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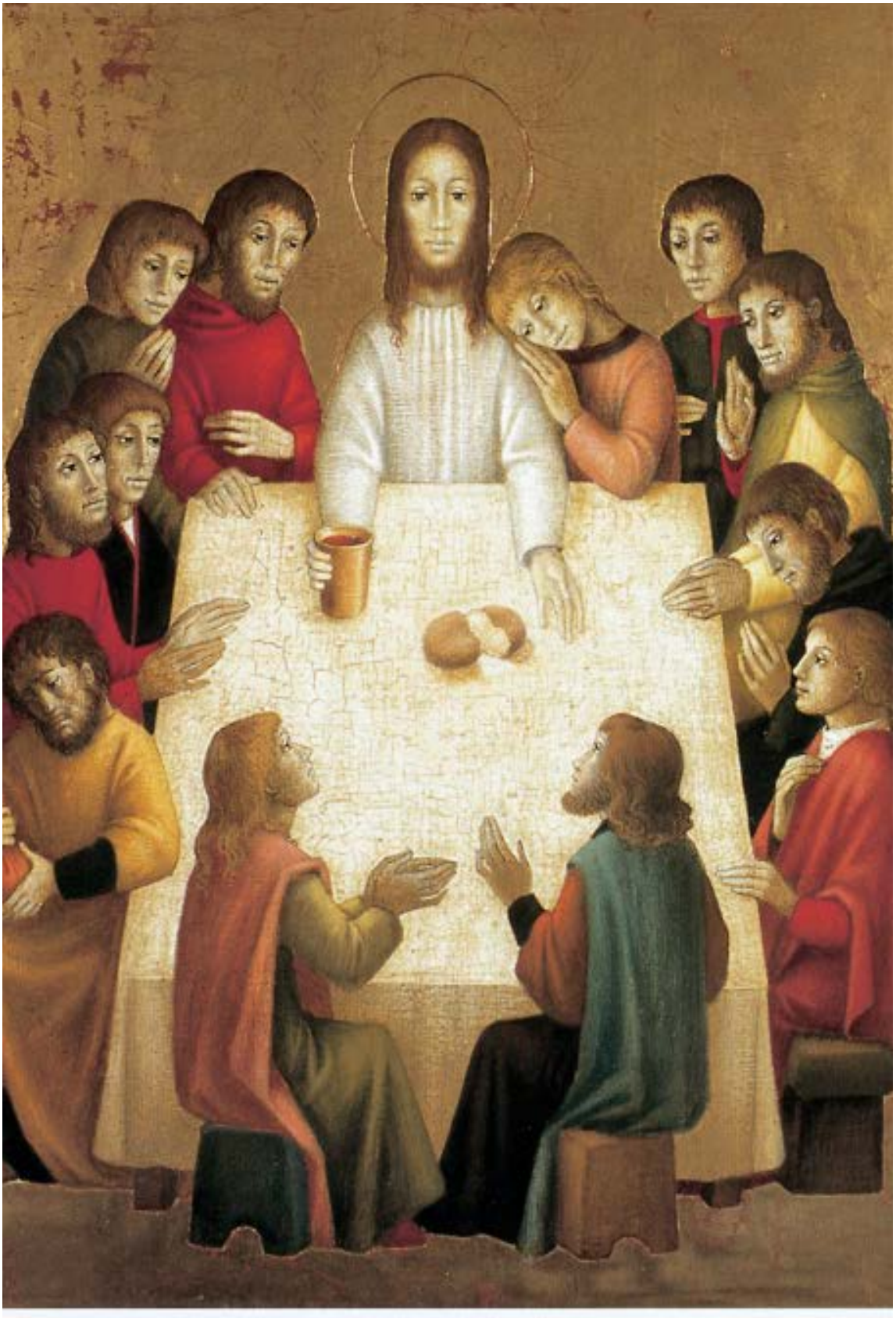
A FUTURE *full of*
HOPE



A resource for teachers, chaplains and all others involved in the preparation of school Masses

CELEBRATING THE MASS

A FUTURE FULL OF HOPE
CLIFTON DIOCESE

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CONTENTS

Introduction – Bishop Declan Lang	4
The Mass	6
Preparing the Mass	9
Preparing the Place for Mass	12
Signs and Symbols	15
The Priest	17
Music at Mass	19
Altar Servers at Mass	22
Reading Scripture at Mass	25
The Prayer of the Faithful	28
The Offertory	30
Ministering Holy Communion	33
Liturgy Planner	37
Simple Glossary	39
Glossary – expanded	40
Order of Mass	46

INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of his papacy Pope Francis has called us to a renewed and fresh encounter with Jesus Christ. In his Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelli Gaudium (The Joy of the Gospel)* he wrote,

> *'I invite all Christians, everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ, or at least an openness to letting him encounter them; I ask all of you to do this unfailingly each day.'* [1]

There are many ways in which we can encounter Jesus Christ such as in our personal prayer or when we serve each other, especially the poor and the weak. However, central to our Catholic faith is the encounter we have with the Lord in the Liturgy, especially at the celebration of the Mass. At Mass Jesus is truly present. As it says in this booklet: The Mass 'is not simply a re-enactment of the Last Supper, rather it is an encounter with the person of Jesus Christ.'

The Church gives us clear guidelines both about how we should prepare for Mass and the way in which it is celebrated. These are not arbitrary guidelines but they are given to us so that we may truly encounter Christ at Mass. Set out in this booklet are clear principles given to us so that God's word may be clearly heard in the Liturgy of the Word and his real presence known and felt in the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

I am very happy that these guidelines have been produced and I am sure that they will produce great fruit in the worthy celebration of Mass in our schools and colleges.

Bishop Declan Lang

1 Evangelii Gaudium 3

A SCHOOL'S GUIDE TO THE MASS

WHAT IS IT?

The Mass is the memorial of the saving death and resurrection of Jesus.

The celebration of Mass, an action of Christ and his people, is the centre of the whole of Christian life for the Church, and for each individual Christian.

In 300 AD the Emperor Diocletian banned Christians, on pain of death, from the celebration of Mass. When forty-nine people were arrested for doing just that, one man, called Emeritus, replied 'Without the Lord's Day, we cannot live'. They were all executed for refusing to stop - for them, celebrating Mass on Sunday meant more even than their lives.

The very first Christians took Sunday, the day that Jesus rose from the dead, as the day on which they assembled, prayed, read the Scriptures and broke bread, just as they had done with him at the Last Supper. They looked on it as a sacred duty and, to this day, that celebration, which we call the Eucharist, has continued. The Eucharist, or Mass, the memorial of the saving death and resurrection of Christ, is central to the life of a Catholic. It is not simply a re-enactment of the Last Supper, rather it is an encounter with the person of the Risen Christ.

THE MASS IS GIVEN TO US

The Mass is a central part of the Tradition of the Church. Instituted by Christ at the Last Supper, it is handed down by the Church from generation to generation. The Mass is a given. Our task is to learn to celebrate it faithfully and well, so that it might be fruitful in our lives.

BY THE WHOLE CHURCH

The Mass is for the whole assembly to celebrate. A celebration of Mass should always be prepared so that it will lead those taking part to conscious, full and active participation. Participation that fosters the virtues of faith, hope and charity is what is expected because of what we celebrate but also because, through our baptism, we all share in the priesthood of Christ.

One implication of this is that in the worship of the Church, priests and other ministers, such as deacons and altar servers, don't celebrate the Mass for us, we do it together. They have their vital role and, without an ordained priest, we cannot celebrate the Mass. But each one present has a role to play, and principal amongst the roles of the priest and other ministers is to help all present to fulfil that role.

CELEBRATE WELL

The work of celebration needs constant support so that all of those taking part - priest, other ministers and all present - are helped to know what they are to do and how to do it. Attention to the internals of participation (such as prayerful preparation) are at least as important as attention to the externals (such as spoken responses).

WHAT IS GIVEN TO US?

THE STRUCTURE OF THE MASS

It is a simple and dynamic structure:

- gathering and introductory rites;
- liturgy of the Word;
- liturgy of the Eucharist;
- blessing and dismissal/going forth.

If we work with the structure it will help our celebration. If we work against it, the nature of the Mass as ritual is compromised.

THE PRAYERS AND READINGS OF THE MASS

These are found in the Lectionary and the Missal. Texts for each day of the year and texts for special occasions are provided. We are invited to make appropriate selection, from the options available, such as for a votive Mass for Our Lady during May or for the Sacred Heart during June - but always in consultation with the priest.

The Catholic tradition is a liturgical tradition, where given prayers and readings matter. When the prayers and readings are not easy to understand on first encounter - and for children that will probably mean most of our readings and prayers - those responsible for Catholic education and for worship need to help the pupils and students understand them, and to do this especially before the celebration itself.

