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A. INTRODUCTION

In order to facilitate parish liturgies that foster and nourish faith, as well as to enable “full, active, and conscious participation” by all, it is recommended that parishes form Parish Liturgy Committees which are sometimes know as Liturgy Commissions. These committees operate in collaboration with both the bishop and local parish leadership.

B. ROLE OF THE PARISH LITURGY COMMITTEE

A Parish Liturgy Committee’s role is advisory. It must work closely with pastors and other professional parish staff. The Committee must also maintain regular communication with the Pastoral Council and other parish groups.

It assesses the needs of the worshipping assembly and regularly evaluates practices to see that those needs are being met.

It advises the parish leadership on liturgical matters and the condition of liturgical spaces.

It provides direction for those who prepare for liturgies. It may also be made of individuals who take responsibility for day-to-day preparations such as decorating the sanctuary, purchasing flowers, or choosing hymns; however, in larger parishes subcommittees may be formed to handle these details.

It is responsible for the liturgical education of all parishioners through various methods.

It is responsible for the on-going training of all liturgical ministers and maintains communication with them.

In collaboration with the pastor and other parish staff members, it ensures that liturgical laws and diocesan policies are followed.

It sets goals for the progress of the liturgical life of the parish.

C. MEMBERSHIP AND STRUCTURE

The pastor, pastoral associate or sacramental minister must serve as an *ex-officio* member of the Committee.

The group ought to be few enough in number to work effectively and efficiently. In addition to a few interested parishioners, members of the Committee should include:

- a. Director of Liturgy (if applicable)
- b. Director of Music
- c. Person responsible for art and environment
- d. Coordinators of each liturgical ministry: lector, usher, Extraordinary Ministers of Communion, altar servers.

The frequency of meetings may depend on the liturgical season of the year. It is recommended the Committee meet on a monthly basis. Each meeting should last approximately an hour and half to two hours maximum.

A core committee along with the pastor and other parish staff is responsible for creating the agenda.

Prayer is to be an essential component of every meeting.

D. FORMATION AND TRAINING

Members of the Liturgy Committee must be open to on-going formation and training. They need to be familiar with the liturgical year with all its seasons and colors. Also, members must understand the Order of Mass and liturgical documents such as the *Constitution on Sacred Liturgy*, *General Instruction on the Roman Missal* (GIRM), *Sing to the Lord*, and Diocesan policies and guidelines.

The parish should set aside funds for attendance at national and local workshops. If feasible, the Liturgy Committee should sponsor its own day of formation and hire a well-qualified presenter.

The Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, Office of Worship and Sacraments offers assistance for parishes who want to form a Parish Liturgy Committee, in locating appropriate resources, and will conduct days of formation and study.

E. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Guidelines for Parish Worship Commissions. Diocese of Lansing, 2008.

Parish Liturgy: People, Process, and Procedure. Joyce Ann Zimmerman. C.P.P.S. Institute for Liturgical Ministry, 2005.