

ARCHDIOCESE OF HALIFAX-YARMOUTH

Sacramental Norms Policy Document

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1.1 POLICY FOR THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM FOR CHILDREN

INTRODUCTION

Baptism, the gateway to the sacraments, is necessary for salvation, either by actual reception or at least by desire. By it, people are freed from sins, are born again as children of God and, made like to Christ by an indelible character, are incorporated into the Church. It is valid only by washing in real water with the proper form of words:(can. 849).

The Church's liturgical norms for the celebration of the sacrament of Baptism are found in the liturgical book *The Order of Baptism of Children* (2020). The more practical norms to be used in the celebration of this sacrament follow. Any other concern relating to Baptism should be addressed to the Chancery.

NORM

Pastors are responsible for the Baptism of those who reside in their parishes. The permission of the proper pastor is required for the celebration of the sacrament of Baptism.

Proper preparation is to be given prior to the reception of the sacrament of Baptism in order to assist those who are to be baptized, or their parents and godparents in the case of infants, in understanding the significance of the sacrament as well as the obligations, responsibilities, and opportunities it entails. This preparation may be carried out, either singly or in groups, by the pastor himself or by other competent persons delegated by the pastor.

Parents or guardians have a serious obligation to ensure that their children are baptized as soon as convenient after birth. Grandparents may not have infants/children baptized without the permission of the parents. Parents should be encouraged to arrange for instruction for Baptism even before the child is born. In the case of infants, both parents and the sponsors (godparents) are to take part in this instruction.

Candidates for Baptism who are over the age of reason (seven) should normally be prepared for the sacrament by participating in the Rite of Christian Initiation for Children and taking part in the catechumenate for children.

Candidates for Baptism who are over 14 should normally be prepared for the sacrament by participating in Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (can. 863).

The Person to be Baptized

Any person who has not yet been baptized can be baptized. Conditional Baptism should be conferred very rarely and only if, after diligent investigation, a grave doubt remains as to whether the person has already been baptized. Those who are to be baptized ought to manifest a desire to receive the sacraments and must be willing to accept the obligation and responsibilities that Baptism entails. Parents or guardians ought likewise to manifest a desire for their child to receive the sacrament and must be willing to accept the obligations and responsibilities that Baptism entails.

The Sponsor:

It is usual to have two sponsors, one male and one female, for the sacrament of Baptism; however, only one is required. In the case of infant Baptism, the sponsor takes on a real but secondary role to that of the parents. This role becomes primary only if the parents are gravely negligent in the religious upbringing of the child. If sponsors are of the same sex, permission must be given by the pastor. Those who are to be sponsors or godparents should fulfill the following requirements:

1. They should be fully initiated Catholics who lead lives of faith in harmony with this undertaking.
 - a. At least one of the sponsors must be fully initiated in the Roman Catholic faith.
 - b. The second sponsor may be a baptized person who belongs to a non-Catholic ecclesial community who serves as a witness of the Baptism (can. 874 §2).
2. They should be named by the person who is to be baptized, or by the parents or guardians in the case of an infant.
3. They should be at least 16 years old.
4. They should not be under any canonical penalty.

Parents are not permitted to sponsor their child for Baptism, as they already have a role as parents.

Note: In many cultures there is a practice of having many godparents/sponsors. In those cases, where pastoral situations necessitate it, the families may invite more than two godparents, but only two names will be listed on the baptismal registry as the formal godparents/sponsors.

If the parents request it, a person who does not meet canonical requirements to be a sponsor may act as an official witness. However, a canonical sponsor is still required.

The Celebrant

A priest or deacon is the ordinary minister of Baptism. In danger of death, Baptism may be validly conferred by any person. The one who baptizes pours water on the forehead and uses the following formula: “I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.”

The parish should collect information from families requesting Baptism in an intake form. If the Baptism is to be done by a visiting priest, permission is to be given by the residing pastor.

The Place of Baptism

Baptisms are to be celebrated in a sacred place. Except in cases of danger of death, persons are not to be baptized in hospitals or private homes without the permission of the Archbishop. In such cases, the Baptism is to be recorded in the parish where it takes place, and a notification should be sent to the proper pastor of the newly baptized. In the case of an emergency Baptism, the proper pastor has the responsibility to ensure that the newly baptized or the parents and

sponsor are given the proper instruction and that provision is made for the celebration of the other rites at a convenient time.

Recording

The pastor has a very serious obligation to ensure that all Baptisms are correctly recorded as soon as possible, even if another person is the minister of the sacrament. Baptisms are to be recorded in the approved register. Baptismal records document the faith and history of people and ought to be maintained with proper security.

The proper registry book should record the full name of the child baptized, parents' names, sponsors' names, date of birth of child, date of Baptism, church/parish name, presider's name.

NOTE REGARDING EASTERN RITES: Indication must be made if one or more parent is of an Eastern Rite. Notification of the Baptism should be sent to the Eastern Rite church of the male parent so that it is recorded. Baptized Children are considered members of whichever rite their father is a member of. Roman Catholic churches may perform baptisms of Eastern Rite children with proper notification to their church of origin.

Registry books can be found at: www.CatholicShop.ca

Preparation

All those who request Baptism should complete the required preparation process as outlined by their pastor and parish. In cases where the parents have previously had other children baptized in recent years, the pastor may decide that participation in the preparation program again may not be necessary, according to his knowledge and relationship with the family.

PASTORAL AND LITURGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The journey towards Baptism is one of accompaniment into the life of a parish. There should be a team of people to journey with the family as they prepare. Formation should be provided to both parents and sponsors so that all know their role and responsibility in the life of the child and their Baptism.

1. Baptisms should be planned in coordination with parish office and pastor.
2. Parents should always contact the parish in advance of their preferred date for the baptism, so as to know expectations, preparation, and possible dates for their child's Baptism. Families should be registered with the parish.
3. Baptism should take place as early as is reasonable in the life of the child and not be intentionally delayed for undue reasons. Parishes should strive to provide formation in a manner that does not place undue burden on the families or delay the Baptism extensively.
4. If a family is from a different parish, then permission must be given by the pastor of their parish of origin for the Baptism to occur outside of their parish. An intake form will be made available to assist in gathering information.

5. Baptisms should take place within the context of Mass. It is a pastoral decision if Baptism is outside of Mass.

APPENDIX

Each parish should have *The Order of Baptism of Children* from the CCCB 2020. This is the latest edition and provides insight for both clergy and families.

<https://cccb.stjoseph.com/Shopping/ProductView/17833-the-order-of-baptism-of-children>

CCCB also has other resources available for planning a Baptism:

https://en.novalis.ca/products/planning-for-baptism?_pos=4&_sid=5607eac4b&_ss=r

2.1 POLICY FOR THE RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF CHILDREN

INTRODUCTION

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Children is the process by which children who have reached the age of reason and who have not been baptized are gradually initiated into the Christian life through catechesis, liturgical rites, and incorporation into the community of faith. Through this process, they are prepared to receive the Sacraments of Initiation—Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist.