THE SYMBOLS OF THE MASS

The Mass is God communicating with us through sacrament (a symbol that signifies what it effects). If sacraments don't signify, their ability to effect, or to 'work', is greatly compromised.

Gathering, Listening and Responding, Giving Thanks, Eating and Drinking and Leaving the Eucharist to live as Christ are not simply things we go through the motions of doing. They need to be purposeful and significant. Again, this needs to be learnt by everyone taking part if, together, we are to do what is necessary.

PREPARING FOR MASS

This is not difficult to do but, like everything else, it does require particular skills. It is very helpful for the person with overall responsibility for the Mass to become:

- familiar with the Missal;
- familiar with the Lectionary;
- familiar with the priorities and principles regarding music at Mass;
- familiar with the Church's expectations of readers, servers, and other ministries.

You do not have to be **the** expert on all of these things. Normally you should expect your role to be more of a coordinating role, as you draw on the expertise of others (who may, for example, select music, train readers, write the texts for the Prayer of the Faithful).

But you, working alongside the priest, are the person who has been given responsibility for ensuring the suitability and quality of the celebration. So you need to have an understanding of the basics.

Indeed, sometimes you will have to 'train the experts' as, for example, simply because someone is a skilled musician doesn't necessarily mean they have an understanding of the expectations of music at Mass.

The various sheets in this booklet remind us of the basics and we include a Liturgy Planner to enable you to ensure that you have everything covered.

To take things further, once you have the basics in place, secondary schools might have a look at *Celebrating the Mass*. Primary schools might look at the *Directory for Masses with Children*, which offers possible adaptation with younger children.

A SCHOOL'S GUIDE TO PREPARING THE MASS

IMPORTANCE OF PREPARATION

Every celebration of Mass should be prepared carefully. It is important that the priest is involved at an early stage.

There are always choices to be made. Careful preparation helps ensure that the choices are made wisely so as to best support and encourage the prayer participation of those with whom the Mass is being celebrated.

WHAT FACTORS SHOULD BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION?

A wide variety of factors can and should be taken into consideration.

The day of the celebration

What is the focus of the day in the Church's calendar? Sometimes this determines prayers/readings that must be used. But once the character of the Church's day is known you might ask:

What options are provided in the Lectionary and in the Missal?

The gathered community

Often what is proper for a celebration with 30 eight-year-olds will not be so suitable for a celebration with a congregation of adults and teenagers.

The musical repertoire

This should be known by the congregation and by the music ministers. Often it will be appropriate to learn a new setting, hymn or chant for a particular Mass, but the planning starts with knowledge of what is already known and what is the musical competence of the congregation.

Opportunities and restrictions

These maybe imposed by the time/place of celebration - e.g. is there a noisy activity taking place next door?

A SIMPLE PROCESS TO FOLLOW

1 Establish the context

What is the particular reason for the celebration?

What are the expectations of the style of celebration – e.g. a quiet celebration of the Mass of the Day or something more particular and festive?

Who will take part in the celebration?

Where will the celebration take place?

What dates/times are available?

2 Once basic decisions have been made, about the who, what, where and when of the celebration, the work of researching the options can begin.

How will this be done? By one person or a group working together?

Who will make the final decisions, having consulted with the priest?

3 Agree who will be involved in the practical preparation of the place of celebration.

Notify them and give them the information they need to take responsibility for the tasks allocated to them.

Agree when arrangements need to be concluded and necessary information passed on to the central coordinator, such as the names of readers, copies of Prayer of the Faithful.

4 After the celebration gather the principal people responsible for the preparation to review how things went, so that there can be effective learning from the experience in preparation for the next time.

5 Create a process to review what the children experienced – how will they feed this back?

PREPARATION WORKSHEET

THE CONTEXT

What is the particular reason for the celebration? Be sure to advise the priest.

What are the expectations of the style of celebration? Is it a quiet celebration of the Mass of the day; a leavers' Mass with missionary 'sending out'?

Who will take part?

Where will we celebrate?

What dates/times are available?

RESEARCHING THE OPTIONS

How will this be done? By one person or a group working together?

Who will co-ordinate with the priest?

INVOLVEMENT

Who will be involved in the practical preparation?

What information do they need? Who will give it to them and deal with questions?

Who do they need to feed back to and when?

REVIEWING

When/where will the review meeting take place?

A SCHOOL'S GUIDE TO PREPARING THE PLACE FOR MASS

WHAT IS EXPECTED?

THE PLACE OF CELEBRATION IS FIT FOR ITS USE

Take into consideration things such as 'is this in a church or a gym/sports hall?' When it is clean, tidy, and appropriately decorated, the place of celebration shows us the importance and holiness of the Mass. Proper space must be provided for the dignified ministry of clergy, readers, musicians and others - and for the easy circulation of the assembly at the time of distribution of Holy Communion. The place of worship must help the gathered assembly realise the unity it shares in Christ.

WHAT ITEMS ARE NEEDED?

AMBO
The Lectionary
(Text for Prayer of the Faithful)

ALTAR
White altar cloth
White altar candles - 2, 4, or 6 (7 if the bishop is presiding!)
Crucifix (cross and corpus) - standing or flat on altar
Altar Missal (& concelebrants' books, if there are to be concelebrants)

CREDENCE TABLE
Corporal
Chalices, as needed
Purificators - one for each chalice
Jug of water
Bowl for priest to wash his hands
Lavabo towel
Ciboria, as needed

OFFERTORY TABLE
Large altar bread for the priest to use
Additional small altar breads
Jug of wine

ALSO
Chasuble and stole for priest
Processional candles for servers (optional)

AMBO
The ambo (lectern) is the Table of the Word. Where possible the design of the ambo should reflect the design of the altar - the Table of the Lord's Supper - but it should be noted that that although it may have design features that are similar, it should look like a place of proclamation not a miniature altar *(Consecrated for Worship 183).*

It should be of a suitable size for the readers.

It should face (at least the majority of) the assembly. It should be easily seen by all.

If a microphone is to be used, readers should be made familiar with the best way to use it in good time before Mass begins.

The dignity of the ambo means that it should be reserved for the proclamation of the Word - in readings, psalm, homily - and the Prayer of the Faithful. Another place should be found for other announcements.

ALTAR
The altar should be at a proper height for the priest to stand at it. It should be large enough to hold with dignity all the things that need to be placed there, and the actions that take place there. The altar should be stable and dressed with dignity, fitting its sacred function. The altar fittings – candle stands, crucifix - should be of a size appropriate to the size of the altar.

USE THE RIGHT BOOKS
The Church requires that the Liturgical books used be fitting for the sacred Liturgy. Therefore, the official editions of Lectionary and Missal should be used, and not Sunday or Weekday Missals. When Mass is in school, the study edition of the Lectionary and the Chapel edition of the Missal may be used. If a school does not have the right books (perhaps the parish could gift them?), then do ensure that readings on a sheet are placed inside a firm and worthy folder.

CREDENCE AND OFFERTORY TABLES
These should be dressed with a white cloth and have enough room for the various items that need to be on them. There should not be lighted candles on these tables.

The credence table should be easily accessible from the altar but not right next to it. The sensible place to put the offertory table is usually near the entrance to the place of worship.

GETTING THE NUMBERS RIGHT

NUMBER OF ALTAR BREADS
It is important to try and ensure that the number of altar breads brought to the altar for consecration match the number of communicants. This is especially important when there is no tabernacle at the place of celebration.

NUMBER OF CIBORIA
The time of distribution of Holy Communion should not be rushed. Neither should it be unduly extended. If there are more than 50 communicants, it is best to have a second minister to assist with the distribution of hosts.

NUMBER OF CHALICES
When Holy Communion is being ministered under both kinds it is usual to have two Ministers of the Chalice for each Minister of the Hosts. In a school situation it may be more appropriate not to have communion under both kinds, to avoid the risk of accidents.

NUMBER OF MINISTERS OF COMMUNION
Ministers of Holy Communion should be commissioned for ministry in the school as needed. The responsibility for approving, training and instituting of ministers lies with the local parish priest. However, he is likely to be ready to approve the use of ministers who are already commissioned for the distribution of Holy Communion elsewhere in the diocese. If new ministers are to be commissioned, there is no minimum age set by the Church but ministers must have been confirmed and be in good standing with the Church.

CHAIRS FOR PRIEST(S) AND SERVERS
The presider's (or priest's) chair is designed to be a place from which he presides at the Liturgy. Therefore, it is good to place the chair where he is free to move and can easily have eye contact with the congregation.

It should generally not be behind the altar but, ideally, to the side of it or, if necessary, in front of it.

The seats for altar servers should be placed close to the credence table. Seats for concelebrating clergy may be placed near the servers.

