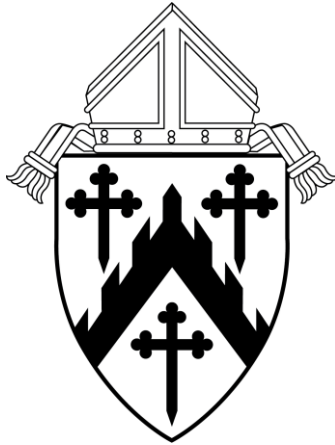


# DIOCESE OF DAVENPORT



## Policies Relating to Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest, Weekday Celebrations of the Liturgy of the Word, and Lay Preaching

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Policy promulgated at the Pastoral Center of the Diocese of Davenport—effective October 18, 2007  
The Feast of St. Luke, Evangelist  
Updated November 27, 2011

Most Reverend Martin Amos  
Bishop of Davenport

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## **§IV-244 POLICIES RELATING TO SUNDAY CELEBRATIONS IN THE ABSENCE OF A PRIEST, WEEKDAY CELEBRATIONS OF THE LITURGY OF THE WORD, AND LAY PREACHING**

### **Introduction**

*As the number of priests available to serve parishes across the United States has decreased, dioceses have been faced with the question of how to both maintain the Eucharist as the source and summit of our life while at the same time remembering that our life of faith is lived out and nourished in a particular parish community. On the one hand, communities are strongly encouraged to gather on Sunday, even if their priest is absent. In such a way, the primacy of Sunday is maintained and the community remains intact. On the other hand, routine recourse to such celebrations has the effect of diminishing and even distorting our sense of Eucharist as well as our teachings regarding the essential nature of the ministerial priesthood. It is out of this tension that this document is born. It attempts to be faithful to the current discipline of the Church while at the same time being attentive to the particular needs of our diocese.*

*Pastors and other pastoral leaders are reminded that the obligation to attend Sunday Mass is considered primary; the absence of a priest from a particular community does not remove the obligation. However, if it is truly impossible (SCAP 6) for someone to attend Mass outside that community, the obligation does not bind. It is for those individuals that a Sunday celebration in the absence of a priest may be held. As mentioned in the policy below, the pastoral leadership in each parish has a serious obligation to ensure that sound catechesis on the Eucharist, and on the essential and crucial distinctions between Mass and the distribution of Holy Communion outside of Mass, takes place.*

*Weekday celebrations of the Liturgy of the Word with the distribution of Communion outside of Mass are regulated by the ritual text, Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist Outside Mass (Congregation for Divine Worship, 1974) and the appropriate canons in the Code of Canon Law. In celebrating this rite, it is important to note that the underlying values listed above still remain—as specified in the policy below.*

*As of the writing of this policy, the U.S. Bishops are preparing a new ritual text entitled Weekday Celebrations of the Liturgy of the Word. Once this text is approved for use, this policy will be revised to reflect any necessary changes.*

*Finally, this policy adds a section on lay preaching in the context of Sunday and weekday liturgies of the word outside Mass; these norms also apply to other situations where a lay person is leading one of the Church's rites (for example, the funeral vigil or the Liturgy of the Hours). The conditions when lay preaching in the context of Sunday Eucharist may take place are also listed. The faculty to preach is separate from the faculty to lead SCAP (or weekday liturgies of the word) and must be requested separately.*

*These policies replaces “Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest: A Policy of the Diocese of Davenport” and “Weekday Liturgy in the Absence of a Priest: A Policy of the Diocese of Davenport,” both dated September 21, 2001.*

#### Abbreviations used:

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| c. / cc. | canon / canons   |
| CIC      | Codex Iuris Canonici (Code of Canon Law, 1983)                         |
| EMHC     | Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion                               |
| HCWEOM   | Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist Outside of Mass (1974)     |
| PLA      | Parish Life Administrator  |
| SCAP     | Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest (revised edition, 2006) |

### **§IV-244.1 Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest**

*The celebration of Sunday Eucharist sits at the very heart of our lives as Catholics—individually and as communities of faith. As the U.S. Bishops note in the Introduction to the revised edition of Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest:*

The complete liturgical celebration of Sunday is characterized by the gathering of the faithful to manifest the Church, not simply on their own initiative but as called together by God, that is, as the people of God in their organic structure, presided over by a priest, who acts in the person of Christ. Through the celebration of the Liturgy of the Word the assembled faithful are instructed in the paschal mystery by the Scriptures which are proclaimed and which are then explained in the homily by a priest or deacon. And through the celebration of the Liturgy of the Eucharist, by which the paschal mystery is sacramentally effected, the liturgical assembly participates in the very sacrifice of Christ (SCAP 3).