Children who are no longer infants but have attained the use of reason are, for the purposes of Christian initiation, considered in the same condition as adults and are to be initiated according to the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, adapted to their age and circumstances (can. 852 §1; RCIA, Part II, Chapter 1).

NORM

Nature of the Rite

The sacraments of initiation for children follow a modified RCIA process and that is sometimes referred to as Rite of Christian Initiation for Children (RCIC). This is not a program, but a ritual process involving conversion, catechesis, liturgical celebration, and communal support. The process unfolds gradually and is adapted to the child's age, maturity, and circumstances, while respecting the integrity of the rite.

In the ritual book it can be found in RCIA Part II:1, 149, *Rites for Particular Circumstances: Christian Initiation of Children who have reached Catechetical Age*

The initiation process is marked by several steps and begins when the child is either brought by the parents or guardians or comes of his/her own accord with parental permission. There is no minimum length required for the formation process.

Children Who Are Unbaptized

Children of catechetical age who are not baptized are to be fully initiated through the RCIC process and receive Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist at the same celebration, ordinarily at the Easter Vigil or another suitable time determined by the Archbishop (can. 851, 866; RCIA, Part II, Ch. 1).

Note: The usual order of the sacraments is Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist. However, for pastoral reasons, if it is beneficial for a child to celebrate Baptism and First Eucharist while reserving Confirmation for a later time when the child can join peers in the customary period of preparation, the usual order of the sacraments may be adjusted. Pastors should discuss such cases with the Archbishop on an individual basis.

Children Who Are Validly Baptized in Another Christian Community

Children who have been validly baptized in another Christian ecclesial community are not baptized again. They are to be received into the full communion of the Catholic Church through an appropriate rite following suitable catechesis (RCIA, Part II, Ch. 5; can. 845 §1).

Children Who Are Baptized Catholic but Uncatechized

Children who were baptized in the Catholic Church but have not received catechesis and who are too old to join the regular first Communion preparation class are to receive formation appropriate to their age and preparation for the sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist. (RCIA, Part II, Ch. 4; can. 889 §2)

Pastor

By virtue of his office, the pastor is responsible for overseeing the RCIC process within the parish, ensuring that it is faithful to the rite, adapted pastorally, and integrated into the life of the parish community.

The priest is to ensure that suitable catechesis is provided, that liturgical rites are celebrated with dignity, and that the discernment of readiness for the sacraments is undertaken carefully and pastorally (can. 528 §1; RCIA, General Introduction).

Catechists and Parish Team

Catechists and parish RCIC teams are to collaborate closely with the pastor in providing formation that is:

1. Rooted in Sacred Scripture and the teachings of the Church
2. Adapted to the child's age and level of understanding
3. Integrated with participation in the liturgical and communal life of the parish (RCIA, #75–76)

Parents and Guardians

Parents or legal guardians have a primary role in supporting their child's journey of faith and are to be actively involved in the RCIC process. They are to encourage participation in catechesis, liturgical rites, and parish life (can. 226 §2; RCIA, Part II, Ch. 1).

SACRAMENTAL CELEBRATION

Children in RCIC progress through the major ritual stages appropriate to their journey, which may include:

1. Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens
2. The Rite of Election or Enrollment of Names
3. Scrutinies (adapted for children)
4. Celebration of the sacraments of initiation

The timing of these rites is determined by readiness rather than a fixed timetable, according to the discernment of the pastor and the unique circumstances of the child and their family. When

possible, these rituals should be celebrated alongside adult catechumens (RCIA, #14–18; Part II, Ch. 1).

PASTORAL/LITURGICAL CONSIDERATIONS:

1. The rites of RCIC should ordinarily be celebrated within the parish Sunday assembly to highlight the communal nature of initiation.
2. Children should be integrated, when appropriate, into parish faith formation activities while also receiving catechesis specific to initiation.
3. Music, symbols, and ritual language should be accessible to children while remaining faithful to the liturgical text.
4. Care should be taken to respect the child's freedom and conscience throughout the process (RCIA, #10–13, 75).

APPENDIX: Resources that are helpful

1. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, Canadian edition, Part II:*
<https://cccb.stjoseph.com/Shopping/ProductView/17765-rite-of-christian-initiation-of-adults>
2. “Chapter 1: Christian Initiation of Children Who Have Reached Catechetical Age”
3. “Chapter 4: Preparation of Uncatechized Adults Baptized in Infancy”
4. “Chapter 5: Reception of Baptized Christians into the Full Communion of the Catholic” Church
5. *Code of Canon Law*, especially:
 - a. Canons 851–874 (Baptism)
 - b. Canons 852 §1, 866
 - c. Canons 889–891 (Confirmation)

2.2 POLICY FOR THE RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS

INTRODUCTION

Christian initiation is the process by which persons are incorporated into Christ and his Church through Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist, and are formed to live fully the Christian life within the ecclesial community. As articulated in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, initiation is not merely intellectual instruction, but a gradual journey of conversion supported by liturgy, catechesis, community life, and apostolic practice.

“Vatican II Council prescribed the revision of the rite of baptism for adults and decreed that the catechumenate for adults, divided into several steps, should be restored. By this means the time of the catechumenate, which is intended as a period of well-suited instruction, would be sanctified by liturgical rites to be celebrated at successive intervals of time.” (Decree 1972)

The Church’s liturgical norms for the celebration of Christian initiation of adults are found in: Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

NORM

In many places within the rite, the texts of the rite and the manner of acting or praying are either intentionally left undetermined, or two options are offered. Thus, the celebrations can be adapted to local circumstances according to the prudent pastoral judgment of the minister (RCIA 35). Such adaptation involves the choice of text, the choice of location, the choice of timing, the choice of optional parts in the rite, the use of music and acclamations, and the use of appropriate symbols.

This policy provides direction on such local adaptations and customs.

Models of Christian Initiation

1. The normative model for adults and children of catechetical age is the celebration of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist together, following a catechumenate of substantial duration and a period of mystagogy.
2. Infant Baptism, followed by Eucharist and Confirmation, is a distinct and legitimate model and must not be confused with or substituted for the RCIA process.

Scope and Authority

1. The *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* (1988 Canadian edition) is the authoritative ritual text and must be followed in all parishes.
1. Pastors and catechumenate directors are responsible for ensuring faithful observance of universal law, CCCB directives, and these archdiocesan norms.

