

- **Huck, Gabe.** "Sunday Worship in the Absence of a Bishop. . . of a Priest . . . of Anybody?" *Pastoral Music* 21:3 (February-March, 1997), 22-25. "Without our Sunday Eucharist, the Catholic life begins to drain away. Without the *assembly* at Sunday Eucharist, what would orders do?"

- **Bishops of Wisconsin.** "Sunday Worship Without a Priest," *Origins* 24:17 (October 6, 1994), 296-299. "Traditionally, the reception of holy communion outside of Mass was reserved for special moments such as for those in danger of death. It was never meant to be normative for Catholics."
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1995

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1985

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1986

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1987

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- **Huck, Gabe.** "Why Settle for Communion? A Trend in the Wrong Direction," *Commonweal* (January 27, 1989), 37-39.
- **Senn, Frank.** "Holy Communion Outside the Assembly: Two Models," *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the North American Academy of Liturgy* (Valparaiso, IN; 1989), 190-210. Examines the theological, historical and pastoral foundations for the ministration of communion outside the time and place of the Eucharistic assembly, with particular attention to the churches of the Reformation.
- **Unsworth, Tim,** "Catholics Won't Settle for Half a Mass," *U. S. Catholic* 54 (June 1989), 13-19.

1990

Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest

DIOCESE OF WINONA

1958

- **Hofinger, Johannes.** "Communal Worship in the Absence of a Priest: Its Importance and Its Structure," in *Worship, the Life of the Missions*, translated by Mary Perkins Ryan (University of Notre Dame Liturgical Studies, Volume IV; Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1958), 125-145. Provides historical background for the phenomenon of Sunday services in the absence of ordained clergy, with particular attention to the *structure* and *content* of such services.
- **Kellner, Josef.** "Suggested Text for the Sunday Service," in *Worship the Life of the Missions* (see entry above), 146-153. Outlines a "basic plan" (pp. 147-151) for celebrating Sunday liturgy (without Eucharist and without any "communion service") in mission territories where a lay minister presides. This plan is then followed (pp. 151-153) by a sample service for "the fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost."

1961

- **Duschak, William.** "Sunday Services Without the Priest," in Johannes Hofinger, ed., *Teaching All Nations: A Symposium on Modern Catechetics*, revised and translated by Clifford Howell (New York: Herder and Herder, 1961), 251-264.

1963

- **Kemerer, Jorge.** "A Priestless Sunday Service," *Worship* 37 (1963), 520-523. An interesting example of a Sunday celebration conducted by lay ministers in the diocese of Posadas, Argentina. The service (described on p. 522) includes a preparatory rite, readings from the Bible, prayer, a final admonition, a blessing, and the dismissal. "The prayer ritual includes a litany of supplications for specific needs of the Christian community and specific needs of the world. There is a prayer of thanks for the divine work of creation, redemption, and sanctification, another prayer which recalls the Last Supper, and then a period of silent prayer. This part of the service is then concluded with the common recitation of the Lord's Prayer." [p. 522] Note that the service does not include distribution of communion, though the author mentions he hopes this will become possible. [p. 523]

1977

- **Lloyd, Trevor,** ed., *Lay Presidency at the Eucharist?* Grove Liturgy Study, No. 9 (Bramcote, Nottingham: Grove Books, 1977).

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- **Bruhin, Monique.** "Sunday Assemblies Without a Priest in France: Present Facts and Future Questions," *Concilium* 133 (1980), 29-63.

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- **Graf, H. J.** "Priestless Sunday Services with Communion and Resulting Problems: A Report on an Ongoing Controversy," *East Asian Pastoral Review* 18 (1981), 175-189.
- **Leclercq, Jean.** "Eucharistic Celebrations Without Priests in the Middle Ages," *Worship* 55 (1981), 160-168.