Pastoral catechesis on the importance of Sunday should emphasize that the sacrifice of the Mass is the only true actualization of the Lord's paschal mystery and is the most complete manifestation of the Church: "Hence the Lord's day is the original feast day, and it should be proposed to the piety of the faithful and taught to them. . . . Other celebrations, unless they be truly of greatest importance, shall not have precedence over the Sunday which is the foundation and kernel of the whole liturgical year" (SCAP 4).

*At the same time, they also note the very real problem of lack of priests, especially in some areas of the United States. Therefore, in keeping with the Directory for Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest (Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship, 1988) and in light of the recent Instruction, Redemptionis sacramentum, the USCCB Committee on the Liturgy has provided an updated ritual book for Sunday celebrations in the absence of a priest. The questions of whether or not to allow such celebrations, whether or not to distribute Communion at such celebrations, and the ritual text to be used are left to the discretion of the local bishop (SCAP 8-11; 18-20).*

*The U.S. Bishops also warn of the importance of differentiating these rites from the Eucharistic Liturgy, and the importance of considering the use of these rites as a temporary measure while praying for and encouraging vocations to the ministerial priesthood:*

Any confusion in the minds of the faithful between this kind of liturgical assembly and a Eucharistic celebration must be carefully avoided. These celebrations should increase the desire of the faithful to be present at and participate in the celebration of the Eucharist (SCAP 16).

To this end, the faithful need to be led to an understanding that the Eucharistic Sacrifice cannot take place without a priest, even though the reception of Holy Communion which they receive in this kind of liturgical assembly is closely connected with the sacrifice of the Mass, but not equal to it. This serves as an urgent reminder for prayers that those whom God has called to the priesthood will respond generously (SCAP 17).

*Accordingly, the first option whenever a community is faced with the absence of a priest is to join with a neighboring community for the celebration of Sunday Mass (SCAP 8). However, "[i]n circumstances in which there is no reasonable opportunity to provide for the celebration of Mass," the bishop may allow for the use of the rites contained in Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest so that the "Christian tradition regarding Sunday" is preserved (SCAP 10).*

*The following policies set out the "general and particular norms" (SCAP 18) for Sunday celebrations in the absence of a priest in the Diocese of Davenport. Unless otherwise specified below, the norms included in the revised (2006) edition of Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest are to be observed.*

**IV-244.1.1 Policy**

Permission is granted for Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest to be celebrated in accord with the procedures listed below.

The ritual text to be used is *Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest*, revised edition (2006). All the norms contained therein are to be observed unless otherwise specified below.

If the good of the community requires it, permission is granted to allow for the distribution of communion as part of one of these celebrations.

**Procedures**

1. Before the ritual SCAP may be used in a parish, catechesis must be provided so that all parishioners understand that “although these celebrations substitute for the Sunday celebration of the Eucharist, they should not be regarded as the ideal solution to present circumstances nor as a surrender to mere convenience” (SCAP 14). Likewise, “the faithful need to be led to an understanding that the Eucharistic Sacrifice cannot take place without a priest, even though the reception of Holy Communion which they receive in this kind of liturgical assembly is closely connected with the sacrifice of the Mass, but not equal to it” (SCAP 17).
2. First Scenario: Planned Absence of the Priest
  - a. Definition: The priest has scheduled time away from the parish and is unable to find a substitute in spite of making good-faith efforts to do so and in spite of having requested assistance from (i) his Dean and (ii) the Vicar for Clergy at the Diocese. The parish is able to be notified at least a week prior to the absence that a SCAP will be celebrated.
  - b. If changing the Mass schedule for that weekend would allow for a visiting priest, this should be done before a SCAP is scheduled if at all possible.
  - c. If Mass cannot be celebrated in the parish, the first option is always for parishioners to celebrate Mass with a nearby community.
    - i. The parish leadership is to ensure that those in their charge are aware of the serious obligation they have in this regard (SCAP 14).
    - ii. Therefore, because of the easy availability of Mass in nearby parishes, in the event of the planned absence of a priest when a substitute priest cannot be found, SCAP may not be celebrated in Davenport/Bettendorf or Iowa City.
  - d. In case of necessity, as judged by the pastor, permission is granted by the bishop to celebrate one of the rites from *Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest*.
    - i. The revised edition (2006) should be used.
    - ii. Permission is granted to distribute Communion as part of the celebration.
  - e. There may only be one liturgical assembly of this kind, and it is preferably to be held on Sunday itself rather than “anticipated” on Saturday evening (SCAP 15).
  - f. As soon as plans for a Sunday celebration in the absence of a priest are known, they are to be published in the bulletin (and announced at Mass)—as noted in Appendix 1. The announcement should including the serious obligation the faithful have to attend Sunday Mass and the Mass schedules of neighboring parishes.
3. Second Scenario: Urgent Absence of the Priest
  - a. Definition: The priest becomes aware that he will be unable to preside at Sunday Mass with less than a week’s warning, and is unable to find a substitute as in (2) above.
    - i. In addition, the parish is not able to be notified through the usual means (announcement, bulletin).
    - ii. If the parish is able to be notified (for example, a phone tree in a small community) then the procedure in (2) above applies.
  - b. Those arriving for Mass should be informed that a SCAP will be celebrated instead. They are to be informed of nearby opportunities to attend Mass, and that they should do so instead if at all possible.
  - c. In case of necessity, as judged by the pastor, permission is granted by the bishop to celebrate one of the rites

from *Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest*.