Persons Addressed by the RCIA

The RCIA governs initiation or completion of initiation for the following groups:

1. **Unbaptized adults** (RCIA Part I), who are to undergo a catechumenate ordinarily lasting at least 12 months.
2. **Unbaptized children of catechetical age** (RCIA Part II, Ch. 1), who receive all three sacraments together.
3. **Baptized but uncatechized adults** (Catholic or non-Catholic) preparing for Confirmation and/or Eucharist (RCIA Part II, Ch. 4).
4. **Baptized and catechized non-Catholic Christians** seeking reception into full communion (RCIA Part II, Ch. 5).

Ideally, each group of individuals will have a program proper to their needs (catechumens and candidates). Practically speaking, it's often prudent for them to be formed together.

Persons Not Proper to the Catechumenate

1. Fully initiated Catholics returning to active practice
2. Fully initiated Catholics seeking faith enrichment or adult faith formation

Children of Catechetical Age

1. Children who have reached the age of reason are initiated according to the RCIA (See RCIC).
2. Unbaptized children of catechetical age normally receive Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist together.
3. Baptized non-Catholic children received into full communion normally receive Confirmation at the time of reception.
4. Baptized Catholic children who are uncatechized may be formed through the catechumenate or another appropriate process (local religious education), based on pastoral judgment.

Norms for Catechumens

Periods of the Initiation Process for Catechumens

1. **Evangelization and Pre-Catechumenate/Inquiry** (RCIA #36-40): A period of evangelization and inquiry without fixed duration. Culminates in the Rite of Acceptance.
2. **Catechumenate** (RCIA #75-97): A formation period of at least (ideally) one full liturgical year in this Archdiocese.
3. **Rite of Election or Enrollment of Names** (RCIA #105-143): First Sunday of Lent
4. **Purification and Enlightenment**: Coincides with Lent and culminates in the Easter Vigil.
5. **Celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation** (RCIA #198-233).
6. **Mystagogy or Post-Baptismal Catechesis** (RCIA #234-241): Extends through the Easter season and the first year after initiation.

Period of Evangelization and Pre-Catechumenate

1. **Rite of Acceptance** (RCIA #250-266)

- a. This rite marks the formal entry of inquirers into the Order of Catechumens and ordinarily takes place in the parish community (RCIA #41–47; 48–68)
- b. The Rite of Acceptance signifies the formal start of the catechumenate for the individual. There is no set date for this ritual, and it may occur multiple times per year according to parish needs.
- c. Sponsors should be present, as well as family or others who wish to celebrate.

Celebrations of the Word of God (optional, repeated as needed)

Celebrations intended to help inquirers become familiar with Scripture and the Christian way of life. For further information please see: RCIA # 81–89

Period of the Catechumenate

1. During this extended period, catechumens receive pastoral formation through catechesis, participation in the Liturgy of the Word, and integration into the life of the parish.
2. **Minor Exorcisms:** Celebrated to strengthen the catechumens spiritually and free them from the effects of sin. RCIA # 90–94
3. **Blessings of the Catechumens:** Blessings calling down God’s protection and guidance. RCIA #95–97

Anointings of the Catechumens (optional): Anointings using blessed oil to strengthen the catechumens for their spiritual journey. RCIA #98–103

Period of Purification and Enlightenment (Lent)

1. **Rite of Election** (or Enrollment of Names): Celebrated on the First Sunday of Lent. Ordinarily celebrated by the Archbishop, who may delegate another bishop or priest for serious pastoral reasons.
2. **Scrutinies:** Celebrated on the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Sundays of Lent. Intended to purify the hearts of the elect and strengthen them against sin. RCIA #138–156; 164–177
3. **Presentation of the Creed** RCIA #157–162
4. **Presentation of the Lord’s Prayer** RCIA #178–184

Preparation Rites on Holy Saturday: Includes the recitation of the Creed, the Ephphetha rite (if not already celebrated), and immediate preparation for the sacraments. RCIA #185–205

Celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation

1. Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist are ordinarily celebrated together at the Easter Vigil. RCIA #206–243
2. A priest who baptizes a catechumen has both the faculty and the obligation to confer Confirmation (can. 883 §2 and 885 §2, as referenced in the CCCB-approved ritual text).

Period of Mystagogy

Following the celebration of the sacraments of initiation, the neophytes enter a period of deeper reflection on the mysteries they have received.

1. **Post-Baptismal Catechesis (Mystagogy):** Rooted in participation in the Sunday Eucharist and continued formation within the parish community. RCIA nos. 244–251
2. **Celebrations for Neophytes (optional):** Includes Masses during the Easter Season and special gatherings with the Archbishop where possible. RCIA nos. 235–239; 245–247

The Christian Initiation of Adults in Exceptional Circumstances (RCIA #307-345)

1. Permission to use this rite is granted in individual cases by the Archbishop. Two types of circumstances justify this abbreviation:
 - a. The full rite is not possible (e.g., sickness, old age, absence for travel)
 - b. The full rite is not necessary (e.g., persons presenting themselves are well along the road to Christian conversion and show a high degree of religious maturity)
2. The abbreviated rite may be expanded to meet specific needs of individuals. However, care should be taken to ensure that:
 - a. The candidate has full catechesis
 - b. The rite is celebrated with the active participation of an assembly
3. Normally, the abbreviated form of the rite is celebrated within Mass, preferably on a Sunday with the local community taking an active part.
4. The rite is found in RCIA #316-345.

The Christian Initiation of a Person in Danger of Death (RCIA #346-374)

1. This rite is designed for those who are in danger of death but still able to hear and respond to the questions. They must give evidence of their conversion to Christ and promise they will complete their post-baptismal catechesis if they recover. When no priest or deacon is available, any member of the faithful (or even a non-believer who intends what the Church intends) may baptize in emergency situations.
2. When a person is at the point of death, or when time is pressing because death is imminent, the minister, omitting everything else, pours natural water (even if not blessed) on the head of the sick person while saying the trinitarian formula.
3. If possible, Holy Communion is given as viaticum after Baptism (or after Confirmation).

