

GUIDELINES FOR LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS IN SCHOOLS & COLLEGES OF THE DIOCESE CELEBRATED BY THE BISHOP OF LANCASTER



25 SEPTEMBER 2013

For the attention of all Catholic Schools & Colleges in the Diocese of Lancaster

Dear Friends,

It's always a joy to visit the schools and colleges of the Diocese – particularly to share in moments of liturgy and prayer.

The following are some guidelines offered, by way of help, when preparing a liturgical celebration in school - particularly Masses - involving me as Diocesan Bishop:

A. THE 'THEME' OF THE MASS

- 1.** The 'theme' of the Mass is elected by the readings and prayers given for the celebration. I would generally intend to celebrate the Liturgy and to preach – if at all possible - using the readings and prayers from the day. The Mass of the day is stipulated by the Lancaster Diocesan "Ordo" - all our school chaplaincies should have a copy (*available from T Snape Printers, Boltons Court, Preston, PR1 3TY, Tel: 01772 254553 e: info@tsnapeprinters.co.uk*)
- 2.** If a feast or solemnity falls on the day, then the Mass prayers and readings of the day in their entirety should be used. If it is a Memorial then I will use these prayers - but with the readings of the ordinary cycle. Unless the rubrics of the day say otherwise there is to be no Gloria. The Mass will take the form of a Stational Mass of a Bishop (*cf. Ceremonial of Bishops nos.119-70*.)
- 3.** A second reading before the Gospel is probably not necessary for children and young people – unless specifically stipulated in the liturgical books.
- 4.** For Mass, I will use mitre and crozier if possible – depending upon the occasion, the number of servers and other local circumstances.
- 5.** Those clergy and liturgists involved locally in the actual organisation of the liturgy should work collaboratively with your musicians, singers etc. to ensure that the liturgical music reflects these texts. Therefore, it may be that some part of the music is choral to allow the congregation to participate by silent prayer and meditation.

B. A 'NOBLE SIMPLICITY'

1. In order to strive towards a 'noble simplicity' as the Second Vatican Council invites us there is no need to add extra parts to the celebration of Mass. To do this runs the risk of 'overload' and confusion.

2. Special care should be given at Mass to having a proper altar, the necessary liturgical vestments (stole *and* chasuble in the liturgical colour of the Mass) and suitable altar cloth, frontal and altar linen and that there are enough sacred vessels. Such vessels should certainly be made of worthy metals (*Redemptionis Sacramentum no.117*). Chalices should be used exclusively for the precious blood; and patens and ciboria for the sacred hosts.

C. A PLACE TO PREPARE FOR MASS

Upon arrival, greeting and welcome at school, a suitable, quiet and recollected place for me to prepare for the celebration of Mass would be very much appreciated.

D. ALTAR SERVERS

It is good that pupils who are experienced altar servers in their parishes are invited to serve at school Masses. My Secretary Father Robert Billing will be pleased to guide them during the celebration of Mass.

E. INVITING PARISHIONERS

1. If appropriate, please do ensure that local parishioners feel they are welcome to join the celebration.

2. It is appropriate to invite the local priests to concelebrate at Mass, or to attend in choir dress.

F. SINGING THE MASS & THE PLACE OF SILENCE

1. The singing of Eucharistic acclamations, processional chants (entrance, offertory and communion: English musical versions of these are available in the resource *Simple English Propers*, which is available on Amazon) and the responsorial psalm takes priority over hymns or solo/choral pieces. Time should be spent finding accessible musical settings, either from the musical heritage of the Church or more modern compositions, of the Psalm of the day (or at least the refrain), Gospel Acclamation, Sanctus, Memorial Acclamation, Great Amen and Agnus Dei.

