

SOME REMINDERS, HINTS, AND SUGGESTIONS CONCERNING
Using Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest

in Situations When Sunday Mass Cannot Be Celebrated

Here are some reminders, hints, and suggestions concerning the diocesan policy and the ritual book Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest, second edition [SCAP] (2007). The first edition (1994 and 1997) is not used.

1. It is not permitted to use SCAP on a regular or habitual basis in the diocese.
2. SCAP may be used **only** with permission from the Bishop or Vicar General on a case by case basis.
3. Each parish is to provide training, formation, and coaching of potential Lay Leaders of Prayer as needed. Careful study of the introduction [SCAP, nos. 1-117] is a central part of this work, as well as review of the outline of the rite and the rubrics.
4. Before a parish may use a Lay Leader of Prayer to lead SCAP in an emergency, diocesan policy requires local training and formation of a Lay Leader of Prayer. The Office of Worship provides materials on the Diocesan website for pastors to train lay leaders.
5. In most situations, the parish plan for a given Sunday or holy day will be used in a situation where a priest is unavailable and SCAP is authorized to be used. This means that the following items are prepared and in the usual designated places for easy access:
 - a. Copy of the diocesan policy on SCAP,
 - b. List of nearby parishes with current Mass times and days,
 - c. The ritual book, Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest,
 - d. Music list for the Sunday or holy day,
 - e. Prayer of the faithful, and
 - f. Parish announcements.
6. Any of the celebrations in the ritual book may be used. Since the experience of Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer is uneven across the diocese, the training should focus on SCAP, Chapter II, Celebration of the Liturgy of Word either [with or without Holy Communion].

Note the following:

- a. Seating of the Leader: Since the priest's chair is not used, each parish determines the place for the leader of prayer. A suggestion would be in a front pew or near/with the servers.
- b. Procession: There is no procession of ministers.
- c. Opening Song: A liturgical song begins the celebration [SCAP, no. 52].
- d. Dismissal of Children: If ministers are prepared and present, dismissal for the liturgy of the word with children takes place in the usual way.
- e. Readings: This follows the usual plan for the given Sunday [SCAP, no. 190-197].
- f. Homily or Preaching: The diocesan policy does not permit a homily by a lay person. If a Deacon does not have a homily prepared in advance, he should not preach since "no preaching may be better than unprepared preaching".
- g. Silence: Silence following the readings is required [SCAP, no. 197].
- h. Dismissal of Catechumens: Catechumens and the elect are dismissed with a minister in the usual way [SCAP, no. 198].
- i. Lord's Prayer: The Lord's Prayer is always sung or said even if Holy Communion is not distributed.
- j. Vesture: A deacon wears an alb with stole and dalmatic of appropriate color. A lay leader of prayer wears what is suitable or customary by parish practice. An alb is permitted; it is neither required nor forbidden in the diocese. See SCAP, nos. 24 and 36.
- k. Ministers: The usual full complement of ministers is to be used to the degree possible.
- l. Liturgical Music: Parish musicians, in addition to the regular seasonal and weekly preparation, can further help the parish prayer by reviewing the parish repertory [see SCAP, nos. 45 and 53] and prepare:
 - i. A list of opening songs to sing a cappella if needed,
 - ii. A list of common responsorial psalms to sing a cappella if needed, and
 - iii. A list of musical settings for the act of thanksgiving [see SCAP, nos. 58-59, 211, and Appendix II at no. 218].
- n. Procession: There is no ending procession.