

Dear servants of the liturgy,

To begin with, a huge THANKS to everyone who made the *Beginnings Plus* experience at St. John Vianney such a success. I want to especially extend my gratitude to Gale Francione for being such an excellent local coordinator, to Fr. Bob McAleer and the people of St. John Vianney for their wonderful hospitality, and to Theresa Harvey and the Archdiocese of Dubuque for their willingness to co-sponsor the event. Of course, thanks also go to all the volunteers, the team members, and the participants: it was a wonderful four days!

We had 98 participants (40 from our diocese) at *Beginning Plus*, representing 52 parishes (20 from our diocese), 20 dioceses, and 9 states. Incredible!

Included below are some important dates and calendar adjustments for the coming year; we've mentioned them before – but I thought it would be helpful to have them all in one place.

Finally, may I please invite you to keep the men discerning a call to diaconal ministry—as well as their wives and children—in your prayers? We will be holding a series of meetings around the diocese to introduce the diaconate and explain the formation program to those who are discerning such a call. This month we meet at Sacred Heart, Newton, from 1pm-4pm on Sunday, August 19; next month we will be at St. Mary, Fort Madison, on September 30.

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FOR YOUR INFORMATION...

MASTERS OF CEREMONY

Anyone interested in the ministry of Master of Ceremonies for Masses with the Bishop is asked to contact me as soon as possible. It would be wonderful to have one or two persons in each deanery to help with Confirmations next year.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AT MASS

Because the issue of announcements at Mass is one of those practical questions that often comes up, the Diocesan Liturgical Commission asked that I comment on the practice as part of this issue of the *LiturgyNotes*. I find it helpful to remember that the announcements are included as part of the closing rites—as part of our preparation to be dismissed for mission. Perhaps, then, it may be a useful and sound practice to limit announcements to those items which have to do with living out the eucharist in the world (such as opportunities for works of charity and justice). Likewise, in order to preserve the integrity of both the communion rite and the concluding rites, it is good to remember that the Prayer After Communion is prayed before the announcements—in order to bring the communion rite to a close. It is not intended to be a “closing” prayer and part of the concluding rites.

UPCOMING EVENTS

MULTI-CULTURAL CELEBRATIONS

Looking ahead to celebrations surrounding the feasts of St. Peter Claver and St. Martin de Porres, and to the observation of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, I am interested in finding out if parishes have a contact person for their African-American communities. If you do have such a contact person, please let me know their name, number, and e-mail (if applicable). The African-American community at Sacred Heart Cathedral would like to explore the possibility of some shared celebrations in the upcoming year.

CONTINUING FORMATION OPPORTUNITIES

Ministry Formation Program: Liturgy Track

Our own diocese is sponsoring a 14-part program in liturgy as part of our Ministry Formation Program. A wide range of topics will be covered. Please look on the diocesan website or contact the Office of Faith Formation for more details.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCE

Fr. Thom Hennen, of the Diocesan Liturgical Commission, recommends the *Bilingual Ritual of Hispanic Popular Catholicism* by Rev. Patrick Brankin (who serves as the Director of the Hispanic Apostolate for the Diocese of Tulsa, OK). The book is published by New Hope Publications, New Hope, KY (<http://www.newhope-ky.org/>). The prayer texts are in Spanish while the rubrics are in English: a helpful arrangement for those who are not fluent in Spanish.

LITURGY PREPARATION

LITURGICAL CALENDAR

Calendar Notes and Changes for 2008

This year, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception falls on a Saturday. Because this is our national patronal feast day, the day remains a holy day of obligation. Ritual Masses (weddings, funerals, confirmation) are not allowed. Weddings and funerals may be celebrated outside of Mass. If a wedding is celebrated within Mass, then only the prayers and readings of the holy day are to be used (no substitution is allowed; see the *Rite of Marriage* #11). After consulting with the secretariat of the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy, please be aware that the Mass for Saturday night is the anticipatory Mass of the Second Sunday of Advent.

The solemnity of St. Joseph (March 19) falls on the Wednesday of Holy Week and the solemnity of the Annunciation (March 25) falls on the Tuesday in the Octave of Easter. The Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments has decreed that in 2008: The Solemnity of St. Joseph will be observed on Saturday, March 15 and the Solemnity of the Annunciation will be celebrated on Monday, March 31.

