

# *A Workshop Guideline for training*



## *Lay Ministers in the Parish*

Diocese of Prince Albert  
Liturgy Office



(2017)

## **Opening Song: Servant Song**

### **Presenter 1: (Lead with Scripture) Ephesians 4:7,11-13**

*But each of us was given grace according to the measure of Christ's gift. The gifts He gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ.*

**Presenter 2:** To begin, let's start with the reason we gather together, The Eucharist! The Eucharist is the central and greatest sacrament of the Church. It is the means by which the Church is continually maintained in communion with Jesus Christ the Lord and the means by which each Christian participates in the once and for all sacrifice of Christ on the Cross. The Catechism of the Catholic Church, following a document of Vatican II calls the Eucharist the 'source and summit of the Christian life'. The word 'Eucharist' from the Greek word for 'thanksgiving' is commonly used in various ways: You might read a sign outside a church that says: "Sunday Eucharist: 8.00, 9.30 and 11.00 am". Here the word Eucharist means the Mass – the act of worship through which Catholics re-present and participate in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

**Presenter 1:** With that short intro we can move right into participation. Participation is the promotion of full, conscious and active participation of the assembly and is both a right and a duty. In the Ordo, which is the Liturgical Calendar for the year, it states: "The assembly participates actively in the liturgy by acclamations and responses; by singing psalms, antiphons and hymns; by actions, gestures and posture; and at appropriate times by observing reverent posture."

In the Document called Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy #14 from the Second Vatican Council it says: "The Church earnestly desires that all the faithful should be led to that fully conscious and active participation in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy. Such participation by the Christian people as "a chosen race, a royal

priesthood, a holy nation, a redeemed people” is their right and duty by reason of their baptism.

In the restoration and promotion of the sacred liturgy, this full and active participation by all the people is the aim to be considered before all else; for it is the primary and indispensable source from which the faithful are to derive the true Christian spirit.”

**Presenter 2:** The celebration of Mass is arranged so that ministers and members of the worshipping assembly take their proper parts and gain its fruits more fully.

Your willingness to serve as a Minister at the celebration of the Eucharist, reflects not only response to your Baptismal call to serve the people of God, but a commitment to Christ as you share in the preaching, teaching and leading aspects of the church. You offer your service, recognize the Body of Christ in those to whom you minister and ultimately you act as the Body of Christ by fully participating in the life of the parish and the wider community. Your willingness to commit to a monthly schedule, to prepare properly for your service and to arrive on time dressed appropriately for Mass, further reflects that commitment.

**Let’s say together the ministry prayer that was given to you before we began.**

*Ministry Prayer*

*Lord, I thank you, for granting me the privilege  
to serve you in this most honored Ministry.  
I ask that you guide me so I might continually learn  
to better proclaim You in a way that is pleasing to you,  
and enlightening to our brothers and sisters  
in the body of your church.  
If I approach this ministry too carelessly,  
remind me Lord, that I was called by you,  
and that I owe you nothing less than my absolute best effort.  
I ask you to guide me and all your ministers  
throughout the body of your church.  
Let your spirit fill our hearts as we serve you in love;  
I ask this in your son Jesus' name, Amen.*

**Presenter 1:** What is a “minister”? Ministers are people entrusted to perform a special function for the members of their community. When we talk about “ministers” we need to realize that there are different types of “ministers.” There are ordained ministers, including Permanent Deacons, Priests, Bishops, and those who take the Sacrament of Holy Orders. There are also lay ministers who are Baptized people that volunteer their time to help priests and deacons in performing special functions. These functions include such ministries as Lectors, Cantors, Catechists, Ushers, Extraordinary Ministers of the Holy Communion, Altar Servers, Environment, etc.

The invitation to serve as a Minister is a reflection of the diversity of the parish. The invitation to join the ministry does not mean that one is "better or holier than another", nor is it an invitation indicative of a reward of some sort. Guidelines for invitation to service in this ministry clearly indicate that it is an invitation to serve ... not to create an elite group in the church community. As “ministers” we should always be aware that it is a privilege and can never be considered a right.

**Presenter 2:** Who is it that does ministry? Ministry is done by people of faith who have nurtured a relationship with God. They are people who have formed their lives on the Gospel. They are also members of a community of family, friends and strangers, bound together by a desire to live near and for one another.

More of the qualities ministers have are: to share opportunities for faith and worship, they value their local Church and its mission, and they understand the importance of making Sunday worship the highlight of their week.

