



Diocese of Laredo Committee on Liturgy and Divine Worship

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Dear Brother Priests and Deacons,

Greetings in this time of Advent as we prepare for the celebration of Christmas! With this letter I wish to touch upon a few liturgical items of importance for the Diocese of Laredo.

I hope that the transition to the use of the Third Edition of the English *Roman Missal* has been smooth. I remind all of you that the use of the *Sacramentary* is to be discontinued. Some of you may have questions regarding the disposal of the old *Sacramentary*. The USCCB Committee of Divine Worship has stated the following:

Whether or not the *Sacramentary* has been blessed by an official rite, it is appropriate to treat it with care as it has been admitted into liturgical use. Its disposal should be handled with respect. The Secretariat recommends burying the *Sacramentary* in an appropriate location on church grounds, or perhaps in a parish cemetery if there is one. Some have even suggested following a custom used in various Eastern Churches whereby liturgical books or Bibles are placed in the coffin of the deceased as a sign of devotion and love for the Liturgy. In lieu of burying old liturgical books, they could be burned, and the ashes placed in the ground in an appropriate location on church grounds. It is advisable to retain a copy of the *Sacramentary* for parish archives or liturgical libraries.

At their fall meeting, the United States Bishops stated that in **all the Sacraments** the response of the people to the greeting “The Lord be with you” be changed to “And with your spirit”. This also goes for Communion services, the blessing of water and non-Mass dismissals. The nuptial blessings for the celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage are to be taken from the Third Edition of the Roman Missal which can be found in the collection of Ritual Masses for the Celebration of Marriage. In the celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours in English, the collects can either be the current ones or the new ones from the Third Edition of the Roman Missal.

I would also like to remind all those who also celebrate the Eucharist in Spanish that His Excellency, Bishop James A. Tamayo, in accord with the other Bishops of the United States, has stated that Priests are not to use the newly Revised *Misal Romano* from Mexico. The USCCB will seek *recognitio* from the Holy See for the *Misal Romano* which will be used in the Dioceses of the United States. Until then we are to continue using the **old** *Misal Romano* from Mexico.

Some of you may have also heard about the proposal on behalf of the USCCB to include the Memorial of Blessed John Paul II, Pope, as an optional memorial in the calendar of celebrations

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in the Dioceses of the United States. The proposal will be sent to the Holy See and we will hopefully have an answer before the date of the memorial on October 22 of next year. I will keep you informed of any developments regarding this matter.

I also offer a note on the mention of the local Ordinary's name in the Eucharistic Prayer in Spanish. Bishop Tamayo has requested that his baptismal name, Jaime, be used when praying for him in our Spanish liturgical ceremonies and most particularly within the Eucharistic Prayer.

I encourage all of you to follow the norms established in the *Diocese of Laredo: Celebration of the Eucharist at Which Bishop Tamayo Presides* distributed to your parishes last spring. In addition you will find attached to this document the *Liturgy Planning Sheet* for celebrations with Bishop Tamayo. I ask that if you have requested that His Excellency celebrate at your parish that you send this document to me with as much information as possible. Please be aware of the Bishop's blessing on the document when there is no specified Solemn Blessing and be sure that the faithful have been properly formed to answer accordingly or have the blessing dialogue printed for their use.

For the celebration of Mass at which the Bishop presides the *GIRM* (117) states that seven candles should be lit. I understand that not all our churches have seven candles but if you are able to do this I would encourage it.

Some of you have asked for a clarification on the matter of Communion under both kinds by intinction. The question is one of interpretation of the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* no. 287 on whether **only** a priest may distribute Communion by intinction. The *GIRM* at the above mentioned number states:

If Communion from the chalice is carried out by intinction, each communicant, holding a communion-plate under the chin, approaches the priest, who holds a vessel with the sacred particles, a minister standing at his side and holding the chalice. **The priest** takes a host, dips it partly into the chalice and, showing it, says, *Corpus et Sanguis Christi (The Body and Blood of Christ)*. The communicant responds, *Amen*, receives the Sacrament in the mouth from the priest, and then withdraws.

No mention of any other minister, ordinary or extraordinary, is given in the *GIRM* or *Norms for the Distribution and Reception of Holy Communion Under Both Kinds in the Dioceses of the United States of America*. It seems to me that the reason for only a priest distributing Communion by intinction is stated in the *Norms for the USA* at no. 24:

In practice, the need to avoid obscuring the role of the priest and the deacon as the ordinary ministers of Holy Communion by an excessive use of extraordinary ministers might in some circumstances constitute a reason either for limiting the distribution of Holy Communion under both species or for using intinction instead of distributing the Precious Blood from the chalice.

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This still leaves the question as to why a Deacon cannot distribute Communion by intinction since he is an Ordinary minister of Holy Communion. In the *GIRM* the Deacon's duty in the distribution of Communion under both kinds is to minister the Chalice (cf. 94; *Norms* 26). Therefore the Deacon would normally hold the chalice as the Priest distributes Communion by intinction (cf. *GIRM* 284.a; 287). If you choose to distribute Communion by intinction please be aware of the following:

- Since Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion cannot be used, intinction should be done only for a congregation of a small size so as to not unduly prolong the distribution of Communion (cf. *Immensæ Caritatis* 1; *Inæstimabile Donum* 10).
- The communicant is not to intinct the host himself in the chalice (*Redemptionis Sacramentum* 104).
- That the process to distribute and receive Communion by intinction in the *GIRM* (287) be followed, particularly the use of the Communion plate (cf. *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, 93).

Finally, a few indications regarding the upcoming celebrations in the time of Christmas from the USCCB Committee on Divine Worship:

- **Feast of the Holy Family** – Since no Sunday falls between the Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord (December 25, 2011) and the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God (January 1, 2012), the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph falls on Friday, December 30, which is assigned as its proper date (*Universal Norms for the Liturgical Year and the Calendar* [UNLYC], no. 35a). The Mass and Office are both proper, but First Vespers is not prayed.
- **Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord** – In 2012, this Solemnity falls on Sunday, January 8. The Epiphany is not a Holyday of Obligation in the United States, and so always falls on the Sunday between January 2 and 8 instead of January 6 (UNLYC, no. 37). The Mass and Office are both proper, and with the introduction of the *Roman Missal, Third Edition*, **a new proper Vigil Mass for the Epiphany will be celebrated for the first time.**
- **Feast of the Baptism of the Lord** – According to the *Roman Missal*, —Where the Solemnity of the Epiphany is transferred to Sunday, if this Sunday occurs on January 7 or 8, the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord is celebrated on the following Monday|| (**Proper** of Time). Therefore, this Feast will take place on Monday, January 9, 2012. The First Week in Ordinary Time begins on the following day, Tuesday, January 10.

Please be aware that at the end of Appendix I of the Third Edition of the Roman Missal you may find the *Proclamation of the Nativity of our Lord* which may be chanted or recited on December 24 during the recitation of the Liturgy of the Hours or before the beginning of Christmas Mass during the Night. Immediately before you will find the *Announcement of Easter and the Moveable Feasts* announced after the Gospel on the Epiphany of the Lord. These are wonderful liturgical traditions of the Church which are to be encouraged. If you would like either of these texts in Spanish please let me know and I will try to make them available.

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I realize that this is a lengthy letter, but I appreciate your attention to these matters and ask that we all work to encourage the proper and worthy celebration of the Liturgy in our Diocese. Also remember that I am here as a resource to you and your parishes. Do not hesitate to contact me with your questions or concerns. I wish you a prayerful Advent and ask God to pour His abundant blessings upon you.

In Christ and Mary Immaculate,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Fr. David Muñoz, OMI". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

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