2. Where hymns are used care should be taken to use the best of the old and new.

The following are some suggested hymns suitable for school Masses (for children *and* staff):

- Alleluia sing to Jesus
- All people that on earth do dwell
- As I kneel before you
- Be thou my vision
- Blest are the pure in heart
- Bread of Life, Truth eternal
- Christ be beside me
- Christ be our light
- Come Holy Ghost
- Come praise the Lord the almighty
- Father we adore you
- Father we love you, we worship and adore you
- Firmly I believe and truly
- Gentle Woman
- Guide me O thou Great Redeemer

- Hail Queen of Heaven
- Holy Spirit of Fire
- Holy Virgin by God's decree
- How lovely on the mountains
- Let all mortal flesh keep silence
- Lord Jesus Christ, you have come to us
- Majesty!
- Now thank we all our God!
- O Bread of Heaven
- O Godhead hid
- O Lord you search me and you know me
- Oh the word of my Lord
- Praise to the holiest
- Praise to the Lord the almighty
- Sing Alleluia
- Seed scattered and sown
- Spirit of God in the clear running water
- Sweet heart of Jesus
- Tell out my soul
- The Church's one foundation
- Appropriate Taize chants

In the extended Christmas season Christmas carols are most suitable. During Lent hymns of a penitential character should be chosen. In the extended Easter season hymns of a jubilant and exultant character should be elected *i.e.* lots of alleluias!!

3. Space for silence during the Mass is especially called for by the *General Instruction to the Roman Missal*. This should fall after the homily and then again after Holy Communion and before the post-communion prayer.

G. USE OF THE DIVINE NAME

It is worth noting that the use of 'Yahweh' in hymns or readings is highly offensive to the Jewish people. The name is sometimes found in some liturgical songs and so we are asked by the Holy See (*29 June 2008*) to refrain from using the name but to replace it instead with the word *Lord* where it occurs.

H. PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL (BIDDING PRAYERS)

These should be brief prayer intentions – no more than 4 – and according to local custom ends with the Hail Mary and the celebrant's concluding prayer.

I. THE OFFERTORY PROCESSION AT MASS

1. Only the gifts of bread and wine are brought forward in the (Offertory) Procession of Gifts. This statement may seem self-evident, but it's amazing how often people want to carry books, banners, candles, etc to the altar - with the bread and wine. Such items, if carried in at all, should be brought in during the entrance procession.

2. The only items to be placed on the altar itself, which is a symbol of Christ, are to be the bread and wine, book, cross and candles. Other significant objects, display work and symbols can be displayed in another, suitably decorated part of the sanctuary, away from the altar.

J. THE DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION AT MASS

1. Just before the distribution of Holy Communion a member of staff should briefly remind the children and staff about the proper reception of Holy Communion. Baptised Catholics who have made their First Communion, and are not in any other way impeded, receive Holy Communion at the Mass. They can receive either directly onto the tongue or by placing one hand on top of another, in the hand. **All** are welcome to come forward for a blessing instead. To indicate they wish to have a blessing they should cross their arms over their chest.

2. As part of the same reminder notice a member of staff should briefly announce where communion will be distributed from. They may wish, very briefly to remind again about the reception of Holy Communion.

3. Ordinarily only priests or deacons should distribute communion. However, if there are not enough ordinary ministers present, so that the distribution of communion would not be unduly long, then extraordinary ministers may be used. These should have received proper training and have been properly commissioned as extraordinary ministers for your specific school.

K. LITURGICAL BOOKLET

For all visits that include a Mass/Blessing /Liturgical Act there will still be a need for a service booklet. This should be sent in draft form for approval to the Bishop's Office bishop@lancasterdiocese.org.uk - 2 weeks before the Visit and before going to print – together with the proposed programme for the visit.

Templates that can be adapted are available on the diocesan website http://www.lancasterdiocese.org.uk/Groups/154874/The_Diocese_of/Useful_Information/Documents/Documents.aspx

L. PARKING

It would be very much appreciated if a parking space could be reserved for me near to the school entrance.

M. OFFERING

The usual customary courtesy of providing the Bishop with an offering is always deeply appreciated – this helps with my day to day costs and travel expenses.

With every good wish, prayer and thanks,

+ Michael Campbell OSA

✠ Michael G Campbell OSA
Bishop of Lancaster

25 September 2013

