

*Celebrations
of the Word
& Communion*

FOR SUNDAY
& WEEKDAY CELEBRATIONS
IN THE ABSENCE OF A PRIEST

Revised edition 2013

CELEBRATIONS OF THE WORD & COMMUNION

This edition incorporates texts from the translation of the 3rd edition of the Roman Missal.

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Celebrations of the Word & Communion

INTRODUCTION

1. It is becoming a more frequent feature of parish life in this country for the community to gather and celebrate the word of God and distribute holy communion in the absence of a priest. At present these celebrations of word and communion are rare on Sundays. Our Bishops' Conference is preparing a ritual book for these celebrations in the light of the *Directory for Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest* (Rome 1988).
2. The frequency, availability and format of these celebrations may be a matter of diocesan policy which should be observed. In this document some possibilities for variation are indicated in the main body of the text, for example, the use of a Proclamation of Praise and the position of the Sign of Peace.
3. The Word of God is integral to these celebrations and Holy Communion may not be distributed without a Liturgy of the Word.
4. Where the community has the service of a Deacon, who has been ordained for the nurture and increase of the people of God, he will preside at these liturgies. The deacon proclaims the gospel, preaches the homily and ministers holy communion. Lay members of the community proclaim the scripture readings before the gospel. They may also announce the intentions for prayer in the general intercessions, and, as necessary, they assist in distributing Holy Communion.
5. Liturgical and spiritual formation is of the utmost importance for the parish and the particular ministers involved. In particular, those who will lead these liturgies should be chosen with care, be recognised by and acceptable to the parish, and be well prepared.

A leader will be assisted by other ministers such as a reader, minister of communion, musician. It is recommended that the leader does not exercise several ministries within one liturgy.

Where the leader is not a commissioned minister of communion, a minister of communion leads the prayer from the Lord's Prayer (xxx) until the song of thanksgiving (xxx).

The vesture and gestures of the leader are not distinctive lest this celebration be confused with the Mass. It should also be noted that the leader does not preside from the ambo and altar.

6. The preparation of the whole parish for these celebrations is of vital importance. Proper and advance notice of the celebrations should be given.

CELEBRATIONS OF THE WORD & COMMUNION

OUTLINE

THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

Entrance Chant
Greeting
Introduction
Penitential Act
Gloria
Collect

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

Reading
Psalm
Reading
Gospel Acclamation
Gospel
Reflection
Silence
Profession of Faith
Prayer of the Faithful

THE LITURGY OF COMMUNION

Transfer of the Blessed Sacrament
The Lord's Prayer
Sign of Peace
Communion
Silence
Thanksgiving

THE CONCLUDING RITES

Concluding Prayer
Blessing
Dismissal

italic Element included on Sundays and Solemnities.

ORDER OF CELEBRATION

PREPARATION

Before you lead the celebration you should prepare the following:

1. Check the *Ordo* (calendar) for your diocese to see if the day is a Memorial, Feast, or Solemnity.
2. Set the Lectionary for the readings of the day. On Sundays, only very occasionally is the cycle of readings interrupted by a special feast and your diocesan ordo will indicate this. On weekdays, you will follow the cycle of readings unless the day is a Feast or Solemnity; only exceptionally does a Memorial have its own (proper) reading and you will find this clearly indicated in the Lectionary (e.g. 29 July).
3. Check the Roman Missal to see if a Collect is assigned to the particular day. Note that you will need to rephrase or replace a Collect if it suggests that the liturgy being celebrated is Mass.
4. Prepare anything you will say in the celebration that is not scripted, for instance, introductory remarks, reflection on the readings, intercessions, concluding announcements.

MUSIC

The priorities for singing are: Gospel Acclamation, Song of Thanksgiving, Psalm.

Other elements that may be sung are listed in the text.

Singing an opening song can be a helpful way to begin the liturgy and establish an atmosphere of prayer. If one is sung, it should reflect the season of the year or feast, or the themes of the scripture readings. A song as communion is distributed can be an effective way of affirming our unity in the body of Christ.

SILENCE

Silence is an integral element of liturgy. The whole way in which liturgy is celebrated should foster reflectiveness. In addition, the dialogue between God and his people which happens through the power of the Holy Spirit requires short intervals of silence.

The Introductory Rites

ENTRANCE CHANT

1. An opening song may be sung. All stand.

GREETING

2. All remain standing as the leader says:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All respond:

Amen.

A Deacon greets those present using one of the following.