Norms for Baptized Candidates

Candidates for Full Communion and Catholic Adult Confirmandi (RCIA #376-451)

1. There are two kinds of liturgies for baptized people.
 - a. Persons who were baptized in the Catholic Church but never received adequate post-baptismal catechesis and did not celebrate first Eucharist. Usually, they have not been confirmed.
 - b. Persons who were baptized in other Christian churches and who now desire to become Catholics.
2. Details for the preparation of uncatechized adults for Confirmation and Eucharist are found in RCIA #376-386.
3. Details for the reception of baptized Christians into the full communion of the Catholic Church are found in RCIA #387-451.
4. Optional Rites
 - a. The Rite of Welcoming Candidates for Confirmation and Eucharist (see RCIA #463-483) may be celebrated at the beginning of the formal period of instruction.
 - b. The period of formal catechesis may also include celebrations of the Word and prayer for strength (see RCIA #448-493).
 - c. The Rite of Calling Candidates to Lenten Renewal may be celebrated to mark the beginning of a period of final, more intense spiritual preparation (see RCIA #494-509).
 - d. The Presentation of the Creed and Presentation of the Lord's Prayer may take place during the period of Lenten renewal. The Presentation of the Creed is recommended for the third week of Lent (RCIA #510-515); the Presentation of the Lord's Prayer for the fifth week of Lent (RCIA #517-521). These may happen alongside catechumens, as the situation warrants.
5. The sacrament of Baptism cannot be repeated; it is archdiocesan policy that conditional Baptism should be conferred very rarely and only if, after diligent investigation, a grave doubt remains as to whether the person has been baptized. When conferred, the Rite of Conditional Baptism is carried out in a private way.
6. Valid Baptisms are those that include both flowing water and the trinitarian formula. Those Baptisms ordinarily recognized as valid are those of the Presbyterian, Lutheran, United, Anglican, and Orthodox traditions.
7. Depending on the personal disposition of the candidate, it is suggested that both penitential services and the sacrament of Penance be celebrated during the period of Lenten renewal.

PASTORAL/LITURGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. Discernment is essential at each transition point and must involve pastors, catechists, sponsors, and the wider community.

2. Marriage situations are to be **identified early**; unresolved cases do not prevent admission to the catechumenate but do delay celebration of the sacraments.
 - a. Pastors should discuss specific circumstances with the Marriage Tribunal or Chancery at the Catholic Diocesan Centre at the earliest possible time in order to have clarity regarding the catechumenal process for these individuals from the outset of their time of formation.
3. Sunday Mass and the proclaimed Word of God are central to catechetical formation.
4. Minor rites, celebrations of the Word, and blessings are to be used generously and according to the ritual book.
5. Clear distinctions between catechumens and candidates must always be maintained in language and ritual.
6. Teenagers of age 14 and older are normally initiated according to adult norms, with pastoral adaptation as needed.
7. Extended mystagogy is strongly encouraged, including regular gatherings and integration into parish life.
8. Please give time for the inquiring person to develop relationships in the parish, to attend liturgical celebrations, and to ask questions.
9. Each parish should have an RCIA team made up of parishioners who have an interest in journeying with someone through prayer, presence, and interest.
10. Pastors need to take an active role in the formation and planned meetings to provide insight and theology.
11. Each parish is to appoint a catechumenate director or coordinator.
12. Catechists must be adequately formed in theology, liturgy, scripture, and pastoral practice.

APPENDIX

1. Instructions and updates come from the Archdiocese each pre-Lenten period. Please be aware and share material as it affects the preparation for Easter Vigil and initiation.
2. Novalis provides much material to have a successful RCIA program in a parish. One such resource that should be shared is “Planning for a Successful RCIA” by Mary Birmingham. <https://cccb.stjoseph.com/Shopping/ProductView/17765-rite-of-christian-initiation-of-adults>
3. For further information on the liturgical and canonical statutes of Christian initiation in the Archdiocese, please refer to the RCIA Statutes Halifax - June 2022: https://halifaxyarmouth.org/images/downloads/liturgy_documents/RCIA%20Statutes%20Halifax%20June%202022.pdf
4. For further information on validity of Baptisms, please refer to: https://halifaxyarmouth.org/images/downloads/liturgy_documents/Baptismal%20Information.pdf

3.1 POLICY FOR THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE

INTRODUCTION

In the sacrament of Penance the faithful who confess their sins to a priest, are sorry for those sins and have a purpose of amendment, receive from God, through the absolution given by that minister, forgiveness of sins they have committed after Baptism, and at the same time they are reconciled with the Church, which by sinning they wounded: (can. 959).

NORM

Types of celebrations include:

Rite 1: Individual Absolution: Individual confession and absolution make up the primary form of gaining absolution. Faithful who are conscious of grave sin seek to be reconciled with God and with the Church and gain absolution from a priest.

Rite 2: Congregation Gathers for Penitential Liturgy with Private Confession: A penitential liturgy is celebrated with scripture, homily, and examination of conscience, followed by individual confessions and absolution.

Rite 3: General Absolution: It is for the Diocesan Bishop to judge whether there is necessity for this form. Presently, this form is not used in the Archdiocese.

Priest Reminders

1. After Ordination a priest receives the faculties to hear confession and validly absolve sin.
2. In hearing confessions, the priest is to remember that he is at once both judge and healer, and that he is constituted by God as a minister of both divine justice and divine mercy.
3. The priest shall impose appropriate penances, in proportion to the kind and number of sins confessed and considering the condition of the penitent.
4. The seal of secrecy is primary for the priest. The sacramental seal is inviolable; therefore, it is absolutely forbidden for a confessor to betray in any way a penitent in words or any manner and for any reason (can. 983 §1), and anyone else who may hear the confession is similarly obliged to secrecy (can. 983 §2). It is forbidden to use knowledge acquired in confession to the detriment of the penitent, even when all danger of disclosure is excluded (can. 984 §1 and §2).

Laity

In order that the faithful may receive the saving remedy of the sacrament, they must be of the disposition that, rejecting the sins they have committed and having the purpose of amending their lives, they turn back to God.

All the faithful who have reached the age of reason are bound to faithfully confess their grave sins at least once a year.

PASTORAL/LITURGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

During the liturgical year, there may be special opportunities to have penitential liturgies specific to the liturgical season. Suggested times especially are Advent and Lent. Some elements to be included:

1. Music for opening, psalm, and Gospel acclamation. Quiet music may be played during the time of individual confessions.
2. Scripture may be chosen according to the season or the overriding theme of the liturgy (e.g., Advent, Lent, youth, First Reconciliation, etc.)
3. Examination of conscience should be included, as it is a means for the faithful to ponder and review their own lives.
4. Extra priests may be invited to assist based on need.
5. Places for private confession/privacy should be made available and set up with chairs/kneelers and a written copy of an act of contrition.

APPENDIX

1. Resources for planning a penitential liturgy, planning a first reconciliation, and supporting youth may be found on the CCCB website under publications: <https://cccb.stjoseph.com/Shopping/List/119-reconciliation>.
2. Novalis has resources in both English and French for first reconciliations, theology of reconciliation, and liturgical outlines.
3. Development and Peace provide seasonal (Lent and Advent) reconciliation prayers and outlines for youth and families: <https://devp.org/en/resources/>.

4.1 POLICY FOR THE EUCHARIST

INTRODUCTION

The Eucharistic sacrifice is the memorial of the death and resurrection of the Lord, in which the sacrifice of the cross is perpetuated over the centuries, and which is the summit and source of all Christian worship and life. It signifies and effects the unity of the people of God and achieves the building up of the body of Christ.

