

# Liturgical Norms of the Archdiocese of Atlanta Promulgated Between 2001 and 2010

## Table of Contents

About this Document.....	3
Sacramental Reception Location.....	3
Sacramental Reception Recording.....	3
Baptism/Confirmation Name & Godparent/Sponsor Qualifications.....	3
Baptism.....	4
Method of Conferring Baptism.....	4
Sponsors.....	5
Parents.....	5
Invalid Celebrations of the Sacrament of Baptism.....	5
Conditional Baptism.....	6
Confirmation.....	8
The Celebration of the Eucharist.....	9
The Homily.....	9
The Creed.....	9
The Sign of Peace.....	9
Matter for the Eucharist.....	9
Bread for the Celebration of the Eucharist.....	9
Low Gluten Hosts.....	10
Wine for the Celebration of the Eucharist.....	10
Holy Communion.....	10
The Purification.....	10
Posture.....	11
Deacons.....	12
Stipends for the Celebration of the Mass.....	12
Holy Communion and Worship of the Blessed Sacrament Outside of Mass.....	13
Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion.....	13
Purification of Vessels.....	14
Distribution of Holy Communion Outside of Mass.....	14
Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest.....	14
Communion Services.....	14
Communion for the Sick.....	14
Reservation of the Blessed Sacrament.....	15
Where may the Blessed Sacrament be reserved?.....	15
What is necessary for the Blessed Sacrament to be reserved in a church, oratory, or chapel?.....	15
What constitutes an oratory or chapel appropriate for the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament?.....	16
What about chapels in rectories?.....	16
What to do about improper reservation of the Blessed Sacrament?.....	17

What if the Blessed Sacrament is reserved in a place that does not have the proper permission or blessing?.....	17
What if I am unsure if a place has been designated as a chapel or oratory?.....	17
What if I have a chapel or oratory that I would like to return to secular use?.....	17
Improvisation.....	17
Music.....	17
The use of Latin.....	18
Lent.....	19
Fasting and Abstinence.....	19
Holy Water.....	19
The Sacred Triduum.....	20
Good Friday.....	20
Silence.....	21
Sacred Vessels.....	21
Linens.....	21
Holy Oils.....	21
Use of Oils.....	21
Reception and Care of Oils.....	22

## **About this Document**

This document represents an attempt to collect and categorize the liturgical norms promulgated in the Archdiocese of Atlanta during the first decade of the twenty-first century. While it attempts to be complete, it is not an authoritative document in itself. Rather, the norms stand on the authority of their original promulgation. This document only presents legislation from the Archdiocese of Atlanta, and so should be taken in conjunction with the relevant national and universal norms. Any questions or concerns regarding this document should be directed to the Office for Divine Worship of the Archdiocese of Atlanta.

## **Sacred Rites**

### **Sacramental Reception Location**

The Sacraments of Initiation are ordinarily to be received in the parish in which a child or youth and his or her family, or an adult, is registered, absent special permission from the Archbishop to a Pastor for good cause shown, see 1983 CIC c. 515.1, 753, 773, 776-777, and 914. The past practice of Sacramental reception in the parish co-located with a parish or regional Catholic school or at a private Catholic school attended by a child or youth from another parish, with permission sought and obtained from the Pastor of the parish of family registration, is hereby abrogated. Cf. Catechism nos. 1324, 1343, 1396, 2179, and 2226.

The Sacrament of Penance may be received either in the parish or elsewhere, from whatever confessor a penitent chooses, 1983 CIC c. 991. (Sacramental Guidelines 2002)

### **Sacramental Reception Recording**

Recording of reception of the Sacraments of Initiation, which is the responsibility of the Pastor, will occur in the parish where the Sacrament was received, 1983 CIC c. 535.1 & 2, 877, and 895; in recording Baptisms, the date and place of birth must also be entered, Compiled Policies 1.6.

A notice of reception of the Sacraments of Eucharist and Confirmation must be sent to the parish of Baptism, see 1983 CIC c. 535.2 and 895. (Sacramental Guidelines 2002)

### **Baptism/Confirmation Name & Godparent/Sponsor Qualifications**

“Parents, sponsors, and the Pastor are to see that a name foreign to the Christian tradition is not given,” Compiled Policies no. 1.4; 1983 CIC c. 855.

While a distinction exists between godparent and sponsor in the Rite nos. 8-9 and 42-43; see, note to 1983 CIC c. 872, the requirements are essentially the same:

- A sponsor assists the person, who is to receive Baptism and Confirmation, to lead a Christian life;

- There may be only one male and one female sponsor;
- A sponsor must be designated by the parents of an infant, by an adult himself or herself, or by the Pastor or other cleric who administers the Sacrament;
- A sponsor must have completed his or her 16th year;
- A sponsor must have received the Sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist;
- A sponsor must be a practicing Catholic;
- A sponsor must be free of any canonical penalty;
- A mother or father may not be a sponsor for their child; and
- A baptized non-Catholic may only act as a witness where a Catholic sponsor has been designated.

1983 CIC c. 872-874 and 892-893; Compiled Policies no. 1.5.

(Sacramental Guidelines 2002)

## **Baptism**

### ***Method of Conferring Baptism***

The Church teaches that Baptism may be performed either by immersion or by pouring water over the head of the candidate. (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #1239-1240, #1278) In the United States, pouring of water over the head of the candidate has become the prevalent, although not exclusive custom. Since the bishop is the principal dispenser of the Sacred Mysteries, and the operations surrounding the administering of the Sacraments are in his care, and since I have been asked for my counsel on this subject, I would offer the following as guidelines for the Archdiocese of Atlanta, and direct that they be observed.

