

Preparing the Liturgy

The Deacon, like all other liturgical ministers, has a certain responsibility for assisting with the preparation of the liturgy, as a whole and not only those parts which are 'his own'.

The regular preparation of the Sunday either week by week or over a liturgical season should bring together the different liturgical ministers responsible for the worthy celebration of the liturgy. The following process is tried and tested.

Before the meeting all attending are invited to reflect on the texts of the liturgy: the readings and the prayers.

1. Opening Prayer
2. The Gospel is read twice, by different people, with three minutes of silence between and after the readings. Group members listen to the reading.
3. Group members share briefly their response to the question: What word or phrase strikes you and why? Other members listen to these echoes of the word. The group considers how does this speak to this community?
4. The group consider what choices are available and make appropriate decisions.
5. The group identify who needs to be informed of the choices it has made and whether any formation is necessary.

The overall aim of the group should be to enable the assembly to listen to the word of God and celebrate the Eucharist worthily.

Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received. Whoever speaks must do so as one speaking the very words of God; whoever serves must do so with the strength that God supplies, so that God may be glorified in all things through Jesus Christ. To him belong the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.

I PETER 4:10–11



Receive the Gospel of Christ,
whose herald you now are.
Believe what you read,
teach what you believe,
and practice what you teach.

ORDINATION OF A DEACON

**Liturgy
Office**
ENGLAND
& WALES

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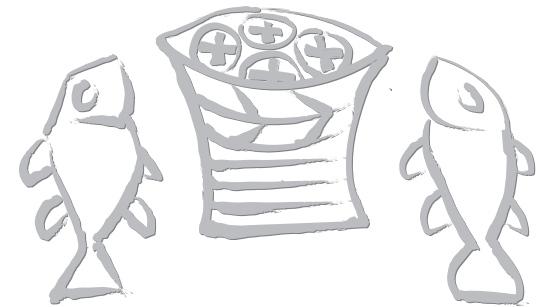
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General Instruction of the Roman Missal & Celebrating the Mass

A reading guide for Deacons



*The deacon's service for the people of
God is the diakonia of liturgy, word, and
charity.* CTM 39

The Eucharist is the vital centre of all that the Church is and does.

At its heart is the real presence of the crucified, risen and glorified Lord, who continues his saving work among us. The Second Vatican Council reminded us: ‘the most holy Eucharist holds within itself the whole spiritual treasure of the Church, namely Christ himself, our Passover and our living bread’. (cf. *One Bread One Body* 3)

All who exercise a liturgical ministry need a proper preparation for their responsibilities. They are to have the competence to perform the particular ministry with which they have been entrusted. (cf. *Celebrating the Mass* 29)



This leaflet is one of a series of leaflets prepared for liturgical ministers to help them refresh their understanding of their role at Mass. The series draws on the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* and *Celebrating the Mass*, a document of the Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales.

It is one of the collection of resources produced by the Liturgy Office to assist the work of liturgical renewal in England and Wales.

What the Church says about...

The deacon, whose order has been held in high honour since the earliest years of the Church, has a principal role among the other ministers of the assembly. The deacon is ordained for service in communion with the Bishop and the college of presbyters. The deacon’s service for the people of God is the *diakonia* of liturgy, word, and charity.

The deacon’s principal functions at Mass are:

- In the Liturgy of the Word to proclaim the Gospel reading. On occasion he may be invited to deliver the Homily and he also ordinarily announces the intentions in the general intercessions.
- As servant of the assembly and its worship, the deacon assists the priest at the chair and at the altar. He is also called to give certain directions and invitations to the assembly, especially regarding movement or posture. When incense is used, the deacon assists with its preparation and where indicated may incense the priest, the people, and the Book of the Gospels.
- In the Liturgy of the Eucharist, to assist in the distribution of Communion to the people, especially as minister of the chalice. In this connection, he, for example, also prepares the table, assists the priest in receiving the gifts, prepares the chalice, elevates the chalice at the doxology, and may

assist with the Breaking of the Bread before Communion.

Celebrating the Mass (CTM) 39



The ministry of Deacon in the General Instruction and Celebrating the Mass

Ministry of Deacon

GIRM 94

CTM 25–32, 39

Role of Deacon at Mass

GIRM 171–186,

59–60, 65–66, 71, 116, 284–287

CTM 141, 166, 169, 173, 180, 181, 182,

206, 211, 219, 220, 225

Role of Deacon

at Concelebrated Masses

GIRM 212, 215, 239–240, 246–249

Vesture

GIRM 119, 336, 338, 340

CTM 111

Seating

GIRM 310

CTM 95, 99

There would be every advantage in deacons reading both the General Instruction and Celebrating the Mass. If you are pressed for time and have not already read either document you will probably find it more fruitful to begin by reading Celebrating the Mass.