The celebration of the Eucharist is an action of Christ himself, and of the Church. In it, Christ the Lord, through the ministry of the priest, offers himself to God the Father, and gives himself as spiritual nourishment to the faithful.

In the eucharistic assembly the people of God are called together...united to participate in their own way, according to their various orders and liturgical roles.

NORM

The canonical norms concerning the Eucharist are found in the *Code of Canon Law*, can. 897–958.

Laity and Liturgical Worship

1. All Catholics are called to a full and active participation in the Eucharistic celebration, and all should carry out the functions proper to their role with dignity and reverence. These offices should be exercised with prayer and preparation.
2. It is not lawful in the Eucharistic celebration for lay persons to say prayers, particularly the Eucharistic Prayer, or to perform actions that are proper to the presiding priest.

Liturgical Guidelines

1. Mass that is celebrated may be offered for anyone, living or dead.
2. The Eucharist must be celebrated with bread and wine, to which a small amount of water has been added.
3. In accordance with ancient tradition, the bread used in the celebration of the Eucharist is to be unleavened and made of wheat flour. Ordinaries may permit clerics and lay persons with gluten intolerance to use low-gluten hosts.
4. The wine used in the celebration is to be natural wine and made from grapes.
5. The priest and deacon are to wear the proper liturgical vestments for the celebration of Mass, including chasuble and dalmatic.
6. If, for any reason, the canonical and liturgical norms cannot be observed by a priest because of advanced age or infirmity, he is to contact the Chancery.

The Minister

1. Only a validly ordained priest can preside over the celebration of the Eucharist.

2. Although concelebration of the Eucharist is highly recommended, every priest has the right to celebrate individually, though not in the same place nor at the same time as a concelebration is taking place.
3. A Catholic priest is not permitted to concelebrate the Eucharist with priests or ministers who are not in full communion with the Catholic Church. With permission of the local priest, a minister of another faith may proclaim one of the readings – excluding the Gospel – in services that require ecumenical participation (e.g., family weddings or funerals).
4. A pastor should consider it a privilege to allow a visiting priest to celebrate the Eucharist; however, the pastor is required to see proof that the visiting priest is in good standing (usually a letter from the visiting priest's ordinary) in order to obtain Faculties for this Archdiocese.
5. It is highly recommended that a priest celebrate Mass daily with a congregation, unless a just and reasonable cause prevents this (can. 906). Priests are permitted to have days off.
6. A priest may celebrate or concelebrate the Eucharist only once a day. However:
 - a. When the pastoral needs of the faithful require it, a priest may celebrate twice or three times on Sundays.
 - b. A priest may celebrate weekday Mass more than once in cases where there is pastoral need (e.g., weddings, funeral Masses)
 - c. In cases of extreme need where three times is not seen as sufficient, please contact Archbishop directly.

The Minister of Holy Communion

1. The ordinary minister of holy Communion is a priest or deacon.
2. If the pastor deems it necessary, acolytes or other duly instructed and prepared lay persons may be designated as Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. See policy 4.2.
3. The bringing of holy Communion to the sick and infirm is the responsibility of the pastor and those priests and deacons who assist him in pastoral ministry. The pastor may delegate Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion to assist him in this, if he deems it necessary for the good of the faithful. In a case of real need or with at least the presumed permission of the proper pastor, any minister of holy Communion may bring viaticum to the sick; in this case, the pastor should be informed afterward.

Those Presenting for a “Blessing” Rather Than Receiving

1. For a variety of circumstances, Catholics not ready to receive or non-Catholics who are attending Mass may come forward in order to receive a blessing, rather than receiving Communion.
2. In these cases, individuals should indicate that they are requesting a blessing. This is most commonly done by crossing their arms over their chest as they approach.
3. Ordinary ministers of holy Communion (clergy) may extend their hands in a gesture of blessing when giving a blessing.

- a. They should say any common words of blessing.
 - b. Recommended blessings are “Christ be with you” or “May the Lord bless you with His peace.”
4. Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (laity) should not extend their hands in a gesture of blessing, as this is reserved for those who are ordained for this purpose, nor should they trace the cross on the forehead or use any similar gesture.
 - a. They should say at this time “Christ be with you” or “May the Lord bless you with His peace.”

Participation in the Holy Eucharist

1. By virtue of their right to the sacraments, the faithful, unless prohibited by the law, may and must be admitted to Holy Communion.
2. The faithful should ordinarily only receive the Eucharist one time per day. In cases where there is pastoral necessity to attend multiple Masses, a person may receive the Eucharist more than once if they believe it is pastorally prudent (e.g., if not receiving may unintentionally cause scandal or confusion).
3. Regarding children, it is the responsibility of parents and of pastors to see to it that a child who has attained the age of reason (around age seven) be nourished by holy Communion as early as possible.
4. Children in danger of death may receive holy Communion provided they are able to distinguish holy Communion from ordinary food and can receive the Eucharist reverently.
5. Under certain conditions, persons who are not Catholic may be admitted to holy Communion. Specific regulations concerning Eucharistic hospitality may be found in the *Code of Canon Law*, can. 844.
6. One who is to receive the Eucharist should abstain from any food or drink, apart from water and medicine alone, for a period of one hour before receiving. Those who are advanced in age or who suffer from any infirmity, as well as those who care for them, may receive the Eucharist even if they have taken something during the previous hour.
7. It is of the utmost importance that the faithful in danger of death be nourished by holy Communion. Pastors and those who share in their pastoral ministry should conscientiously see to it that viaticum is brought to the faithful.
8. Those guilty of grave sin may not receive the Eucharist until they have received sacramental absolution. If sacramental absolution is not possible, a person may receive the Eucharist after making an act of perfect contrition, which includes the resolve to go to confession as soon as possible.
9. Persons who have a good reason to attend a second celebration of the Eucharist on any particular day may receive Holy Communion a second time if they desire.
10. Normally a person is to receive Holy Communion during the celebration of Mass; however, for a just reason it can be received outside Mass.

11. All the faithful are bound to receive Holy Communion once a year, especially during the Easter season.

The Time and Place of the Eucharistic Celebration

1. Mass may be celebrated at any time of day not excluded by liturgical norms.
2. The Eucharistic sacrifice is to be celebrated in a sacred place unless serious need requires otherwise, in which case the celebration must take place in a becoming place.
3. The Eucharistic sacrifice is to be celebrated upon a blessed or consecrated altar. When it is celebrated outside of a sacred place, a suitable table covered with cloth and corporal may be used.
4. For a just cause and with the permission of the Archbishop, the Eucharist can be celebrated in the church building of an ecclesial community not in full communion with the Catholic Church.