1983

foremost a gathering of those whom the Lord has called into a covenant of peace with himself. In this gathering, as in every other, offices and ministries are necessary, but secondary. The primary reality is Christ in the assembly, the People of God.” (*Fulfilled in Your Hearing*, n.5, NCCB Committee on Priestly Life and Ministry)

Specific Norms

1. Lay presiders may wear lay clothing in accord with the dignity of their role, or be vested in an alb. The use of a stole is reserved to the ordained along with a chasuble for a priest and dalmatic for a deacon.
2. Laypersons do not use the greeting before the Gospel (“The Lord be with you”) or any of the other greetings designated for a priest or deacon. They do not use the priestly or diaconal forms of blessing.
3. The chair used by a layperson must be different from the presidential chair used by a priest or a deacon and normally it should be placed in close proximity to the assembly.
4. The ambo is reserved for the Liturgy of the Word only.
 - a. The readings assigned in the *Lectionary* for a particular day are to be used.
 - b. The homily is, by its very definition, reserved to a priest or a deacon.
 - c. Only the bishop may authorize others to preach the Word of God with due regard for canon 767.1 which deals with the issue of the liturgical homily.
 - d. The pastor may provide a text for the leader to read.
5. The altar is used only when the rite of communion is included in the celebration. The Eucharist is placed on the altar before the distribution of Holy Communion. Candles are lit at the altar before the sacrament is brought to it from the place of reservation.
6. The lay presider does not assume the roles and functions of other assisting ministers. “In liturgical celebrations each person, minister or layman, who has an office to perform, should do all of, but only, those parts which pertain to his office by the nature of the rite and the principles of liturgy.” *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, n. 28
7. In every situation lay presiders should follow the norms in the appropriate liturgical books and, in particular, the formularies for when the minister is a lay person. The lay presider uses the specific formulas in the ritual text designated for a minister who is a layperson. (*Gathered in Steadfast Faith*, n. 46, 55)

Term of Service and Blessing

The appointment of lay presiders is made for a definite time and should be made known to the community in a liturgical celebration, preferably on Sunday. The Order for the Blessing of Those Who Exercise Pastoral Service, *Book of Blessings*, Part VI, Chapter 60 may be used for this purpose.

Revised 11/17/05

FURTHER READING AND RESEARCH
1958 – 2005 regarding

DIOCESE OF WINONA
Office of Liturgy
GUIDELINES FOR LAY PRESIDERS

In the absence of a priest or deacon, laypersons, carefully selected and properly trained, may serve as presiders in the following situations:

1. **Liturgy of the Hours** (Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer)
2. **Weekday Communion Services** preceded by a Word Service or *Liturgy of the Hours*
3. **Funeral Vigils, Committal Services & Office for the Dead** (cf. *Order of Christian Funerals*)
4. **Liturgy of the Word with Children** during Liturgy of the Word, Sunday Mass
5. **Eucharistic Exposition** (cf. *Rite of Eucharistic Exposition and Benediction*)
6. **Minor Exorcisms & Blessings** (cf. *The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*)
7. **Blessings** (cf. *Book of Blessings*)

Only with the permission of the bishop may laypersons or deacons preside for Sunday celebrations in the absence of a priest.

Presiders

It is the responsibility of the pastor in consultation with parish leadership to determine who has the charism of presiding. Those chosen for this ministry should be

- o fully initiated, practicing Catholics
- o recognized leaders in the community
- o exhibit a living appreciation for Scripture
- o deep reverence for the Eucharist,
- o an active prayer life
- o an exemplary moral life
- o exhibit a spirit of cooperation with the laity and clergy of the parish
- o accepted well by members of the community
- o actively involved in the pastoral life of the community
- o a strong desire for and ability to foster participation of other lay people in the assembly and in liturgical ministries
- o sensitive to the cultural makeup and linguistic needs of the assembly

(Compiled from: *Gathered in Steadfast Faith*, n. 32, NCCB Committee on the Liturgy)

Catechesis

Pastors must provide catechesis for the faith community so that there is no confusion between a prayer service that includes parts of the Mass and the celebration of Mass. “It is especially important that the community be assisted in deepening its understanding of the importance of the sacramental worship of the Church and its ordained ministry.” (*Gathered in Steadfast Faith*, n. 56.)

Training

Those called to lead liturgical prayer should promote the ecclesiology and theology of the assembly as found in the liturgical documents and rites of the Church. For example: “The Church is first and

Sources

Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (Sacrosanctum Concilium), <http://www.dow.org/documents/CONSTITUTIONSACREDLITURGY.doc> . Also, see the Vatican site, http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19631204_sacrosanctum-concilium_en.html

Order of Prayer in the Liturgy of the Hours and Celebration of the Eucharist or “ordo”, Paulist Press Ordo, 997 Macarthur Blvd, Hahwah, NJ, 07430.

