



## Overview of the *Norms for the Celebration of the Eucharist*

The *Norms for the Celebration of the Eucharist according to the Third Typical Edition of the Roman Missal in the Diocese of Arlington* aims to promote the full, active, and conscious participation of the faithful in the celebration of the Eucharist. This document does not intend to explicate every detail of the liturgy, for the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (2010) and the *Introduction to the Lectionary for Mass* (1998) remain indispensable tools for the celebration of the Mass. For its part, this document addresses the specific circumstances and needs of the Diocese of Arlington. With this local context in view, it brings together relevant laws and instructions of the universal Church, norms and guidelines of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), and policies of the Diocese of Arlington.

The *Norms* includes directives and recommendations on preparing for and celebrating the Mass. The prayerful preparation and celebration of liturgy includes fidelity to the Church's authoritative rites and texts, and so clarifications on practical ritual matters are provided. Such respect for the Church's tradition in concrete celebrations thus allows the act of liturgy to be what it most truly is: God's work of sanctification and the Church's response, through God's initiating and sustaining action, to the *mirabilia Dei*.

In addition, the *Norms* appeals to numerous principles and guidelines that preserve the unity and diversity of all concrete liturgical celebrations. Therefore, the USCCB's *Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities* (rev. 2017), *Guidelines for a Multilingual Celebration of Mass* (rev. 2013), and similar guidelines are emphasized and applied throughout the *Norms* in order to encourage pastoral ministers to address a number of matters that are significant to the local Church. Further, the *Norms* specifies decisions and directives reserved to the Diocesan Bishop in a manner that upholds the unity of the local Church while maintaining its legitimate diversity.

Furthermore, the *Norms* stresses the integral role of music in the celebration of liturgy with the hope of fostering the participation and unity of all who worship. To this end, the principles and guidelines of the USCCB's *Sing to the Lord* (2007) are emphasized and applied. Indeed, the importance of singing is highlighted by the Roman Missal itself, which includes, even within the Order of Mass, the musical notation for the prayers and other texts of the Mass.

Finally, the *Norms* includes an appendix with selected resources on the liturgy. The celebration of the Eucharist enacted well and beautifully also requires that laity and clergy alike be well formed in its practice, history, theology, and spirituality. The resources provided in the appendix, many of which are employed in the document itself, provide a basis for beginning new programs in liturgical formation or bolstering existing programs, as well as for deepening personal formation.

Therefore, the *Norms* aims to advance the ongoing implementation of the Roman liturgical rites as reformed in accordance with the Second Vatican Council. In this regard, the document highlights and clarifies the rich ritual options that nurture fruitful sacramental celebrations in a manner that remains faithful to the Church's authoritative liturgical tradition. At times, the document also provides correctives, both those identified by the universal Church and those particular to the Diocese of Arlington. Once more, the goal of such correctives is to allow the act of liturgy to be what it most truly is: the sanctification of humans by God and the Church's glorification of God, through Christ in the unity of the Holy Spirit.

Liturgy is an act of God and an act of the whole Church. By its nature, the *Norms* often focuses in a special way on the roles and actions of liturgical ministers, including those who assist in preparing for the liturgy and especially presiders. At the same time, such ministries are for and on behalf of the entire gathered community. Indeed, all of the baptized, lay and ordained, are invited by God to become one body, one spirit in Christ by taking part in the Eucharistic sacrifice.