

January 8, 2010

Dear Priests, Deacons, Liturgical Musicians, Lay Ministers, et al.,

I hope all have enjoyed a beautiful Christmas Season and a good start to the new year. With this email you will find the following four attachments:

- 1.) a liturgical calendar including related diocesan events already scheduled for this year
- 2.) liturgical notes and clarifications pertaining especially to Lent and Easter
- 3.) a brochure for our annual diocesan liturgical formations and RCIA retreats
- 4.) a letter from Bishop D'Arcy to priests of the Diocese, detailing a moratorium on "speaking in remembrance" at funerals

Please note in particular the dates for the Rites of Election and the Chrism Masses, as well as the start time for the Easter Vigil. In addition, please note that all payment and registration for the trainings and RCIA retreats must be submitted to this office before the events. I would be very grateful if you would advertise these formation workshop opportunities – especially the RCIA retreat – via parish bulletins and other means. Brochures may be downloaded from our website as well.

Distribution of the Precious Blood

Although this information has previously been disseminated via a notification from the Bishop's office as well as through the diocesan newspaper, I want to ensure that all are aware that Bishop D'Arcy has lifted the suspension of the use of the chalice. Effective Sunday, January 10th, the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, the distribution of the Precious Blood is again permitted in parishes. This decision was made through consultation with health officials. As Bishop D'Arcy said in his letter, there is, of course, no obligation for the faithful to receive from the chalice.

Also, as stated in the October 16th clarifications on the previous suspension policy, it is still good practice at all times for those distributing Holy Communion to refrain from actually touching those who come forward for a blessing, both for hygiene purposes and because Eucharistic particles could be on the fingers of those administering Holy Communion. Again, extraordinary ministers cannot impart blessings in the manner of priests, and it might be good to remind the faithful that there is no obligation to come forward in the Communion line if an individual is not receiving the Eucharist. In fact, making a good spiritual communion is more important than being blessed or prayed over at this time during the Mass.

New Policy on Reflections Offered at Funerals

Please take note of the just-released letter (attached) from Bishop John D'Arcy, issuing a moratorium on "speaking in remembrance" or any sort of eulogizing after the post-Communion prayer at a Funeral Mass. This letter also details the reasons why, and the process behind this decision. This moratorium is effective Ash Wednesday, February 17, 2010, and will last for one year, at which point Bishop Rhoades will make a determination as to its continuation.

The New Translation of the Roman Missal

In November, the U.S. Bishops approved the final pieces of the new English translation of the Roman Missal. All that remains is for a final approval, called the *recognitio*, to be given from Rome. This could come as early as this Spring, and once it happens, it might take around a year for publishers to have the new Missal ready for distribution. An exact implementation date has not yet been announced, but we know that it will indeed happen and that it is something we should begin preparing for in the immediate future. Please be aware that until all of this transpires and the Missal is approved for actual use in the United States, the new translation (whether whole or in part) should **not** yet be put to use in parishes. This is to ensure that the changes occur in unison and in orderly fashion throughout each diocese and the entire country. There is no problem with examining and catechizing on the available approved texts of the new translation, as long as they are not yet used in the liturgy.

In the time between now and the implementation, we will strive to provide resources and catechetical opportunities for all the faithful in this Diocese. The diocesan Priests Continuing Education Days scheduled for October 12-14 of this year will focus on the new translation. In addition, we hope that large-scale catechetical opportunities will be made available for the laity in the Diocese. I will also be happy to provide assistance to individual parishes.

An excellent resource for anyone to consult for information of the new translation is the USCCB Committee on Divine Worship's [Roman Missal website](#), which includes the approved text of the new Order of the Mass for study purposes. Material will also eventually be run in *Today's Catholic*, and updates on resources will be provided through the Office of Worship. Please keep in mind that not all resources (whether catechetical, musical, etc.) are of equal value—many companies will try to take advantage of the publishing opportunity this presents, but not all will produce quality material. Therefore, we must approach this project with great care and commitment.

In addition, as I noted in a presentation at the presbyteral meeting last October, it is absolutely essential that any resources used—as well as your own interaction with the faithful—not be negative, but instead emphasize the positive aspects of the new translation. And there is definite reason to be sincerely positive. This change, although it will be challenging (but much less dramatic than the changes of four decades ago), presents a great many opportunities. We should be genuinely excited for the chance to reemphasize liturgical catechesis and to focus anew on an integrated sense of exterior and interior active participation. Perhaps most importantly, this occasion gives attention to the great need and desire for reverence, as we celebrate the majesty of the sacred liturgy and allow the liturgy to shape us.

Mention of our New Bishop in the Eucharistic Prayer

As our priests have been made aware, beginning Wednesday, January 13th, following the official installation of Bishop Kevin Rhoades as the ninth Bishop of Fort Wayne-South Bend, it is his name that will be said during the Eucharistic Prayer at Mass.

Let us pray for Bishop Rhoades' leadership, and give thanks to God for Bishop D'Arcy's care for the Diocese these past two and half decades.

Sincerely in Christ,

Brian MacMichael

Director, Office of Worship
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