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The Roman Missal (Sacramentary).

The Lectionary for Mass, New York: Catholic Book Publishing Company.

Endnotes

¹ Adapted from Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest (SCAP), United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), Washington, DC, edition March, 2007.

² The Roman Ritual, Holy Communion, and Worship of the Eucharist Outside Mass, no. 20, Washington, DC: USCCB, 1976; and the General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM), #339: “In the dioceses of the United States of America, acolytes, altar servers, lectors, and other lay ministers may wear the alb or other suitable vesture or other appropriate and dignified clothing.”

³ Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest. no. 186

⁴ Canon 766 states that lay people may be admitted to preach "in certain circumstances or if it is useful in particular cases according to the prescriptions of the conference of bishops and with due regard for can. 767, ss1." *The Instruction on the Collaboration of the Non-Ordained Faithful* states: "Preaching in churches or oratories by the non-ordained faithful can be permitted only as a supply for sacred ministers or for those particular reasons fore seen by the universal law of the Church or by Conferences of Bishops. It cannot, however, be regarded as an ordinary occurrence nor as an authentic promotion of the laity." In addition, Sacrosanctum Concilium states: "In liturgical celebrations each one, minister, or lay person, who has an office to perform, should do all of, but only, those parts which pertain to that office by the nature of the rite and principles of the liturgy."

**of the death and resurrection of Christ your Son.
May this gift bring us closer to our eternal salvation.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.**

All: Amen.

(Prayer After Communion, Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time.)

Leader: **Mindful of the Lord's word to "ask the Master of the harvest to send our laborers for the harvest," let us pray for an increase of vocations to the priesthood. May our prayer hasten the day when we will be able to take part in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist regularly.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

(The leader or another leader of the parish makes the parish announcements.)

CONCLUDING RITE

Deacon only says:

The Lord be with you.

All:

And also with you.

**May almighty God bless you, the Father, and the Son, +
and the Holy Spirit.**

All:

Amen.

Lay leader makes the sign of the cross on himself/herself and says:

Lay Leader:

**May the almighty and merciful God bless and protect us,
the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.**

All:

Amen.

Leader:

Go in the peace of Christ.

All:

Thanks be to God.

CLOSING SONG

The leader may bow before the altar and walk out as a sign that the prayer has ended.

All make an appropriate sign of peace, according to local custom.

The leader goes to the altar and genuflects. Taking the host, the leader raises it SLIGHTLY (i.e. two inches) over the vessel or pyx. Facing the people, the leader says:

Leader: **This is the Lamb of God
who takes away the sins of the world.
Happy are those who are called to his supper.**

All: Lord, I am not worthy to receive you,
but only say the word and I shall be healed.

LEADER'S COMMUNION

Other extraordinary ministers of communion may join the leader in front of the assembly. The leader takes the host and says quietly:

May the Body of Christ bring me to everlasting life,

The leader reverently consumes the body of Christ. The leader distributes communion to other extraordinary ministers of communion

COMMUNION SONG

The people begin the communion song and begin the communion procession.

After communion the minister puts any particle left on the plate into the ciborium or pyx, and may wash hands. Any remaining hosts are returned to the tabernacle where the minister genuflects and puts the hosts in place.

SILENCE

All observe a period of silence or all the people sing a psalm or song of praise.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Leader: **Let us pray . . . ,** (pause for silence and offer the communion prayer from the Prayers of the Day listed in the ordo or the following from the Roman Missal-Sacramentary.)

**Lord,
we receive the sacrament which celebrates the memory**

For those who serve us in public office and for all those entrusted with the common good of all. We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord hear our prayer.

For those in our parish we are preparing for the sacraments of baptism, confirmation, first communion, penance, and marriage. We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

For vocations to the priesthood, the diaconate, lay ministry and sacramental marriage; that those who are called will build up the Body of Christ in our midst. We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

For the aged, for those who are hospitalized, and for those who suffer chronic illness that the healing rays of Christ may restore them to the dignity of life. We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

For those in our community who have died: N., N., We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: Father, hear the prayers of your Church. In your love, make up for what is lacking in our faith. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

All sit.

COMMUNION RITE

After the prayer the leader goes to the place where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved, genuflects, takes the ciborium containing the Body of Christ, and places it on the altar.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

The leader introduces the Lord's Prayer in these or similar words:

Let us pray with confidence to the Father in the words our Savior gave us.
Our Father . . .

