



## DIOCESE OF HAMILTON

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Gathered Into One

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# Liturgical Instruction: Gathered Into One



The Sacred Liturgy is above all the Worship of God. It is the action of Christ and his Body, the Church, *gathered into one* by the Holy Spirit.

Here and now we participate in the heavenly liturgy of the New Jerusalem which is our goal as pilgrims (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 8). It is the summit towards which the activity of the Church is directed and the source from which her power flows (*SC*, 10).

For this reason it is my privilege and duty as your Bishop, and therefore the first steward of the mysteries of God in the Church of Hamilton, to moderate, promote and safeguard the whole liturgical life of the Diocese (*Code of Canon Law*, 838 §4), keeping in mind that what and how we celebrate has been given to us directly by the Lord himself (*1 Cor. 11.23*).

It is my desire that in the Diocese of Hamilton we are truly united in our celebrations of the Sacred Liturgy. The way and therefore the norms for celebrating the Sacred Liturgy are found in all the liturgical books given to us by the Church and

Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops. As ordained Ministers we are servants of the liturgy, not its creators or masters. What we have received from the Lord, and which has been safeguarded for us by the Church, we hand on in faithfulness and with reverence to those to whom we are called to minister. It is not for us to add, or remove, or to change anything in the celebration of the liturgy, (see *GIRM*, 24). We must allow the liturgy to speak for itself about the worship of the Trinity. The care with which the Church has reformed the liturgy offers us many possibilities for its celebration and provides for how it is to be conducted.

Because such a sacred work has been entrusted to our faithful care, I would like us, as a sacred duty, to always keep in mind what follows.

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## GENERAL NORMS

1. The norms for the celebration of the Eucharist and the other sacraments are found in the most recent liturgical books published by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops which have received the approval from the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments. These are not arbitrary norms and are to be followed faithfully.

2. The full, conscious and active participation by all is the duty of Pastors and the right and duty of Christ's faithful by reason of their baptism. This must be given careful consideration above all else when preparing and celebrating the Eucharist and the other Sacraments. Participation in the liturgy is the primary and indispensable source from which the faithful are to derive the true Christian spirit; and therefore, Pastors must zealously strive to achieve this (*SC*, 14).

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3. The liturgical books provide for certain options. Priests are encouraged to use the options available, and where appropriate, according to the rubrics, may use their own words for some instructions. However, no priest may add, remove or change anything in the liturgy on his own authority (*SC*, 22).

4. Masses celebrated with the faithful in churches in the Diocese of Hamilton, whenever possible, are to be celebrated at a free standing altar, facing the people, observing faithfully the rubrics in the Third Typical Edition of the Roman Missal (see *GIRM*, 299). There is to be no transferring of rubrics or gestures from the Extraordinary Form of the Mass into the celebration of the *Novus Ordo Missae* which is the Ordinary Form of the Mass and therefore, the principal Form.

5. The Extraordinary Form of the Mass may be celebrated without a congregation by any Priest of the Diocese, using the Roman Missal published by Saint John XXIII in 1962 (*Summorum Pontificum*, 2). Such celebrations may be attended by members of the lay faithful who spontaneously request to do so (*SP*, 4). Masses are celebrated in the Extraordinary Form in Parishes where a stable group attached to this Form exists (*SP*, 5§1). However, the Extraordinary Form is not to replace the Ordinary Form Masses that are regularly scheduled on Sundays or Solemnities in the Parish.

6. It is not permitted to add extra prayers after the dismissal at Mass as was customary by Papal authority only prior to the conciliar reform.

## PARTICULAR NORMS

### 1. LITURGICAL BOOKS

1.1 The Canadian editions of the Roman Missal, Lectionaries, and Ritual Books are the only books approved for liturgical use in Canada are to be used for all celebrations in the Diocese of Hamilton.

1.2 Only the approved Lectionary is to be used for all liturgical celebrations. Binders and individual papers must never be used for the proclamation of the Word of God.

1.3 On Sundays, Solemnities and for celebrations of First Communion and Confirmation, the Book of the Gospels is to be carried by a Deacon or other Minister of the Word. It is to be placed flat on the center of the altar at the beginning of Mass. Following the proclamation of the Gospel, the Book of Gospels remains on the ambo. It is not carried out of the church at the end of Mass.