- i. The revised edition (2006) should be used.
- ii. Permission is granted to distribute Communion as part of the celebration.

d. There should only be one liturgical assembly of this kind, and it is preferably to be held on Sunday itself rather than “anticipated” on Saturday evening (SCAP 15). However, in order to prevent undue hardship, permission is granted to celebrate SCAP more than once if necessary.

4. Third Scenario: Emergency Absence of the Priest

a. Definition: The sudden absence of a priest just before Mass is to begin; there is insufficient time to notify the Dean or Diocese.

b. Those arriving for Mass should be informed that a SCAP will be celebrated instead. They are to be informed of nearby opportunities to attend Mass, and that they should do so instead if at all possible.

c. Permission is granted by the bishop to celebrate one of the rites from *Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest*.

- i. The revised edition (2006) should be used.
- ii. Permission is granted to distribute Communion as part of the celebration.
- iii. Due to the “last-minute” absence of the priest, it may be impossible to rapidly prepare and worthily celebrate a ritual as complicated and unfamiliar as those included in SCAP. Therefore, in case of necessity, the more familiar Rite of Distributing Communion Outside of Mass with the Celebration of the Word from HCWEOM (as outlined in Appendix 3) may be used.

d. Given the sudden and unexpected absence of the priest, permission is granted to celebrate a SCAP ritual at the times Mass would normally be scheduled for the parish.

e. Given the sudden and unexpected absence of the priest, preaching would normally be omitted.

5. Whenever a Sunday liturgy in the absence of a priest is celebrated, the appropriate Dean and the Vicar General should be notified the following week. The rite used and the leader of prayer should be mentioned.

6. Sunday celebrations in the absence of a priest are not to be routinely scheduled in a parish or other community. If a parish community will experience a prolonged absence of a priest/pastor, the Office of the Bishop is to be consulted.

7. An outline of the SCAP 2006 rite for a Liturgy of the Word with Communion is included in Appendix 2.

8. In preparing these Sunday celebrations, every effort should be made to include the full expression of ministries in the Church. For example, readers, servers, usher/greeters, musicians, and those responsible for the liturgical environment should all be included to the extent possible. It is not intended that the leader of SCAP take on all the ministerial roles.

**IV-244.1.2 Policy**

1. As a minister of the Word and an ordinary minister of communion, the deacon is the preferred minister to lead these celebrations (SCAP 23). In the absence of a deacon, an instituted acolyte (if available and suitably prepared) should lead the rite.

2. If neither a deacon nor an instituted acolyte is available:

a. the PLA of a parish is the preferred minister and, by virtue of his/her office, has the faculty to lead these celebrations.

b. “[I]n the absence of both a priest and a deacon, upon the request and recommendation of the pastor, the bishop may appoint lay persons, who may be religious, as lay leaders of prayer, who are entrusted with the care of preparing and directing these celebrations. They would be responsible for leading the prayers and, when it is to be included in the celebration, with distributing Holy Communion” (SCAP 26).