- Baptism by immersion or by pouring water over the head of the candidate are both acceptable in the Archdiocese of Atlanta.
- As with pouring water over the head, if Baptism is to be performed by immersion, the actions must be carried out in such a way that the dignity of the Sacrament is in no way compromised:
  - The pool used for immersion must be located within the church, and of permanent construction. The physical circumstances providing for immersion may not be improvised simply so immersion can take place.
  - Safety, especially in the case of infants, must be of paramount concern. The Sacrament must never be an occasion for possible harm occurring to the person receiving it, or to those assisting in the ceremony.
  - When the Sacrament is celebrated using immersion, great care must be given to preparation for the actual movements of the ritual and the disposition of those taking part – for example: where will the celebrant stand, what will the celebrant wear, who will help with

the robing and disrobing, where will the candidate dress after the immersion, etc. In all circumstances of the Rite, the dignity of the Sacrament must be guarded from awkwardness or unintentional levity which might result from lack of preparation.

- A pastor may permit Baptism by immersion as long as the ritual integrity of the action is observed and the dignity of the Sacrament is guaranteed, as above. The family or individuals involved must agree to the celebration of Baptism by immersion rather than being confronted with this option without proper preparation. Where permitted by the pastor, the choice of immersion or pouring of water over the head remains with the parents or guardians of the candidate in the case of infants or minors, or with the candidate. (Baptism Instruction 2005)

## ***Sponsors***

We have recently received a number of requests for information regarding the qualifications of individuals to serve as sponsors (Godparents) in the celebration of Baptism. As there seems to be considerable confusion on this matter, I wanted to write to clarify the norms found in Canons 872-874.

Outside of emergency situations, it is necessary that an individual being baptized have at least one sponsor. This sponsor must be a fully initiated Catholic who is living in communion with the Church. This excludes those living in invalid marriages. The sponsor must be at least 16 years of age, unless the minister concludes that there is a just reason for an exception to the age requirement.

If there are two sponsors, one must be male, and one female. A non-Catholic of either gender can stand as a Christian witness to a baptism along with a Catholic sponsor. (Baptism Sponsors 2009)

## ***Parents***

The only requirement that the law places on the parents of a child presented for infant baptism is that at least one of them consent to the baptism and that there be a realistic hope that the child be brought up as Catholic. There is no requirement that the parents be living in a sacramental marriage. While pre-baptismal catechesis is an opportunity to invite parents in an irregular situation into deeper communion with the Church, baptism can not be denied on the basis of the parents' marital status or lack of parish registration. (Baptism Sponsors 2009)

## ***Invalid Celebrations of the Sacrament of Baptism***

You may be aware of the recent ruling from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith on certain English language baptismal formulas. In response to a question on the validity of the formulas, “I baptize you in the name of the Creator, and of the Redeemer, and of the Sanctifier,” or “I baptize you in the name of the Creator, and of the Liberator, and of the Sustainer,” the Congregation ruled that such formulas are invalid, and that anyone who had been baptized with such a formula needs to be baptized “in forma absoluta” - that is to say, not conditionally.

In the course of your ministry, you may come across individuals who have been baptized invalidly in such a manner. In this case, it will be necessary to baptize them according to the proper rites of the Church. For children under the age of seven, the Rite of Baptism for Children should be used. In the

case of individuals whose baptism is invalid, the reception of the other sacraments is also invalid. Therefore, for individuals who have already attempted the reception of the sacrament of confirmation, it will be necessary for them to receive both the sacrament of baptism and the sacrament of confirmation according to the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults in Exceptional Circumstances (numbers 331-369 of the RCIA.) Any priest may celebrate the sacrament of confirmation in this case, in virtue of Canon 883, section 2. Children who have not yet attempted confirmation should receive only the sacrament of baptism, and should receive confirmation in the ordinary course of Christian initiation as it is conventionally celebrated in the Archdiocese of Atlanta. Because these ceremonies are taking the place of prior, invalid, celebrations of the sacrament, the individuals should not be required to undergo any prior period of catechesis, nor should they be celebrated with any external solemnity. The reception of these sacraments should be noted in the baptismal registry as a notation to the original entry that was made for their invalid reception.

Individuals who were invalidly baptized and have subsequently married in the Catholic Church will usually need to receive a *sanatio in radice* or a convalidation of their marriage. The priest or deacon working with the couple should contact the Metropolitan Tribunal regarding a request for a *sanatio*. Please contact my office directly in the case of any individual who was invalidly baptized, but who later attempted to receive the sacrament of Holy Orders.

Unless there is evidence that one of the invalid formulas was used, a baptism should be presumed to be valid. In case of serious doubt, the individual may be conditionally rebaptized.

In cases where it is known that a priest or deacon habitually made use of an invalid formula, it will be necessary to contact all of the individuals baptized by that priest or deacon. Please contact my office regarding the procedures to follow in notifying individuals who may have received the sacrament of Baptism invalidly. (Invalid Baptisms 2008)

## ***Conditional Baptism***

**I. When to Administer Conditional Baptism:** The Sacrament of Baptism should only be administered conditionally when it is impossible to verify whether or not an individual has been baptized, or when there is a serious reason for doubting the validity of a previous attempt to confer Baptism. (cf. CIC 845, 869)

A. In order to establish the fact that an individual was baptized, if there is no conflict of interest, it is sufficient to have either one unexceptionable witness or, if the baptism was conferred upon an adult, the sworn testimony of the baptized person (cf. CIC 876)

B. i. Baptism is assumed to have been administered validly in the Catholic Church or in any church or ecclesial community that habitually uses valid form, matter, and intention. An individual baptized under such circumstances should not be re-baptized unless there is a serious reason to believe that form, matter, or intention was lacking. (cf. CIC 869 §2)

ii. In order for a Baptism to be valid, the form used must name the three persons of the Blessed Trinity as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Formulas such as “I baptize you in the name of the Creator, and of the Redeemer, and of the Sanctifier” and “I baptize you in the name of the Creator, and

of the Liberator, and of the Sustainer” are not valid forms for the Sacrament of Baptism. If it is known that such a formula was used at an attempted Baptism, the person should be baptized absolutely. If there is serious reason to believe that such a formula may have been used, the individual should be baptized conditionally. (cf. Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Responses to Questions Proposed on the Validity of Baptism*, February 1, 2008)

iii. Questions regarding the validity of the celebration of Baptism within a particular ecclesial community may be directed to the Office for Divine Worship of the Archdiocese of Atlanta. (cf. Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism*, 99)

C. In the event where a serious doubt exists regarding the valid conferral of Baptism, the individual, if an adult, should be properly catechized on the nature of the sacrament before a conditional celebration of the Sacrament of Baptism. (cf. CIC 869 §3)

D. In danger of death, an individual may be baptized conditionally without any catechesis or investigation into the circumstances of the first attempt to confer the sacrament if the minister has reason to believe that a prior attempt to confer baptism was invalid.

