

GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOL CHAPELS

One of the joys of a Catholic High School is to have appropriate, worthy space to celebrate the liturgy.

Large Gatherings

Normally when the school community gathers in large numbers to celebrate the liturgy this would be in the closest parish church.

When that is not possible, an auditorium or gymnasium is converted into a worship space. On these occasions every effort should be made that the liturgical furnishings be appropriate and the ambiance be conducive for communal celebration, allowing for excellent sight lines and participation. A large space may be arranged in such a way that the seating provides a sense of being gathered around the Table of the Word and the Table of the Eucharist.

In order to participate in the community's song, a worship aid may be produced only if appropriate copyright permission has been procured for duplication of texts and music. Overhead projection also requires copyright permission.

A lectionary must be used for the proclamation of the Word.

Sufficient bread and wine should be prepared for the celebration, since the sacred elements that are consumed should be consecrated at that same liturgy.

School Chapels

With the permission of the bishop, high schools may have a designated chapel where smaller groups gather for the celebration of the Liturgy, or for devotional prayer.

It should be appointed with beautiful liturgical furnishings and liturgical books. Participation aids for the assembly should be provided. Since the primary purpose of the chapel is to celebrate the liturgy, devotional element should be minimal.

The entrance should be distinctive, drawing attention to the sacred worship space. By diocesan policy the doors must contain a large portion of clear glass.

The primary liturgical furnishings are: an altar table, ambo (lectern), presider's chair, baptismal font, cross with a corpus. Furnishings should be appropriate in size to the worship space.

Movable seating for the assembly is most appropriate.

Regarding the baptismal font: since the sacrament of baptism will rarely be celebrated in the

small chapel, this vessel serves to draw attention to our baptismal spirituality and accordingly should be distinctive.

Required liturgical books:

- \$ *Sacramentary* or *Roman Missal* (published for use in Canada)
- \$ *Lectionary* (published for use in Canada)
- \$ *Sunday Celebrations of the Word and Hours* (a resource for preparing Services of the Word)
- \$ Hymnbooks or other music resource
- \$ Resources to celebrate Morning Prayer, if this is the custom.

Other requirements: altar candle(s), linens, chalice, communion plate, vessels for wine and water, lavabo bowl and towel.

The acoustics of the chapel should be considered. The room should reflect sound allowing for vibrant singing from the assembly. Clarity of the speaking voice, without the use of amplification is ideal. Sufficient space and outlets should be provided for musical instruments.

The warm ambiance of the room could be created with materials other than carpet.

A representation of the patronal saint is appropriate in any art form: painting, stain-glass. It should not, however, dominate the worship space.

The design and artistry of the entrance way, walls and decor should signify the space as welcoming and conducive to both liturgical and devotional prayer, personal and communal.

Reservation of the Blessed Sacrament

The primary reason the Blessed Sacrament is reserved is to extend the Church's celebration of the Eucharist to those unable to be present at the liturgy: the sick, the homebound, the imprisoned and the dying (*Viaticum*). From this arises the secondary practice of prayer and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. In our tradition the Eucharist is not celebrated to specifically reserve the sacrament.

The following norms must be observed:

1. The local pastor or the local Episcopal Vicar may give permission for the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament in the school.
2. The diocesan Bishop is to be apprised of the decision.
3. The pastor or his delegate must take responsibility for the care of the Blessed Sacrament, and see that these norms are observed.
4. The chapel may *not* be used for such events as:

- \$ non-Catholic or non-religious reflection groups
- \$ peer support sessions
- \$ drama or music practice (unrelated to the liturgy)
- \$ gatherings of small groups preparing a presentation for a class, etc.
- \$ The Ontario Bishops require that a separate space be designated for all other faiths and traditions rather than to create an ecumenical (Christian) space and an inter-faith space.

5. When Eucharist is celebrated in the chapel, the presiding priest will ensure that sufficient bread and wine are consecrated for the number attending, and that an excessive number of hosts not be stored in the tabernacle.
6. The reserved host(s) should be consumed and replaced monthly.
7. For safety reasons the key to the tabernacle should be stored in a place known only to a designated few.
8. In a school the reserved sacrament is present for private devotional prayer. Due to liturgical and pastoral expectations, Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament will not occur without specific permission from the bishop.
9. Should a group be gathered for the celebration of Mass and the priest is unable to be present, a Liturgy of the Word or Liturgy of the Hours will be celebrated with the group, not a communion service, according to diocesan policy. Appropriate members of the school community should be trained to lead this service.

Celebration of Reconciliation

An area of sacramental reconciliation may be provided within the chapel. This may be achieved simply by providing two chairs and a small table with a bible.

Diocesan policy ensures that the sacrament will always be celebrated in a space that is open or at least visibly accessible.

The school environment provides opportunity to celebrate this sacrament with communal prayer.

Liturgical spirituality

Catechesis and formation about the liturgical action and function of each liturgical item in the chapel is essential for full, conscious, active participation, particularly for those unfamiliar with the liturgy.

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