



OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

## **PASTORAL NOTE ON THE REVISED GIRM AND MISSAL**

Dear Reverend Father,

The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops has issued a Decree of Implementation for the General Instruction of the third typical edition of the Roman Missal for use in Canada. The norms of the General Instruction, including the adaptations which the Holy See has confirmed for use in Canada, come into effect on the First Sunday of Advent, 27 November 2011, in all English-language and French-language parishes and institutions in our country which follow the Roman Rite. The same day, the revised English-language translation of the Roman Missal approved for Canada also becomes obligatory throughout our country in all English-language liturgical celebrations of the Roman Rite. The revised French-language translation of the Missal will be approved and published over the coming months.

The revised English-language Roman Missal for Canada is published by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops. Its contents include the revised General Instruction with the adaptations approved for Canada, the variations to the translation of the Propers of the Mass for use in Canada, including those for Canadian Saints and Blesseds, and the revised Liturgical Calendar for the Dioceses of Canada. The Missal can already be ordered from the CCCB Publications Service.

To assist in preparing for the implementation of the revised Roman Missal and its General Instruction, I hereby authorize parishes in our Archdiocese to begin immediately to introduce the new practices called for by the revised GIRM. The specific changes to take place are outlined below. Pastors are also asked to encourage congregations to begin using the new texts for the people's parts of the Mass when these are sung, so these can already be familiar when officially implemented on 27 November. Of course, the Missal itself is not to be used until the Masses for the First Sunday of Advent.

I wish to bring to your particular attention the posture to be assumed for the Consecration. The GIRM makes clear that the posture to be assumed by the faithful at this point in the Mass is kneeling. Therefore, in the Archdiocese of Edmonton the faithful are to kneel at the conclusion of the *Sanctus* and to stand when the priest announces "The Mystery of Faith." Those who may not be able to kneel for such reasons as infirmity or lack of space are invited to make a profound bow when the celebrant genuflects at the Consecration of the bread and again at the Consecration of the wine. For your information, this same directive will be given by the other Latin Rite Bishops of Alberta and the Northwest Territories to their faithful.

## Specific Directives for the Archdiocese of Edmonton

Prior to noting changes to current practice called for by the GIRM, I wish to affirm that the Sacred Liturgy in this Archdiocese has been celebrated well. In my visits to our many parishes I have observed that liturgical ministers are generally very well prepared and exercise their roles in a dignified manner. The following directives are highlighted in order to assure a consistent practice in the Archdiocese and a conformity with the universal law of the Church. The oneness of our faith is to be apparent in the unity of our gestures and posture at the Sacred Liturgy (cf. GIRM, 96).

These directives follow the new numbering of the revised GIRM and pertain only to a select number of its paragraphs. Father Paul Kavanagh has addressed these points in the many workshops he has held throughout the Archdiocese.

Number 43: In addition to what has been said above regarding kneeling at the Consecration, the following is to be observed:

- Standing from the invitation *Pray, brethren* before the Prayer Over the Gifts.
- It is not necessary for all to remain standing throughout the entire Communion rite until all have received. Paragraph 43 is intended to ensure within broad limits a certain uniformity of posture within the congregation for the various parts of the celebration of the Holy Mass, but this is not to be interpreted so rigidly that people wishing to sit or kneel immediately after receiving the Lord in Holy Communion are not free to do so.

Number 53: The text of the *Gloria* must not be replaced by another text. Musical settings of the *Gloria* with words other than the official text are not to be used.

Number 82: The sign of peace is given by a handshake or a bow only to those nearby and in a dignified manner.

Number 83: The breaking of the Eucharistic Bread is reserved to the Priest, who may be assisted by a Deacon or a concelebrant. This reservation of function is to apply as well to the apportioning of Hosts among ciboria prior to their distribution to the faithful.

Number 86: The Communion chant begins as the Priest receives the Sacred Host. This means that music ministers will receive Holy Communion after all others have received.

Number 100-101: Note the important distinction made between instituted readers and acolytes, on the one hand, and deputed lay ministers on the other. In our Archdiocese, the only duly instituted readers and acolytes are those in preparation for Holy Orders.

Number 117:

- The altar is to be covered with a white cloth (cf. also 304).
- The altar candles are to be lit prior to the beginning of Mass. They are to remain lit until after the recessional.

- The number of lighted candles can vary in accordance with the nature of the celebration, but there are to be at least two lit candles in any celebration of the Mass.
- On the altar or near it is to be a Cross adorned with a figure of Christ crucified. If the processional Cross is placed near the altar then a Cross need not be placed on the altar.
- The processional Cross is to be adorned with a figure of Christ crucified.

Number 120: Only the Book of the Gospels, not the Lectionary, may be carried in the procession. The Lectionary is to be placed on the Ambo prior to the beginning of Mass (cf. 118). The Book of the Gospels is not carried out in the recessional.

Number 134: When about to proclaim the Gospel, the Priest greets the people with hands joined. Of course, this holds as well when a Deacon proclaims the Gospel (cf. 175).

