

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS OF THE ROMAN MISSAL
SUMMARY

Before Mass

1. A period of silence is encouraged. Presider and ministers should arrive at least 15 minutes before Mass to enter into the spirit of the celebration (cf. no.45).
2. The 15 minutes out silence before Mass are for personal recollection and preparation; no singing; no instruments; no rosary; no Angelus; no pre-greetings, instructions or announcements (Diocesan Norm).
3. The Altar is bare except for the altar cloth. The Lectionary is in place on the Ambo. The Lectionary and Missal are **never** carried in procession (cf. nos.117-118).
4. *A drop of water is added to the wine in the main chalice only.* Sacristans or acolytes should **NOT** pour a drop of water into secondary chalices before Mass; nor should priest or deacon do so during Mass. (Bishop's letter, Feb. 13, 2015).
5. Before Mass starts, the following prayer is said by priests, ministers and altar servers in a proper place:

**God our Father,
You have called us
to stand next to Your altar and serve You.
Pour forth into our hearts the grace of the Holy Spirit.
that our every word and gesture
may draw Your People deeper
into the saving Mysteries of Your Beloved Son.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Presider: Mary, Mother of the Church,

Ministers: pray for us.

P: St. Joseph, M: pray for us.

P: St. (Patron of parish), M: pray for us.

Introductory Rites

Entrance and Procession¹

6. If incense is being used (cf. no.120):
 - a. the thurifer carrying a smoking thurible approaches the presider, who puts incense into the thurible in the vestibule, before the procession commences.
 - b. Two altar servers with lighted candles follow two steps behind an acolyte or other minister with the cross. The cross bearer takes the cross directly to its stand and sets it in place facing the altar, not facing the people (unless there is no other crucifix in the sanctuary) (Diocesan Norms for Celebration of Mass).
 - c. After the candles, the acolytes, and the other Lector (if a Deacon is present). If they are not carrying anything, they genuflect (Diocesan Norms for Celebration of Mass);
 - d. If a no Deacon is present, a Reader may carry the Book of the Gospels (though not a Lectionary), slightly elevated;
 - e. Priest(s) concelebrant(s) – (side by side if more than one);
 - f. Presider with a second deacon a half-step ahead to the right (Diocesan Norms for Celebration of Mass).
 - g. (miter and crozier bearers).

7. The reader who is carrying the Book of the Gospels, omits the sign of reverence and goes up to the altar placing the book on the altar and (s)he goes to his/her place (Diocesan Norms).

¹ See illustrations in the appendices.

8. A Deacon carrying the Book of the Gospels omits the sign of reverence and goes up to the altar and places the Book directly to the altar. He then waits until the Presider arrives, and both venerate the altar with a kiss (cf. no.173).
9. Servers should be seated on the same side where they place whatever they carry in or out. They should NOT process across the sanctuary to fetch candles or cruets or processional Cross. Eliminate processions that should NOT occur. For example, the Cross bearer sits near (not next to) the priest's chair and holds the Missal for the prayers; the candle bearers take their candles to the opposite side and sit near the credence table, so they have ready access to the cruets and bowl. "Attention follows motion, not sound." **Unnecessary movements in the sanctuary draw attention away from the proper rhythm of the liturgy** (Bishop's letter, Oct. 18, 2016).
10. Concelebrant(s) kiss the altar, and then he (or they) go(es) to his (their) assigned place(s) (cf. no. 211).
11. The Presider, after kissing the altar:
 - a. Thurifer gives the thurible to Deacon to hand to the Presider.
 - b. The presider takes the thurible from the Deacon, without adding incense, proceeds to incense the altar and the cross (**three swings of two**) (Ceremonies of the Modern Roman Rite, cf. no.218).
 - c. If a no deacon is present, the thurifer hands the thurible directly to the presider (Ceremonial of Bishops, cf. no.90).

Kyrie

12. The Presider introduces the penitential rite. The Deacon then recites one of the three penitential formulas. The Presider concludes with the absolution (cf. The Order of Mass no.6).
13. As a rule, each acclamation is sung or said twice (cf. no.52).

Gloria

14. **The Gloria is a liturgical prayer. The words of the Gloria as printed in the Roman Missal are the only words that may be used. No other texts may be sung or said** (cf. no.53).

15. The Gloria is to be sung **without** the repeated insertion of a refrain or a chorus (e.g. a "choral" Gloria) (cf. no.53).

The Liturgy of the Word

After the First and Second Reading

16. The Readers are to be seated in first pew in the center aisle one on each side. They approach the pulpit with a profound bow to the altar in the center aisle and repeat this gesture upon returning to their seats. (Diocesan Norms for Celebration of Mass).
17. Upon concluding the Scriptures passage, the reader leaves a brief period of silence before saying, "The Word of the Lord". After the people's response "Thanks be to God" without elevating the lectionary, the reader returns to the pew, making a profound bow to the altar in the center aisle. (cf. nos. 128 and 130; Diocesan Norms).
18. If there is only one reader, he/she steps away from the ambo for a brief period of silence before commencing the second reading.