Reservation and Worship of the Holy Eucharist

1. The Eucharist must be reserved in:
 - a. The Cathedral church
 - b. Every parish church
 - c. In a church or oratory attached to a religious house
2. The Eucharist may be reserved in:
 - a. The Archbishop's chapel
 - b. Other churches, oratories, and chapels, with the permission of the Archbishop
3. The Eucharist should be reserved only in the principal chapel of a religious house. To reserve the Eucharist in another place in the same house requires the permission of the Archbishop.
4. It is unlawful for anyone to keep the Eucharist on his or her person or to carry it on a journey unless they have a legitimate Eucharistic ministry in the parish or hospital and are acting on norms approved by the Archbishop.
5. According to the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, the tabernacle is to "be located, according to the judgement of the Diocesan Bishop: a) either in the sanctuary, apart from the altar of celebration, in an appropriate form and place, not excluding its being positioned on an old altar no longer used for celebration (cf. no. 303); b) or even in some chapel suitable for the private adoration and prayer of the faithful and organically connected to the church and readily noticeable by the Christian faithful." In hospitals or chapels, a tabernacle must be in a blessed/dedicated space.
6. The tabernacle should be immovable, made of solid material, and kept locked.
7. A special lamp to indicate and honor the presence of Christ should always burn adjacent to the tabernacle in which the Eucharist is reserved.
8. Special rites and ceremonies honoring the Eucharist should be celebrated on a regular basis.

9. A priest or deacon is the minister of benediction. If pastoral circumstances dictate, and with the permission of the pastor, public exposition without benediction may be presided over by an acolyte or an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion.
10. The Eucharist is not to be exposed for adoration during the celebration of the Mass.

APPENDIX

To aid in liturgical celebrations, the CCCB has various documents available that include liturgical calendars, the Lectionary, hymnals and other music resources, and various useful links to aid in Eucharistic prayer.

Novalis also provides many resources for children, youth, families, and individuals on understanding and appreciating the Mass: https://en.novalis.ca/products/understanding-the-mass-historical-biblical-and-liturgical-perspectives?_pos=24&_sid=48b4b7a2c&_ss=r

4.2 POLICY FOR EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION WITHIN MASS

INTRODUCTION

When the needs of the Church warrant it and because of lack of ordained ministers, lay faithful may be temporarily designated as an Extraordinary Minister of Communion, according to the norms of law.

The role of an Extraordinary Minister of Communion is to help, not replace, ordinary ministers of Holy Communion. It is inadmissible for extraordinary ministers to distribute communion when there is a sufficient number of priests or deacons present.

The following practices, which include suggestions for the formation of Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion and practical notes for the exercise of this ministry, are presented as the ideal. Each parish may adapt to these practices according to their local pastoral circumstances.

NORM

Formation

Formation for ministry takes time. The following areas should be covered in formation:

1. Ministry as an act of worship, an act of service, and a response to our baptismal commitment.
2. Scriptural reflections on Jesus as our model of service, the importance of a shared meal, and Jesus as our life-giving food and drink.
3. Catholic spirituality dealing with the call to be persons of prayer; the Eucharist as sacrifice, sacrament, meal, and memorial; and the importance and arrangement of the Sunday Mass.
4. The criteria for becoming Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion:
 - a. Member of the parish community
 - b. Baptized and confirmed Catholic
 - c. Due reverence for the Eucharist and those being served
 - d. Commitment to follow the faith
5. The procedures for sharing holy Communion at Mass and for taking holy Communion to the sick and homebound, with special attention given to pastoral techniques for visitation.

Additional topics to consider:

1. How to handle situations where the communicant does not say “Amen” or is unfamiliar with the formula.
2. How to handle situations where the communicant does not consume the host.
3. How to respond when the host or wine is dropped.

Training for Eucharistic ministers should be regularly provided – perhaps annually – including updating on policies and refreshing on policies.

Commissioning

1. After they have completed their formation, persons may be called forth in a community celebration to be commissioned as Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion.
2. The recommended period of service in this ministry is three to five years. Renewal of this period of commitment may be made upon mutual agreement of the individual and the parish community.
3. The pastor celebrates the commissioning of the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion in each parish. The Rite of Commissioning can be found in *A Book of Blessings*, pp. 86–88, from CCCB Publications Service.

PASTORAL/LITURGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Age

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are called to be persons of prayer who have a reverence and respect for the great mystery of the Eucharist. They should be confirmed members of the parish, usually over the age of 16. They are also called to be caring, hospitable, and person-centered ministers. Persons who are mature enough to participate in and grow from the formation program are to be considered appropriately mature for this ministry.

Clothing

Clothing worn by Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion during their ministry should express the respect and dignity proper to the Eucharist and the assembly. Items such as jewelry and cosmetics are to be used in moderation. In our Archdiocese, special liturgical garments or insignia are not prescribed for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion.

Hygiene

Cleanliness of hands and fingernails is required on the part of all ministers; this is especially true for those who distribute holy Communion. Excessive use of hand lotions and colognes is discouraged. In the Rite of Mass, no provision is made for the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion to engage in a washing of the hands during Mass. If necessary, a washing of hands may take place prior to the beginning of Mass in the sacristy. There is to be no hand washing in the sanctuary, including the use of hand sanitizer; any hand washing or sanitizing should be done before Mass in the sacristy or in a discreet way so that it is not confused with the priest's action.

Procedures at Mass

1. At least 10 minutes before Mass begins, the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion should make their presence known to the presider and/or liturgical coordinator. The Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion should make sure all details concerning their ministry are in order. They can then join their family and friends in the assembly.

Preferably, the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion will sit close to an aisle and near the sanctuary in order to readily approach the altar at the appropriate time.

2. After the “Amen” of the Doxology of the Eucharistic Prayer, the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion come to their designated places in the sanctuary. Upon entering the sanctuary, the ministers bow to the Eucharist present on the altar. The “Our Father” begins. Some parishes prefer to have their Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion approach the altar during the Sign of Peace. This is an acceptable option.
3. Holy Communion is to be received from the bread and wine presented and consecrated at that particular Mass. The Eucharist is reserved in the tabernacle for viaticum, holy Communion of the sick or other emergencies, and adoration.
 - a. All efforts should be made to consecrate the number of hosts required during the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Care should be made to arrange to estimate the number of those gathered for the assembly.
 - b. After distribution of Communion has begun, if it is clear there will not be enough consecrated hosts, then a member of the clergy, or a lay person, if necessary, may go to the tabernacle to retrieve additional hosts.
 - c. A preemptive procession to the tabernacle to retrieve hosts before the distribution of Communion has begun should be avoided if possible.
4. After the presider receives holy Communion, holy Communion is given to the deacon, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, altar servers, and others present in the sanctuary. All are invited to receive holy Communion under the forms of bread and wine.
5. The deacon and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion then receive the ciboria with the consecrated bread and the chalices of consecrated wine from the presider. A purificator is given to each minister of the chalice. Together, all go to their designated stations. For each minister of the consecrated bread, it is prudent that there should be two ministers of the consecrated wine. When a deacon is present, he always serves the chalice.
6. In distributing the consecrated bread, the minister holds the consecrated bread for the communicant to see and says, “The Body of Christ.” When the communicant responds with “Amen,” the consecrated bread is placed in the communicant’s hand or on their tongue. It is important that the minister look directly at the communicant when saying “The Body of Christ.”
7. In distributing the consecrated wine, the minister extends the chalice toward the communicant and says, “The Blood of Christ.” When the communicant responds with “Amen,” the communicant takes the chalice from the minister, drinks from it, and returns it to the minister. The minister wipes the rim of the chalice with the purificator and then turns it slightly so that the next person will drink from a different position on the rim. If required, the minister should offer assistance to the young and elderly in drinking from the chalice. The chalice should be held with two hands.