Another important quality to look more closely at when talking about ministers is their faith. Inner faith is the essential foundation for all Catholic worship. Through faith we recognize the presence of Christ in the liturgy. Our faith will affect the way we fulfill our ministry.

**Presenter 1:** What is Faith? Faith is the most critical quality for a minister. Yet Faith is not a static quality ... it can grow, may weaken and even be lost. A lay minister, as well as, the priest or deacon can foster and nourish or weaken and destroy faith. No other single factor affects the liturgy as much as the attitude, style and bearing of the celebrant and ministers. A great opportunity, a great challenge, a great responsibility!

Out of faith develops an attitude of prayerfulness. People sense and recognize it, just as they intuit and detect its absence. A spirit of prayerful adoration should permeate ministers throughout the celebration of Mass. We are called to serve with dignity and humility, impressing upon others the living presence of God. ONLY A PRAYERFUL PERSON CAN DO THAT!

The presence of Jesus brings joy to people's hearts. St. Paul wrote that the fruits of the spirit are: Love, joy, peace, patient endurance, kindness, generosity, faith, mildness and chastity.

“Rejoice always.” Those inner qualities of peace, love and joy, like faith and prayerfulness, should be evident to parishioners. We need to perform our task with faith, prayerfulness and care regardless of the current mood or feeling. The spirit of Christian joy and peace within us needs to shine despite what our emotions may seem to tell us at that moment. We need to be reverent, relaxed, comfortable, but not casual.

**Presenter 2:** The Mass is a celebration ... a relaxed, easy, joyful event. Your respect for the Ministry should be reflected in your appearance and attire: appropriate attire includes being properly groomed and clothing that is clean and modest. Jewelry or clothing which would be distracting to the assembly should not be worn. Your hands should be clean, with neatly trimmed clean nails.

God speaks to us through the scriptures. He speaks to a particular people gathered at a particular time in a particular place. Each person will hear the message uniquely, as the Holy Spirit reaches into the hearts of us all to place within them the message that comes from God. For this work, God chooses instruments and we see these instruments in the various ministers during the liturgy.

**Now go through whichever specific Ministry(s) you want to talk about (Check out the Diocesan guidelines on the Liturgy page of the Website)!!**

Example: LECTORS.

- Readings other than the Gospel are proclaimed by the LECTORS.
- The ministry of the Word is treated seriously and with great dignity.
  - Lectors bring the living Word of God to the liturgical assembly.
  - The Word of God is not merely read during the liturgy. It is proclaimed!
- Deliver the message with clarity, conviction and appropriate pace.
- Ideally, members of the assembly listen to the proclamation of the Scriptures and do not read along in missalettes.
- Use of TWO readers – one for each reading – is encouraged

**Presenter 1:** Please bow your heads as we close our time together with Prayer;

As we close this meeting, Lord, we want to give honor to You. Thank You, God, for the time we had today to discuss issues and make decisions.

May You bless each person who took the time to gather here today and let Your hand of protection be on them always.

Let the work done here tonight come to fruition, and let it all be for Your glory. Help us each to do our parts to bring the plans discussed to life.

Amen

**Closing Song:** Peace Prayer of Saint Francis

**Please print out the on the last page for the participant in the workshop!**

**Other inspirations that can be inserted into the workshop:**

**Biblical quotes:**

John 12:26 *Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, my servant will be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honour.*

1 Peter 2:16a-17a *As servants of God, live as free people. Honour everyone. Love the family of believers.*

**Doing God's Will**

Lord Jesus, teach me to be generous;  
teach me to serve you as you deserve;  
to give and not count the cost,  
to fight and not heed the wounds,  
to toil and not seek for rest,  
to labour and not to seek reward,  
except that of knowing that I do your will.

*Saint Ignatius Loyola*

**In Service to God**

Govern everything by your wisdom, O Lord,  
so that my soul may always be serving you  
in the way you will and not as I choose.  
Let me die to myself so that I may serve you;  
let me live to you who are life itself.

*Saint Teresa of Avila*

---

*Ministry Prayer*

*Lord, I thank you, for granting me the privilege  
to serve you in this most honored Ministry.  
I ask that you guide me so I might continually learn  
to better proclaim You in a way that is pleasing to you,  
and enlightening to our brothers and sisters  
in the body of your church.*

*If I approach this ministry too carelessly,  
remind me Lord, that I was called by you,  
and that I owe you nothing less than my absolute best effort.*

*I ask you to guide me and all your ministers  
throughout the body of your church.*

*Let your spirit fill our hearts as we serve you in love;  
I ask this in your son Jesus' name, Amen.*

---