

Guidelines for Concelebration of the Eucharist

Highlights

- ✘ No one is ever to enter into a concelebration or to be admitted as a concelebrant once the Mass has already begun. (n. 10)
- ✘ Concelebrants should be seated together in a distinct area. They should not be intermingled with the assembly nor should anyone be seated between the concelebrants and the altar. (n. 14)
- ✘ Concelebrating priests wear an alb with a stole and chasuble. However, if the need arises, e.g. because of a lack of vestments, concelebrants other than the principal celebrant may omit the chasuble and simply wear the stole over the alb. (n. 17) Priests may not concelebrate in secular attire, in ordinary clerical garb, or by wearing the stole over the cassock. Nor may priests of religious institutes concelebrate merely by placing a stole over the monastic cowl or habit. (n. 19)
- ✘ In the Diocese of Bridgeport, when concelebrating at Diocesan Masses, the white Diocesan chasuble should always be worn, regardless of the liturgical color of the day.
- ✘ The principal celebrant and deacon(s), together with the concelebrants and other ministers in the procession, bow to the altar on arrival as a sign of reverence, unless the tabernacle with the Most Blessed Sacrament is present in the sanctuary, in which case they genuflect. The principal celebrant, the deacon(s), and any concelebrants then venerate the altar with a kiss. (n. 21)
- ✘ When there is no deacon present, a concelebrant proclaims the Gospel. If the principal celebrant is a Bishop, the concelebrant asks for and receives a blessing from the Bishop. If the principal celebrant is not a Bishop, the concelebrant bows before the altar and prays inaudibly, *Almighty God, cleanse my heart...*” After the proclamation of the Gospel, if the *Book of the Gospels* is brought to the Bishop, the concelebrants remain standing. (n. 22)
- ✘ The concelebrants approach the altar for the Eucharistic Prayer after the principal celebrant has concluded the prayer over the offerings. (n. 25)
- ✘ Concelebrating priests recite the epiclesis, words of consecration, anamnesis, and post-consecratory epiclesis in a very low voice, so that the congregation is able to hear the text without difficulty. (n. 27)
- ✘ In accord with ancient tradition, concelebrating priests stretch out both their hands toward the elements during the epiclesis. During the consecration each concelebrant extends the right hand toward the bread and the chalice. All bow profoundly when the principal celebrant genuflects after the consecration of the bread and after the consecration of the wine. (nn. 29-31)

- ✘ The concelebrants hold their hands outstretched in an *orans* gesture during the anamnesis and post-consecratory epiclesis, but not during the other parts of the Eucharistic Prayer. (n. 32)
- ✘ When praying the First Eucharistic Prayer (Roman Canon), concelebrants make two additional gestures. From *Almighty God, we pray to the sacred body and blood of your Son* inclusive, they bow with hands joined; then they stand upright and cross themselves at the words *let us be filled*. At the words *Though we are sinners*, each concelebrant strikes his breast. (n. 33)
- ✘ During the final doxology of the Eucharistic Prayer only the principal celebrant elevates the paten with the consecrated bread, while the deacon raises the chalice. The concelebrants do not elevate other chalices, ciboria or other sacred vessels. If no deacon is present, one of the concelebrants may elevate the chalice. (n. 36)
- ✘ The principal celebrant, with hands extended, says the introduction to the Lord's Prayer. Then, together with the concelebrants, who also extend their hands, he says the Lord's Prayer with the people. Only the principal celebrant maintains the *orans* posture for the *Deliver us, Lord...* (n. 38)
- ✘ Concelebrants must never be given Holy Communion consecrated at another Mass and reserved in the tabernacle, and they are to receive under both species. (n. 43)
- ✘ If the concelebrants remain in their places for the reception of the host, they take the Body of Christ from the paten presented to them by the principal celebrant, or by one or more of the concelebrants or deacons, or also from the paten as it is passed from one to another. (n. 44)
- ✘ The Precious Blood is received in one of the following ways: The concelebrants approach the altar one after another, or if two chalices are used, two by two. They genuflect, partake of the Blood of Christ, wipe the rim of the chalice, and return to their seats. (n. 48)
- ✘ Before leaving it, the concelebrants make a profound bow to the altar when the principal celebrant with the deacon(s) venerates the altar with a kiss. If the tabernacle is present in the sanctuary, they genuflect to it. (n. 53)

These highlights are summarized from the *Guidelines for Concelebration of the Eucharist* developed by the Bishop's Committee on the Liturgy of the USCCB. They were approved by the full body of the bishops at the November 2003 General Meeting and have been authorized for publication. The complete text may be ordered by calling 1-800-235-8722.

Copyright December 8, 2003, by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops