Blessing of a Rosary
Blessing of Scapulars

5. Blessing in Thanksgiving for Favors Received

Blessing of Various Situations

6. In addition, the deacons may bless throats on the Feast of St. Blaise; bless rings during the Marriage ceremony; and bless baptismal water during the Rite of Baptism.

