

PARISH LITURGY TRAINING, SECTION II

For the use of Priest Deanery co-ordinators by Liturgy Centre staff, June 2011

Parish Liturgy Committee Formation Guidelines

- Representatives of all liturgical ministries should be on the PLT.
- Each of these ministries need to meet regularly.
- For the purpose of representation on the PLT they should elect a Head and Asst. If not already existing. *For Example, 5 choirs – 5 Heads +5 Assts. Out of the 5 heads, 2 to be elected to represent Choirs on the PLT. If there are a larger number of Choirs, then the Parish Priest should decide the No. of representatives needed on the PLT. They in turn will disseminate information/instructions received at the PLT meeting to the Church Choirs mtg. Thus all the 5 heads then would take it to the Choir they lead. In this manner all ministries must be represented in the PLT.*

Composition Parish Liturgy Committee

Representatives of all Liturgical Ministries

- Head of the Eucharistic Ministers
- Head of the Lectors
- Head of Altar Servers (Adult)
- Head of Choirs and Cantors that sing at masses
- Head of Announcement Team
- Head of Art and Environment Team
- Head of Liturgy (Children)
- Head of Ushers and Greeters
- Head of Mass–Coordinators
- Head of Altar Care Team (sacred vestments, vessels, etc.)
- Head of Prayer Writers (e.g. Prayers of Faithful, Special Liturgies etc.)
- Sacristan
- If a Parish has any other specialised Liturgical Ministries – they too must be represented on the PLT

Parish Training for PLTs

The Deanery Training will cover the following:

- Preparation
- Co-ordination
- Formation
- Evaluation

Preparation

For Sunday Mass and other celebrations, the liturgical books set out the order of service, opening prayer, prayer over the gifts and prayer after communion, and the readings for the day.

On certain occasions there is also a set preface to be used.

Other parts of the Mass, however, are more flexible. Among the variable aspects are the introductory rites, intercessions, Eucharistic Prayer and the music.

Even among the “fixed” parts there is often a choice of opening prayer or the option of using a shorter form of a reading. Liturgical ministers need to be rostered and instructed.

Immediate preparation for Celebrations; Long-term planning; The “big picture” of parish liturgies across the entire liturgical year; A long-term goal – improve the standard of proclamation, etc.

Co-ordination

Specialist liturgical ministries are planned and performed by those who have the necessary knowledge and skills. For example, musicians

A common understanding of the spirit and structure of the celebration.

The avenue for communication between the different liturgical ministry groups in the parish. For example, rosters for readers and ministers of communion

Formation

In service training:

Role of the parish liturgy committee to use suitable opportunities for spiritual and practical formation. E.g. arranging guest speakers, etc.

Excellent training available from the Liturgy Office:

1. Basic of Liturgical Ministry a once a month Sunday training for a year, (11am to 6 pm)
2. Advanced Liturgy Course, (3 weekends – residential i.e. Sat. morning to Sunday evening)

Evaluation

Looking back:

What worked well that should be retained?

What needs to be revised, improved or eliminated in the future?

Big questions???

Are our liturgies life-giving?

Are parishioners able to participate easily in the liturgies?

What criticisms are people making and how do we address these?

Some Suggestions for Setting up a Liturgy Group

1. Ask the Parish Priest’s permission to form a liturgy team. Explain the process.
2. Prepare invitations.
3. Give invitations to:
 - All those involved in liturgical ministry – e.g.
 - Music coordinator,
 - People who roster readers
 - and Extra ord. Communion Ministers,
 - Sacristan(s),
 - RCIA Team leader,
 - Children’s liturgy coordinator,
 - Communion to the sick coordinator,

- Presiders (priest-in-charge of Liturgy, deacons)
- 4. Other people who have appropriate skills/experience from another parish e.g. interior decorator, florist, through an interest (eg public-speaking groups like Compares, etc), People who because of relevant study/courses done, or experience they have.
- 5. Place a general invitation in the Parish newsletter.
- 6. Include a general invitation in the announcements at Mass.

Suggested Agenda for Meeting

1. Hospitality
2. Welcome and Introductions
3. Open Forum:
 1. positive aspects of parish liturgy
 2. areas that need work
4. Prioritize
5. Brainstorm possible strategies to deal with top 2 priorities what? why? how? who? when?
6. Draw up a list of tasks, people responsible, action dates and follow-up.
7. Float idea of a standing committee called Mass Animators.
8. Thank people for attending and contributing. -refreshments and socializing.

Process for Preparation

Begin with Scripture readings, liturgical texts and the feast/season.

Since the source of our worship is the Word of God, the readings given in the Lectionary are the starting point for all liturgical preparation.

The liturgical texts found in the Missal (the presidential prayers, preface, blessings) should also be consulted.

All preparation needs to be located within the context of the feast/ season of the liturgical year.

Major focus of the celebration.

The aim of this exercise is not to come up with a 'theme' for the celebration as the theme of every liturgical celebration is nothing more nor less than the paschal mystery of Jesus Christ (his life, death and resurrection)

Make selections from optional texts and compose variable texts where required.

Communicate decisions to the appropriate liturgical ministers and the assembly.

Keep a record of decisions, tasks and person responsible

Checklist

- (Outline of Liturgy)
- Texts: readings & prayers
- Music and song
- Worship environment, liturgical art
- Symbol
- Gesture and movement
- Times of silence
- Assembly

- Liturgical Ministers
- Overall rhythm & flow

Check the Church's Calendar for the day of the Celebration

- Universal Church and celebrate feasts and seasons over the cycle of the liturgical year in unison with Catholics Christians around the world
- Look up the date of the planned celebration in the Ordo which sets out the liturgical calendar for the year. Readings and Mass prayers are found in the Lectionary and Missal respectively.
- Understanding the “givens” – the rites and the readings – gives the liturgy committee the basis for the planning which remains to be done. It is not a matter of planning something new and exciting each week but of doing the basics well and trusting the rite to offer our living sacrifice of praise. Excite people to participate!

Singing of acclamations, processional songs (entrance and communion) and the responsorial psalm takes priority.

The infamous “hymn sandwich”

Remember a base rule is that the word and rite, the song and rite always synchronize with each other.

Only gifts are brought forward in the Procession of Gifts.

- At the Procession of Gifts the community offers its gifts of money for the poor and the upkeep/needs of the Church and bread and wine for the Eucharist.
- Other items, if carried in at all, should be brought in during the entrance procession.
- The only items on the altar, which is a symbol of Christ, are bread and wine, cross, book and candle. Other significant objects and symbols can be displayed in another, suitably decorated part of the worship space.

Ensure that the language used applies to everyone present and incorporates a variety of images for God.

Check the words of hymns to ensure that they are inclusive of all people. There are many ways to address God besides “Our Father” – Loving God, Creator God, God our Light, God of Peace are just a few examples.

The Prayer of the Faithful allows all the faithful to pray

The reader simply announces to the assembly what we will pray about, for example, “Let us pray for those suffering the effects of drought across this country”.

A time of silence follows so that the ‘Faithful’ can make their ‘Prayer’. If there is no silence, then there is no prayer.

Only after there has been a substantial time of silence does the reader give a cue, such as ‘Lord, hear us’, to bring the assembly’s separate prayers to a close with a common response, ‘Lord, hear our prayer’.

Don’t give everyone the script!

Printed orders of service should provide only an outline of the liturgy, the words of hymns and any unfamiliar prayers that the people will join in.

The words of scripture readings and of prayers said by the presider are NOT included!