***Procedures***

1. For Deacons:
  - a. If there is no parish deacon, in scheduled and urgent absences, deacons from another parish should be asked to lead these celebrations.
  - b. Deacons should attend the appropriate diocesan continuing formation programs to become familiar with the revised rites.
  - c. Deacons wear the vestments proper to their Order (alb and stole; dalmatic if available).
2. For Instituted Acolytes:
  - a. While not commonly present, there are times when an instituted acolyte (such as a seminarian or candidate for the diaconate) would be available at a parish. If available, and suitably prepared, he should preside at the rite in the absence of a deacon.
  - b. Instituted acolytes should attend the appropriate diocesan continuing formation programs to become familiar with the revised rites.
  - c. An alb is the appropriate vesture for an instituted acolyte.
3. For Lay Parish Life Administrators (PLA)
  - a. In parishes with both a deacon and a lay PLA, the deacon leads the celebration while the PLA attends to the pastoral needs of the community and the necessary preparations.
  - b. PLAs should attend the appropriate diocesan continuing formation programs to become familiar with the revised rites.
  - c. An alb is the appropriate vesture for a lay leader of prayer.
4. For other laypersons
  - a. Lay leaders of SCAP must be nominated to the bishop by their pastor. It would be helpful to have at least two trained leaders at each parish.
  - b. Steps in nominating lay persons as SCAP leaders:
    - i. The pastor (or PLA) writes a letter to the bishop, naming the individuals nominated for this ministry;
    - ii. The letter should include the appropriate documentation, certifying that the person
      - Is already an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion (EMHC) in the parish
      - Has completed the training provided by the diocese;
    - iii. Preference should be given to those who have completed the two-year diocesan Ministry Formation Program (or an equivalent);
    - iv. The bishop appoints the minister for a three-year term;
    - v. In order that their ministry is made known to the parish, these ministers are to be commissioned using an appropriate liturgical rite (The Order for the Blessing of Those Who Exercise Pastoral Service contained in the *Book of Blessings*; or the expanded rite found in Appendix 4).
  - c. Those commissioned to lead SCAP are commissioned primarily for their parish. If a parish does not have someone suitably prepared to lead SCAP, and a deacon or instituted acolyte is not available, the parish may request a commissioned SCAP leader from another parish to lead a SCAP rite for them.
  - d. An alb is the appropriate vesture for a lay leader of prayer.
5. A layperson may not preach at a SCAP unless they have also been granted those faculties (see §IV-244.3 below).

## §IV-244.2 Weekday Celebrations of the Liturgy of the Word with Communion

*“Sacramental communion received during Mass is the more perfect participation in the eucharistic celebration”* (HCWEOM 13) and *“the faithful should be encouraged to receive communion during the Eucharistic celebration itself”* (HCWEOM 14). At the same time, *“it is proper that those who are prevented from being present at the community’s celebration”* should have access to the Sacrament (HCWEOM 14).

### **IV-244.2.1 Policy**

Holy Communion may be distributed outside of Mass for a “just cause” (c. 918; HCWEOM 14), at the discretion of the pastor or minister. Examples of a just cause include:

1. The absence of a priest when weekday Mass is usually scheduled.
2. The community is unable to attend Mass (e.g., those in prison, hospitals, nursing homes).

At the same time, the real danger of confusing the celebration of the Eucharist with distribution of communion requires that recourse to the Rite of Distributing Communion Outside of Mass not be indiscriminate. Therefore:

1. Weekday Liturgies of the Word with the distribution of Communion are not to be routinely scheduled in parishes / clusters. Instead, parishes are encouraged to use another form of liturgical prayer (such as a Liturgy of the Word without the distribution of Communion, the Liturgy of the Hours, or Eucharistic Exposition and Adoration – observing the proper rites).
2. The Rite of Distributing Communion Outside Mass should not be used in/for schools.
3. The Rite of Distributing Communion Outside Mass should not be used if Mass is already being celebrated in the parish on that day.

The proper ritual text is taken from *Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist Outside of Mass: Rite of Distributing Communion Outside of Mass with the Celebration of the Word*. The readings for the day should be used; the option for an abbreviated Liturgy of the Word should not be used.

### ***Procedures***

1. When there is a planned absence of a priest from his assignment for whatever reason (and a substitute priest cannot be found), and it is judged pastorally necessary to offer another opportunity for the community to gather for prayer:
  - a. The pastor who will be away publishes a notice in the Sunday bulletin and announces to the weekday Mass congregation the dates of daily Masses at neighboring parishes and adds that a Liturgy of the Word (with or without Communion) or Liturgy of the Hours without Communion, will be celebrated by the deacon or lay pastoral minister for those who are unable to attend Mass elsewhere.
  - b. See Appendix 1 for a sample bulletin announcement; the words in italics cite canon 918.
2. When there is an emergency or unplanned absence of a priest (defined as less than 24 hours notice): if in the judgment of the pastor it is pastorally necessary, a Liturgy of the Word with Communion using the proper ritual text (as noted above) may be celebrated.
3. The leader of worship should be assisted by other ministers, such as a reader and server, as appropriate. It is not intended that the leader of prayer serve as the only liturgical minister at these rites.

**IV-244.2.2 Policy**

1. As a minister of the Word and an ordinary minister of Communion, the deacon is the preferred minister to lead these celebrations (HCWEOM 17). In the absence of a deacon, an instituted acolyte should lead the rite.
2. If neither a deacon nor an instituted acolyte is available:
  - a. the PLA of a parish is the preferred minister and, by virtue of his/her office, has the faculty to lead these celebrations.
  - b. Otherwise, the rite may be led by a qualified and deputed lay person (as specified below; see HCWEOM 17).