SIGN OF PEACE

The minister may invite the people in these or similar words:

Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

true God from true God,
begotten, not made, one in Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:

[All bow during these two lines:]
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he was born of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered, died, and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in fulfillment of the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.
We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

(The Prayers of Faithful should be written by the local parish community. In absence of a written text, the leader may use a text from the Roman Missal-Sacramentary, appendix I or the following:)

**Leader: With faith in God's promises,
let us now present our needs and petitions.**

Lector: For Pope Benedict, our Bishop, and all the Church's ministers and the people they have been called to lead and serve. We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord hear our prayer.

Leader: **Father,**
let the light of your truth
guide us to your kingdom
through a world filled with lights
 contrary to your own.
Christian is the name and the gospel we glory in.
May your love make us
 what you have called us to be.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.
(Opening prayer from the Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time)

All sit.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The lector proclaims the scriptures for the Mass of the day or from the votive Masses.
The leader or another lector may proclaim the Gospel.

FIRST READING

PSALM

(**SECOND READING** if the celebration is a holy day or Sunday)

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

GOSPEL

HOMILY OR CATECHETICAL REFLECTION ON THE SCRIPTURE⁴

PROFESSION OF FAITH

All stand

Leader: **We believe in one God,**

All: the Father, the Almighty
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is seen and unseen.
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,

All Stand

OPENING SONG (All may sing a song of unity and praise.)

GREETING

Leader: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
(Amen)

Priest/deacon: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

All: And also with you.

Lay leader: Brothers and sisters, the Lord invites us to his table to share in the body of Christ: bless him for his goodness.

All: Blessed be God for ever.

PENITENTIAL RITE

Leader: Coming together as God's family,
with confidence, let us ask the Father's forgiveness,
for he is full of gentleness and compassion.

All: I confess to almighty God, and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have sinned through my own fault in my thought and in my words, in what I have done, and in what I have failed to do: and I ask blessed Mary, ever virgin, all the angels and saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.

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

All: Amen.

(GLORY TO GOD - Speak or sing only when called for in the *Order of Prayer in the Liturgy of the Hours and Celebration of the Eucharist*, hereafter referred to as, "ordo.")

OPENING PRAYER (From the Mass of the Day)

Leader: Let us pray. (The leader times a period of silence to settle all present, and then leads the opening prayer. Leader may use the following or the prayer of the day from the Roman Missal – Sacramentary listed in the ordo.)

**THE LITURGY OF THE WORD
and
DISTRIBUTION of HOLY COMMUNION
Outside Mass ¹**

This rite is to be used only when Mass cannot be celebrated due to the absence of a priest. Furthermore, a deacon normally leads this celebration. When a deacon is not available, an extraordinary minister of communion may be trained to lead this service.

Anyone else considered for this liturgical role must be a fully initiated Catholic in good standing. The candidate should be formed as an extraordinary minister of communion and trained to serve the parish regularly as an extraordinary minister of communion in its liturgy. Finally, the pastor should choose and appoint the candidate for this liturgical ministry after the candidate has served for a time as an extraordinary minister of communion in the liturgy.

The leader should be chosen because of natural talents that would be needed for this role and because the pastor recognizes his or her spiritual maturity important to this role. Lay leaders should focus their energies on the ministry of extraordinary minister of communion exclusively (vs. multiple liturgical ministries). This ministry, and its spirituality, forms them in the special gifts needed for this liturgical role.

BEFORE THE LITURGY:

- Check the number of hosts in the tabernacle.
- Lector is _____
- Extraordinary Ministers of Communion assisting are _____
- Server or assistant _____
- Leader's book and/or Sacramentary
- Lectionary marked and placed in ambo
- Text for the local Prayers of the Faithful in leader's book and lector's place
- Candles lighted
- Church lights on.

INTRODUCTORY RITES

The lay leader "of prayer"² stands at a central place (not behind the altar, not at the presider's chair)³

INTRODUCTION

Leader: We gather here to celebrate the Liturgy of the Word and to receive communion. Unfortunately, we are not able to celebrate the Mass today because we do not have a priest. Let us be united in the spirit of Christ with the Church around the world and celebrate our redemption in Christ's suffering, death, and resurrection.