



**North Thompson Catholic Parishes**

**Roman Catholic Diocese of Kamloops**

## The Holy Eucharist

Reference from Catechism of the Catholic Church

### **CHAPTER III**

#### **The Duties and Ministries in the Mass**

91. The Eucharistic celebration is an action of Christ and the Church, namely, the holy people united and ordered under the Bishop. It therefore pertains to the whole Body of the Church, manifests it, and has its effect upon it. It also affects the individual members of the Church in different ways, according to their different orders, offices, and actual participation.<sup>[75]</sup> In this way, the Christian people, “a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people,” expresses its cohesion and its hierarchical ordering.<sup>[76]</sup> All, therefore, whether they are ordained ministers or lay Christian faithful, in fulfilling their office or their duty, should carry out solely but completely that which pertains to them.<sup>[77]</sup>

## I. THE DUTIES OF THOSE IN HOLY ORDERS

92. Every legitimate celebration of the Eucharist is directed by the Bishop, either in person or through priests who are his helpers.<sup>[78]</sup>

Whenever the Bishop is present at a Mass where the people are gathered, it is most fitting that he himself celebrate the Eucharist and associate priests with himself as concelebrants in the sacred action. This is done not to add external solemnity to the rite, but to express in a clearer light the mystery of the Church, “the sacrament of unity.”<sup>[79]</sup>

Even if the Bishop does not celebrate the Eucharist but has assigned someone else to do this, it is appropriate that he should preside over the Liturgy of the Word, wearing the pectoral cross, stole, and cope over an alb, and that he give the blessing at the end of Mass.<sup>[80]</sup>

93. A priest also, who possesses within the Church the power of Holy Orders to offer sacrifice in the person of Christ,<sup>[81]</sup> stands for this reason at the head of the faithful people gathered together here and now, presides over their prayer, proclaims the message of salvation to them, associates the people with himself in the offering of sacrifice through Christ in the Holy Spirit to God the Father, gives his brothers and sisters the Bread of eternal life, and partakes of it with them. When he celebrates the Eucharist, therefore, he must serve God and the people with dignity and humility, and by his bearing and by the way he says the divine words he must convey to the faithful the living presence of Christ.

94. After the priest, the deacon, in virtue of the sacred ordination he has received, holds first place among those who minister in the Eucharistic Celebration. For the sacred Order of the diaconate has been held in high honor in the Church even from the time of the Apostles.[82] At Mass the deacon has his own part in proclaiming the Gospel, in preaching God's word from time to time, in announcing the intentions of the Prayer of the Faithful, in ministering to the priest, in preparing the altar and serving the celebration of the Sacrifice, in distributing the Eucharist to the faithful, especially under the species of wine, and sometimes in giving directions regarding the people's gestures and posture.

## **II. THE DUTIES OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD**

95. In the celebration of Mass the faithful form a holy people, a people whom God has made his own, a royal priesthood, so that they may give thanks to God and offer the spotless Victim not only through the hands of the priest but also together with him, and so that they may learn to offer themselves.[83] They should, moreover, endeavor to make this clear by their deep religious sense and their charity toward brothers and sisters who participate with them in the same celebration.

Thus, they are to shun any appearance of individualism or division, keeping before their eyes that they have only one Father in heaven and accordingly are all brothers and sisters to each other.

96. Indeed, they form one body, whether by hearing the word of God, or by joining in the prayers and the singing, or above all by the common offering of Sacrifice and by a common partaking at the Lord's table. This unity is beautifully apparent from the gestures and postures observed in common by the faithful.

97. The faithful, moreover, should not refuse to serve the People of God gladly whenever they are asked to perform some particular ministry or function in the celebration.

### **III. PARTICULAR MINISTRIES**

#### ***The Ministry of the Instituted Acolyte and Lector***

98. The acolyte is instituted to serve at the altar and to assist the priest and deacon. In particular, it is his responsibility to prepare the altar and the sacred vessels and, if it is necessary, as an extraordinary minister, to distribute the Eucharist to the faithful.[\[84\]](#)

In the ministry of the altar, the acolyte has his own functions (cf. nos. 187-193), which he must perform personally.