***Procedures***

1. For Deacons:
  - a. If there is no parish deacon, in the case of scheduled absences deacons from another parish should be asked to lead these celebrations.
  - b. Deacons wear the vestments proper to their Order (alb and stole). The dalmatic is not worn in this rite.
2. For Instituted Acolytes:
  - a. While not commonly present, there are times when an instituted acolyte (such as a seminarian or a candidate for the diaconate) would be available at a parish. If available, he should preside at the rite in the absence of a deacon.
  - b. An alb is the appropriate vesture for an instituted acolyte.
3. For Lay Parish Life Administrators (PLA)
  - a. In parishes with both a deacon and a lay PLA, the deacon leads the celebration while the PLA attends to the pastoral needs of the community and the necessary preparations.
  - b. An alb is the appropriate vesture for a lay leader of prayer.
4. For other laypersons
  - a. The following requirements are established for lay leaders of Weekday Celebrations of the Liturgy of the Word
    - i. Already be an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion (EMHC) in the parish
    - ii. Be delegated to do so by the pastor
    - iii. Have completed the training provided by the parish or diocese
  - b. An alb is the appropriate vesture for a lay leader of prayer.
5. Laypersons may not preach at a Weekday Celebration of the Liturgy of the Word unless they have also been granted those faculties (see §IV-244.3 below).

### §IV-244.3 Lay Preaching

*By virtue of their Baptism, all of Christ's faithful are called to bear witness to the Gospel in word and deed; some, in addition, are called to a more specific ministry of the word (c. 759). For example, some are called to the catechetical ministry or to teaching in institutes of higher learning, or to work in the area of social communication (c. 761).*

*Preaching, especially liturgical preaching, is primarily the ministry of the ordained (c.756-7). The pre-eminent form of liturgical preaching is the homily—which is reserved to the ordained and may not be omitted without a grave reason (c. 767).*

*The lay faithful may be called upon to share in the preaching ministry in appropriate ways (c. 766), as specified in the policy that follows. It is especially important to note that this policy does not grant the faculty for routine or regular lay preaching at the Eucharist. Likewise, it is stressed that when lay preaching does take place in the context of Eucharist it does not replace the homily and does not take place at the usual time of the homily—but, rather, after the Prayer After Communion.*

*According to the USCCB Complementary Norms to c. 766:*

Preaching the Word of God is among the principal duties of those who have received the sacrament of orders (cc. 762-764). The lay faithful can be called to cooperate in the exercise of the Ministry of the Word (c. 759). In accord with canon 766 the National Conference of Catholic Bishops hereby decrees that the lay faithful may be permitted to exercise this ministry in churches and oratories, with due regard for the following provisions:

If necessity requires it in certain circumstances or it seems useful in particular cases, the diocesan bishop can admit lay faithful to preach, to offer spiritual conferences or give instructions in churches, oratories or other sacred places within his diocese, when he judges it to be to the spiritual advantage of the faithful.

In order to assist the diocesan bishop in making an appropriate pastoral decision (Interdicasterial Instruction, *Ecclesiae de Mysterio*, Article 2 §3), the following circumstances and cases are illustrative: the absence or shortage of clergy, particular language requirements, or the demonstrated expertise or experience of the lay faithful concerned.

The lay faithful who are to be admitted to preach in a church or oratory must be orthodox in faith, and well-qualified, both by the witness of their lives as Christians and by a preparation for preaching appropriate to the circumstances. The diocesan bishop will determine the appropriate situations in accord with canon 772§1. In providing for preaching by the lay faithful the diocesan bishop may never dispense from the norm which reserves the homily to the sacred ministers (c. 767§1; cf. Pontifical Commission for the Authentic Interpretation of the Code of Canon Law, 26 May 1987, in AAS 79 [1987], 1249). Preaching by the lay faithful may not take place within the Celebration of the Eucharist at the moment reserved for the homily.

#### **IV-244.3.1 Policy**

The permission of the bishop is required for a lay person to preach in a church or oratory (or if celebrating a rite of the Church elsewhere, such as a funeral home).

“Those designated for lay preaching must have completed a process of discernment with the pastor or pastoral administrator responsible for the pastoral care of the faith community. They must also complete the program for training, certification, and commissioning provided for by the local diocese. Formation in the ministry of lay preaching includes thorough familiarity with the documents issued by the USCCB [especially *Fulfilled in Your Hearing*] and legislation issued by the USCCB as complementary to Canon 766” (SCAP 34).

#### Qualifications

Those selected to be lay preachers are expected to:

- a. have been fully initiated (baptism, confirmation, eucharist) Catholics for at least two years and who are in full communion with the Catholic Church;
- b. have a recommendation/endorsement from their pastor or PLA;
- c. be suitably qualified for this role by the witness of their lives as Christians;
- d. actively participate in the liturgical, spiritual and service life of their faith community;
- e. be persons who understand the mission and ministry of the Catholic church and who are respectful of the Catholic faith and tradition as expressed in worship and the teaching office of the church;
- f. have skills in interpersonal communication, including verbal and non-verbal skills;
- g. have a living appreciation for scripture;
- h. have a spirit of cooperative involvement with the leadership of the faith community;
- i. be committed to this ministry and have the time to minister.