- A **The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit
be with you all.**

or
 - B **Grace to you and peace from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

or
 - C **The Lord be with you.**

All respond:
And with your spirit.
-

A lay leader greets all present with one of the following forms:

1. **Blessed be the God of all consolation,
who has shown us his great mercy.
Bless the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.**

or
 2. **Let us praise the Lord Jesus Christ,
who is present among us and in his Word,
and who keeps us united in love.
Bless the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.**

or
 3. **Bless the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.**

All respond:
Blessed be God for ever.
-

INTRODUCTION

3. The leader introduces the celebration in these or similar words.

Once again we gather to be the Church of Christ.

Christ is with us, as he promised:

present in this assembly of his people,

in the proclamation of God's word,

and in the Communion of his Body and Blood.

As our Priest cannot be with us

we are unable to celebrate the Eucharist.

Let us reflect on the word and pray together

and then share Christ's Body and Blood

consecrated for us at a previous Eucharist.

Today we celebrate...

(name the saint of the day/feast, in a sentence prepared beforehand.)

PENITENTIAL ACT

4. One of the three following forms is used.

5. The leader invites the faithful, saying:

Brethren (brothers and sisters), let us acknowledge our sins,

and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries.

A brief pause for silence follows. Then all recite together the formula of general confession:

I confess to almighty God

and to you, my brothers and sisters,

that I have greatly sinned,

in my thoughts and in my words,

in what I have done and in what I have failed to do,

And, striking their breast, they say:

through my fault, through my fault,

through my most grievous fault;

Then they continue:

therefore 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.

The leader says:

May almighty God have mercy on us,

forgive us our sins,

and bring us to everlasting life.

The people reply:

Amen.

6. The leader invites the faithful, saying:
**Brethren (brothers and sisters), let us acknowledge our sins,
and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries.**

A brief pause for silence follows.

The leader then says:

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

The people reply:

For we have sinned against you.

The leader:

Show us, O Lord, your mercy.

The people:

And grant us your salvation.

The leader says:

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

The people reply:

Amen.

7. The leader invites the faithful, saying:
**Brethren (brothers and sisters), let us acknowledge our sins,
and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries.**

A brief pause for silence follows.

The leader or another minister, then says the following or other invocations with *Kyrie, eleison* (*Lord, have mercy*):

You were sent to heal the contrite of heart:

Lord, have mercy. Or: **Kyrie, eleison.**

The people reply:

Lord, have mercy. Or: **Kyrie, eleison.**

The leader:

You came to call sinners:

Christ, have mercy. Or: **Christe, eleison.**

The people:

Christ, have mercy. Or: **Christe, eleison.**

The leader:

You are seated at the right hand of the Father to intercede for us:

Lord, have mercy. Or: **Kyrie, eleison.**

The people:

Lord, have mercy. Or: **Kyrie, eleison.**

The leader says:

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

The people reply:

Amen.

8. The *Kyrie, eleison* (*Lord, have mercy*) invocations follow, unless they have just occurred in a formula of the Penitential Act.

℣. **Lord, have mercy.** R. Lord, have mercy.

℣. **Christ, have mercy.** R. Christ, have mercy.

℣. **Lord, have mercy.** R. Lord, have mercy.

Or:

℣. **Kyrie, eleison.** R. Kyrie, eleison.

℣. **Christe, eleison.** R. Christe, eleison.

℣. **Kyrie, eleison.** R. Kyrie, eleison.

GLORIA

9. When indicated in the *Ordo*, the Gloria is sung or said.

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you,
we bless you,
we adore you,
we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world,
 have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world,
 receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,
 have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

COLLECT

10. The leader says the Collect.

The prayer assigned to the day in the *Roman Missal* is normally used. Two examples are given. Other texts may be taken from the *Roman Missal*.

Let us pray.

Pause for silent prayer.

- A **Grant us, Lord our God,**
that we may honour you with all our mind,
and love everyone in truth of heart.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.
- Amen.
- B **O God, from whom all good things come,**
grant that we, who call on you in our need,
may at your prompting discern what is right,
and by your guidance do it.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.
- Amen.

Liturgy of the Word

12. All sit. After each reading a brief silence is observed.

READING

13. The scripture is proclaimed by a reader.

PSALM

SECOND READING

14. On Sundays and Solemnities.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

15. All stand as the Gospel Acclamation is sung.

GOSPEL

16. The Gospel is read by another reader or, if necessary, by the leader. A lay reader does not say "*The Lord be with you.*" but begins with "*A reading from the holy Gospel according to...*".