**II. Individuals Preparing for Reception into Full Communion with the Catholic Church:** In the case of individuals preparing for reception into full communion with the Catholic Church, the following norms should be followed if, after serious investigation, the fact or validity of Baptism can not be established: (cf. RCIA #480)

A. Conditional Baptism should be administered outside of mass within the weeks prior to the Easter Vigil. It should be administered with a minimum of solemnity and not be publicly announced.

B. Baptism should be administered according to the form given in numbers 340-361 of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA.) The celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation and the post-baptismal anointing with sacred chrism are omitted. The clothing with a baptismal garment and presentation of a lighted candle may be omitted.

C. The form used for conditional baptism is as follows:

*If you are not baptized, N., I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.*

This form is accompanied by the pouring of water, as indicated in number 226 of the RCIA.

D. The individual's sponsor for the RCIA should preferably serve as a sponsor at the conditional baptism.

E. At the Easter Vigil or at another appropriate time, the individual who has received conditional baptism will join the candidates for reception into full communion with the Catholic Church in making a profession of faith and receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation.

**III. Individuals Already Living as Members of the Catholic Church:** Should a serious doubt arise regarding the validity of the baptism of an individual already living as a member of the Catholic

Church, they should be conditionally baptized.

A. If the individual is a child who has not yet reached the age of reason, the *Rite of Baptism for Children* should be followed, with the form given in II(C) above.

B. If the individual has reached the age of reason, they should receive conditional baptism according to the form given in numbers 340-366 of the RCIA. The celebration should be conducted outside of mass, with a minimum of solemnity, and should not be publicly announced. The form of the sacrament is that given in II(C) above.

C. If the individual has reached the age of reason, they should receive the Sacrament of Confirmation at the same ceremony. If they have previously attempted to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, it should be administered conditionally. Otherwise, Confirmation should be administered absolutely.

**IV. Individuals who may not be Alive:** If there is a question as to whether an individual is alive, they should be baptized immediately, if it is known that they are unbaptized and desire baptism. This is accomplished through the pouring of water and the sacramental formula. Children under the age of reason may be baptized even without the parents' permission, although this is not required. (cf. CIC 868 §2)

**V. Recording Conditional Baptisms:** Conditional baptisms should be recorded. If the original attempt at baptism was celebrated in a Catholic Church, the conditional baptism should be noted in the margin of the entry that recorded the original attempt at baptism. If the original attempt was in a non-Catholic community, a new entry should be made in the baptismal register of the parish within whose boundaries the conditional baptism was celebrated. A marginal note should indicate that the baptism was conditional.

**VI. Circumstances Requiring Variations from these Norms:** The local ordinary may decide in each case which rites are to be included or excluded in conferring conditional baptism. If pastoral circumstances suggest a variation from the norms described in this document, the Archbishop's Office should be contacted, preferably in writing, with the request. (RCIA 480) (Conditional Baptism 2010)

## **Confirmation**

Pastors and Administrators in the Archdiocese of Atlanta possess the faculty to confirm within the territory of their parishes when it seems pastorally expedient to do so and when in their opinion circumstances warrant such an action. This faculty includes the right to sub-delegate. (Confirmation Directives 2005)

# **The Celebration of the Eucharist**

## ***The Homily***

*The homily should ordinarily be given by the priest celebrant himself. He may entrust it to a concelebrating priest, or occasionally, according to circumstances, to the deacon, but never to a lay person. (GIRM, no. 66)*

On occasion, the pastor will ask members of the lay faithful to address the congregation for some specific purpose, and it is often done at the time reserved for the homily. A better time is at the conclusion of Mass, after the Communion Rite is completed, and before the final greeting and the celebrant's blessing. In any case, the homily is always to be delivered, by a priest or deacon, regardless of any extraordinary presentation. (GIRM-Notes)

## ***The Creed***

*At the words et incarnatus est (by the power of the Holy Spirit...and became man) all make a profound bow; but on the solemnities of the Annunciation and of the Nativity of the Lord, all genuflect. (GIRM, no. 137)*

The bow or genuflection at the words commemorating the Incarnation of our Lord are not optional; I ask that these signs of reverence and humility be practiced throughout the Archdiocese of Atlanta. The words of the Nicene Creed are not to be changed from the text which appears in the Roman Missal. (GIRM-Notes)

## ***The Sign of Peace***

*The priest may give the sign of peace to the ministers, but always remains within the sanctuary, so as not to disturb the celebration. In the dioceses of the United States of America, for a good reason, on special occasions, (for example, in the case of a funeral, a wedding, or when civic leaders are present) the priest may offer the sign of peace to a few of the faithful near the sanctuary. At the same time, in accord with the decisions of the Conference of Bishops, all offer one another a sign that expresses peace, communion and charity. While the sign of peace is being given, one may say: Pax Domini sit semper tecum (The peace of the Lord be with you always), to which the response is Amen. (GIRM-USA, no.154)*

The priest celebrants of the Archdiocese of Atlanta should consider remaining within the sanctuary during the Sign of Peace the norm, and should leave the sanctuary only under the circumstances given above. (GIRM-Notes)