#### Competencies

As a result of the required training and experience, the lay preacher will:

- a. be an effective public speaker in a liturgical setting;
- b. understand the proper role of the liturgical assembly according to the norms and guidelines;
- c. be able to demonstrate cultural awareness and sensitivity;
- d. be knowledgeable about the principles in the documents of Vatican II, the post-conciliar documents, canon law on liturgy, and documents regarding cultural diversity;
- e. be knowledgeable about the Scriptures and how they are interpreted within the context of Catholic faith and liturgy;
- f. be knowledgeable about one’s own community and be effective in integrating this knowledge and experience into preaching.

“Those who preach, when properly delegated, should preserve a diligence in prayer, commitment to the study of Scripture, growth in faith, and careful preparation” (SCAP 33).

**IV-244.3.2 Policy**

1. With the permission of the pastor, canonical pastor, or PLA, a commissioned lay preacher may preach in the following circumstances:

- a. at a celebration of Mass with children when, because of difficulty in adapting to the mentality of children, no ordained minister is able to preach (see *Directory for Masses with Children*, no. 24.);
- b. at a celebration of the Word of God in the absence of a priest or deacon with preaching faculties, especially on a Sunday or holy day of obligation (see *Directory for Sunday Celebrations In the Absence of a Priest*, no. 43);
- c. at a celebration of one of the funeral rites (see *Order of Christian Funerals* no. 27), led by authorized lay persons because ordained ministers are absent (canon 230.3; 1112);
- d. at parish mission, retreats, days of recollection, and spiritual exercises led by lay persons with expertise in Scripture, theology or the spiritual life;
- e. at celebrations of Morning Prayer or Evening Prayer, particularly on a Sunday or solemnity, when no priest or deacon is present (see *Liturgy of the Hours* nos. 27 & 47);
- f. at popular devotions and those blessings which may be given by lay persons (see *Book of Blessings*, no. 21).

In these cases, preaching takes place at the usual time called for in the rite.

In addition, certain qualified or commissioned lay persons can be permitted to preach in a church in the following special circumstances:

- g. at a liturgical celebration when, because of illness or lack of familiarity with the language of the assembly (including instances when the presider does not have the requisite command of English to be readily understood), no ordained minister is able to preach;
- h. when those who have been admitted to Candidacy for ordination receive a particular assignment as part of their pastoral formation;
- i. when particular circumstances recommend preaching by a lay person with special expertise (such as mission appeals – as noted below).

In these cases, outside of Mass, preaching takes place at the usual time called for in the rite. At Mass, the appropriate time for such lay preaching is after the Prayer After Communion.

2. No faculty is granted for the regular/routine preaching by lay persons at the Eucharist.

3. Individuals making mission appeals through the Mission Co-op are granted the faculty to preach at Mass. Such preaching may not take place at the time reserved for the homily; the priest or deacon must still preach (albeit a shorter) homily.

***Procedures***

1. The pastor (or PLA) sends a letter nominating the individual for this ministry to the bishop
2. The letter should document the following
  - a. the individual meets the qualifications and competencies listed above
  - b. the specific training that the individual has had in the Scriptures, Homiletics, and Theology
  - c. the reason why the ministry of a lay preacher is required
3. The bishop may require an interview with the applicant, either personally or through the Office of Liturgy.
4. The basic training provided by the diocese is the Parish Life Administrator Track in the Diocesan Ministry Formation Program. For those who have not completed that program, but meet the criteria listed in IV-244.3.1, a personalized course of study may need to be completed before faculties are granted.
5. Initial faculties are granted for one year.
  - a. in order that their ministry is made known to the parish, these ministers are to be commissioned using an appropriate liturgical rite (The Order for the Blessing of Those Who Exercise Pastoral Service contained in the *Book of Blessings*; or the expanded rite in Appendix 4 may be used),
  - b. During that time, the pastor (or PLA) is to review the text of each reflection before it is preached (if possible; if not, it should be reviewed after the event).
    - i. The pastor (or PLA) should give specific feedback to the lay preacher regarding their successes as well as areas of needed improvement. The Director of Liturgy is available to assist in this matter if needed.
    - ii. The lay preacher is to keep a copy of all the reflections he or she preaches. These are to be reviewed with the pastor/PLA as specified above; and are to be submitted to the bishop upon his (or his delegate's) request.
  - c. The bishop may specify that specific continuing formation in preaching take place during this time. (Alternatively, the bishop may also choose not to grant faculties until the additional formation is completed).
6. At the end of the year, the pastor (or PLA) should make a report to the bishop. The report should include how often the lay preacher exercised his/her ministry and an evaluation of the preaching, including areas of needed improvement. The report should also note if any required continuing formation was completed and/or if re-appointment to the ministry is requested.
  - a. If so, the bishop will specify:
    - i. the length of time of the re-appointment (1-3 years); and
    - ii. whether or not review of the reflections *before* they are preached is still required.
  - b. The reflections should always be reviewed after the event in order to provide the preacher with constructive criticism.
  - c. The preacher is commissioned in a liturgical rite as specified above.
  - d. The lay preacher is to keep a copy of all the reflections he or she preaches. These are to be reviewed with the pastor/PLA as specified above; and are to be submitted to the bishop upon his (or his delegate's) request.