### 2. MUSIC

2.1 Musicians are reminded that they are servants of the liturgy. Their principal role is to lead the assembly in song. All music selected for the Sunday Eucharist and for celebrations of the Sacraments must enable the assembly to unite their voices in praise and thanksgiving for the marvels God has worked in Jesus Christ, our Lord. Priority is to be given to those sung parts of the Mass which properly belong to the assembly.

Music which the assembly is capable of singing is to be provided for the members of the assembly and they are to be invited to join their voices in song. For the most part, hymns and responses and acclamations are to be sung in the vernacular. Keeping in mind the Church's ancient heritage it is fitting that people are familiar with the chant settings of the ordinary parts of the Mass, using the settings found in our Canadian hymnal.

2.2 *Entrance Chant:* The hymn or Entrance Antiphon marks the beginning of the Mass. "Since the purpose of the Entrance Chant is to open the celebration, foster the unity of those who have been gathered, introduce their thoughts to the mystery of the liturgical time or festivity, and accompany the procession of the Priest and ministers" (*GIRM*, 47), it is important that the entire assembly be able to participate in this song. It is to be sung by the entire

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assembly or by the choir or cantor together with the assembly joining in a refrain. A song sung by the choir alone is not appropriate.

**2.3 *The Kyrie Eleison:*** “Since this is a chant by which the faithful acclaim the Lord and implore his mercy, it is usually executed by everyone, that is to say, with the people and the choir or cantor taking part in it” (*GIRM*, 52).

**2.4 *The Gloria in Excelsis:*** The Gloria is to be sung by the entire assembly or by a cantor or choir with the assembly joining in a refrain. The text must be exactly what is found in the Roman Missal. When the rubrics call for the Gloria to be sung or said, it may not be replaced by another hymn or a paraphrase of the official text.

**2.5 *Responsorial Psalm:*** The Responsorial Psalm is to be sung at all Masses on Sundays, Solemnities, and during First Communion and Confirmation celebrations. The text for the Psalm is always taken from the Canadian edition of the Lectionary which contains the New Revised Standard Version translation of the Psalms, the only translation approved for use during Mass in Canada. Music for the Lectionary Psalms is published by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The Psalm is always sung responsorially, that is, by a cantor with the people taking part in the response. A seasonal Psalm from the Lectionary may be used. The Lectionary Psalm is never replaced by a hymn based on the psalm or by another hymn (see *GIRM*, 61).

**2.6 *Gospel Acclamation:*** The Acclamation before the Gospel is always to be sung during Masses on Sundays, Solemnities and during First Communion and Confirmation celebrations. The Alleluia is always sung first by the cantor or choir and then by the entire assembly. It is repeated by everyone following the assigned verse for the day (see *GIRM*, 62-63). During Lent, the Alleluia is replaced by another acclamation found in the Lectionary for Mass.

**2.7 *Offertory:*** It is fitting that music is provided during the preparation of the altar and the procession of gifts for the Eucharist. A hymn may be sung by the assembly or by the choir or instrumental music may accompany this liturgical action.

**2.8 *Preface Dialogue:*** Whenever the Preface is to be sung, the Preface Dialogue is to be sung using the text and music found in the Roman Missal.

**2.9 *Eucharistic Acclamations:*** There are three acclamations which are to be sung during the Eucharistic Prayer and they are to be sung in all Masses celebrated on Sundays, Solemnities and during First Communion and Confirmation celebrations. The Sanctus (Holy), the Mystery of Faith, and the Amen which concludes the Doxology, taken from the same musical setting, are always to be sung by the entire assembly. They are never sung by the choir alone.

Only the approved texts from the Roman Missal may be used for these acclamations. The texts may not be altered in any way. Musical arrangements for these acclamations must have the approval of the Conference of Bishops prior to being used in the liturgy (see *GIRM*, 393).

**2.10 *Lord's Prayer:*** Normally, the Lord's Prayer is recited. If sung, the Lord's Prayer must be familiar to the entire community and the musical text in the Roman Missal is preferred. The words are not to be altered in any way and the music must have the approval of the Conference of Bishops.