## ***Matter for the Eucharist***

### **Bread for the Celebration of the Eucharist**

Canon 924 states that: "The bread must be wheaten only, and recently made, so that there is no danger of corruption." This is expanded on somewhat by the instruction *Inaestimabile Donum*, which adds that the bread must be unleavened, that by its consistency it should "appear as actual food," but that it

should retain the traditional form or shape. No ingredients other than wheaten flour and water may be used in the preparation of the bread. The instruction adds that “the preparation of the bread requires attentive care, to ensure that the product does not detract from the dignity due to the Eucharistic bread, can be broken in a dignified way, does not give rise to excessive fragments, and does not offend the sensibilities of the faithful when they eat it.” (*Inaestimabile Donum*, 8) Altar breads prepared in conformity with the Church's norms can be obtained from a number of sources. (Matter-Memo 2007)

### **Low Gluten Hosts**

All priests in the Archdiocese of Atlanta in good standing have the authority to permit reception of Holy Communion confected in a low gluten host by those among the laity suffering from Celiac disease, either for a single instance or habitually. (Celiac-Decree 2007)

### **Wine for the Celebration of the Eucharist**

Canon 924 states that: “The wine must be natural, made from grapes of the vine, and not corrupt.” *Inaestimabile Donum* further specifies that “The wine for the Eucharistic celebration must be of 'the fruit of the vine' and be natural and genuine, that is to say not mixed with other substances.” (*Inaestimabile Donum* 8). Many commercially available wines have other substances such as sugars or preservatives added, and so are not appropriate matter for the Eucharist. Only wine which is certified to be prepared in accordance with Church law should be used in the mass. Such wine is available from a number of sources. (Matter-Memo 2007)

### **Holy Communion**

*If extraordinary ministers...are required...they approach the altar as the priest receives Communion.* (Norms USA, no. 38) Extraordinary ministers are not to gather at the altar until the celebrant and concelebrants are receiving. Deacons and extraordinary ministers are not to receive Communion at the same time as priests. Also, extraordinary ministers are not to wait to receive Holy Communion until after the distribution. See Norms USA, no. 39. Also, GIRM, no. 162: *These ministers (extraordinary ministers) should not approach the altar before the priest has received Communion and they are always to receive from the hands of the priest celebrant (or the deacon if he is so delegated,) the vessel containing either species of the Most Holy Eucharist for distribution to the faithful.* (GIRM-Notes)

The extraordinary ministers distribute the Eucharist according to local practice, then they give the vessel to the celebrant, deacon or acolyte, or place it on the altar. Each genuflects and goes to the credence table to cleanse his or her fingers, in the case of those who have distributed the Precious Body, before returning to places among the assembly. (Communion Distribution 2002)

In the Archdiocese of Atlanta, it is permitted to distribute Holy Communion under both species at all masses. (Communication from Archbishop Gregory)

### **The Purification**

Beginning with the First Sunday of Advent in 2006, parishes in the Archdiocese of Atlanta are requested to see that all sacred vessels are purified by a priest, deacon, or instituted acolyte. ... The GIRM permits that vessels be purified either after communion or after mass, and parishes with large

numbers of vessels may find it more convenient to do so after mass. In any case, all of the Precious Blood that remains should be consumed at the end of communion. In the Archdiocese of Atlanta, the permission for extraordinary ministers to consume any of the precious blood that remains after communion continues in effect. While the Prefect of the Congregation, in his letter, mentions two additional pastoral approaches: the distribution of Holy Communion under only one species or the use of intinction, at present the use of intinction is not encouraged in the Archdiocese of Atlanta. The choice to distribute communion under one or both kinds remains at the discretion of the priest. (Purification-Notice 2006)

The purifications should take place only at the altar or the credence or side table, not in the sacristy. The following is the policy of the Archdiocese of Atlanta regarding the actions of extraordinary ministers at the conclusion of the Communion rite:

They (the extraordinary ministers) distribute the Eucharist according to local practice, then they give the vessel to the celebrant, deacon or acolyte, or place it on the altar. Each goes to the credence table to cleanse his or her fingers, in the case of those who have distributed the precious Body, before returning to his or her place among the faithful. ... It is to be remembered that the extraordinary ministers are commissioned, as their name implies, to a restricted function, and only when necessary. When the distribution of Holy Communion is completed, they should return to their appropriate places among the faithful, since the only persons authorized to be in the sanctuary are the ministers of the altar, the priest(s), deacon(s), and their authorized assistants (acolytes, lectors, cantors, etc.). (GIRM-Notes)

## **Posture**

The faithful continue to sit at the conclusion of the Offertory while the invitation "Pray, brethren..." is extended. They rise to respond, "May the Lord accept..."

The only licit posture of the faithful during the Eucharistic Prayer is kneeling, unless they are prevented **on occasion** from kneeling due to "health, lack of space, the large number of people present, or some other good reason." The determination of what constitutes "some other good reason" will be made by the Diocesan Bishop.

The phrase "**on occasion**" was specifically chosen by the Bishops in order to establish a uniform posture of kneeling during the Eucharistic Prayer. It is only on exceptional and extraordinary occasions, therefore, and never on a regular basis, that standing during the Eucharistic Prayer is permitted in the dioceses of the United States of America.

The following chart is provided to assist in catechesis for the proper common posture at Mass.