## **Appendix 1: Sample Bulletin Announcements**

The following are offered as possible bulletin inserts and/or pulpit announcements in the event a Weekday or Sunday celebration in the absence of a priest is planned. The sentence in *italics* could be omitted.

### Weekday Celebration of the Liturgy of the Word

After many phone calls, we are unable to find a priest to celebrate Mass with us on \_\_\_\_\_. *While the faithful should receive Communion during Mass itself, for just cause (for example, when the faithful who regularly attend daily Mass cannot without inconvenience go elsewhere for Mass) Communion may be distributed outside of Mass.* Listed below are the Mass times for other parishes in the area. For those who would find it difficult to travel to the other parishes, \_\_\_\_\_ will lead a Liturgy of the Word [with distribution of Communion] in the church at \_\_\_\_\_.

### Sunday Celebration in the Absence of a Priest

After many phone calls, we are unable to find a priest to celebrate Mass with us on the weekend of \_\_\_\_\_. *While the faithful have a serious obligation to attend Sunday Mass and should receive Communion during Mass itself, for just cause (for example, when the faithful are unable to attend Sunday Mass elsewhere) Communion may be distributed outside of Mass.* Listed below are the Mass times for other parishes in the area. For those who would find it impossible to travel to the other parishes, \_\_\_\_\_ will lead a Sunday Celebration in the Absence of a Priest (a Liturgy of the Word and Holy Communion) in the church at \_\_\_\_\_.

## Appendix 2: SCAP Outline

*The following outline may be used as the basis for a worship aid when a Liturgy of the Word with Communion is celebrated, following SCAP 2006:*

### INTRODUCTORY RITES

*There is no entrance procession. The rite begins with the leader standing in a place other than the altar or the presider's chair, which is not used in this rite. All stand.*

Introduction (given in the ritual text)

Sign of the Cross

Greeting

*The response is: Blessed be God forever.*

Opening prayer

*The normal collect is not used. Instead, the alternate form given in the text is used according to the season.*

### LITURGY OF THE WORD

*The readings assigned to the day are used. The gospel is proclaimed in the usual fashion by a deacon; a lay leader omits the greeting. A deacon preaches the homily. If qualified, a lay leader of prayer offers a reflection or reads a text provided by the pastor. All stand for the gospel; otherwise, all are seated.*

*The catechumens may be dismissed. All then stand.*

*The Profession of Faith (Nicene or Apostle's Creed) is recited, followed by the Prayer of the Faithful.*

*The Prayer of the Faithful concludes with the prayer of the day (Collect – using the new translation of the prayer from the Missal) or another prayer given in the rite.*

### COMMUNION RITE

*All are seated as the altar is prepared. The leader retrieves the Blessed Sacrament from the Tabernacle and places it on a corporal on the altar. Returning to the place where he or she has been sitting, the leader then leads the assembly in the Lord's Prayer. The people then kneel as the leader returns to the altar. There, he or she holds the host over the ciborium, showing it to the people, and says:*

Leader: Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world.

Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

All: Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

*The leader then communes. If needed, the hosts are distributed to other vessels and the EMHCs are given Communion. Communion is then distributed to the assembly.*

The Act of Thanksgiving

*After Communion, all stand and the leader—facing the same direction as the gathered assembly—leads the Act of Thanksgiving. A psalm, canticle, hymn, litany of praise, or prayer may be used—as specified in the ritual text. If appropriate for the season, the Gloria may be used.*

### CONCLUDING RITE

Brief Announcements

Collection of Monetary Offerings

Invitation to pray for vocations to the Priesthood.

Blessing (different form if deacon or if lay leader of prayer; the deacon uses the same greeting as in the Missal).

Sign of Peace (the leader says: Let us offer each other a sign of peace.)

### **Appendix 3: Rite of Distributing Communion Outside of Mass with the Celebration of the Word: Emergency Use on Sunday**

The outline below presumes a lay leader of prayer. A deacon-president would make the appropriate changes to the rite. The rite also presumes that other ministers will assist with the readings, intercessions, distributing Communion (if necessary) and with the music. Given that the use of this rite presumes the sudden absence of the priest, those parts marked with an asterisk (\*) would probably already have been prepared by the choir/cantor and can be used. Care should be taken that the hymn accompanying Communion (\*\*) does not make reference to the Eucharistic action (offering) or to the Precious Blood/wine.