A SCHOOL'S GUIDE TO SIGNS AND SYMBOLS

WHY WORRY?

The Mass is God communicating with us through sacrament (a symbol that signifies what it effects). If sacraments don't signify, their ability to effect, or to 'work', is greatly compromised. Giving attention to the quality of the symbols is a pastoral response to the needs of the Assembly.

PRINCIPAL SYMBOLS

ASSEMBLY

The assembly, the Body of Christ, should experience itself as gathered and ordered for celebration. Its members should be able to see and hear clearly, and be in sufficient comfort to allow them to participate.

WORD

The Word of God should be able to be heard by all present. Amplification and loop systems, and signing, should be available as needed. The dignity of the Word should be indicated by the use of the Lectionary (or in some other way, if necessary).

BREAD AND WINE

Altar breads should be fresh. The large altar bread used by the priest should be large enough so that it can be 'truly broken into parts and distributed to at least some of the faithful', as the Church requires. Wine should be natural and pure and free from any foreign substance. It must be alcoholic wine (NB not all wine sold as Communion wine is intended for Catholic use, so check carefully with your supplier). In practice, while desirable, communion under both kinds may not always be practical in a school setting.

PRIEST

The priest is to lead the people in prayer, in listening and responding to God's word and in offering the Sacrifice through Christ in the Spirit to the Father. If he is to lead the assembly he needs to be carefully prepared, and in good time, as to what is proposed for a Mass. He also needs to exercise responsibility for those parts which most closely relate to his role.

OTHER MAIN SIGNS

ALTAR

The altar is where the Sacrifice of the Cross is made present and the Table of the Lord around which we gather. It is venerated as symbol of Christ, cornerstone of the Church and a Living Stone. It should be dressed with a cloth, and reserved for its Eucharistic function. Candles may be placed on the altar; flowers may be put next to the altar but not on it.

AMBO
The ambo or lectern is the Table of the Word and complements the altar (table for the sacrament). Its design should indicate the dignity of the Word. It should remain in its place throughout the Mass.

CROSS
The cross is a constant reminder of the cost of our salvation and a symbol of hope. The cross should be visible to the whole assembly during Mass. The cross should bear a figure of Christ crucified. The cross may be on or near the altar, or be brought in procession.

CHAIR
In a church the presider's chair is a symbol of the priest's office. It symbolises unity, leadership and service. When celebrating in a school hall it will rarely be possible to achieve this, and usually the chair will simply serve as a chair.

CANDLES
The light of candles signifies Christ the light of the world; the gradual burning down of the candle as wax is consumed in the flame symbolises Christ's self-sacrifice in the service of his mission. Only genuine wax candles should be used. Fake 'candles' with oil inserts are not permitted at Mass. Normally two, four, or six are to be used, according to the level of solemnity. Seven should be lit when the bishop presides at Mass.

VESSELS
When it is not practical for these to be of precious metal, they should be of gilded metal. Pottery or porcelain should not be used. Vessels for the altar bread/hosts should have the form of plates or shallow bowls, not chalices. Chalices should be large enough for the quantity of wine needed for consecration for communion.

VESTURE
The vestments worn by the priest are the stole and chasuble. Variety in colour gives effective outward expression to the seasons of the year. The priest and servers should also wear an alb, or (in the case of servers) cassock and cotta, although if these cannot be provided for servers they can wear their ordinary school clothes.

A SCHOOL'S GUIDE TO THE PRIEST

SACRAMENT OF CHRIST'S PRESENCE

In the celebration of the Eucharist, Christ is present in the person of the presiding priest, ordained for this ministry. Every authentic celebration of the Eucharist is presided over by the bishop or a priest, presiding in the person of Christ. Note that the celebrant (the bishop or priest) presides. As presider, he does not need an assistant, even if it is a teacher who knows the children well, to give instructions to the assembly – this is part of his presidential responsibility.

As so often, in the Mass, what we see is less than what we get. We see the priest, a man among men. But by virtue of the Sacrament of Ordination and the ministry entrusted to him by the bishop, this man is the symbol of Christ present for us – he is acting in the person of Christ (in persona Christi).

We need to cultivate a reverence for that presence of Christ in the ministry of the priest. This is one way in which we help ourselves to keep an awareness that the Mass is something that involves our relationship with Christ. It is not a merely human work, something we do. It is something richer by far than simply that.

THE ROLE OF THE PRIEST

The priest is the presider - in Mass he represents Christ in his role as teacher and priest; he stands before God the Father interceding for the good of his flock. He brings the prayers of thanksgiving, adoration, penance, and petition before God and calls down the Holy Spirit on the gifts of bread and wine that they may become the Body & Blood of Christ. Of all those involved in Mass, his job is specifically to serve both the people and God.

Through his prayerfulness and his relationship to the Mystery of the Mass, and to the people assembled, the priest is to assist the congregation in their praying of the Mass. It is important to recognise that to do this the priest needs to take overall responsibility for the celebration of the Mass, though he should always also work collaboratively with other ministers.

His role is more integral to the celebration than that of leading the presidential prayers, consecrating the gifts of bread and wine, and ensuring that the sacrament is validly ministered.

HOW TO HELP ENABLE YOUR PRIEST TO PRESIDE MOST EFFECTIVELY

Ensure you have consulted with him in plenty of time about the forthcoming celebration. This will help avoid clashes with Feast Days/Solemnities which might not necessarily 'fit' with the focus of your celebration, but may have priority on a particular day. Do remember that there is only ever one 'theme' to Mass – **the passion, death and resurrection of Christ.** Don't try to insert other themes.

Discuss with the priest what he will prepare and what he expects others to prepare – e.g. choice of readings, music. Agree how decisions are to be shared regarding what is prepared by the priest and what is prepared by others.

Let him know about particular pastoral issues that he should be aware of within the group that is celebrating so that he may be pastorally sensitive. For example, has there been a recent bereavement in the class, or major difficulties in the family life of a pupil or student? He does not need to know all the details, and he will treat information with professional confidentiality. He will not refer to these things during the Mass, if it is judged best not to, but sometimes knowing what not to refer to is as important as knowing what should be acknowledged in prayer.

It is sometimes appropriate for the priest to help the smooth running of the Mass by inviting forward ministers by their name at the appropriate time, e.g. 'John is now going to read the first reading to us...' If this suits your situation, let the priest have a typed list of who is doing what.

A SCHOOL'S GUIDE TO MUSIC AT MASS

WHY IS MUSIC IMPORTANT?

Singing brings a richness to our worship. As St Augustine said 'singing is for one who loves'. The different energy required makes singing a sign of personal commitment, and the beauty and dignity of the hymn add to the importance of what is taking place. It wouldn't be right to say the words of 'Happy Birthday to you' instead of singing them, and we should also encourage the feeling that there is something wrong if the key texts of the Mass are said and not sung.

MAKE YOUR SINGING REAL

In order to make our worship more truly authentic the Church urges us to avoid pre-recorded music. If your school does not already have staff or students capable of accompanying your singing, you might find that there is a parish musician available and willing to support you with music for Mass. In the meantime, it is generally more honest and true to the liturgy to sing unaccompanied rather than to use pre-recorded backing tracks.

WHAT ARE THE PRIORITIES FOR SINGING AT MASS?

The most important things for us to sing are the key acclamations of the Mass.

In the Liturgy of the Word we should sing:

- the Acclamation before the Gospel.

In the Liturgy of the Eucharist we should sing:

- the Sanctus (Holy, Holy);
- the Memorial Acclamation;
- the Great Amen;
- the Agnus Dei (Lamb of God).

This means that, in the first place, we should focus on singing the given parts of the Mass, before we think of singing anything else. The other hymns – entrance, offertory and communion, and the final hymn if there is to be one – are easier to do (because they are often well known) but the parts of the Mass should be pre-eminent.

The revision of the English words of the Mass has meant that teachers and those who provide music in school Masses have to use settings which they did not themselves learn at school. This is one reason why the Mass texts are often not sung. Looking around the diocese we have found that the most popular settings in schools are:

- **Mass of Christ the Saviour** (Dan Schutte);
- **Stella Mass** (Chris Walker, available from the Clifton Diocese Music Service);
- **The Gathering Mass** (Paul Inwood, but make sure you have the new words).

If your school is attached to a parish church it is worth finding out what settings the church uses, as you will be able to share resources and both children and congregation will be able to sing. Other texts which have priority over hymns include the Gloria (Glory to God) - when appropriate - and the Responsorial Psalm. You can choose a setting from the collection of Common Psalms if you have not learnt a setting of the Psalm of the day. **Don't substitute a song which is not a psalm.**

The Roman Rite of Mass does not envisage a final hymn. The dismissal is taken seriously! On the other hand, music here can help maintain prayer and reverence as people leave. Why not experiment and see what works best for you?