REFLECTION

17. The leader may read a homily prepared by the priest; or may give a short reflection on the scripture readings of the day. The reflection is followed by a period of silence. Even when there is no reflection a period of silence is included.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

18. When indicated in the *Ordo* the Profession of Faith is said.

GENERAL INTERCESSIONS

19. After an introduction by the leader, petitions are offered for the whole Church and for the world, as well as for the local community and other needs. The following order is a model:

- for the needs of the Church;
- for the public authorities and the salvation of the whole world;
- for those oppressed by any need;
- for the local community.

Texts may be found in Appendix V of the Roman Missal. An extra petition may be added for all who exercise ministry and particularly for vocations.

Introduction

The leader begins by saying:

Let us pray for the needs of the Church and the world.

Intentions

The intentions are announced by a reader.

The final petition is followed by a time of silent prayer. The leader concludes the intercessions with the following, or another suitable prayer.

**O God, our refuge and our strength,
hear the prayers of your Church,
for you yourself are the source of all devotion,
and grant, we pray, that what we ask in faith
we may truly obtain.
Through Christ our Lord.**

R^g. Amen.

[SIGN OF PEACE

20. This may be exchanged here where it is customary to do so.]

[PROCLAMATION OF PRAISE

21. Where this is approved diocesan practice.]

Liturgy of Communion

TRANSFER OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

22. A commissioned minister of Communion brings the Sacrament to the altar from the place where it is reserved. (cf. p.1 note 3) The leader goes to the altar, genuflects and introduces the Lord's Prayer.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

23. The leader says:

**At the Saviour's command,
and formed divine teaching,
we dare to say:**

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 leader continues:

**Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
graciously grant peace in our days,
that, by the help of your mercy,
we may be always free from sin
and safe from all distress,
as we wait the blessed hope
and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.**

The people conclude the prayer, acclaiming:
**For the kingdom,
the power and the glory are yours
now and for ever.**

SIGN OF PEACE

24. The leader invites all to exchange peace unless this has already taken place.

Let us offer each other the sign of peace

All exchange a sign of peace.

COMMUNION

25. All prepare in silence to receive Holy Communion. Any additional vessels required for the distribution of Communion are brought to the altar and prepared. The leader takes a host and, extending it towards the people, 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.**

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

26. During the distribution of Communion, a suitable song may be sung.

If the leader receives Communion, he or she says inaudibly:

**May the Body of Christ
keep me safe for eternal life.**

Ministers of Holy Communion go to the communicants. They raise a host slightly and show it to each of the communicants, saying:

The Body of Christ.

The communicant receives Communion answering:

Amen.

Any hosts remaining after the distribution are returned to the place where it is reserved. Vessels used for the distribution are left covered on a side table and cleansed after the liturgy has concluded.

SILENCE

27. After the distribution, a period of silence is most appropriate so that, in communion, all may praise God in silent prayer.

SONG OF THANKSGIVING

28. All stand.

One of the following songs of thanksgiving is sung or said: *Benedictus*, *Magnificat*, or *Gloria*. Texts are available in hymnbooks. If the *Gloria* has been used already in the celebration or it is the season of Lent or Advent one of the other texts is used. The leader says one of the following invitations.

A Benedictus

**With people everywhere
let us bless the God of Israel.**

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel...

B Magnificat

**Let us glorify the Lord
whose mercy is from age to age.**

My soul glorifies the Lord...

C Gloria

**With all the voices of heaven,
let us sing praise and honour and glory to God.
Glory to God in the highest...**

The Concluding Rites

CONCLUDING PRAYER

29. The leader says the concluding prayer using one of the following:
- A **Pour on us, O Lord, the Spirit of love,
and in your kindness
make those you have nourished
by this one heavenly Bread
one in mind and heart.
Through Christ our Lord.**
- Amen.
- B **May your healing work, O Lord,
free us, we pray, from doing evil
and lead us to what is right.
Through Christ our Lord.**
- Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

30. Any necessary announcements are made at this point.

BLESSING

31. The leader concludes the rite by signing himself or herself with the Sign of the Cross while saying the following:
- May almighty God bless us,
the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.**
- Amen.

DISMISSAL

32. The leader dismisses the people.
- A **Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord.**
Or:
B Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.
Or:
C Go in peace.
- Thanks be to God.

33. On Sundays a collection is taken as people leave.

