

Office of Divine Worship

Archdiocese of Boston

Liturgical Clarifications

February 18, 2022

Some questions have recently been raised about what currently is and is not permitted in the liturgy following nearly two years of changing policies and restrictions related to Covid-19. The Office of Divine Worship seeks to clarify the status of various liturgical practices, some of which have been brought to our attention. Certainly, there may be other questions out there about other practices. If we have not covered it here, please contact Tom Lyman, Coordinator of Divine Worship, at tlyman@rcab.org or 617-746-5759 to inquire and we will make every effort to clarify procedures. Please be sure to read any endnotes where included below to see further clarifications.

At this time, priests/parishes:

| | Should... | Should not yet... |
|--|----------------|-------------------|
| Have Holy Water in the fonts | X ⁱ | |
| Maintain a marked section for those preferring social distancing ⁱⁱ | X | |
| Have Altar Servers, including the usual trained children | X | |
| Have Deacons serving in all their required roles | X | |
| Have an Entrance Procession from the rear with servers and per the usual options, Lectors and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion | X | |
| Use incense as appropriate in Sunday and more solemn Masses, all Funeral Masses, and in Solemn Exposition and Benediction of the Eucharist | X | |
| Have Congregational Singing | X | |
| Have a Choir | X | |
| Have Cantors lead song from front of church/cantor stand/in or near sanctuary | X | |

| | Should... | Should not yet... |
|---|-----------|-------------------|
| Have worship aids/hymnals/missalettes | X | |
| Sing the Mass Ordinary as is typical for Sundays and Holy Days (Gloria, Alleluia, Sanctus, Great Amen, Agnus Dei) | X | |
| Have an Offertory Procession at the Presentation of the Gifts | X | |
| Have Ushers take up the collection with baskets, if this is the parish's usual method | X | |
| Have the Lavabo/washing of the hands ⁱⁱⁱ with servers/Deacon | X | |
| Have the Sign of Peace ^{iv} | X | |
| Make use of Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion as needed | X | |
| Distribute the Precious Blood to any Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion | | X |
| Celebrant intincts Host himself before allowing Concelebrating Priests and Deacon to do the same | X | |
| Allow the Deacon to receive the Precious Blood from the Principal Chalice | X | |
| Allow Concelebrating Priests to drink from the Principal Chalice ^v | X | |
| Distribute the Precious Blood to the faithful | | X |
| Distribute Communion at the normal time in the Mass, directly following the Priest's Communion, and that of any sanctuary ministers | X | |
| Have a typical recessional from the sanctuary to the rear of the church, following the final blessing | X | |
| | | |

| | Should... | Should not yet... |
|--|-----------|-------------------|
| LENT + HOLY WEEK | | |
| Ash Wednesday: Distribute ashes in the usual way ^{vi} | X | |
| Distribute palms in the usual way | X | |
| Holy Thursday: Have the washing of the feet | X | |
| Have a Procession with the Eucharist either within the church or to another location on parish campus for adoration and Night Prayer | X | |
| Good Friday: Have the veneration of the Cross ^{vii} | X | |

ⁱ This is a local decision for the pastor, not a requirement.

ⁱⁱ This is mandated by current protocol.

ⁱⁱⁱ The use of Purell/hand sanitizer does not take the place of the Lavabo, a rite which has significance both for the priest and for all of the faithful present.

^{iv} The sign of peace need not require physical contact, and its specific form is not enumerated by the Roman Missal. The GIRM does specify in #82, however, that "it is appropriate that each person, in a sober manner, offer the sign of peace only to those who are nearest." In that light, cross-church waves and "peace signs" are not recommended.

^v Consult with any concelebrating priests to decide the best course of action.

^{vi} This Ash Wednesday reference was inadvertently omitted in the initial release of this document

^{vii} Here it is prudent to discourage kissing of the Cross for the time being.