



Particular Law Regarding Liturgy and Sacraments

[Owner: Office of Worship]

1. Scheduling Masses for Sunday and Holy Days of Obligation

- 1.1. No anticipated (or vigil) Mass on Saturday or on the eve of Holy Days may begin earlier than 4:00pm; and, the precept of participating in a Mass on Sundays and holydays of obligation is not satisfied by attending a Mass celebrated before 4:00pm.

2. Holy Days of Obligation

- 2.1. In the event a Holy Day of Obligation falls on a Saturday or a Monday, the feast is to be celebrated according to the liturgical norms. However, by decree of the NCCB of December 13, 1991, when the Holy Days of January 1, August 15, and November 1, fall on either a Saturday or a Monday the precept to attend Mass is abrogated.
- 2.2. Because of its special importance, the Sunday celebration gives way only to solemnities or feasts of the Lord. The Sundays of the seasons of Advent, Lent, and Easter, however, take precedence over all solemnities and feasts of the Lord. Solemnities occurring on these Sundays are observed on the Saturdays preceding (Universal Norms for the Liturgical Year and Calendar, §5).

If several celebrations fall on the same day, the one that holds the highest rank according to the preceding Table of Liturgical Days is observed. But a solemnity impeded by a liturgical day that takes precedence over it should be transferred to the closest day not listed in nos. 1-8 in the table of precedence; the rule of no. 5 remains in effect. Other celebrations are omitted that year (Ibid. §60).

If the same day were to call for celebration of evening prayer of that day's office and evening prayer I of the following day, evening prayer of the day with the higher rank in the Table of Liturgical Days takes precedence; in cases of equal rank, evening prayer of the actual day takes precedence (Ibid. §61).

When there is a conflict in the evening between a day of precept and a liturgical day of equal or higher rank, the liturgy for the day of precept takes precedence (see Bishop's Committee on Divine Worship Newsletter, Vol. LIV, November-December 2018)

3. Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

3.1. Deputation of Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion | Lay persons who are not instituted acolytes may be temporarily designated to distribute Holy Communion.¹ In the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux, Extraordinary Ministers may be designated to distribute Holy Communion within five year periods, beginning on January 1st of years ending in 0 or 5 and terminating on December 31st of years ending in 4 or 9.

3.1.1. When Extraordinary Ministers are deputed after the beginning date of the periods just identified, their deputation continues only until the ending date of such periods.

3.1.1.1. At the discretion of the Pastor, the names of those who have been temporarily designated may be submitted to the Bishop for successive periods. However, during the final year of the period of temporary designation, pastors or administrators of parishes or Catholic High Schools in the diocese shall see that all Extraordinary Ministers who are to be deputed for the next five-year period are retrained according to the training program provided by the Office of Worship.

3.1.2. In special cases of an unforeseen nature Priests may give permission for a member or members of the faithful to distribute Holy Communion on a single occasion.² Priests in Houma-Thibodaux may give this permission for the distribution of Holy Communion on a single occasion in cases where the family member of a parishioner is temporarily ill such that he or she is kept away from a single Sunday Mass. In such cases, the family member must receive the proper vessel for transporting the Blessed Sacrament and must go immediately from the church to the person concerned.

3.1.3. Deputation of Extraordinary Ministers is for specific institutions in the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux (e. g. a church parish) not for every institution in the diocese.

¹ *Code of Canon Law*, c. 230, §3: When the need of the Church warrants it and ministers are lacking, lay persons, even if they are not lectors or acolytes, can also supply certain of their duties, namely, to exercise the ministry of the word, to preside over liturgical prayers, to confer baptism, and to distribute Holy Communion, according to the prescripts of the law.

² *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, §155: In addition to the ordinary ministers there is the formally instituted acolyte, who by virtue of his institution is an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion even outside the celebration of Mass. If, moreover, reasons of real necessity prompt it, another lay member of Christ's faithful may also be delegated by the diocesan Bishop, in accordance with the norm of law, for one occasion or for a specified time, and an appropriate formula of blessing may be used for the occasion. This act of appointment, however, does not necessarily take a liturgical form, nor, if it does take a liturgical form, should it resemble sacred Ordination in any way. Finally, in special cases of an unforeseen nature, permission can be given for a single occasion by the Priest who presides at the celebration of the Eucharist; cf. *The Roman Missal, Third Typical Edition*, Appendix III.