#### INTRODUCTORY RITES

Hymn\* – *wear alb, process in, bow to altar*

Sign of the Cross

Greeting (*Note different response: Blessed be God forever.*)

For example: Brothers and sisters, the Lord invites us to his table to share the Body of Christ: bless him for his goodness. (Blessed be God forever.)

#### PENITENTIAL RITE

My brothers and sisters, to prepare ourselves for this celebration, let us call to mind our sins.

*Here, you can use the Form A (the Confiteor; I confess to almighty God...) or Form C, such as:*

Lord Jesus, Messenger of the Reign. Lord have mercy. (Lord have mercy.)

Christ Jesus, Forever with us. Christ have mercy. (Christ have mercy.)

Lord Jesus, Teacher and Example. Lord have mercy. (Lord have mercy.)

*Always close with:*

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life. (Amen)

#### CELEBRATION OF THE WORD OF GOD – use the readings of the day

First Reading

Responsorial Psalm\*

Second Reading

Gospel Acclamation\*

Gospel – read by the leader of prayer

Prayers of the Faithful (Intercessions) – opened and closed by the leader of prayer

*For example: Let us bring our needs before the God who loves us.*

*(the intercessions are prayed)*

*Gracious God, hear the prayers of your people, for they are made through Christ our Lord.*

## HOLY COMMUNION

Place corporal on the altar.  
Go to tabernacle.  
Retrieve the Blessed Sacrament  
Place the vessel (ciborium or paten) on the corporal.  
Genuflect.

### Lord's Prayer

Introduce the prayer, *for example: We pray as Jesus taught us... Our Father...*

### Sign of Peace

For example: *Let us share the peace of Christ...*

### Invitation to Communion

Genuflect.  
Raise Host.

Say: Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world.  
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.  
(Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.)

*(Say quietly to yourself) May the body of Christ bring me to everlasting life. (commune)*

### Communion

Hymn to Accompany Communion\*\*  
Afterwards, return Blessed Sacrament to Tabernacle.  
Genuflect.

### Concluding Prayer

Taken from the Prayer After Communion for the day (in the Missal).

## CONCLUDING RITE

### Blessing & Dismissal

*Said while making the sign of the cross on oneself:*

+May the Lord bless us, protect us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life. (Amen.)

Go in the peace of Christ. (Thanks be to God).

### Concluding Hymn\* – *bow to altar, process out*

*Baskets may be placed at the exits for parishioners to leave their Sunday offerings. Alternatively, a collection may be received after the concluding prayer.*

#### **Appendix 4: Rite for Commissioning a Leader for Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest and/or a Lay Preacher**

The following rite is based on the “Order for the Blessing of those who Exercise Pastoral Service” and the “Order for the Commissioning of Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion,” found in the *Book of Blessings*.

##### **Presentation of the Candidates**

*After the homily (or Profession of Faith), the presider presents the candidates and then addresses them, in these or similar words:*

Presider: Dear friends in Christ, our brothers and sisters N. and N. are to be entrusted with (leading Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest) (preaching the word). Today, we ask God to bless them and strengthen them in their ministry. Will they please come forward.

*May invite the candidates to stand, come forward.*

In this ministry, you must be examples of Christian living in faith and conduct; you must strive to grow in holiness—through prayer, through the Word, and through the Eucharist, the sacrament of unity and love. As ministers of (prayer) (the word), therefore, especially observant of the Lord's command to love your neighbor. For when he gave his body as food to his disciples, he said to them: "This is my commandment, that you should love one another as I have loved you."

##### **Examination**

Presider: Are you resolved to undertake the office of (leading prayer) (preaching), and so serve to build up the Church?

Minister: I am.

Presider: Are you resolved to (lead prayer) (preach) with the utmost care and reverence, in union with the Church?

Minister: I am.

##### **Prayer of Blessing**

*All stand. May have candidates kneel.*

Presider: Dear friends in Christ, let us pray with confidence to the Father; let us ask him to bestow his blessings on our brothers and sisters, chosen to be ministers of (prayer) (the word).

Lord God, in your loving kindness you sent your Son to be our shepherd and guide. Continue to send workers into your vineyard to sustain and direct your people. Bless N.N. and N.N. Let your Spirit uphold them always as they take up their new responsibility among the people of this parish. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen

*The general intercessions follow. Specific intercessions for the new ministers should be include, for example:*

That the Holy Spirit would strengthen the hearts and enlighten the minds of N.N. and N.N., who will serve us as (leaders of prayer) (preachers of the word); we pray to the Lord.