



Pastoral Recommendations Project
By the baptized - For the baptized

Experiencing Liturgical and Sacramental Life

The liturgy, then, is rightly seen as an exercise of the priestly office of Jesus Christ. In the liturgy the sanctification of women and men is given expression in symbols perceptible by the senses and is carried out in ways appropriate to each of them...

From this it follows that every liturgical celebration, because it is an action of Christ the priest and of his body, which is the church, is a preeminently sacred action. No other action of the church equals its effectiveness by the same title nor to the same degree. (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy #7)

Community Worship and Sacraments

1) The *Association of Liturgical Ministers* is the organization in the archdiocese charged with the mandate of the Second Vatican Council that the people of God be “lead to the full, conscious, and active participation”¹ in their communal prayer. ALM has served this diocese for over thirty years. Every parish in the diocese is eligible for membership and every parishioner is invited to participate in its ongoing work. Workshops, presentations, deanery gatherings, and access to resources are all available through ALM. Board members serve in a voluntary capacity and each of them holds full time positions in parishes. Support from the archdiocese has been crucial to ALM in the past.

Worship has been negatively influenced by the 2010 translation of the liturgy. The language is awkward and distracting.

Divorced and remarried Catholics have too long been barred from receiving the Eucharist. The new director of worship could be the liaison to the Vatican, to research, prompt, and educate on this important part of community worship.

Recommendation:

Reinstate a full time Director of Liturgy and a full time Director of Music, along with an archdiocesan Worship Board, working in collaboration with the Archbishop to invigorate the sacramental life of the archdiocese, including work towards renewing and/or restoring a meaningful translation of the liturgy, and bringing to fruition the welcome of divorced and remarried Catholics to the Eucharist.

2) Listening is held in high regard by members of this archdiocese. We call upon staff members, both ordained and lay, to invite conversation with all believers, listening to each other as baptized members of the Church. Unity in Christ does not preclude celebrating our differences, including ethnic heritage, age, geographic place, and personal response to the call of the Gospel. Deep conversation among the people of God will result in worship that honors the mystery of Christ's presence not only in the elements of bread and wine, but also in the gathered community, in the proclamation of the Word, and in the person of the ordained minister.² In the absence of respectful dialogue we have seen the rise of the "congregational" parish, one that sees itself as disconnected with the local church in communion with the archbishop. We hope to reinforce the relationship of archbishop and parish community to its Vatican II expectation.³

At the same time, the inherent sacramental intuition of parishes needs to be honored. For many years, for example, some parishes conferred confirmation at the time of first Eucharist, the order of initiation in keeping with the sacred tradition of the church, as mandated in the Rite of Christian Initiation. This was eventually phased out and is now not permitted in any parish. We urge the open communication between parish and the bishop in sacramental life.

Recommendation:

Create and promote avenues available to discussion and dialogue on an archdiocesan level and on a parish level, for the purpose of building trust and respect through deep listening among all members of the Body of Christ.

Lay Preaching and Lay-Led Liturgies

Lay preaching has a history in the archdiocese.⁴ In those parishes where lay preaching thrived, the Word of God was able to open itself to the diverse experience of the local church. Preachers were trained, had ongoing support from each other and the diocese, and took their spiritual work seriously. Besides Sunday masses, preaching takes place at a variety of liturgical prayer, including word and communion services, liturgy of the hours, vigils for the dead, and ecumenical celebrations. In the midst of a serious and deepening shortage of ordained ministers, liturgies that are available to be led by laity can enrich and enhance the prayer experience of a parish.

Recommendation:

Reinstate opportunities for lay preaching and lay presiding, supported by training made available in all deaneries in the diocese. Please refer to link below for a full description of lay preaching in the archdiocese.

(See the Council of the Baptized - "Lay Preaching" position paper)
http://cccr-cob.org/images/CCCR_MEDIA/Position_Statement_Program/Position_Paper_on_Lay_Preaching.pdf

Education

Yearning for knowledge of God is embedded in the Christian character. The deepening awareness of God's presence through symbol and sign will be encouraged by a variety of educational offerings, including workshops and conferences but also retreats and days of recollection. Post-graduate education in the field of Liturgical Pastoral Ministry is available at both St Catherine University and the University of St Thomas (the latter through the St Paul Seminary and School of Divinity). In addition, St John's University School of Theology in Collegeville offers post-graduate work in liturgy. In all cases, these degrees need to be subsidized by the archdiocese, in an effort to broaden the work of liturgical pastoral ministry in our parishes.

As liturgy is the "source and summit" of the life of the church, our work to engage the faithful in matters of spiritual growth is of the highest importance.

Recommendation:

Employ more opportunities throughout the archdiocese for education in areas of liturgical ministry. This would include workshops for musicians, lectors, Eucharistic ministers, lay preachers and presiders, as well as broader possibilities for those pursuing theology degrees in university settings.

Sacrament of Penance

The Sacrament of Penance can be celebrated in three forms, according to the Rite of Penance of 1973. *Form I* is the rite for reconciliation of individual penitents. *Form II* is the rite for reconciliation of several penitents with individual confession and absolution. *Form III* is the rite for reconciliation of penitents with general confession and absolution.

- 1) Although the sacrament is rich in its expectation of the use of scripture and dialogue between confessor and penitent, the truncated "Bless me, Father, for I have sinned" and list of sins predominates the celebration of Form I.
- 2) Gathering the community in preparation for individual confession generally follows the prescription for Form II. However, the important re-gathering and proclamation of communal thanksgiving to God for God's mercy is lost when most parishes allow (and even encourage) the penitent to leave upon receiving absolution.
- 3) In the past, the celebration of Form III drew overwhelming numbers of penitents to the sacrament, especially in Advent and Lent, and participants reported that it had had a profound effect on

their understanding of sin and grace. Especially in this Jubilee Year of Mercy, more extensive use of Form III could be recommended.

Recommendation:

Heighten the experience of sacramental reconciliation through ongoing education both for confessors and for penitents, through extensive catechesis and experience on the sacrament in all its forms. We especially recommend a wider experience of Form III.

Model Parishes

Parishes throughout the diocese are in a position, through the willingness of the pastor and the professional lay ministers, to become *model parishes*, places that would incubate the recommendations included in this paper, especially experiencing lay preaching, confirmation at the time of First Eucharist, Form III Sacrament of Penance.

Recommendation:

Create several model parishes throughout the archdiocese, to examine, integrate, and implement the recommendations of this paper.

¹ Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, paragraph 14

² See the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, paragraph 7.

³ See the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, paragraph 41.

⁴ See www.cccr-cob.org for more information on lay preaching in this archdiocese

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