



**Sunday**

**Celebration of the Word**

**in the Absence of a Priest**

**During the Time of Pandemic**

Diocese of Hamilton, Ontario

# Intent

In a time of the pandemic, a priest should, under no circumstances, celebrate Mass when he is feeling unwell, and showing any of the following symptoms: elevated temperature over 37.8 degrees Celsius, cough, severe fatigue, loss of appetites, shortness of breath, sputum production, persistent head ache or muscle aches, runny nose or sore throat.

When a priest is unwell and unable to celebrate Sunday Mass, below are options to employ:

1. Contact the Chancellor or Dean for information regarding who might be available to celebrate Mass.
2. Contact neighbouring parishes where there is an Associate Pastor or may contact a retired priest who may be available.
3. Delegate a Deacon or lay parishioner to lead a Liturgy of the Word (without Communion) or some other form of prayer (e.g. Rosary).
4. Cancel the Mass(es). Post a sign on the church door(s) stating that the priest is sick and unable to celebrate Mass.
  - a. Where possible, direct parishioners to neighbouring parishes.
  - b. Include if possible that the obligation to participate in Sunday Mass is suspended during the time of pandemic.

# Preparation

In preparation for a Liturgy of the Word, have a liturgy available for the Deacon or leader of prayer.

If possible in advance, catechize potential leaders or prayer with this liturgy including seating and use of lectern.

Readings are from the Sunday Lectionary for the day.

# SUNDAY CELEBRATION OF THE WORD

## Outline

### **INTRODUCTORY RITE**

Gathering and Announcement  
Gathering Hymn  
Sign of the Cross  
Introductory Remarks  
Penitential Rite or Gloria  
Opening Prayer

### **LITURGY OF THE WORD**

First Reading  
Responsorial Psalm  
Second Reading  
Gospel Acclamation  
Gospel  
Silence  
Profession of Faith  
General Intercessions  
Lord's Prayer

### **CONCLUDING RITE**

Announcements  
Blessing  
Dismissal

# INTRODUCTORY RITES

## GATHERING AND ANNOUNCEMENT

Ministers of Hospitality greet and welcome parishioners as they enter the church.

The usual presidential chair, a sign of the office of the bishop or presbyter remains empty. If a deacon presides, a special chair is placed to the right of the presidential chair. If a lay person leads the prayer of the community, he/she may lead the prayer from a lectern, and then be seated in a suitable place in the sanctuary.

There is no procession. The deacon or leader of prayer begins the Liturgy from their place.

The deacon or leader of prayer announces that the priest is unable to celebrate and that the community will celebrate a Liturgy of the Word.

## GATHERING HYMN

A brief familiar song may be sung. During the time of COVID a single instrumentalist and cantor is to provide music during the liturgy.

## SIGN OF THE CROSS

Immediately after the hymn, all make the sign of the cross, as the leader of prayers says:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,

 and of the Holy Spirit.

R. Amen

## INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

The leader may introduce the celebration in these or similar words.

Today, we, the people of God,  
gather to hear and respond to God's word,  
and to give God praise and thanks.

## PENITENTIAL RITE OR GLORIA

The leader of prayer chooses either the Penitential Rite or the Gloria, except in Advent or Lent when the Gloria is omitted.

## PENITENTIAL RITE

After the Introductory Remarks, the leader invites the people to acknowledge their sins in silence and to repent of them, using the following:

As we prepare to listen to the Word of God,  
we confess that we are sinners  
and ask the Lord for pardon and strength.

All pause in silence for a moment of personal prayer; then they say together:

I confess to almighty God  
and to you, my brothers and sisters,  
that I have sinned through my own fault.

All strike their breast as a sign of sorrow  
in my thoughts and in my words,  
in what I have done,  
and in what I have failed to do;  
and I ask blessed Mary, ever virgin,  
all the angels and saints,  
and you, my brothers and sisters,  
to pray for me to the Lord our God.

Leader: Lord, have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: Christ, have mercy.

All: Christ, have mercy.

Leader: Lord, have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

## GLORIA

After the Introductory Remarks, the leader invites the people to praise God.