Responsorial Psalm & Gospel Acclamation

19. The Responsorial Psalm is to be sung at the Ambo or from the choir (cf. no. 61)
20. After the Second Reading, the Reader removes the Lectionary from the ambo and places it in a suitable location. **The Gospel Acclamation is never to be sung or read from the Ambo** (Bishop's letter, Oct. 18, 2016).
21. If the Gospel Acclamation is not sung may be omitted (cf. no.63 c.).
22. The Alleluia is sung at every Mass other than Lent. The verse is taken only from the Lectionary (cf. no.62).
23. During Lent, instead of the Alleluia, either *Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ, King of endless glory!* or *Glory and praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ!* is sung.
24. After the Second Reading, if incense is being used, while the Reader is returning to the pew, the candle bearers take candles and takes their place for the procession. The thurifer kneels before the presider and he puts incense in

thurible. The thurifer then moves to a position in front of the candle bearers (Diocesan Norms for Celebration of Mass).

25. The Deacon kneels for the Presider's blessing, and when he stands (**sign for the singing of the Gospel Acclamation to begin**), he goes to the altar. When he takes the Book of the Gospel turns toward the procession. The thurifer begins to move toward the pulpit, with the candle bearers (Diocesan Norms for Celebration of Mass). If no deacon is present, the concelebrant who is to proclaim the Gospel receives the Bishop's blessing (cf. no.212).
26. **If there are no ministers to carry the two candles, there is no Gospel procession.** The Book of the Gospels may be place in a suitable place at the ambo and the Gospel may be read from the Book of the Gospels rather from the Lectionary. Otherwise the Gospel may be read from the Lectionary.

Gospel

27. At the ambo, the Priest (or deacon) opens the Book of the Gospel and, **with hands joined**, says, "The Lord be with you", then he says, "*A reading from the holy Gospel*", **making the Sign of the Cross on his forehead, mouth, and chest.** The Priest incenses the Book of the Gospels (two swings, three times). He then proclaims the Gospel and at the end pronounces the acclamation *The Gospel of the Lord*, to which all reply, *Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.* The Priest or deacon kisses the book, saying quietly the formula *Per evangelica dicta (Through the words of the Gospel)* (cf. no.134).
28. If Bishop presides, the Priest or Deacon brings the Book of the Gospels for him to kiss it (cf. 175).

Profession of Faith

Prayers of the Faithful

29. The presider introduces the prayers and concludes them with a closing prayer. (cf. no.71).
30. The intentions are announced from the ambo, by the deacon if he is present or by a lector, a cantor, or one of the lay faithful if no Deacon is present (cf. no.71).

Liturgy of the Eucharist

Offertory

31. After the Prayers of the Faithful, the presider sits and the ushers immediately begin to take up the collection and the offertory hymn (or instrumental music) begins (Celebrations Mass: Norms for Priests, Deacons, Acolytes).

Preparation of the Altar

32. The acolyte places the Chalice covered by the chalice veil and burse in the center of the altar. Then the Presider or deacon unveils the chalice and prepares the altar. The veil and burse are taken to the credence table, and the Roman Missal is brought to the altar (Diocesan Norms).
33. The offertory procession then begins. This includes only the bread, wine and collection. No other items such as prayers of intentions, prayer cards, book of intention, flowers, etc. are to be included. The gifts are handed to the presider:
- The collection is placed near the Altar
 - The wine is taken by the Deacon, or Acolyte or altar server to the credence table.
 - The Hosts are taken to the Altar by the presider.

Upon reception of gifts, the gift bearers and the presider bow to each other. **No blessing is given** (Celebrations Mass: Norms for Priests, Deacons, Acolytes).

34. The presider returns to the altar and sets the ciborium on a large corporal. The servers **immediately** bring him the communion cups filled with wine, which he places at the farthest corners of the corporal. **Music ceases** (Celebrations Mass: Norms for Priests, Deacons, Acolytes).
35. The presider takes the paten with the bread and holds it slightly raised above the altar with **both hands** saying: "Blessed are (The Order of Mass, no.23).
36. After the presider concludes, he places the paten with the bread on the corporal. **Presider steps back from the altar** (Diocesan Norm) and then the Deacon or Concelebrant pours wine and a little water into the chalice saying quietly: "By the (cf. The Order of Mass, no.24).
37. The presider takes the chalice and holds it slightly raised above the altar with **both hands** saying: "Blessed are (The Order of Mass, no. 25).
38. If incense is used, the thurifer approaches the altar and the presider puts incense into the thurible. The presider incenses the offerings, the altar, the cross (Easter Candle at Easter Vigil). The Deacon or acolyte incenses the presider, then

concelebrants and then the people. **Light instrumental music should be played during the incensation** (Diocesan Norms).