SCHOOLS & PARISHES CAN HELP EACH OTHER

As we've already said, schools and parishes can have a shared repertoire of the hymns and Mass settings. Schools generally sing these hymns less regularly than parishes do, so children attending the local parish will already know the hymns. Most primary schools have a dedicated prayer and praise time when they can learn new hymns, so schools can help parishes prepare to introduce new hymns and settings. Secondary schools might find other opportunities for hymn practice such as school or class assemblies. Collaboration shows that Church is bigger than school or parish alone.

... *before:* hearing God's call in the midst of life

THE MASS

'Do this in memory of me'

What is to be done?	*What ritual is used ?*	*What are the roles in the assembly?*	*How important is it to sing?* 1	2	3	4	5
Introductory Rite *Gathering God's people* • Becoming one in heart and voice • Preparing to listen	**Opening Procession**	All sing while ministers process or gather		𝄞			
	Greeting	Priest & people dialogue				𝄞	
	Penitential Rite	Priest [& Cantor] and people dialogue			𝄞		
	[Gloria]	Whole assembly participates		𝄞			
	Opening Prayer	Priest leads prayer; all assent with 'Amen'					𝄞
The Word *Recalling God's great works for us* • Opening our hearts • Remembering our story • Feeling our heart burn within us • Breaking and sharing the word • Praying for the Church and the world	**First Reading**	Reader proclaims; all listen					
	Psalm	Psalmist sings; all respond		𝄞			
	[Second Reading]	Reader proclaims; all listen					
	Gospel Acclamation	All sing [C. may lead] while ministers process	𝄞				
	THE GOSPEL	Deacon or Priest proclaims and all listen					
	Homily	Priest/Deacon 'breaks the word' and all listen					
	[Profession of Faith]	All recite [or sing]					𝄞
	General Intercessions *(Prayer of the Faithful, Bidding Prayer)*	Reader announces intentions; all pray in silence and then respond Priest concludes and all assent with 'Amen'				𝄞	
The Eucharist *From word to thanksgiving* • Fulfilling the Lord's command to 'Do this in memory of me' • Recalling his death, his resurrection, his coming again • Becoming one with his sacrifice • Receiving God's gifts	**Preparation of Altar & Gifts**	People bring gifts while all sing or listen *[If no song, P. may say prayers, all respond]*			𝄞		
	Prayer over the Gifts	Priest leads prayer; all assent with 'Amen'					𝄞
	EUCHARISTIC PRAYER: **Proclamation:** *dialogue & preface, thanksgiving, institution, intercessions, doxology* **Assent:** *preface dialogue responses* *Sanctus, Mem. Acc, Amen*	The priest proclaims the prayer on behalf of the whole assembly, which shows its assent by singing the acclamations	𝄞			𝄞 𝄞	
	Lord's Prayer	All pray together					𝄞
	Peace	Priest/deacon invites and all exchange peace					
	Breaking of Bread	During the breaking the 'Agnus Dei' is sung			𝄞		
	COMMUNION **Silence after communion** **{*Or: Thanksgiving hymn*** **Prayer after Communion**	All process to communion; a song is sung No music or speaking! *All sing*] Priest leads prayer; all assent with 'Amen'		𝄞 [𝄞]			𝄞
Concluding Rite *Going in peace to love and serve the Lord*	**Blessing and Dismissal**	Priest [& deacon] and people dialogue					𝄞
	Exit Procession	All sing [or listen] while ministers depart			𝄞		

... *and after:* being Christ for others until the next gathering

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A SCHOOL'S GUIDE TO ALTAR SERVERS AT MASS

WHAT ARE THEY?

Altar servers, by their skills and knowledge, serve the assembly and the priest by helping the smooth-running of the Liturgy. They carry, bring and fetch the things needed at the altar, they carry candles in procession.

They can also help prepare the altar, and the credence and offertory tables, before Mass begins.

WHO CAN SERVE AT THE ALTAR?

In theory any of the baptised can serve at the altar. In our diocese there is equal access to the ministry for male and female servers. However, it is usual to reserve the ministry to those who have also made their first Holy Communion.

It is important that anyone who is asked to serve already has acquired the skills to serve with understanding and attention. These skills will only be obtained by careful and sustained training.

The assembly and priest are not well served when this ministry is entrusted to those who do not know what to do. Neither are the servers themselves, who are shown in a poor light if they are confused and ineffective.

It is not a difficult thing to train servers in the school, and probably one of the local clergy would be happy to arrange a couple of after-school sessions to work with volunteers.

That said it is probably simpler to make use of servers who have already been trained for service in parishes. However, these, too, will require additional help to adapt themselves to the often very different circumstances of serving in a school setting.

WHAT SHOULD THEY WEAR?

It is usual for an altar server to wear a white alb and cincture, or a cassock and cotta. It would be practical for a school to hold sufficient stock in a range of standard sizes for the children who will serve. Otherwise it is usually a simple matter for the priest to bring sufficient albs, or cassocks and cottas, from the parish. Alternatively, servers may assist wearing their own school clothes.

HOW MANY SERVERS SHOULD THERE BE?

The right number for what they need to do!

This flip answer is the only really sensible one. For example, if you are having an entrance procession with thurible and boat, processional cross, and two candles, then you need four. On the other hand, if all the server is being asked to do is bring chalices from the credence table and assist in receiving the Offertory gifts then only one (or two) are needed.

So, agree on the degree of ritual that is to feature in your celebration and note the maximum number of servers you need at any one time, (probably it will be the number carrying things in the Entrance Procession), and that is the number of servers you need. Below is a list of things that the servers might do which will help you make your calculation.

You could have more, using different sets of servers for different parts of the Mass, but that can get cumbersome. Servers who are under-occupied can get bored. It is better to go for the minimum number needed than the maximum number you can 'find jobs for'.

VALUE OF RITUAL

In recent decades there has been a tendency to downplay the importance of ritual relative to the spoken word. This is unfortunate, for liturgy is essentially a symbolic action, and symbols work best when we allow them proper time and space. It is then they are most expressive and most effective.

Careful use of the given symbols of the Mass allows the Liturgy to 'speak' to us at all sorts of different levels, and helps us respond to the presence of the Lord in all sorts of different ways. Children especially will respond well to the effective use of the symbols of the Mass.

ROLES OF ALTAR SERVERS AT MASS

[Don't worry! You don't need to have this many servers – it is not usual to have thurible and boat at a school Mass – the table below just indicates possible roles and should help you to decide how many altar servers will be needed].

- **INTRODUCTORY RITES**
  ENTRANCE PROCESSION
  Thurible
  Boat
  Cross
  Candle 1
  Candle 2

- **PENITENTIAL ACT**
  Book for Collect

- **LITURGY OF THE WORD**
  Gospel Procession
  Candle 1
  Candle 2
  Thurible
  Boat

- **LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST**
  Preparation of Altar
  Bringing chalices to the altar
  Server 1
  Server 2

- **OFFERTORY**
  Receiving Offertory Gifts
  Bringing Wine/Water to the altar
  Washing priest's hands
  Server 1
  Server 2
  Thurible
  Boat

- **EUCHARISTIC PRAYER**
  Bell
  Thurible
  Boat

- **FINAL PROCESSION**
  Thurible
  Boat
  Cross
  Candle 1
  Candle 2

A SCHOOL'S GUIDE TO READING SCRIPTURE AT MASS

THE WORD OF GOD

At the heart of our Christian faith is the amazing truth that God speaks to us - his people. God finds many ways to communicate with us but central is the Bible, the written word of God. The Church teaches us that when the Scriptures are read at Mass 'God himself speaks to his people, and Christ, present in his word, proclaims the Gospel.' The task of those who minister the word, that is those who read the Scriptures at Mass, is to enable God's word to be heard and understood.

HOW DO WE KNOW WHICH READINGS ARE TO BE PROCLAIMED AT MASS?

There are readings assigned for every day of the year. The Church sets out the readings in a systematic way so that the Church listens to the biblical readings in sequence. The Church does this so that as much of the Scriptures as possible are read at the Mass. It stops us from falling into the trap of only listening to our favourite Scripture passages or closing our ears to the more difficult words of God. We do not choose what God says to us, we are called to listen to every word which comes 'forth from the mouth of God.'

This also means that we listen to the Scriptures with the whole Church. There is something wonderful in knowing that on any given Sunday the same readings are being proclaimed at every Catholic Mass throughout the world.

So, generally, the Church listens to the whole of the Scriptures in sequence, with a different cycle on Sundays and Weekdays. It is therefore usual at any Mass to listen to the readings of the day, rather than to choose readings according to what we like or what seems suitable to us.