Number 150:

- At the Consecration, a small bell may be rung by the server at each elevation by the Priest.
- When the Host and Chalice are shown to the people, incense may also be used.

Number 151: The memorial acclamation is to be taken from one of the approved formulas. Substitutions are not permitted.

Number 154: The priest is to remain in the sanctuary when giving the sign of peace.

Number 157: At Communion, the priest now has the option of holding the host above the paten or above the chalice when he says *Behold the Lamb of God*.

Number 160: The distribution of Holy Communion.

- The lay faithful are not to take the Host or the chalice by themselves. Neither may they pass the paten or chalice among themselves. They are to receive Communion from the Priest, Deacon, or deputed lay minister.
- The posture for receiving Communion is standing. Allowance is made in the GIRM for those who wish to receive kneeling to do so.
- While standing before the minister of Communion, the recipient makes a bow of the head before reception.
- Reception of the Host may be either in the hand or on the tongue.
- When receiving on the hand, one hand is to be placed over the other, so that the Host may be placed by the minister in the hand. The practice of the recipient taking the host from the minister is to be discontinued. The Host is to be consumed immediately upon receiving it.
- When receiving on the tongue, the recipients' hands are to be reverently joined.

Number 162: If deputed lay ministers are necessary to help in the distribution of Holy Communion, they approach the altar after the priest has communicated and stand at the side of the sanctuary. After they have received Communion themselves, they then receive

from the hands of the priest the vessels containing the Sacred Hosts or Precious Blood for distribution to the faithful.

Number 163:

- It is the Priest who consumes at the altar any Precious Blood remaining after the distribution. In the case of Mass with a Deacon, it is the Deacon who consumes the remaining Precious Blood at the altar, assisted, if necessary, by other Priests or Deacons (cf. 182) or by an instituted acolyte (cf. 284, b).
- It is the Priest who carries any remaining hosts to the tabernacle.
- It is the Priest who purifies the vessels. This may occur at the altar immediately after Holy Communion, or at the credence table after the conclusion of Mass. In the case of Mass with a Deacon, it is the Deacon who purifies the vessels (cf. 183).

Number 171: This number now outlines clearly the liturgical functions of the Deacon.

- Note that the Deacon may minister at the altar as regards both the chalice and the book. The priest may decide to attend to the book himself at the altar, in which case he need simply let the deacon know beforehand.
- The practice of having the adult server stand at the altar and turn the pages of the Missal is to be discontinued. He or she takes their place with the other servers at the side of the sanctuary.

Number 178: It is the Deacon who prepares the altar, assisted by a server(s). In the absence of a Deacon, a server prepares the altar.

Number 179: The Deacon kneels at the *epiclesis* until the elevation of the chalice. If he is not attending to the Missal, he kneels at the same time as the congregation.

Number 182: When a Deacon is exercising his functions at the altar, he receives Holy Communion under both kinds immediately after the Priest has communicated and before Holy Communion is given to deputed lay ministers.

Number 206: In concelebrated Masses, once Mass is begun, a priest may not afterward join in concelebration or be admitted as concelebrant.

Number 244: Concelebrants give themselves Communion. Note: if it is necessary to present the Eucharist to a concelebrant, one presents the vessel from which the concelebrant takes the Host himself. In this case, the one holding the vessel does not say "The Body of Christ" (or "The Blood of Christ").

Number 285, b: This number describes the distribution of Holy Communion by intinction. In the Archdiocese of Edmonton permission is not given for the distribution of Holy Communion to take place in this manner.

Number 320: The bread used from the celebration of the Eucharist must be made from wheat. Please note that so-called "gluten-free" hosts, if they are, in fact, entirely gluten

free, are not valid matter for the Eucharist. To be valid matter such hosts must have at least a small amount of gluten. People unable to receive hosts with even a small amount of gluten due to celiac disease may be invited to receive solely the Precious Blood according to the doctrine of concomitance (cf. 282).

Number 339:

- In the Archdiocese of Edmonton, all acolytes and altar servers, including any adult servers, are to be vested in an alb and cincture. The albs worn by servers exercising their function in the same Mass should be uniform in design insofar as possible.
- Readers and lay ministers of Holy Communion do not wear albs. Their clothing should be modest and dignified, in keeping with the sacred nature of the Eucharistic celebration.

Number 366: The substitution of other chants for those of the Order of Mass is not permitted.

More information on the revised norms of the General Instruction and on the English-language translation of the Roman Missal is available on the website of the National Liturgy Office, as well as at [www.romanmissal.ca](http://www.romanmissal.ca). There are also other highly recommended resources which provide further background and explanation. A number of these are available from the CCCB Publications Service. This is a good opportunity for each of us to re-aquaint ourselves with the GIRM in its entirety, and I strongly encourage you to do so prior to its official implementation November 27th.

I take this opportunity to express to you my heartfelt thanks for your collaboration at this significant moment of transition. May the Lord help us to guide our people to a renewed appreciation of the mystery of the Holy Eucharist as the source and summit of the Church's life.

Yours sincerely in Christ,



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Archbishop of Edmonton

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