

Liturgical Guidelines for Episcopal Visitations

1. The liturgy is to be ordered according to the Book of Common Prayer (1979) or other authorized liturgical texts such as “Enriching Our Worship”.
2. The proper and color are normally those of the day. On “green Sundays” the Patronal Feast may be celebrated with its own proper.
3. The bishop wears a chasuble from the entrance and throughout the liturgy.
4. If the Prayers for the Candidates for Holy Baptism are used as allowed on pp. 305-306 at Confirmation, the Prayers of the People may be omitted. If the Prayers of the People are to be used, a period of silence is observed as noted on p. 417, which is then followed by the prayer on p. 418.
5. Candidates for the laying-on-of-hands may stand or kneel before the bishop. If the candidates stand, the bishop stands and a chair is unnecessary.
6. At the offertory, the bishop says the Offertory Sentence if there is to be one. Then, the deacon or assisting priest prepares the Altar. A single chalice and container/paten for the bread together with an additional flagon of wine, if needed, are presented and placed on the Altar. The deacon or assisting priest does not elevate the gifts nor present the water to be blessed by the bishop.
7. At the Great Thanksgiving, it is appropriate that the priests of the community stand with the bishop at the altar. It is the ministry of the deacon to elevate the chalice at the concluding doxology of the Eucharistic Prayer.
8. At the administration of Communion, lay Eucharistic ministers may assist in the distribution of the Sacrament.
9. At celebrations of Baptism, the bishop blesses chrism after blessing the water in order to situate the sign of oil in the midst of the worshipping community, and to associate it clearly in the minds of the people with his oversight of the rites of initiation. The chrism should be placed in a suitable ampulla or bowl rather than a stock in order to suggest visibly the abundance and generosity of the Spirit’s gifts, signified by the oil.
10. Older children or adults who are sealed with the laying-on of hands by the bishop at Baptism are thereby “confirmed”. They should not be presented again with Confirmation candidates.
11. When desired, the Pontifical Blessing may be used at the conclusion of the liturgy (Prayer Book, page 523) beginning at “Our help is in the Name of the Lord.” Music for

the blessing, when it is sung, is to be found in the Hymnal, S-173. When the Pontifical Blessing is used, it is important that the versicles and responses be readily available to the people and the choir.

12. According to Diocesan canons, the *loose offering* is to be sent to the bishop's discretionary fund. Please make the check payable to "*Bishop's Discretionary Fund.*"

General expectations:

1. The bishop will check and initial the service book and parish register. These books should be laid out in an accessible place.
2. A copy of the most recent audit should be available for the Bishop. Resolution B-172 adopted at the 2009 Diocesan Convention amended Canon 39, Section 5 of diocesan canons to specify that all parishes, missions and other diocesan institutions be audited annually by a certified or independent public accountant, or an audit committee.
3. The bishop meets with the wardens and Vestry or Bishop's Committee. If the Sunday schedule allows, he is also happy to lead an adult forum and meet with youth or other groups. If there are confirmands, the bishop would like to meet them briefly before the service.
4. The bishop's wife usually accompanies him on visitations. She is always grateful to be welcomed and accompanied on the visit by a member of the congregation.

(Revised January, 2010)