From the beginning of Mass until the First Reading	STAND
From the First Reading until the Gospel Acclamation	SIT
From the Gospel Acclamation until the end of the Gospel	STAND
During the Homily	SIT
From the profession of Faith until the end of the General Intercessions	STAND
From the Preparation of the Gifts to the completion of "Pray brethren..."	SIT
From the beginning of the people's response "May the Lord..." to the end of the Holy, Holy	STAND
From the completion of the Holy, Holy until after the Amen of the Eucharistic Prayer	KNEEL
From the beginning of the Our Father until the completion of the Lamb of God	STAND
From the "Behold the Lamb of God" until the distribution of Holy Communion	KNEEL
When receiving Holy Communion (see Chapter 4, Reception of Holy Communion below)	STAND
During the sacred silence after the Distribution of Holy Communion	SIT or KNEEL

(GIRM-Notes)

## Deacons

*From the epiclesis until the priest shows the chalice, the deacon normally remains kneeling.* (GIRM, no. 179)

In the Archdiocese of Atlanta, for reasons of age or infirmity, the assisting deacon may remain standing during the consecration. In all other instances, the deacon should kneel as directed. (GIRM-Norms)

## ***Stipends for the Celebration of the Mass***

Mass stipends are offerings given by the faithful when they request that a mass be offered for a specific intention. They are distinct from any gift that might be given to a visiting priest as an expression of thanks or as compensation for his time and travel.

Only one stipend can be taken for each mass, and the mass must be offered for that intention, alone. A single intention may be for multiple individuals: e.g.: For the deceased members of the Knights of Columbus. If a priest wants to remember other intentions during the mass, he may do so in the prayers of the faithful or at the designated points in the Roman Canon. He should not take a stipend for those intentions, however. (cf. CIC 948)

Under certain circumstances, collective intentions are permitted. For several mass intentions to be combined into a single mass:

- (1) the donors must be informed of and consent to the combining of their offerings before the Mass for the collective intention is celebrated;
- (2) the place and time for the collective Mass must be announced;
- (3) the practice may not be observed more than twice a week;
- (4) the celebrant of the “collective intention” may keep for himself no more than the usual amount of a single Mass offering (\$10) and must send any excess to the Archdiocesan Seminary Fund (see below.) (cf. Congregation for the Clergy – decree of February 22, 1991; *New Commentary on the Code of Canon Law* p. 1132)

In each parish, the pastor has the obligation to offer one mass for the people of the parish on every Sunday and holy day of obligation, for which he should not receive a stipend. If a pastor has multiple parishes, he is obliged to only one mass for all of the people entrusted to him. If he has neglected this obligation, he should offer the number of masses that he has omitted as soon as possible. (cf. CIC 534)

A priest should not refuse to offer a mass because a small amount of money is offered for the stipend. He can, however, place restrictions on how many intentions he is willing to take from a particular individual, or exclude intentions of questionable piety. (cf. CIC 948)

Mass intentions are received by the individual priest, although they may be transmitted through the parish. This means that the priest should receive the stipend given for the mass he celebrates, unless the priests of a parish agree among themselves to divide their stipends in a different way. In that case, visiting priests should still receive the stipends for the masses they celebrate. (cf. CIC 955)

While the province of Atlanta does not have an established norm for mass stipends, the custom of \$10 per mass should be followed as a guideline. If a sum of money is given for the celebration of masses, the amount should be divided by ten to determine how many masses should be offered for the intention. (cf. CIC 950, 952)

A priest is only allowed to retain one mass stipend per day. Except on Christmas Day, if a priest offers more than one mass, the stipends for the additional masses should be sent to the Archdiocesan Seminary Fund: c/o Finance Office / 680 West Peachtree St. NW / Atlanta, GA 30308 (cf. CIC 951)

A priest may not accept stipends for more masses than he can offer in a year's time. It would be prudent for parishes to follow this norm, as well. Also, a parish may reserve days on its calendar for urgent intentions that come up at short notice, such as deaths or natural disasters. (cf. CIC 953)

If a priest or parish receives more stipends than they can make use of in a year, excess stipends can be sent to another priest or to the missions, unless the donor has requested otherwise. One agency that handles the transfer of stipends to mission priests is: Aid to the Church in Need, 725 Leonard Street, P.O. Box 220384 Brooklyn, NY 11222 Tel: 800-628-6333 Excess stipends may also be sent to the Monastery of the Holy Spirit, 2625 Highway 212 SW, Conyers, GA 30094 (cf. CIC 954)

Should a priest or parish discover that they have held intentions for more than a year, the extra intentions, including the stipend given, should be sent to the ordinary. In the Archdiocese of Atlanta, these stipends should be sent to: Office of the Archbishop, Archdiocese of Atlanta, 680 West Peachtree St. NW, Atlanta, GA 30308 (cf. CIC 956)

Proper records should be kept of mass stipends received, together with the moment when they are fulfilled or transferred. The books may be inspected by the ordinary or his representative at a parish visitation. (cf. CIC 955, 958)

Mass Stipends are taxable income for federal and state income tax, as well as Social Security tax purposes. (Mass Stipends 2010)

## **Holy Communion and Worship of the Blessed Sacrament Outside of Mass**

### ***Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion***

One of the duties of the bishop is to delegate through pastoral assignment, members of the lay faithful to assist in the distribution of Holy Communion. They are called “extraordinary” ministers to distinguish them from those who are the “ordinary” ministers of Holy Communion, the bishop, the priest, and the deacon. In the recent instruction on the Eucharist, *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, the following direction is given, and I ask that it be followed faithfully in the Archdiocese, not only in parlance, but also where the words themselves appear as printed text, such as parish bulletins and websites.

“This function (extraordinary minister) is to be understood strictly according to the name by which it is known, that is to say, that of extraordinary minister of Holy Communion, and not “special minister of Holy Communion” nor “extraordinary minister of the Eucharist” nor “special minister of the Eucharist” by which names the meaning of this function is unnecessarily and improperly broadened.”