WHERE DO WE FIND THESE READINGS?

These readings, and their arrangement, are found in the Lectionary. The Lectionary for use in England and Wales is in 3 volumes:

Volume 1 is for Sundays and the great Seasons of Advent/Christmas and Lent/ Easter.

Volume 2 for Weekdays.

Volume 3 for celebrations of particular sacraments, and in particular circumstances.

In Clifton Diocese there is a Liturgical Diary published each year, at the beginning of Advent, which gives a clear guide to the sequence of readings and to the various Saints' Days and Feasts throughout the year.

WHEN CAN WE CHANGE THE READINGS?

There are many occasions when we cannot change the Scripture readings, such as on major Feast days. There are other times such as Advent or Lent when the readings of the following Sunday may be the most appropriate. However, we should always begin with the readings assigned by the Church for that particular day.

If you need to consider changing the readings you can find appropriate readings for various needs and occasions in Volume III of the Lectionary. You should always consult the priest who will preside at the Mass before you change the readings.

WHERE SHOULD THE READING BE READ FROM?

The Readings should always be proclaimed from a Lectionary to show the reverence in which we hold God's word. Scripture should never be proclaimed from a piece of paper or from a folder. The Lectionary sets out the readings clearly.

The readings should be read from an ambo or a lectern.

WHAT IS ORDER OF READINGS AT MASS?

The Liturgy of the Word is slightly different on Sundays and on weekdays but it follows roughly the same pattern.

First Reading - Taken from the Old Testament (except during Easter time when it will come from Acts of the Apostles).

Responsorial Psalm - Taken from the Old Testament Book of Psalms or from a poetic section of the Old or New Testament.

Second Reading (on Sundays and major celebrations) - Taken from the Epistles of the New Testament or, especially during Easter time, the Book of Revelation.

Gospel Acclamation - Throughout the year the Church greets the Gospel by singing Alleluia, except during Lent when another Acclamation is used.

Gospel - The Gospel reading is taken from one of the four gospels. It is read by an ordained minister: the deacon, if one is present, or the priest or bishop.

Homily - The homily is a 'breaking open' of God's word so those present can better digest the living word of God, and benefit from it in their lives.

Creed - The Creed is recited on Sundays and other Solemnities. Having listened to God's word we re-affirm our faith in God and what he has done for us.

Prayer of the Faithful - The Liturgy of the Word concludes with the faithful uniting in prayer for those in need.

WHO SHOULD READ AT MASS?

The reader should be chosen so that the congregation is able to hear and to understand what they hear.

If a child is to read at Mass they must be clear and audible. If the Scripture reading is to bear fruit the reader will need to understand the meaning of the reading in its biblical context, think about what the reading has to say to us today, be confident, clear, audible and engaging in their proclamation.

If there is no suitable child it might mean that an adult is chosen who will be able to read well and who will be able to minister the word to the congregation.

The Gospel is always read by a deacon or a priest.

LISTENING AND RESPONDING TO THE WORD OF GOD

God speaks so that we might move into deeper relationship with him by responding to what he says.

As is so often the case, if the Mass is to be meaningful and fruitful for us, we need to work - whether we are ministers or congregation. Teachers can have a big impact on how the congregation manages to find nourishment in the word of God.

- Readings are often not easy to understand at first hearing. Perhaps in the days before Mass they could be introduced in class.

- Allow time during the Mass for silence after the reading for the congregation to take it to heart and ponder its meaning for them.

- Give time in the days after the Mass to come back to the reading, and talk about how we might live out what it says to us.

All this takes effort but it helps us form the pupils and students to be people who listen to God's word and who put it into practice in their lives. If we take this seriously, we help them develop a practice of preparing, listening and reflecting that will be theirs always.

A SCHOOL'S GUIDE TO THE PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

WHAT IS IT?

The Prayer of the Faithful, or Universal Prayer (or Bidding Prayers, as they are popularly known), forms an integral and valuable part of the celebration of the Mass. These prayers provide an opportunity for the community to pray for the needs of the world, for the Church, for those in need and for those who have died.

It is most important that careful preparation is given to these intercessions, for they assist the community in praying for those things that only God can give.

STRUCTURE

INTRODUCTION

The priest introduces the prayer in the form of an invitation to the whole assembly. It is not a prayer to God, nor to any of the three persons of the Blessed Trinity. It serves as a bridge between the proclamation of God's word and the response of the assembly in petition, made with faith and trust in God's love. The content of the invitation to prayer and the intentions should relate to the mystery being celebrated, the feast or season, or some particular aspect of the word of God proclaimed in the Scriptures.

BIDDINGS

Both the priest's introduction and those intentions proposed are addressed to the gathered assembly, not to God. The reader presents the prayer and allows a short time for silence. A communal response (spoken or sung) marks the conclusion of the particular intercession. (See examples below).

There should be about four or five bidding prayers:

- for the needs of the Church;
- for the needs of the wider world;
- for those facing oppression or particular needs;
- for the needs of the community.

One or two other bidding prayers may be included which relate to the particular celebration – for example, Advent or the beginning or end of the school year.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

The concluding prayer, said by the priest, is normally in the form of a collect prayer, which collects the silent prayer of all into a spoken prayer addressed to God. The gathered assembly gives assent to this prayer by saying 'Amen'.

TAKE CARE

Keep the prayers short and simple - so we all know what to pray for.

Make sure the priest's introduction and the biddings are addressed to the gathered assembly - not to God.

Make sure readers are comfortable with the pause (it should perhaps be about 10 seconds - time it with them). There should be only one reader for the intercessions. Don't be tempted to have several readers simply to give children 'something to do'.

Consider enriching the prayers with a simple sung responsory instead of the 'Lord in your mercy', such as the Iona 'Through our lives and by our prayers, your kingdom come.'

AN EXAMPLE

Priest: Dear brothers and sisters, let us ask God the Father, who listened to the prayers of Jesus, to hear our prayers too:

Reader: For *N.*, our Pope, and *N.*, our Bishop, and the whole Church, that they will always show God's love to the world. *(Pause)*
Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

For world leaders, that they will take care of those who are most in need. *(Pause)*
Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

For those who are sick, lonely, imprisoned or hungry, that others will have care and compassion for them. *(Pause)*
Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

For our school, and especially for the children who will be receiving their first Holy Communion next Sunday. *(Pause)*
Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Priest: May your mercy, we ask you O Lord, be with your people who call out to you. What we ask of your love may we receive from your kindness. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

A SCHOOL'S GUIDE TO THE OFFERTORY

WHAT IS THIS?

The procession with the gifts symbolises the assembly's participation in the Eucharist and in the social mission of the Church.

It is an expression of the humble and contrite heart, a giving of self in readiness for making the true offering which the Lord Jesus invites his people to make with him. The procession with the gifts expresses also our willingness to enter into a holy exchange with God: by offering to God what he has given to us we may merit to receive Christ's very self.

PARTICIPATION IN THE MASS

The renewal of the Liturgy that the Church called for at Vatican Council II had at its heart full and active participation at the Liturgy by all the faithful.

The phrase much used at the time was that people were being encouraged not so much to pray at Mass but to learn how to pray the Mass. The same challenge lies before us all today and for clergy, catechists, and parents the challenge is how to teach our children to pray the Mass.

Maybe the best analogy is that we are invited to learn to contemplate the actions, symbols and readings of the Mass. 'What do the readings say to me?' 'How do I respond to Jesus feeding me today with his Body and Blood?' 'How does all this relate to my daily life?'

This is full, active and conscious participation. We should know this before we come to Mass. The priest should alert us to this during Mass; likewise, the hymns we sing, and prayers we say.

Simply giving people 'things to do' is no replacement for this. Children can, of course, minister at Mass but what is most important is that they learn to participate - and that we know the difference!

WHAT SHOULD BE BROUGHT IN THIS PROCESSION?

Only those elements of bread and wine to be used in the celebration of the Eucharist or money to be given to relieve the needs of the Church and the poor.

In other words, the only things to be brought in this procession are:

- bread;
- wine;
- any collection of money or other things taken for Church and the poor (before or during the Mass).

This procession is to focus on the very heart of the Liturgy and on the very heart of the life of the Church, i.e. her living in charity.

Other things used at the altar, e.g. water, chalices, purificators and towel, belong on the credence table. They should never be brought in procession. They do not have symbolic importance comparable to the bread, wine, and offerings. Only these three things belong in this procession.

BUT....

Many schools have used this moment in the Mass for a procession of symbols of, for example, the achievements of a school or a class; or have used it to give pupils 'something to do during the Mass'.

In both cases this distorts what the Liturgy is and means. This time in the Mass is not the time for us to focus on our achievements. It is precisely the time when we focus most intimately on what Christ achieves for us.