Eucharistic Prayer

39. The Deacon stands near the Priest, but slightly behind him, so that, when necessary, he may assist the presider with the chalice or the Missal (no.178).
40. **After the prayer over the offerings, the concelebrants approach the altar** and stand around it, but in such a way that they do not obstruct the execution of the rites and that the sacred action may be seen clearly by the faithful. They should not obstruct the Deacon whenever he needs to approach the altar by reason of his ministry (cf. no. 215).
41. The deacon kneels at the epiclesis and stands when the presider shows the chalice after the consecration (cf. no. 179).
42. At the concluding doxology of the Eucharistic Prayer, the Deacon (or if no Deacon is present, a concelebrant stands next to the presider), holds the chalice elevated while the presider elevates the paten with the host until the people have acclaimed, Amen (no. 180).

The Communion Rite

Greeting of Peace

43. Presider says: "The peace of the Lord ..."; then, if a Deacon is present, he says: "Let us offer.... (The Order of the Mass, no. 128).
44. The gesture of the sign of peace is a head bow with folded hands to the person at either side while saying, "Peace be with you" (Diocesan Norm).
45. Because this rite takes place immediately before Communion and the Body and Blood of Christ are present on the Altar, dignity and reverence are extremely important. Therefore, the greeting should be extended only to those in close proximity. It is not fitting to leave the pew to greet people in other parts of the church. Parents should instruct their children in the meaning of this greeting. The presider exchanges the greeting of peace only with those in the sanctuary itself. **The greeting should conclude when the Lamb of God begins** (cf. no.154).

Lamb of God

46. **As the presider breaks the host, the Lamb of God begins**, led by the choir, if sung, or by the congregation, if not said by the presider (Diocesan Norm).

47. After the greeting of peace, smaller, empty ciboria are brought to the altar by servers immediately. The presider then distributes hosts from the large ciborium into the smaller ciboria during the Lamb of God (Celebration Mass: Norm for Priests, Deacons, Acolytes).
48. Acolytes **DO NOT** distribute Hosts to the secondary ciboria; this is the task of the Bishop, Priest and Deacon (Bishop's letter, February 13, 2015).
49. **The ciborium from the Tabernacle should *not* be brought to the altar as a matter of course at the Lamb of God.** Rather, the faithful should receive Communion from bread consecrated at the Mass they attend, and sufficient hosts be set out beforehand to accomplish this. Only if hosts run out should the priest go to the Tabernacle for more. Having to break hosts at Communion is a liturgical disaster, and priest should take great care to avoid it (Bishop's letter, October 18, 2016).

Communion

50. Extraordinary Eucharistic Ministers of the Holy Communion proceed to the sanctuary **after the presider has consumed the Precious Blood**. They do not wash or sanitize their hands in the sanctuary. There should be NO movement while the presider is taking communion (Bishop's letter February 13, 2005).
51. If a host or any particle should fall, it is to be picked up reverently. **If any of the Precious Blood is spilled, the area where the spill occurred should be covered with a purificator and after Mass should be washed with water, and this water should then be poured into the sacrarium in the sacristy** (no. 280).
52. At the end of Communion, **if a ciborium contains hosts it is placed on the corporal on the altar. Chalices and empty ciboria are taken to the credence table** for purification by deacon or acolyte or if needed by Eucharistic Ministers. After words Eucharistic Ministers return immediately to their pews (Celebration of Mass: Norms for Priests, Deacons, Acolytes).
53. Upon returning to the altar, the presider or deacon puts any remaining hosts in one ciborium and gives it to the acolyte who places it in the tabernacle, or takes it there himself if there is no acolyte. Then, the presider purifies the paten and purifies the chalice (cf. no. 183).
54. The presider or Deacon veils the chalice at the center of the altar and places the burse atop it. Then, the acolyte takes it to the credence table (Diocesan Norm).

55. A period moment of silence before the Prayer after Communion is encouraged (cf. no.88). The presider should leave ample time for prayerful silence before the closing prayer (Diocesan Norm).

The Concluding Rites

Dismissal

56. After the final blessing the deacon dismisses the people using the proper formula (The Order of Mass, cf. no.144).

Exit Procession

57. When people say, "Thanks be to God" in response to "Go in peace", the Cross bearer and servers immediately take the processional cross and candles (without waiting for a cue from the presider) and descend to stand facing the altar in the middle of the center aisle, ten to fifteen feet back from the sanctuary (Bishop's letter, February 13, 2015).

58. Lectors emerge from center pews and stand side by side facing the altar before the candle bearers (Bishop's letter, February 13, 2015).

59. The presider and deacon reverence altar, descend to center aisle, and genuflect with the other concelebrants already in the middle aisle. As Bishop (Priest) turns around, Cross bearer leads procession to doors of church (Bishop's letter, February 13, 2015).