Also, the term “Eucharistic Minister” is to be used only to describe those who are the ordinary ministers of the Eucharist: the bishop, the priest and the deacon. (2004-letter)

### **Purification of Vessels**

Sacred vessels are not to be purified by extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion. They are only to be purified by a priest, deacon, or instituted acolyte. (see above) (Purification-Notice 2006)

### ***Distribution of Holy Communion Outside of Mass***

#### **Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest**

Circumstances calling for the use of the *Directory for Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest* are not to be found in the Archdiocese of Atlanta (2004-letter)

#### **Communion Services**

The *Rite of Distributing Holy Communion outside Mass with the Celebration of the Word* is to be used in the following instances:

a) When sickness or emergency causes the absence of the only priest in a parish from a scheduled mass

b) In parishes with only one priest, when on a regularly scheduled off-day, no other priest is available to cover the scheduled daily mass.

The *Rite for Communion outside Mass* should be held in the place where the Eucharist is regularly celebrated or reserved. (Communion may be given, however, in other places, including private homes, when it is a question of the sick, prisoners, or others who cannot leave the place without danger or serious difficulty.)

The Rite may be celebrated only by a deacon, an instituted acolyte, or an appointed extraordinary minister of Holy Communion. All other rubrics given in the *Introduction to Holy Communion Outside Mass* are to be followed.

This rite may be celebrated only with the permission of the pastor, or in his absence, permission from the local dean, or from a Vicar of the Archdiocese or the Archbishop.

This rite may not be used in parishes where Mass is offered for the general parish community on the same day, and it may not be used as an “optional” ceremony for any other purposes, such as the commissioning of leaders, teachers, or other incidental parish events. (2004-letter)

#### **Communion for the Sick**

The Church's primary reason for reserving the Holy Eucharist is for distribution to the sick as viaticum. The usual ministers for this merciful work are the priest and the deacon, but when necessary, also the extraordinary minister of Holy Communion. The rites to be followed are found in the *Roman Ritual: Administration of Communion to the Sick*. The rite may be obtained from the USCCB Publishing office. In *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, the following caution is given:

“A Priest or Deacon, or an extraordinary minister who takes the Most Holy Eucharist when an ordained minister is absent or impeded in order to administer it as Communion for a sick person, should go insofar as possible *directly from the place where the Sacrament is reserved to the sick person's home, leaving aside any profane business so that any danger of profanation may be avoided* and the greatest reverence for the Body of Christ may be ensured.” (2004-letter)

## **Reservation of the Blessed Sacrament**

### **Where may the Blessed Sacrament be reserved?**

In virtue of law, the Blessed Sacrament *must* be reserved in certain locations:

- In the cathedral church of a diocese (c. 934 §1,1°)
- In every parish church (c. 934 §1,1°)
- In the church or oratory attached to a house of a religious institute or house of apostolic life<sup>1</sup> (c. 934 §1 1°)

In virtue of law, the Blessed Sacrament *may* be reserved in one additional location:

- In the private chapel of the bishop (c. 934 §1.2°)

The *permission of the local ordinary* is required for reservation of the Blessed Sacrament in other locations:

- In other churches, oratories, and chapels (c. 934 §2)

It is not permitted to reserve the Blessed Sacrament outside of sacred places consecrated for divine worship. This includes keeping the Blessed Sacrament in personal custody except when it is carried for an urgent need such as the communion of the sick. (c. 935)

### **What is necessary for the Blessed Sacrament to be reserved in a church, oratory, or chapel?**

- An individual must be entrusted with the care of the Blessed Sacrament (c. 934 §2)
- A priest should celebrate mass in the place at least twice a month (c. 934 §2)
- A church in which the Blessed Sacrament is reserved should be open to the faithful for prayer for at least a period of hours each day (c. 937)
- The tabernacle in which the Blessed Sacrament is placed should be in a part of the church or oratory which is distinguished, conspicuous, fittingly adorned, and fit for prayer (c. 938 §2)

---

<sup>1</sup> This refers to houses of a religious community legitimately erected with the prior written consent of the Bishop, (c. 609) and not simply to a building in which religious happen to reside.

- The Blessed Sacrament should be reserved in a tabernacle that is immovable, solid, not transparent, and locked securely against profanation (c. 938 §3)
- The person in charge of the church or oratory should see that the key to the tabernacle is kept with the greatest diligence (c. 938 §5)
- The hosts which are kept in a ciborium in the tabernacle are to be renewed frequently, with the older hosts being properly consumed (c. 939)
- A lamp is to be kept burning perpetually before the tabernacle<sup>2</sup> (c. 940)
- The presence of the Eucharist in the tabernacle is to be shown by a veil or in another suitable way determined by the competent authority. (*Roman Ritual: Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist outside of Mass*, 11)
- In churches or oratories where permission has been given to reserve the Blessed Sacrament, there should be a solemn period of Eucharistic Adoration at least yearly. (c. 942)
- The Blessed Sacrament may be reserved in only one tabernacle of any church or oratory (c. 938 § 1).

### **What constitutes an oratory or chapel appropriate for the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament?**

- An oratory is a place permanently set aside for divine worship by the permission of the local ordinary for the convenience of some community or group of the faithful (c. 1223)
- A private chapel is a place set aside for divine worship by the local Ordinary for the convenience of one or more individuals (c. 1226)
- Once an oratory or private chapel has been designated, it may only be used for divine worship, and must be freed from all domestic use (c. 1229)
- Before granting the permission to establish an oratory, the ordinary is to inspect the place in question, either personally or through a representative (c. 1224 §1)
- Once the permission has been given to establish an oratory in a place, it can not revert to secular use without the authority of the same ordinary (c. 1224 §2)
- Before becoming a sacred place, the oratory or chapel must receive the blessing established in the liturgical books. (c. 1205) This blessing must be given by the local ordinary or his delegate (c. 1207) (see the *Rite of Blessing of a Church*)<sup>3</sup>
- The ordinary must grant an additional permission before the Blessed Sacrament may be reserved in an oratory or chapel.<sup>4</sup> (c. 934)
- A separate permission from the ordinary is also needed before Mass or other sacred celebrations can take place in a private chapel. (c. 1228)

### **What about chapels in rectories?**

Only a bishop possesses the right of reserving the Blessed Sacrament in his residence by virtue of law.