- a. Should the consecrated bread be dropped during distribution, the minister calmly picks it up until after serving holy Communion or places it on the altar. The fallen holy Communion is disposed of in a sacred manner (dissolved in water that is placed in the sacrarium).
 - b. If consecrated wine is spilled, the minister uses the purificator to absorb it. The area is cleansed with clear water after Mass. Extra purificators should always be readily available.
8. When finished distributing holy Communion to a given line of communicants, each minister checks to see if another minister requires assistance. If required, the minister takes a position close to the other minister and assists in the distribution of holy Communion.
9. When ministers of the consecrated bread have finished distributing holy Communion, they return any remaining consecrated bread to the altar and then return to their places in the assembly.
10. If no consecrated bread remains after distributing holy Communion, the empty ciborium or plate is taken to the credence table, and the minister returns to their place in the assembly.
11. One minister, usually the deacon, is designated to combine all the remaining consecrated bread into one ciborium. This ciborium is placed in the tabernacle.
12. The empty ciboria/plates are taken to the credence table by an altar server.
13. The ministers of the consecrated bread shall use purificators to cleanse their fingers in the event of any remaining Eucharistic particles.
14. When a minister of the consecrated wine has finished distributing holy Communion, they return to the credence table, consume any remaining consecrated wine, cover the chalice with a purificator, and then return to their place in the assembly.
If there is a large quantity of consecrated wine remaining after Holy Communion, the minister should ask the other ministers at the credence table to help consume the consecrated wine. If for some reason this is not feasible, the remaining consecrated wine may be consumed after Mass by several other people.
15. The vessels are to be purified during Mass, and this is to take place at the credence table, rather than at the altar. The deacon is responsible for this purification process. He may ask Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion to assist him. If no deacon is present, an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion should be responsible for the purification of the vessels. Normally, the presider returns to his chair after distributing holy Communion and leads the assembly in silent prayer and reflection.

APPENDIX

Novalis provides many resources for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion:

https://en.novalis.ca/products/handbook-for-extraordinary-ministers-of-holy-communion?_pos=1&_sid=66c6b4243&_ss=r

4.3 POLICY ON TAKING COMMUNION TO THE SICK AND HOMEBOUND

INTRODUCTION

It is proper that those who are prevented from being present at the community's celebration should be refreshed with the Eucharist. In this way, they may realize that they are united not only with the Lord's sacrifice, but also with the community itself.

Since the 1970s, lay ministers have been designated to bring holy Communion to the homebound, especially from the community's celebration of the Eucharist. This is a laudable practice. The minister who serves in this way shares the Church's total ministry with her members. These ministers become a vital link between the parish community and the member who is homebound.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure this important ministry is carried out with proper catechesis and due reverence, and in a way that protects both the ministers and those to whom this ministry is directed.

NORM

Due to their baptismal call, lay people can take Communion to elderly, shut-in, or sick parishioners who desire it, especially if the priest is not available.

The person who desires to be involved in the ministry of bringing Communion to the homebound must be designated by the parish for this ministry. Even someone bringing holy Communion to a member of their own family is exercising the ministry of an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion. Thus, any individual engaged in this ministry, even for a short time, should be provided catechesis and formation and be deputed by the parish priest for the exercise of this ministry. All those engaged in this ministry and all recipients of this ministry should be recorded by the parish.

Unless the person is bringing communion to a member of one's own family, the archdiocesan Responsible Ministry protocols must be followed. For home visits, the protocol requires two unrelated parishioners with up-to-date Responsible Ministry checks to be present. Only one of them needs to be an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion.

Following the liturgy, the minister is to go directly to the one to whom they are bringing Communion, as one should never be carrying the Blessed Sacrament around with them for an extended period of time. When it is not possible to go directly from any parish Mass to the one who is homebound (and only in such cases) a deputed minister, with the parish priest's permission, may take the Blessed Sacrament from the tabernacle and go directly to the homebound.

LITURGICAL PROCEDURES

The ministry is carried out as follows:

1. The minister receives Communion at the Eucharist in the usual way, without seeking extra hosts in a pyx.
2. Once Communion has been distributed to the entire assembly, the Extraordinary Ministers of Communion to the homebound approach the altar and the priest (or the deacon who may assist in his place) places the Eucharistic Body in pyxes and hands them to the ministers.
3. While no prayer of blessing or dismissal is prescribed since it is the action of handing the elements to the ministers that is important, the priest or deacon may offer words of dismissal. This may be done quietly, while the Communion chant continues, or it may be done for all to hear if the chant has already concluded.
4. The Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion should preferably stay until the final blessing before departing to visit the sick.
5. As the minister is driving or walking to the residence of the communicant, a respectful decorum ought to reflect the presence of the Eucharist and the ministry about to be performed.

DISTRIBUTION WITHIN THE HOME

1. When a sick or homebound person is going to receive holy Communion, a table near the person's bed should be prepared with:
 - a. A clean tablecloth
 - b. Lighted candle(s)
 - c. A crucifix or cross
 - d. A glass of water
 - e. A spoon
2. The Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion brings:
 - a. A purificator and a pyx containing the Eucharist, which are carried in a burse
 - b. Holy water
 - c. Bible or "study edition" of the Lectionary
 - d. The Rite of Communion for the Sick
 - e. A parish bulletin (if available)
 - f. Matches/lighter (only allowed if no oxygen present)
3. Procedures at the communicant's residence:
 - a. Normally *Communion of the Sick, Ritual and Pastoral Notes for Lay Ministers* is to be used. This rite is available from the CCCB (see appendix).
 - b. If the communicant is seriously ill or very weak, the shortened rite should be used.