There is nothing wrong - and often everything right - in marking our achievements and our identity at Mass, but the place for doing it is while we are gathering, i.e. in the entrance procession. Then the symbols are received and placed as a reminder throughout the Mass of who we are and why we are here.

SYMBOLS OF CHRIST, SYMBOLS OF US

In the Orthodox tradition the bread and the wine of the Offertory procession have been venerated almost as though they were already the Body and Blood of Christ that they will soon become.

In our Western tradition we reverence these elements too. Like all of Creation they find their fulfilment in Christ, as is made explicit in their offering at Mass. But in our tradition the elements are mainly seen as symbols of us. Human hands that have prepared these offerings of bread and wine. We have taken the wheat and grape of God's creation and transformed it into work of human hands, which now we offer to God.

St Augustine wrote beautifully on this: 'Bread is not made from one grain, but from many. It's as though you who were many were ground. When you were baptised it's as though you were mixed into dough. When you received the fire of the Holy Spirit, it's as though you were baked. Be what you can see, and receive what you are. After all, just as many grains are mixed into one loaf in order to produce the visible appearance of bread, as though what Holy Scripture says about the faithful were happening: "They had one soul and one heart in God" (Acts 4:32); so too with the wine. Brothers and sisters, just remind yourselves what wine is made from; many grapes hang in the bunch, but the juice of the grapes is poured together in one vessel.'

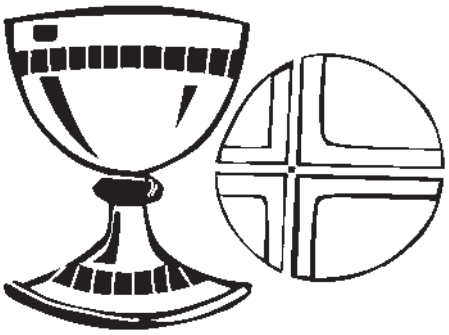
There's a lot in this teaching to deepen our appreciation of the meaning of the symbols of bread and wine, and a lot to refresh how we speak with the pupils and students on these things.

BREAD AND WINE FOR CONSECRATION - PRAYERS AND NEEDS TO PRESENT TO GOD

If, as St Augustine suggests, the bread and wine symbolise us - baptised and consecrated to God in Christ and by the Spirit - it is no bad thing for us to make these symbols still more potent by consciously and deliberately associating the detail of our lives with the symbols of bread and wine.

Already these symbols represent our humanity redeemed by Christ. Let us also deliberately and consciously associate our troubles and difficulties with the elements being brought to the altar. Let these concerns and challenges be associated with Christ's Paschal Mystery, his Passion, Death and Resurrection. We associate our fears and frailties with his triumph over human fears and weaknesses, so that they might come before the transcendent love of the Father which, as it raised Jesus from the dead, so too it may reach out to us with healing and encouragement, hope and the promise of new and eternal life.

Again, it is through the owning of and the using of the symbols of the Liturgy that these ancient symbols become fruitful for us, and that we best participate in them.



A SCHOOL'S GUIDE TO MINISTERING HOLY COMMUNION

WHAT IS THIS?

The distribution of the consecrated Bread and Wine to the faithful. What was bread and wine has now become, in truth, Christ's Body and Blood shared with us that we might live in him and he in us.

ORDINARY AND EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS

The ministry of Holy Communion is reserved to those who have been formally called to this ministry.

There are two categories of Ministers of Holy Communion. The first - the Ordinary Ministers - are those called to this ministry by virtue of their ordination. Bishops, priests and deacons fall into this category.

The second are those who are commissioned to exercise the ministry when there are not sufficient ordinary ministers present. These extraordinary ministers are deployed to assist the ordinary ministers, and to avoid the distribution taking an undue amount of time, for example, or the distribution being restricted to one kind, when circumstances would otherwise suggest Communion should be ministered under both kinds.

'Ordinary' and 'Extraordinary' are the Church's technical terms used to describe the circumstances in which the ministry is exercised. 'Ordinary' means what is expected – i.e. that Holy Communion is ministered by ordained ministers. 'Extraordinary' means what is provided in unusual circumstances - i.e. when there are not enough ordained ministers.

When there are regularly insufficient ordinary ministers to assist in the distribution of Holy Communion a school should consider having sufficient extraordinary ministers in place.

HOW MANY MINISTERS?

There are no hard and fast rules. However, having one Minister of the Hosts and two Ministers of the Chalice for every fifty communicants seems about right. More than one for every forty would probably be too many, and fewer than one for every eighty too few.

It is generally the case that when Holy Communion is distributed under both kinds there should be two Ministers of the Chalice for every one Minister of the Hosts.

Whilst in school Masses with children it is not usually considered appropriate to have communion under both kinds, there may be times, e.g. on an inset day, or for a governors' or parents' Mass, when the Mass is specifically for adults and it would, therefore, be appropriate to offer communion under both kinds.

WHO CAN BE AN EXTRAORDINARY MINISTER?

Such ministers should have been confirmed and be in good standing with the Church. Approval of those proposed for this ministry should be obtained from a priest chaplain or local parish priest, who should also be the commissioning minister (in the absence of a bishop).

Ministers who have been commissioned for service in one parish/chaplaincy properly require a new commissioning for ministry elsewhere.

ONE KIND OR TWO KINDS?

Parish Holy Communion programmes generally prepare children to receive Holy Communion under both kinds. The children should, therefore, have a good understanding of the Eucharist under both its forms, and be familiar with how to receive Holy Communion in both ways, even if communion will only be distributed under one kind.

RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION

The decision as to whether to receive the Sacred Host on the tongue or in the hand belongs to the individual child or young person (no doubt in consultation with their parents/guardians). Those receiving the Sacred Host should consume it immediately. The response before receiving the Eucharist is 'Amen.'

Where communion is offered under both kinds, the decision as to whether or not to receive from the Chalice also belongs to the individual child or young person (again, no doubt, in consultation with their parents/guardians).

WHAT ABOUT THOSE WHO DO NOT RECEIVE HOLY COMMUNION?

It is now common for a prayer for these members of the assembly to be offered during the time of the distribution of Holy Communion. This may be done in a number of ways.

When the number of non-communicants is relatively small it is convenient to invite them to come forward with communicants but with their arms crossed before them to indicate they are asking for a 'blessing'.

Rather than a Trinitarian blessing being given (which is properly reserved to a priest, and would be an inappropriate blessing to give, for example, to a Jew or Muslim) it is best for the minister (lay or ordained) to pray words such as 'May the love of God be strong in your heart.'

Where there is a large number of non-communicants – e.g. a class or number of classes of pupils who have not yet prepared for Holy Communion - it is better to offer the prayer for them 'en masse', before or after ministering Holy Communion to the rest of the assembly.

COMMUNION FOR COELIACS?

Communicants with coeliac disease may require a low gluten altar bread to be consecrated for their Communion. Information and guidance can be found at: *liturgyoffice.org.uk/Documents/Coeliacs/index.html*

VESTURE AND STYLE OF DRESS

Extraordinary Ministers should be neatly and discreetly dressed. It is neither necessary nor desirable that Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion wear anything distinctive to indicate the ministry that they exercise. In fact, any semblance of a 'stole' is not be worn by them since the stole is the symbol of an ordained office of the Church.

LITURGY PLANNER

Date:	**Liturgical Day:**	
Reason for celebration:		
Priest:		
The Introductory Rites		Page number
Procession		
Entrance song/music		
Greeting		
Penitential Act		
(Gloria)		
Collect		
The Liturgy of the Word		
First Reading		
Psalm		
(Second Reading)		
Gospel Acclamation		
Gospel		
Homily		
(Creed)		
Prayer of the Faithful		
The Liturgy of the Eucharist		
Presentation of Gifts		
Offertory Song		
Prayer over the Offerings		
Preface		
Sanctus		
Eucharistic Prayer		
Memorial Acclamation		
Great Amen		
Communion Rite		
Lord's Prayer		
Lamb of God		
Mode of distribution of Holy Communion		
Song(s)/Music during Holy Communion		
Song after Holy Communion - optional		
Prayer after Communion		
The Concluding Rites		
Blessing		
Dismissal		
Concluding Music/Song		

Worship Space Coordinator	
Music Coordinator	
Readers' Coordinator	
Servers' Coordinator	
Holy Communion Coordinator	

SIMPLE GLOSSARY OF TERMS USED IN THIS DOCUMENT

Alb The white garment covering one's street dress for participation in the liturgy.

Altar *(Table of the Lord)* A table on which the sacrifice of the Mass is offered. It is the centre of importance in the place where Mass is celebrated. In those schools which have an altar it is crucial that it is treated with dignity and respected in terms of where it is situated when Mass is not taking place.