With people everywhere,  
let us glorify God in joyful song:

All sing or say together:

Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you,  
we bless you,  
we adore you,  
we glorify you,  
we give you thanks for your great glory,  
Lord God, heavenly King,  
O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,  
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,  
you take away the sins of the world,  
    have mercy on us;  
you take away the sins of the world,  
    receive our prayer;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,  
    have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High,  
Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father.  
Amen.

## OPENING PRAYER

The leader of prayer says:

Let us pray:

A brief period of silence is observed. Then, with hands joined, the leader says the Opening Prayer of the Sunday or the following collect taken from the Mass in Time of Pandemic.

Almighty and eternal God,  
our refuge in every danger,  
to whom we turn in our distress;  
in faith we pray  
look with compassion on the afflicted,  
grant eternal rest to the dead, comfort to mourners,  
healing to the sick, peace to the dying,  
strength to healthcare workers, wisdom to our leaders  
and the courage to reach out to all in love,  
so that together we may give glory to your holy name.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever.

All respond: Amen.

# LITURGY OF THE WORD

The leader and the community are seated for the Liturgy of the Word.

## FIRST READING

When the community is seated, a Minister of the Word proclaims the first reading which is taken from the Sunday Lectionary for the particular day, one person proclaims both the first and second readings. During the liturgy of the word, the usual periods of silence are observed.

## RESPONSORIAL PSALM

The community then prays the Psalm appointed for the Sunday. It may be led by a cantor, who sings the psalm verses or it may be recited by a reader, and all say the refrain.

## SECOND READING

After the psalm, the Minister of the Word returns to the lectern. The second reading is proclaimed as usual.

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

The Gospel Acclamation is sung in the usual manner by the congregation, led by a cantor who intones it. If it is not sung, it is omitted.

## THE GOSPEL

The Gospel is proclaimed by the Deacon or leader. A lay reader does not say “The Lord be with you” but immediately says:

A reading from the holy gospel according to ...

All respond: Glory to you, Lord.

At the end of the gospel, the reader says:

The gospel of the Lord.

All respond: **Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.**

## SILENT PRAYER

Unless a Deacon is presiding and has prepared a homily, a period of silence follows the Gospel.

## PROFESSION OF FAITH

After a period of silence, (or following the homily), the assembly stands and the leader invites the assembly to make a profession of Profession of Faith, using the Apostles' Creed, in these or similar words.

Brothers and sisters let us reaffirm our faith, the faith of the Church.

All say together:

I believe in God,  
the Father almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth,  
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died and was buried;  
he descended into hell;  
on the third day he rose again from the dead;  
he ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty;  
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and life everlasting. Amen.

## GENERAL INTERCESSIONS

Following the Profession of Faith, the leader introduces the intercessions with these words:

Gathered together in Christ as sisters and brothers  
let us pray to God for the needs of the Church and the world:

The lector (or the deacon) announces the petitions already prepared or the following. All respond, saying: "Lord, hear our prayer", or another response familiar to the community.

For Francis our Pope, and Douglas our Bishop, and all the clergy, with the people entrusted to their charge, let us pray to the Lord.

For the whole world, that it may truly know the peace given by Christ, let us pray to the Lord.

For our own community, that it may bear witness with great confidence to the Resurrection of Christ, let us pray to the Lord.

For all those who suffer the consequences of the current pandemic, that God may grant health to the sick, strength to those who care for them, comfort to families in need, let us pray to the Lord.

For the souls of all the faithful departed that they may rejoice in eternal life, and for those who mourn, that they may be consoled, let us pray to the Lord.

At the conclusion of the petitions, the leader invites all to recite the Lord's Prayer, using these or similar words:

Gathering our prayers and praises into one, let us offer the prayer Christ himself taught us.

All prayer together:

Our Father...

# CONCLUDING RITE

## BLESSING

A deacon greets the assembly:

The Lord be with you.

All respond:

And with your spirit.

He continues:

May almighty God bless you,  
 the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

All respond: Amen.

A layperson (without any greeting) says the following and makes the sign of the Cross with the assembly.

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

## DISMISSAL

Following the blessing, the leader dismisses the assembly in these words:

Let us go forth in peace.

All respond

Thanks be to God.