Schools which are not attached to a church parish, viz. the Catholic High Schools in the diocese, must submit names to the Bishop for deputation for ongoing service as Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion at that institution. Such schools must ensure that those whose names they submit for service as extraordinary ministers have been trained according to the diocesan guidelines. If necessary, lay persons may be deputed for service at more than one institution in the diocese, but each institution must request deputation by the Bishop.

3.1.4. **Procedure for Deputation** | When the names of new people are submitted for deputation as Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, the institution must also submit a copy of the list of people who are already deputed for that institution. The official form provided by the Diocesan Office of Worship must be used to request deputation.

3.1.4.1. “It is never allowed for the extraordinary minister of Holy Communion to delegate anyone else to administer the Eucharist, as for example a parent or spouse or child of the sick person who is the communicant” (*Redemptionis Sacramentum*, §159).

3.1.5. Those deputized as Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion must be (1) 18 years of age or older, (2) in full communion with the Catholic Church³ and (3) “must be persons whose good qualities of Christian life, faith, and morals recommend them. Let them strive to be worthy of this great office, foster their own devotion to the eucharist, and show an example to the rest of the faithful by their own devotion and reverence toward the most august sacrament of the altar. No one is to be chosen whose appointment the faithful might find disquieting.”⁴

3.2. Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion may bring Holy Communion to the sick--whether they be in their homes, in hospitals, in nursing homes, or in another place--provided that (1) they are visited at least occasionally by a priest who offers the Sacrament of Penance and (2) that a priest is available to provide the Anointing of the Sick when the person begins to be in danger of death due to sickness or old age.⁵

4. *Sacraments of Initiation*

³ *Code of Canon Law*, c. 205: Those baptized are fully in the communion of the Catholic Church on this earth who are joined with Christ in its visible structure by the bonds of the profession of faith, the sacraments, and ecclesiastical governance.

⁴ Sacred Congregation of the Sacraments (29 January 1973), *Immensae Caritatis*.

⁵ *Code of Canon Law*, c. 1004, §4: “The anointing of the sick can be administered to a member of the faithful who, having reached the use of reason, begins to be in danger due to sickness or old age.”

- 4.1. It is the responsibility of the pastor to see that the specific diocesan policies are followed for the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA) and the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, and Reconciliation. Particular law in these regards may be in the *Policy Regarding the Sacraments of Initiation*.

5. **Marriages**

- 5.1. **Delegation** | The pastor and other priests or deacons officially assigned to a parish have canonical jurisdiction to officially witness marriages in that parish. Any other priest or deacon must obtain for each marriage he is to officiate delegation from the Local Ordinary, the Pastor, or any cleric with general delegation, preferably in writing. The acquisition of delegation is required for the *validity* of the Marriage to be celebrated.
- 5.2. **Dispensations and Permissions** | Pastors, parochial vicars, and priests in residence at parishes may give permission for a Marriage between a Catholic and a validly Baptized non-Catholic (Mixed Marriage).
- 5.2.1. However, if such a Mixed Marriage is to take place at Mass, permission for this must be obtained from the Local Ordinary or the Judicial Vicar.
- 5.2.1.1. Thus a Mixed Marriage which takes place at Mass involves two permissions: (1) The priest gives permission for the Mixed Marriage itself and (2) the Local Ordinary or the Judicial Vicar gives permission for the celebration of Mass.
- 5.2.2. If either party is not baptized, or if there is some doubt about the validity of baptism, a dispensation from Disparity of Cult must be requested from the Office of the Judicial Vicar.
- 5.2.3. Please note the particular law entitled “Guidelines for Marriages of Roman Catholics and Episcopalians for the Dioceses of Louisiana” in the section regarding Proximate Marriage Preparation in the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux’s *Particular Law Regarding Liturgy and Sacraments*.

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6. **Funerals**

- 6.1. The proper venue for a Funeral Mass is the parish church of the deceased. Another church may be used with the consent of the person who governs that church and after notification of the pastor of the deceased (c. 1177.1.2)
- 6.2. Funeral Mass may not be celebrated in the funeral home or outside of a Catholic church or chapel. If a funeral is to be celebrated outside of a Catholic church or chapel, then the Rite for Funerals Outside of Mass must be celebrated. Holy Communion is not to be distributed in such a circumstance.

6.2.1. For serious pastoral reasons determined by the Bishop, he may grant permission for the celebration of a Funeral Mass in a Funeral Home or in another suitable place.

7. *The Light is On for You*

7.1. Each parish is expected to offer the Sacrament of Reconciliation from at least 6:00p to 8:00p on the Wednesday of the week prior to Christmas and on the Wednesday prior to Holy Week.