Altar breads Small, unleavened breads which will be consecrated during the Mass.

Ambo/Lectern *(Table of the Word)* A place set aside for the proclamation of Scripture.

Boat A 'boat-shaped' metal dish to for holding incense.

Cassock A coloured non-liturgical, full length robe for use by priests, altar servers and other clerics under liturgical vestments; usually black for priests and purple for bishops.

Chalice The cup made of metal used to hold the wine which will be consecrated during the Mass.

Chasuble The vestment worn over the alb by priests.

Ciboria Vessels used to hold the consecrated bread for the distribution of communion.

Corporal Square, white cloth placed on the altar underneath the paten and chalice.

Cotta A short white garment sometimes worn over a cassock.

Credence table A table to the side of the sanctuary area where chalices and altar linens are kept in readiness for use at Mass.

Intercessions Also called Prayer of the Faithful or Bidding Prayers.

Lectionary Book containing the biblical readings proclaimed at Mass.

Missal Book containing the prayers of the Mass.

Offertory table A table where the gifts of bread and wine are placed ready to be brought up to the altar for the preparation of the gifts.

Paten Plate or bowl on which the altar breads are placed.

Purificator A small towel used for cleaning (purifying) the chalice.

Stole The vestment, worn around the neck, by ordained ministers. For priests, bishops and the Pope, it hangs down in front (under the chasuble); deacons wear it over their left shoulder, crossed and fastened at the side.

Thurible A metal censer, suspended from chains, in which incense is burned during services.

GLOSSARY

THE SHAPE OF THE MASS

Mass
The common name for the Eucharistic Liturgy of the Catholic Church. It may be referred to as the Sacrifice of the Mass, Eucharistic Celebration or Lord's Supper.

Liturgy
The public prayer of the Church.

Liturgy of the Word
The section of the Mass where the Scriptures are proclaimed and reflected upon. On Sundays and **major Feasts** there are three readings and a psalm:

1. Old Testament (except in Eastertide)
2. Psalm
3. New Testament (letters of Paul and others)
4. Gospel

Except on Holy Days schools will generally only need one reading, the psalm and the Gospel.

Liturgy of the Eucharist
The part of the Mass when the gifts are prepared and the Eucharistic Prayer is proclaimed. This is a solemn part of the Mass and people usually kneel. In a school building it is better if the children sit.

Entrance Procession
Priest (celebrant), deacon, altar servers enter the church or designated worship space. Everyone stands. It is appropriate to sing at this point.

Veneration of the Altar
The celebrant will reverence the altar with a kiss and the optional use of incense.

Greeting
The celebrant greets all present, expressing the presence of the Lord to the assembled community: 'The Lord be with you.' to which all reply: 'And with your Spirit'. This is not an 'hi, how are you?' moment!

Penitential Act
An acknowledgement by the whole assembly of the need for God's mercy.

Gloria
Ancient hymn of praise to God. It is used on Sundays and Holy Days outside of Advent and Lent. It is a song and where possible should always be sung.

Collect (Opening Prayer)
This prayer by the celebrant expresses the general theme of the celebration. Called the collect, it gathers and 'collects' the prayers of the gathered assembly. At the end of the Collect we sit for the Liturgy of the Word.

Responsorial Psalm
After the first reading there is a psalm response to the reading. The response, repeated after each verse, is said or sung by the people. The verses are led by a cantor or choir. Psalms are songs and should be sung whenever possible.

Gospel Acclamation
The acclamation of praise to God follows the second reading (or psalm if only one reading). It serves to prepare the assembly for the Gospel. In every season except Lent and Holy Week this takes the form of an 'Alleluia'. The assembly stands for the Gospel and should do in school also.

Homily
The homily (sermon) is when the priest reflects (breaks open the Word) on the Scripture readings and the application of the texts to the assembled community. We sit.

Profession of Faith
Also known as the Creed. This is when the whole assembly recalls and proclaims the fundamental teachings of the faith. It is used on all Sundays and solemnities. It will rarely be used in school, but children should be taught the Creed so that they can say it readily.

Prayer of the Faithful (Bidding Prayers)
Prayers of intercessions for all of humankind; for the Church, civil authorities, those in various needs, for the local community, the sick and those who have died. These are not prayers about individual people or places. It is best to avoid having 'many' children reading individual prayers. A sung response is appropriate to allow for a prayerful response.

Blessed Sacrament
The Eucharist, the Body and Blood of Christ, whether at Mass or reserved in a special place in the church. We genuflect when we come into church to acknowledge that Jesus is present in the Reserved Sacrament.

Preparation of the Gifts
The time in the Mass when the bread and wine to be used in the celebration are brought to the celebrant by members of the community.

Offertory Hymn
Music which accompanies the procession of the gifts to the celebrant as the altar is prepared. The Offertory hymn should end as soon as the priest has finished preparing the bread and wine.

Incense
Incense (material used to produce a fragrant smell when burned); used as a symbol of the Church's offering and prayer going up to God.

Washing of Hands
The celebrant washes his hands as an expression of the desire for inward purification. In earlier times, and still today in some parts of the world, the offertory gifts might include live animals and unwashed produce. Washing hands is then essential.

Prayer over the Gifts
The prayers by the celebrant asking that the gifts offered be made holy and acceptable.

Eucharistic Prayer
The prayer of thanksgiving and sanctification. It is the centre and high point for the entire celebration.

Preface Dialogue
The introductory dialogue between the celebrant and assembly in which all are invited to join in prayer and thanksgiving to God. Everyone stands. It is important that the children have access to or are taught the responses so that they can engage in the dialogue.

Preface
The first part of the Eucharistic Prayer which may be said or sung by the celebrant. The celebrant praises the Father and gives thanks for the work of salvation accomplished in Christ and the special reason for giving thanks on this particular day. It leads into the 'Sanctus'.

Holy, Holy (Sanctus)
The response of the community to the Preface and a continuation of the general theme of praise and thanks. The Sanctus is meant to be sung wherever possible. At the end of the Sanctus everyone kneels, or may sit if in a school building.

Epiclesis
The prayer in which the Church calls on the Holy Spirit, and asks that the gifts be offered to be consecrated, that is, become the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ and that the victim (Christ) may become the source of salvation for all.

Transubstantiation
After the consecration the 'substance' of the elements (bread and wine) are changed into the Body and Blood of Christ, whilst retaining the appearance of bread and wine.

Institution Narrative
The words and actions of Christ at the Last Supper when he instituted the sacrifice of the Mass and Holy Eucharist.

Anamnesis
The prayer that recalls the passion, death, resurrection and ascension of Christ.

Memorial Acclamation
The people's affirmation of faith. This is usually sung.

Second Epiclesis
The calling down of the Holy Spirit upon the Church, that by sharing the Eucharist it becomes and remains one body, one Spirit in Christ.

Intercessions
Prayers for the Church, the world, the Pope, clergy, laity and the dead.

Doxology
This Doxology concludes the Eucharistic Prayer. The Sacred Host and the chalice are held aloft as the celebrant proclaims 'Through him, and with him, and in him...' and the people acclaim 'Amen'.

Amen
Called the 'Great Amen'. It is the acclamation. This should always be sung.

Communion Rite
The part of the celebration which leads to the communion of the people. We stand.

Lord's Prayer
The prayer of petition for daily food, forgiveness of sins and deliverance from evil.

Embolism
The celebrant's prayer immediately after the Lord's prayer in which the same themes are developed: deliverance from evil, for peace and divine protection.

Sign of Peace
Before sharing the Body of Christ the members of the community are invited to express their unity and peace by turning to their neighbour and saying 'peace be with you'.

Breaking of Bread
Lamb of God (Agnus Dei)
The celebrant recreates gestures of Christ at the Last Supper when he broke bread to give to his disciples. The action signifies that, in communion, we who are many are made one in the Bread of Life which is Christ. The 'Lamb of God' may be sung. At the end of this we kneel.

Communion Hymn
The music that is played while Communion, the Body and Blood of Christ, is distributed to the faithful. As a rule, this should be something people can sing as they process to receive Communion or a blessing. It is gentle and reflective.

Holy Communion
After saying a preparatory prayer, the celebrant, and other priests, receive Communion, gives it to other designated ministers at the altar, and then to the congregation.

Prayer after Communion
The final prayer by the celebrant in which he petitions that the sacrament be beneficial for all. We stand.

Concluding Rite
A brief rite which consists of the celebrant's greeting to all present, final blessing and dismissal.

MINISTERS

Celebrant
The one who presides over the assembly and consecrates the Eucharistic Sacrament.

Concelebrants
Those priests and bishops who join the celebrant in celebrating Mass.