99. The lector is instituted to proclaim the readings from Sacred Scripture, with the exception of the Gospel. He may also announce the intentions for the Prayer of the Faithful and, in the absence of a psalmist, proclaim the Psalm between the readings.

In the Eucharistic Celebration, the lector has his own proper office (cf. nos. 194-198), which he must exercise personally.

### ***Other Ministries***

100. In the absence of an instituted acolyte, lay ministers may be deputed to serve at the altar and assist the priest and the deacon; they may carry the cross, the candles, the thurible, the bread, the wine, and the water, and they may also be deputed to distribute Holy Communion as extraordinary ministers.[\[85\]](#)

101. In the absence of an instituted lector, other laypersons may be commissioned to proclaim the readings from Sacred Scripture. They should be truly suited to perform this function and should receive careful preparation, so that the faithful by listening to the readings from the sacred texts may develop in their hearts a warm and living love for Sacred Scripture. [\[86\]](#)

102. The psalmist's role is to sing the Psalm or other biblical canticle that comes between the readings. To fulfill this function correctly, it is necessary that the psalmist have the ability for singing and a facility in correct pronunciation and diction.

103. Among the faithful, the *schola cantorum* or choir exercises its own liturgical function, ensuring that the parts proper to it, in keeping with the different types of chants, are properly carried out and fostering the active participation of the faithful through the singing. [\[87\]](#) What is said about the choir also applies, in accordance with the relevant norms, to other musicians, especially the organist.

104. It is fitting that there be a cantor or a choir director to lead and sustain the people's singing. When in fact there is no choir, it is up to the cantor to lead the different chants, with the people taking part.[\[88\]](#)

105. The following also exercise a liturgical function:

- The sacristan, who carefully arranges the liturgical books, the vestments, and other things necessary in the celebration of Mass.
- The commentator, who provides the faithful, when appropriate, with brief explanations and commentaries with the purpose of introducing them to the celebration and preparing them to understand it better. The commentator's remarks must be meticulously prepared and clear though brief. In performing this function the commentator stands in an appropriate place facing the faithful, but not at the ambo.
- Those who take up the collection in the church.
- Those who, in some places, meet the faithful at the church entrance, lead them to appropriate places, and direct processions.



106. It is appropriate, at least in cathedrals and in larger churches, to have some competent minister, that is to say a master of ceremonies, to oversee the proper planning of sacred actions and their being carried out by the sacred ministers and the lay faithful with decorum, order, and devotion.

107. The liturgical duties that are not proper to the priest or the deacon and are listed in nos. 100-106 may also be entrusted by a liturgical blessing or a temporary deputation to suitable lay persons chosen by the pastor or rector of the church.<sup>[89]</sup> All should observe the norms established by the Bishop for his diocese regarding the office of those who serve the priest at the altar.

#### **IV. THE DISTRIBUTION OF DUTIES AND THE PREPARATION OF THE CELEBRATION**

108. One and the same priest celebrant must always exercise the presidential office in all of its parts, except for those parts which are proper to a Mass at which the Bishop is present (cf. no. 92).

109. If there are several persons present who are able to exercise the same ministry, nothing forbids their distributing among themselves and performing different parts of the same ministry or duty. For example, one deacon may be assigned to take the sung parts, another to serve at the altar; if there are several readings, it is well to distribute them among a number of lectors. The same applies for the other ministries. But it is not at all appropriate that several persons divide a single element of the celebration among themselves, e.g., that the same reading be proclaimed by two lectors, one after the other, except as far as the Passion of the Lord is concerned.

110. If only one minister is present at a Mass with a congregation, that minister may exercise several different duties.

111. Among all who are involved with regard to the rites, pastoral aspects, and music there should be harmony and diligence in the effective preparation of each liturgical celebration in accord with the Missal and other liturgical books. This should take place under the direction of the rector of the church and after the consultation with the faithful about things that directly pertain to them. The priest who presides at the celebration, however, always retains the right of arranging those things that are his own responsibility.

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