In 2008, the traditional date of Saint Patrick's Day falls on the Monday of Holy Week. Therefore, in most of the United States, the feast (an optional memorial) will not be commemorated liturgically. For those places that celebrate Saint Patrick's Day as a solemnity (for example, those places where St. Patrick is the principal patron of a particular church), the observation of the solemnity is transferred to Friday, March 14 (since the Saturday is already being taken by the solemnity of St. Joseph).

Looking Ahead to Lent / Triduum

The Rite of Election will be celebrated at Sacred Heart Cathedral at 3pm and 6pm on Sunday, February 10, and again at St. Mary, Ottumwa, on February 17 at 3pm.

The Chrism Mass will be celebrated at the Cathedral on Tuesday, March 11, at 4:00 pm.

The Easter Vigil, celebrated on March 22, may not begin before 8:00 p.m.

INTERCESSIONS

We've been publishing intercessions as part of the *LiturgyNotes* for quite some time now... and we are wondering how useful they have been for people. There are many sources out there for helping folks prepare the Prayer of the Faithful, so we don't want to be duplicating efforts. Please e-mail or call and let me know: Should we keep this section of the *LiturgyNotes* or retire it? Thanks.

(1) "Intercessions for Life" may be found on the USCCB website at:

<http://www.usccb.org/prolife/liturgy/wolarchive.shtml>

(2) Monthly intercession for vocations:

For the men of our diocese discerning a call to the diaconate, and for their families. We pray:

(3) Weekly intercessions from the Liturgical Commission:

Sept 2 22nd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

That we may all conduct our daily activities with gentleness and humility. We pray...

Sept 9 23rd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

That we leave behind those things in our life that keep us from following the Lord without reservation. We pray...

Sept 16 24th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

That we would be given the grace to reach out to all we have hurt by our omissions or actions in order to be reconciled with them and with the Lord. We pray...

Sept 23 25th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

That we would be moved to share our time, talent and treasures with the needy and lonely members of our communities. We pray...

Sept 30 26th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

That we would respond to the generous gifts of God by working for justice for all who are suffering due to war, natural disasters and disease. We pray...

A “How To” for Intercessions:

At the request of the members of the Diocesan Liturgical Commission, I am reprinting this section from our diocesan policy, §IV-220 *Policies Relating to the Liturgical Ministry of the Deacon...*

In the composition of the Prayer of the Faithful, the following points should be kept in mind:

1. “As a rule, the series of intentions is to be” (GIRM #70) for:
 - a. The needs of the universal church
 - b. Public authorities and the salvation of the whole world
 - c. People burdened by any kind of difficulty
 - d. The local faith community / assembly
2. The petitions are not prayers themselves; we are naming groups for the assembly to pray for; therefore, one of the following patterns is usually used:
 - a. For...that... (announcing who and what to pray for)
 - b. That... (announcing what to pray for)
 - c. For... (announcing who to pray for)
 - d. After the petition, the deacon should pause and make eye contact with the assembly and then say, “We pray to the Lord” (or the equivalent). Eye contact should be maintained as the people respond, in keeping with the dialogic nature of the prayer.
 - e. Please note: The Diocesan Liturgical Commission’s preference is for (c); otherwise, it can sound like we are telling God what to do...!
3. Please note that these are “general” intercessions
 - a. They ought to be petitions that the assembly can, by and large, agree on.
 - b. They ought not become a “mini-homily” or a place to make a particular point.
 - c. They ought not single out individuals (“For Uncle George with cancer...”) but may include individuals as part of a group (“For George, and for all who have cancer, ...”).
 - d. They should not be secret (“For a special intention”); otherwise the assembly cannot rightly give its assent.
4. They are petitions, not prayers of thanksgiving; the great prayer of thanksgiving follows shortly.
5. The response by the people should be a general prayer that God would hear the invocation (e.g., Lord, hear our prayer; Lord, have mercy)—not a separate petition or other statement. If the people are not familiar with the response, it should be announced before the intercessions and/or be included in a participation aid.