<sup>2</sup> If at all possible, this lamp should be fueled by oil or wax (*Roman Ritual: Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist outside of Mass*, 11)

<sup>3</sup> Oratories and chapels receive a blessing according to the *Rite of Blessing of a Church*, and not the dedication given to parish churches.

<sup>4</sup> For this permission to be granted, it is necessary that the place be subject in a secure way to the authority of the diocesan bishop (*Redemptionis Sacramentum*, 131). This may require a contract in the case of places owned by secular entities, such as hospitals.

(c. 1227) For the Blessed Sacrament to be reserved in a rectory, a chapel must be established as described above, and the ordinary must give permission for Mass to be celebrated and the Blessed Sacrament to be reserved in that place.

### **What to do about improper reservation of the Blessed Sacrament?**

If the Blessed Sacrament is reserved in a parish church, or in a oratory or chapel by the permission of the ordinary, but some required element is lacking, it is sufficient to correct the problem and supply the missing element. Otherwise it would be necessary to remove the Blessed Sacrament.

### **What if the Blessed Sacrament is reserved in a place that does not have the proper permission or blessing?**

If the Blessed Sacrament is reserved in a place that is not a properly blessed oratory or chapel with the required permission, the Blessed Sacrament should be removed from that place. The Archbishop is happy to grant appropriate requests to designate chapels or oratories, and to see that the place in question is properly blessed. A request to designate or bless a chapel or oratory, and to grant the permissions necessary to reserve the Blessed Sacrament, should be addressed in writing to the Archbishop.

### **What if I am unsure if a place has been designated as a chapel or oratory?**

In the case of uncertainty as to whether a place has been designated as a chapel or oratory, whether it has been blessed in accord with the liturgical rites, or whether permission has been given to reserve the Blessed Sacrament in that place, one should contact the Office of the Chancellor at the Archdiocese, which maintains records of these designations.

### **What if I have a chapel or oratory that I would like to return to secular use?**

An oratory may not be converted to secular use without the permission of the local ordinary. (c. 1224) Likewise, a decree of the ordinary removing the blessing of any sacred place is necessary before it be given over to secular or domestic use. (c. 1212) This should be requested of Archbishop Gregory in writing.

## **Improvisation**

Words of the Order of the Mass and of the prayers proper to the day, as printed in the Missal and the Sacramentary, and the words of the readings as printed in the Lectionary approved for use in the United States, are not to be altered or omitted, but delivered with faithful adherence to the printed text. Those places where the celebrant is encouraged to speak in his own words are clearly identified, both in the General Instruction and in the Order of the Mass itself. (Redemptionis Sacramentum Letter)

## **Music**

In some churches it has become the practice to use the organ or other instruments to cover moments of silence, as musical "filler." This practice is to be discouraged. The Eucharistic Prayer must never be accompanied by any so-called "background music." (GIRM-Notes)

## ***The use of Latin***

“All other things being equal, Gregorian chant holds pride of place because it is proper to the Roman liturgy. Other types of sacred music, in particular polyphony, are in no way excluded, provided that they correspond to the spirit of the liturgical action and that they foster the participation of all the faithful.

“Since faithful from different countries come together ever more frequently, it is fitting that they know how to sing together at least some parts of the Ordinary of the Mass in Latin, especially the Creed and the Lord's Prayer, set to the simpler melodies. (GIRM, no. 41)”

The Second Vatican Council expressed the desire of the Church that the Latin language and the use of Gregorian Chant not be discarded as regular practices of the Roman Church. (GIRM-notes)

# Sacred Times

## Lent

### ***Fasting and Abstinence***

In Matthew 9:15, Our Lord says of us: “the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast.” In response to our Lord's saying, Christians have always embraced fasting and self-denial as an important part of the spiritual life, especially in commemoration of the Lord's passion and death. Most of the decisions on how to embrace asceticism in life are left to the choice of the individual believer, in consultation with his or her confessor or spiritual director, but the Catholic Church does call all believers to certain practices that emphasize the communal nature of repentance, especially during the Lenten season. These common practices include:

**Fasting and Abstinence on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday:** Traditionally, fasting consists of eating only one meal, with the possibility of two smaller snacks that do not add up to a single full meal.

**Abstinence from Meat on Fridays:** Canon 1251 specifies that Catholics refrain from eating meat on Fridays, as an act of penitence. In the United States, Catholics are permitted to substitute another penance outside of the season of Lent. During Lent, however, all Catholics are obliged not to eat meat on Fridays.

**Penance during Lent:** The season of Lent is a penitential time, and should be marked by some form of self-denial.

**Fasting before the reception of Holy Communion:** In preparation for the reception of Holy Communion, Catholics are asked to observe a period of fasting before receiving the Blessed Sacrament in Holy Communion. Currently the minimum length of this fast is one hour.<sup>5</sup>

The law of abstinence applies to all persons over the age of fourteen; the law of fasting applies to those between the age of 18 and 59. Those who are sick, pregnant, or nursing, or whose health would adversely be affected by fasting or abstinence should not consider themselves bound by these norms.

### ***Holy Water***

Holy water should remain in the holy water fonts during Lent, as a reminder of Baptism and of the repentance especially appropriate to the Season, and *never* be replaced with sand, or any other substance.

The represents the teaching of the Church as clarified by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments in 2003 as follows:

---

<sup>5</sup> This requirement does not apply to the elderly, the ill and those who care for them.

1. The liturgical legislation in force does not foresee this innovation, which in addition to being 'praeter legem' is contrary to a balanced understanding of the season of Lent, which though truly being a season of penance, is also a season rich in the symbolism of water and baptism, constantly evoked in liturgical texts.