**2.11 *Agnus Dei:*** The Lamb of God is sung during the Fraction of the Bread. This is sung by the choir or cantor and the assembly. Only the approved text from the Roman Missal is permitted. This litany may be sung or recited. It is not permitted to preface this litany with a song accompanying the exchange of peace.

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**2.12 Communion Chant:** The Communion hymn begins immediately as the Priest receives Communion and continues until all have received Communion (see *GIRM*, 86). “Since the purpose of the hymn is to express the spiritual union of the communicants by means of the unity of their voices, to show gladness of heart, and to bring out more clearly the “communitarian” character of the procession to receive the Eucharist” (*GIRM*, 86), the assembly should be able to participate in the Communion Processional Hymn. This is best done by selecting a hymn/psalm with a refrain/antiphon which the faithful can sing while approaching the minister for Communion.

A hymn sung by the choir alone, or by a soloist, does not respect the nature of the Communion Chant. Likewise, hymns which do not relate to the mystery of the Eucharist and our Communion with the Lord, are not appropriate.

Once all have received Communion, there is to be a period of silent prayer. Additional hymns sung by the choir alone are not permitted (see *GIRM*, 88).

**2.13 Concluding Hymn:** The Roman Rite does not provide for a hymn to conclude the celebration of Mass. Instrumental or choral music fittingly concludes the liturgy. However, it is customary in most communities to conclude the Mass with a suitable hymn. If a hymn is chosen, it ought to be one in which the assembly can participate.

### 3. POSTURES AND GESTURES

**3.1** “A common bodily posture, to be observed by all those taking part, is a sign of the unity of the members of the Christian community gathered together for the Sacred Liturgy, for it expresses the intentions and spiritual attitude of the participants and also fosters them” (*GIRM*, 42).

**3.2** In the Diocese of Hamilton everyone stands for the Introductory Rites of the Mass, during the Proclamation of the Gospel, the Profession of Faith,

the Universal Prayer, for the Invitation (Pray brothers and sisters that my sacrifice and yours...), the Prayer over the Gifts, the Preface to the Eucharistic Prayer, the Lord’s Prayer, the Rite of Peace, the Fraction of the Bread, the Prayer after Communion and the Concluding Rites. All are seated for the readings before the Gospel, the Homily, the Offertory and the period of silence following Communion. All kneel during the Eucharistic Prayer from after the Holy Holy until the Amen, and following the Lamb of God until the Communion Procession begins. During Communion members of the assembly may kneel or be seated (see *GIRM*, 43).

**3.3** In concelebrated Masses, all priests on arriving at the altar make a profound bow and kiss the altar before taking their places; the principal celebrant and the Deacon do likewise (see *GIRM*, 49, 211). At the conclusion of the liturgy, only the principal celebrant and the Deacon kiss the altar (see *GIRM*, 90).

In Diocesan celebrations, when there are large numbers of priests, the concelebrants reverence the altar with a profound bow, but do not kiss the altar before taking their places.

**3.4** When approaching the altar or the lectern or passing the altar during Mass, ministers bow to the altar alone; they do not bow to the tabernacle, the lectern or to the presiding priest.

**3.5** In the Diocese of Hamilton, Deacons assisting at the altar remain standing throughout the entire Eucharistic Prayer, including the Epiclesis and Words of Institution.

**3.6** “In the Dioceses of Canada, Communion is to be received standing, though individual members of the faithful may choose to receive Communion while kneeling” (*GIRM*, 160). In the Diocese of Hamilton all the faithful are to be encouraged to observe a common posture for receiving Communion, namely, standing. All servers, Extraordinary Ministers of Communion, and those

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in leadership roles in the liturgy are to model this posture. Individuals who choose to receive Communion kneeling are not to be refused.

**3.7** As a sign of reverence, the faithful are to make a simple bow, not a profound bow or a genuflection, when approaching the Minister of Communion (see *GIRM, 160*). The choice to receive Communion in the hand or on the tongue is at the discretion of the communicant.

**3.8** When Communion is offered under Both Forms, it is not permitted for the communicants themselves to dip the sacred host in the chalice before consuming the Body and Blood of the Lord (see *GIRM, 286-287*). Communion is given always by a Minister and received by those partaking in Communion. It is an action of Christ's giving of Himself.