Deacon
An ordained minister who assists the celebration of the Liturgy of the Word and at the altar for the Liturgy of the Eucharist. The deacon normally proclaims the Gospel.

Master of Ceremonies
One who assists in the preparation of the celebration and is present during it to facilitate the movement of the entire rite.

Server
One who assists in the celebration, i.e. carrying candles, at the Entrance, Gospel and Recessional procession.

Cross Bearer
The one who carries the cross in the procession (entrance and recessional).

Thurifer
The one who carries the thurible and assists the celebrant and deacon when incense is being used.

Reader
One who is called upon to proclaim the Scriptures during the Liturgy of the Word.

Cantor
One who sings the responsorial psalm during the liturgy.

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion
Lay people who assist in the distribution of Holy Communion. These ministers must have been commissioned with the permission of the Bishop.

Assembly
Those present to celebrate the liturgy. Other words/phrases used are: Community, the Church (as people not building), 'the Faithful' or 'the Congregation'.

NOTE
It is the entire assembly (ordained and nonordained) that celebrates the liturgy of the Mass, therefore **avoid**: 'Pope's Mass, Bishop's Mass, his Mass etc. All such terms would give the impression that it is only the Pope or clergy who celebrate.

VESTMENTS

Vestment
The vesture the ministers wear. The colour of this will reflect the liturgical season.

Alb
The white garment covering one's street dress for participation in the liturgy.

Amice
A rectangular piece of white cloth, with two long ribbons at the top corners. It is worn around the priest's neck when the alb does not completely cover his ordinary clothing at the neck.

Cassock
A non-liturgical, full length, close-fitting robe for use by priests and other clerics under liturgical vestments; usually black for priests, purple for bishops and other prelates, e.g. monsignor, red for cardinals, white for the pope

Chasuble
The vestment worn over the alb by priests

Cincture
A long cord used for fastening the priest's alb at the waist

Crosier (Pastoral staff)
The staff which the bishop carries when he presides at liturgy

Dalmatic
The vestment the deacon wears over an alb on solemn occasions

Mitre
A headdress worn at some liturgical functions primarily by bishops and abbots

Pallium
Special stole made of lamb's wool worn over the chasuble by the pope and archbishops; it signifies communion of archbishops with the Holy See

Stole
The vestment worn around the neck by ordained ministers. For priests, bishops and the Pope, it hangs down in front (under the chasuble); the deacons wear it over their left shoulder, crossed and fastened at the side.

Zucchetto
Skull cap worn by the Pope (white) Cardinals (Red) Bishops (purple).

LITURGICAL OBJECTS

Altar (Table of the Lord)
A table on which the sacrifice of the Mass is offered. It is the centre of importance in the place where Mass is celebrated. In those schools which have an altar it is crucial that it is treated with dignity and respected in terms of where it is situated when Mass is not taking place.

Ambo/Lectern (Table of the Word)
The place where the Scriptures are proclaimed.

Aspergillum
A vessel or device used for sprinkling holy water.

Book of Gospels
The book which contains the Gospel texts from which the priest or deacon proclaims the Gospel of the day.

Bread and Wine
The elements used in the celebration of the Eucharist. These must be unleavened bread and natural pure wine. NOTE. After the consecration the bread and wine are changed into the Body and Blood of Christ and should no longer be referred to as bread and wine.

Cathedra
In the cathedral, the Bishop's chair (throne)

Cathedral
The major church in the archdiocese or diocese, as it is the seat of the local Bishop (Ordinary) and the church which 'houses' his chair, his cathedra

Celebrant's chair
The place where the celebrant sits: it expresses the office of presiding over the assembly and of leading prayer of those present.

Chalice
The cup made of metal used to hold the wine

Ciborium
A vessel used to hold the consecrated bread for the distribution of communion

Cruets
The containers/vessels holding the water and wine

Lectionary
The book that contains all the readings from the Scriptures for use in the celebration of the liturgy

Paten
The plate used to hold the bread and wine that will be consecrated during the Eucharistic Prayer

Processional Cross
The cross carried in the processions

Sacramentary/Missal
The book used by the celebrant, containing all the prayers for the Liturgy of the Mass

Tabernacle
The place in church where the Eucharist or sacred species is reserved

Thurible
A metal censer, suspended from chains, in which incense is burned during worship services

We **KNEEL** as the priest holds up the Bread of Life and says:

Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

We go to the altar to receive Jesus in Holy Communion or receive a blessing.

We reply: **Amen.**

We return to our places and pray quietly. This is our own moment with Jesus and we can thank him and bring all that we need to him, so especially close to us.

After Communion we **STAND** to pray. The priest prays the prayer after communion and we respond: **Amen.**

WE ARE SENT OUT

Jesus is present in the priest who blesses us. Jesus in present in us as we go in his name.

We are to go out to the world and share the gift of Jesus with others.

The Lord be with you.
And with your spirit.

We make the Sign of the Cross as the priest says:

May almighty God bless you, the Father, ✠ and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.
Thanks be to God.

We sing a hymn of glory and thanks.

We have been made strong for our work and play during the week. Pray that we may become as loving, compassionate, forgiving and kind as Jesus, and so live all that we have celebrated in this Mass.

THE ORDER OF MASS

We gather to give thanks for his goodness and to celebrate all that God has done for us in Jesus, his Son. We remember Jesus' death and resurrection, and we gather to be made into Body of Christ, given for our world. We are the children of God and he loves us.

WE GATHER

Jesus is present in us gathered together.

*We **STAND** and sing an entrance hymn and then make the Sign of the Cross as the priest says:*

In the name ✠ of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
We say: **Amen**

The priest greets us: The Lord be with you.
And we all say: **And with your spirit.**

We say sorry to God that we are not always like him and not always loving:

Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy .
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.
Amen.

On a special feast we give praise and thanks to God by singing the GLORIA. The first verse was sung by the angels when Jesus was born.

The priest invites us to pray and then he gathers our prayers together in the prayer he prays, and we say: **Amen.**

We **SIT**

WE LISTEN TO GOD'S WORD.

Jesus is present in the Word.

We listen to readings from the Bible. At the end of the reading the reader says:
The word of the Lord.
and we respond: **Thanks be to God.**

The reading is followed by one of the Psalms, one of Israel's great songs. Listen carefully to the response and join in.

We **STAND** up for the Gospel because it's very special - it is the words of Jesus.

The Lord be with you.
And with your spirit.
A reading from the holy Gospel according to ...
Glory to you, O Lord.

We make the Sign of the Cross on our **foreheads**, on our **lips** and on our **hearts.**

At the end of the gospel:
The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

We **SIT** down.

The priest now tells us more about the readings in the homily and helps us to live the word of God we have heard.

Then we pray for people in the world, for our school, our families and for ourselves.

Lord in your mercy.
Hear our prayer.

We ask Mary our mother to pray with us:

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed are thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

WE CELEBRATE THE GIFT OF JESUS

Jesus is present in the gift of his Body and Blood.

We bring the bread and wine to the altar. These are our gifts and they will become God's gift to us of Jesus' Body and Blood.

We **STAND** and we pray that God will accept our gifts.

Pray, my brothers and sisters, that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.

The priest prays the Prayer over the Offerings and we all respond: **Amen.**

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

This is a very special prayer of thanksgiving during which we remember Jesus giving his disciples his Body and Blood. We ask God's Holy Spirit to transform our gifts into the Gift of Jesus.

The Lord be with you.
And with your spirit.
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right and just.

The priest gives praise and thanks to God in the Preface and we all sing together:

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

We **KNEEL.**

The priest remembers what Jesus said and did at the Last Supper. When the bell rings the priest holds up the bread which is now Jesus, the Bread of Life. Then he raises the chalice which is Jesus, the Cup of Salvation.

The mystery of faith.
We proclaim your death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.

or

Save us, Saviour of the world, for by your cross and resurrection you have set us free.

At the end of the prayer the priest prays: Through him, and with him and in him, O God almighty Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honour is yours for ever and ever.

and we all say together: **Amen.**

We **STAND** to join in the prayer that Jesus teaches us to pray.

**Our Father,
who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us,
and lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.**

The priest prays for peace as we wait for Jesus to come again.

For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and forever.

The peace of the Lord be with you always.
And with your spirit.

Because we are all one family, we turn to one another, shake hands with the people near us and quietly say:
Peace be with you.

We sing or say together:

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world grant us peace.

DIOCESAN PRAYER

God our Father,
open the horizons of our minds and hearts
so that we can see what hope your call holds for us.

Pour out the overflowing gifts of your Spirit
so that we, your Church,
may become a people of hope for our world.

We ask you this through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God for ever and ever.

Our Lady, Woman of Hope,
pray for us.

St Peter, Rock of Hope,
pray for us.

St Paul, Apostle of Hope,
pray for us.

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