



Catholic Diocese of Victoria

Office of the Bishop

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September 28, 2023

Dear Pastors, Pastoral Administrators, and Deacons,

The graces and gifts of the Liturgy for the People of God gather us together to visibly witness to our common Christian life in the Body of Christ. I write this letter on two matters related to Liturgy. First, on the topic of posture during the Liturgy of the Eucharist, as a help to the Pastors, Pastoral Administrators, and many parishioners who are new to our diocese since the norms for the Diocese of Victoria were originally issued by my predecessor, the Most Reverend Richard Gagnon, in 2011. Second, I write to bring some clarity to the request to add prayers to the Liturgy.

In the years since information on the norms of posture was first shared, many people and priests have come to our Diocese from many jurisdictions with their own norms and procedures. It is understandable that we can become attached to the celebration of the Liturgy as we learned it at a specific place and time of our lives. However, as stated in the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (2011),

42. The gestures and bodily posture of both the Priest, the Deacon, and the ministers, and also of the people, must be conducive to making the entire celebration resplendent with beauty and noble simplicity, to making clear the true and full meaning of its different parts, and to fostering the participation of all. Attention must therefore be paid to what is determined by this General Instruction by the traditional practice of the Roman Rite and to what serves the common spiritual good of the People of God, rather than private inclination or arbitrary choice.

A common bodily posture, to be observed by all those taking part, is a sign of the unity of the members of the Christian community gathered together for the Sacred Liturgy, for it expresses the intentions and spiritual attitude of the participants and also fosters them.

To express our unity when we gather, I here provide in writing the flow and action of the Liturgy to be followed in all churches, chapels, and places where the Liturgy is celebrated in the Diocese. In this way, the visible communion of the liturgical life of the Church may give witness to the unity and grace of the faith of God's people.

<i>Stand</i>	for the Gathering Hymn and Opening Rite
<i>Be seated</i>	for the First Reading, Psalm, and Second Reading
<i>Stand</i>	at the Gospel Acclamation
<i>Be seated</i>	for the Homily / Reflection
<i>Stand</i>	at the Profession of Faith
<i>Be seated</i>	for the Offertory
<i>Stand</i>	at the words "Pray, brethren / brothers and sisters"



*Kneel** at the end of the Holy Holy / Sanctus
Stand at the “Mystery of the Faith”
All remain standing until they have received Holy Communion.
Stand for the Prayer after Communion

* In places that do not have kneelers, the congregation stands where kneeling is indicated, and exercises a deep bow at the time of the elevation of the Body and Blood of Christ.

There are some people for whom kneeling or standing, either for extended periods or even for brief moments, is not possible. These people are welcome to remain seated as necessary.

To assist us all to participate fully, consciously, and actively in the liturgical life of the Diocese of Victoria, it may be helpful for the priest, deacon, or assigned minister to invite the congregation to the appropriate postures at the proper times in the Liturgy (as is common at funerals and weddings).

When you visit other dioceses, it is appropriate to practice their postural norms as a sign of being united as members of the one Body of Christ.

Finally, as a help to Pastors and others who assist with the Universal Prayer (Prayer of the Faithful), when asked to add devotional prayers to the Mass, please refer to the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (2011) #69, 70, and 71. Universal Prayer provides a grace-filled opportunity for the gathered community to prayerfully intercede for the needs of the world, the Church, and for one another. There is an abundance of worthy and pious prayers that people may ask to be added to the intercessions, or at the beginning or end of the Liturgy; these are to be avoided to maintain the integrity of the Liturgy as outlined by the Roman Missal.

I encourage the whole people of God, as an action of love for the common good and communion of liturgical witness, to follow the norms of the Roman Missal as it has been implemented in the Diocese of Victoria since 2011. Together, as one body of Christ, we may more fully witness to the communion of the faith.

In Communion,

Most Reverend Gary Gordon
Bishop of Victoria