**3.9** Following Communion the Priest may purify the sacred vessels at the altar or at the credence table (see *GIRM, 163*). However, when there are several vessels to be purified, it is preferable to purify them at the credence table following Mass. If a Deacon purifies the vessels, this is never done at the altar; it is done at the credence table (see *GIRM, 183, 247*).

#### **4. COMMUNION UNDER BOTH FORMS**

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

**4.2** In the Diocese of Hamilton, Communion under Both Forms is encouraged in Parishes at Masses celebrated especially on Sundays and Solemnities and during weekday Masses, too, provided that the

faithful have been suitably instructed regarding the significance and manner of receiving Communion under Both Forms.

**4.3** Children who have received their First Communion and have been adequately prepared may receive Communion under Both Forms.

#### **5. SANCTUARY FURNISHINGS**

**5.1** The altar, lectern, and presidential chair ought to be of the same design and stand out by their noble simplicity. Decorations in the sanctuary are to be modest in order that these principal furnishings and places of liturgical action may be given their proper attention.

**5.2** On Sundays and Solemnities and during First Communion and Confirmation celebrations, at the beginning of Mass, only the Book of the Gospels is to be placed on the altar. The chalice, paten, ciboria and Roman Missal are only placed on the altar during the Presentation of the Gifts (see *GIRM, 305*). The Cross or candlesticks should be placed on or near the altar according to the design of the altar so that the faithful are not impeded from a clear view of what takes place at the altar or what is placed upon it (see *GIRM, 307*).

The altar is not to be hidden by floral arrangements and other seasonal decorations. The lectern, similarly, ought not to be used as a backdrop for sacred images or seasonal decorations. Wherever possible real flowers are to be used in the decoration of sacred spaces.

**5.3** No changes are to be made to the sanctuary and its furnishings without the recommendation of the Diocesan Building Committee and the approval of the Bishop (see *GIRM, 291*).

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## 6. ORDER OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION FOR ADULTS

**6.1** The Rite of Becoming a Catechumen is to be celebrated whenever candidates are prepared to enter this period of their formation in preparation for the Sacraments of Christian Initiation.

**6.2** The Rite of Election is always celebrated with the Bishop at a Diocesan celebration at the beginning of Lent, unless the Bishop gives permission otherwise.

**6.3** The Rites of Scrutiny are an integral part of the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults. All three Scrutinies are to be celebrated in the Parish. The Bishop alone may dispense from one of them for serious reasons, or, in extraordinary circumstances, even from two (*Introduction to the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults*, 20).

**6.4** When the Scrutinies are celebrated all of the Scripture readings from Year A of the Sunday Lectionary must be used. These readings may be used at other Masses celebrated on the same day.

## CONCLUSION

The Sacred Liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; at the same time it is the font from which all her power flows (*SC*, 10). It is the indispensable source of the true Christian spirit. For this reason, I firmly believe that if we celebrate the liturgy well according to the mind and the laws of the Church, our local Church in the Diocese of Hamilton will most certainly remain strong in faith and zealous in carrying out the Church's mission.

Therefore I, Douglas Crosby, OMI, hereby instruct all Priests, Deacons and Liturgical Ministers in the Diocese of Hamilton to follow faithfully the norms, drawn from the General Instruction of the Roman Missal (2011) and the Sacramental Rites and other liturgical legislation promulgated by the Holy See, which are to be observed in celebrations of the Eucharist and the Sacraments in the Diocese of Hamilton without exception.

*+ Douglas Crosby, OMI*

(Most Rev.) Douglas Crosby, OMI  
Bishop of Hamilton

*Murray J. Kroetsch*

(Very Rev.) Monsignor Murray J. Kroetsch PH, VG  
Chancellor

*Given at Hamilton, Ontario, on  
the 25th day of March 2018.*

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## **Sources**

Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, (SC), 1963.

John Paul II, Code of Canon Law, *Codex Iuris Canonici*, (CIC), 1983.

*The General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, (GIRM), Canadian edition, copyright © Concacan Inc., 2011.

Benedict XVI, Apostolic Letter on the Use of the Roman Liturgy Prior to the Reform 1970 given *Motu Proprio Summorum Pontificum*, (SP), 2007.

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*Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, Canadian edition, copyright © Concacan Inc., 1987.