

## PROTOCOL: VESTING OF PRIESTS AND DEACONS

The answer to the question when priests and deacons are to vest and/or to join the entrance procession for the celebration of the Eucharist is complex. The issue can be addressed from both a liturgical as well as an ecclesial perspective. As a general principle, priests vest to concelebrate the Eucharist; deacons vest when they assist the presiding priest and/or have a designated role in the liturgy.

There may be occasions, however, when the local Church appropriately should make visible its ecclesial order: deacons and priests gathered with the faithful around a common Altar of Sacrifice. On such occasions deacons should make every effort to be in attendance, vest and participate in the liturgy as indicated in this protocol. The same effort should be made by the presbyters.

This visible unity should not be broken by special seating of a select number of priests or deacons, unless the occasion obviously calls for it. Similarly, if it is physically possible, the concelebrating priests should gather behind the presider at the altar for the Eucharistic prayer. They assist with the distribution of Holy Communion (Body of Christ). If vested for service at the Altar, a deacon(s) properly assists with the distribution of Holy Communion (Blood of Christ).

For the sake of clarity and consistency of practice, the normative protocol in the Diocese of Spokane regarding the vesting, processing and seating of priests and deacons at the celebration of the Eucharist at a parish, at the Cathedral, or at a special liturgical occasion, is as follows:

### **A. Sunday Mass – Weekday Mass – Mass on a Holy Day of Obligation**

Priests: Concelebrating priests vest, process and sit together as a body.

Deacon: Only the deacon(s) engaged in ministry at the Mass vest, process and are positioned at the appropriate place(s) of service.

### **B. Ordination Mass: Order of Presbyters**

Priests: Concelebrating priests vest, process and sit together as a body.

[The ordinand's pastor and priests of choice sit at the head of the body of presbyters.]

Deacons: Only the deacon(s) engaged in ministry at the Mass vest, process and are positioned at the appropriate place(s) of service.

### **C. Ordination Mass: Order of Deacons**

Priests: Concelebrating priests vest, process and sit together as a body.

Deacons: The deacon(s) engaged in ministry at the altar vest, process, and are positioned at the appropriate place(s) of service.

All other deacons vest in alb and stole, process and sit together as a group.

Those to be ordained join the procession with their wives and sit together with their wives as a group.

Seating near the group of deacons will be provided for the wives of deacons and the widows of deacons.

### **D. Funeral Mass for a Priest or Parent/Relative of a Priest**

Priests: Concelebrating priests vest, process and sit together as a body.

Deacons: Only the deacon(s) engaged in ministry at the Mass vest, process and are positioned at the appropriate place(s) of service.

Arrangements should be made which enable the vested priests to accompany the casket or urn to the funeral coach.

### **E. Funeral Mass for a Deacon, a Deacon's Spouse or Parent/Relative of a Deacon**

Priests: Concelebrating priests vest, process and sit together as a body.

Deacons: The deacon(s) engaged in ministry at the Mass vest, process and are positioned at the appropriate place(s) of service.

All other deacons vest in alb and stole, and sit together as a group. They do not join the procession.

Seating near the body of deacons will be provided for the wives of deacons, and widows of deacons.

Arrangements should be made to enable the vested deacons to accompany the casket or urn to the funeral coach.

### **F. Chrism Mass**

Priests: Concelebrating priests vest, process and sit together as a body.

Deacons: The deacon(s) engaged in ministry at the Mass vest, process and are positioned at the appropriate place(s) of service.

All other deacons vest and sit (with their wives) together as a group. They do not join the procession.

Special seating may be provided for widows of deacons.

### **G. Other Celebrations**

Priests: Concelebrating priests vest, process and sit together as a body.

Deacons: Vesting and procession instructions are determined by the Bishop in consultation with those responsible for arranging the liturgy.]

## **ADDENDUM**

The processional and recessional should reflect both liturgical principle and, when deemed appropriate, an ecclesial order reflecting the significance of the celebration.

Acolyte with censer (if incense is used)

Acolyte with processional cross

Acolytes with processional candles

Master(s) of Ceremonies (if used)

Deacon of the Gospel [holding the Book of Gospels]

Deacons (as designated by protocol)

Body of presbyters (in no particular order)

Concelebrating abbot(s)

Concelebrating bishop(s)

Bishop (presiding priest) + Deacon of the Altar

Approved by Bishop Blase Cupich  
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