2. The encouragement of the Church that the faithful avail themselves frequently of the sacraments is to be understood to apply also to the season of Lent. The 'fast' and 'abstinence' which the faithful embrace in this season does not extend to abstaining from the sacraments or sacramentals of the Church.

The practice of the Church has been to empty the Holy Water fonts on the days of the Sacred Triduum in preparation of the blessing of the water at the Easter Vigil, and it corresponds to those days on which the Eucharist is not celebrated (i.e., Good Friday and Holy Saturday) (Lent Letter 2004)

## **The Sacred Triduum**

### ***Good Friday***

Please remind the Faithful, that from the solemn adoration during the liturgical celebration on Good Friday until the beginning of the Easter Vigil, all are to genuflect when presenting themselves or passing before the Holy Cross. (Holy Thursday Announcement)

# Sacred Objects and Places

## Silence

*Even before the celebration itself, it is commendable that silence be observed in the church, in the sacristy, in the vesting room, and in adjacent areas, so that all may dispose themselves to carry out the sacred action in a devout and fitting manner. (GIRM, no. 45)*

In many churches, conversation, even in raised voices, has become acceptable, impairing the sense of reverence and silence which should be observed in the presence of our Lord, and as a fitting preparation for the celebration of the Eucharistic mystery. Pastors are urged to promote the custom of silence as directed in the paragraph above. (GIRM-Notes)

## Sacred Vessels

Glass vessels, or vessels of clay, earthenware, ceramic or porcelain or any easily broken material are no longer to be used as containers for the Precious Blood. It is acceptable to use such vessels to carry the wine forward at the Offertory, but as the instruction stipulates, from that point, the wine should be poured into chalices - see # 117. (Redemptionis Sacramentum Letter)

## Linens

All altar cloths, corporals, purificators, lavabo towels and palls used in the Archdiocese of Atlanta, must be made of absorbent cloth and never of paper. No reasons concerning economy or utility will be allowed to supersede the reverence we are bound to show the Precious Blood of our Lord, and the care with which we will treat all those surfaces that may come in contact with His Body and Blood. Any cloth that becomes saturated with any portion of the Precious Blood, should immediately be washed, and the water poured into the sacrarium. (Purificator Memo)

## Holy Oils

### ***Use of Oils***

The sacramental oils of the Church are:

- the Oil of Catechumens, used at baptism, or in ceremonies during the period of the catechmenate as specified in the *Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults*;
- the Oil of the Sick, used in celebrations of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick;
- the Holy Chrism, used in the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders.

Bishops, priests, and deacons are the only ministers authorized to use the holy oils, and the holy oils are not to be used in any ceremonies other than the sacramental liturgies listed above. (2004-letter)

## ***Reception and Care of Oils***

When the oils are received in the parish, this may be done with or without a ritual celebration. If it seems pastorally advantageous to give a ritual form to the reception, the rite entitled “The reception of the Holy Oils,” copyright 1994 by the United States Catholic Conference may be used.

Please dispose of all remaining holy oils from the previous year. The oils may be removed from their particular stocks and used on the new fire of the Easter Vigil or buried. Please remember that Canon 847 suppressed by omission the permission to add unblest oil to that which is already blessed.

The documents on liturgy frequently admonish us to use our sacramental symbols lavishly. In response to this, oil stocks are being produced in beautiful forms that are larger than those of the past. This is a commendable practice if the community can see during the year from Chrism Mass to Chrism Mass that those oils do indeed decrease because they are being used. (Oil Memo 2009)

## Sources

2004-letter – Undated Letter included in the Clergy Mailing in 2004

Redemptionis Sacramentum Letter – Letter dated July 2, 2004 accompanying a copy of Redemptionis Sacramentum.

Purificator Memo – A memo from Archbishop Donoghue dated May 2, 2003 regarding paper purificators

GIRM-Notes – A collection of excerpts from the GIRM with local adaptations promulgated by Archbishop Donoghue on Nov 24, 2003.

Baptism Instruction 2005 – An instruction from July 2005 regarding Baptism, especially the requirements for Baptism by immersion.

Baptism Sponsors 2009 – A memorandum from the Office for Divine Worship clarifying the qualifications for Baptismal Sponsors

Celiac Decree 2007 – A decree from Archbishop Gregory dated 16 August 2007 delegating to priests the authority to permit reception of Holy Communion confected in a low-gluten host.

Communion Distribution 2002 – A letter from Archbishop Donoghue dated Nov 1, 2002, providing certain details for the actions of extraordinary ministers following Holy Communion.

Conditional Baptism 2010 – Norms promulgated by Archbishop Gregory in June of 2010, regarding the conditional celebration of Baptism in the Archdiocese of Atlanta

Confirmation Directives 2005 – A letter from Archbishop Gregory dated 22 July, 2005, extending the faculty to confirm to pastors and administrators.

Invalid Baptisms 2008 – A memorandum from Archbishop Gregory dated April 14, 2008, giving instructions on how to approach cases where individuals were baptized using improper formulae.

Lent Letter 2004 – A letter from Archbishop Donoghue regarding removing Holy Water from the fonts during Lent.

Mass Stipends 2010 – Guidelines on Mass Stipends in the Archdiocese of Atlanta issued by the Office for Divine Worship on February 5, 2010.

Matter-Memo 2007 – A memorandum from the Office for Divine Worship dated August 15, 2007, sharing the norms on matter for the Eucharist.

Oil Memo 2009 – A memorandum from the Office for Divine Worship dated March 19, 2009, regarding the reception and storage of Holy Oils.

Purification Notice 2006 – A memo from Archbishop Gregory dated Oct 26, 2006 regarding the purification of vessels by lay ministers.

Reservation Guidelines 2008 – A series of guidelines issued by the Office for Divine Worship, and dated December, 2008, providing guidance on the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament

Sacramental Guidelines 2002 – Guidelines on the reception of the sacraments of initiation promulgated by Archbishop Donoghue on February 7, 2002.