- c. If other persons are present during the rite, they also may receive the Eucharist if they so desire.
- d. If the communicant has difficulty swallowing, a small piece of the host may be offered, followed by a drink of water. A small particle of the host may also be presented on a teaspoon along with some water.
- e. In very particular cases, holy Communion may be received under the form of wine alone. This provision is not available for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion.
- f. If the communicant should happen to spit out the host, the Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion should pick up the host with the purificator and fold it up in the purificator. They should try to put the sick person at ease and then discern, as well as possible, whether the sick person wishes to receive at that time or postpone it to another day.
- g. If the communicant is well enough, some conversation after Holy Communion can be very helpful in keeping them in touch with what is happening in the parish. A parish bulletin or any other parish publications should be left with the sick person.
- h. The pyx needs to be purified after use.

APPENDIX

Communion of the Sick: Ritual and Pastoral Notes for Lay Ministers, Revised may be found at: <https://cccb.stjoseph.com/Shopping/ProductView/17827-communion-of-the-sick---ritual-and-past>

5.1 POLICY FOR EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING MASS

INTRODUCTION

The Second Vatican Council teaches that taking part in the Eucharistic sacrifice is the “source and summit of Christian life” (Lumen Gentium, #11) and that the “other sacraments, and indeed all ecclesiastical ministries and works of the apostolate, are bound up with the Eucharist and are oriented toward it. In short, for Catholics the Eucharist is essential to our life of faith and fuels and informs our participation in the world.

NORM

1. A new host for the monstrance is to be consecrated during the Mass.
2. While the distribution of holy Communion is underway, ministers should prepare the altar with the monstrance, the stand (if one is used), and four to six candles.
3. Following the distribution of holy Communion, the presider may purify the vessels, though it is preferred this be done following the celebration if possible. The presider exposes the Blessed Sacrament in the monstrance and is then seated.
4. Following a period of sacred silence, the presider stands and leads the Prayer After Communion. The Concluding Rites are omitted. The presider kneels before the Blessed Sacrament, and all join in singing an appropriate hymn.
5. Incense is ordinarily used, and the Blessed Sacrament is incensed three times from a kneeling position.
6. When exposition of the Blessed Sacrament happens apart from the celebration of Mass, the following is observed: The presiding priest, deacon, or acolyte retrieves the Blessed Sacrament from the tabernacle and exposes the Blessed Sacrament in the monstrance. Then all kneel for the singing of the hymn.

APPENDIX

Procedure for Exposition Pamphlet - Jubilee.pdf (<https://halifaxyarmouth.org/pastoral-services/liturgy>)

5.2 POLICY FOR EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT WHEN NOT FOLLOWING THE MASS

INTRODUCTION

“Popular devotions of the Christian people are to be highly endorsed, provided they accord with the laws and norms of the Church... these devotions should be so fashioned that they harmonize with the liturgical seasons, accord with the sacred liturgy, are in some way derived from it, and lead the people to it, since, in fact, the liturgy by its very nature far surpasses any of them.”

—*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, #13

NORM

For exposition of the Blessed Sacrament that happens apart from the celebration of Mass, the following is observed:

1. The altar is prepared with the monstrance, the stand (if one is used), and four to six candles.
2. The presiding priest, deacon, or acolyte retrieves the Blessed Sacrament from the tabernacle and exposes the Blessed Sacrament in the monstrance.
3. All kneel for the singing of the hymn.
4. Incense is ordinarily used, and the Blessed Sacrament is incensed three times from a kneeling position.

Time of Prayer

1. During exposition, there should be prayers, songs, and readings from scripture to direct the attention of the faithful to the worship of Christ the Lord. This might include the rosary or the Divine Mercy Chaplet. Part of the Liturgy of the Hours, especially Morning or Evening Prayer, may also be celebrated before the Blessed Sacrament.
2. A homily or a brief exhortation may be given to develop a better understanding of the Eucharistic mystery.
3. A reading from one of the Church Fathers or poetry from the Breviary may be read.
4. Intercessory prayers may be offered by the community.
5. Adequate periods of sacred silence should also be observed.
6. Where exposition is extended over a lengthy period, special times for communal prayer should be identified.
7. Benediction may only be given after a suitable period of silence and prayer with the community.

Concluding Rites

1. At the appointed time, the presiding minister kneels before the monstrance, and the hymn is sung. Incense may be used, and the Blessed Sacrament is incensed three times from a kneeling position.

2. A presiding priest or deacon puts on the humeral veil and gives the benediction with the Blessed Sacrament.
3. When a duly appointed lay person presides, they do not give the benediction with the Blessed Sacrament but continue with the Divine Praises following the Responsory.
4. The presiding minister reposes the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle. Then all stand and sings a hymn.

PASTORAL/LITURGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. Formation of laity is of importance so that the ritual and all expectations are understood. This includes music, prayers, postures, dress code, etc.
2. Form includes:
 - a. Opening/exposition
 - b. Opening hymn
 - c. Benediction after meditation and reflection
 - d. Singing of “Tantum Ergo” (or other Eucharistic hymn)
 - e. Recitation of Divine Praises
 - f. Reposition of the Blessed Sacrament

APPENDIX

Procedure for Exposition Pamphlet - Jubilee.pdf:

/https://halifaxarmouth.org/images/liturgy_documents/Procedure_for_Exposition_Pamphlet_-_Jubilee.pdf

6.1 POLICY FOR SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

INTRODUCTION

The sacrament of confirmation confers a character. The sacrament of confirmation strengthens the baptized and obliges them more firmly to be witnesses of Christ by word and deed and to spread and defend the faith. It imprints a character, enriches by the gift of the Holy Spirit the baptized continuing on the path of Christian initiation, and binds them more perfectly to the Church (can. 879).

The Church's liturgical and canonical norms for the celebration of the sacrament of Confirmation are found in the liturgical book *The Order of Confirmation* and in the *Code of Canon Law*, can. 879–896.

NORM

Minister of Confirmation

1. The sacrament is conferred by anointing with chrism on the forehead in a laying on of hands, and by the words prescribed in the approved liturgical books.
2. The ordinary minister is a bishop. A priest may confirm validly if granted the faculty by the bishop.

Recipients of Confirmation

1. Every baptized person not yet confirmed is capable of receiving the sacrament.
2. To receive Confirmation, a person with use of reason must be suitably instructed, properly disposed, and able to renew their baptismal promises. In an emergency, age restrictions are removed.
3. The norm in this Archdiocese is that the order of the sacraments of initiation is Baptism, Eucharist, Confirmation.
4. Candidates should have sufficient maturity to accept the obligations of Christian life and the ability to renew their baptismal promises. The recommended age of Confirmation is grade 8, roughly age 14. Individual pastors can request slight adjustments based on their parish circumstances and according to the maturity of those to receive the sacrament.
5. Catholics seeking Confirmation who are above the typical age for sacraments of initiation in the parish should have their own formation program, tailored to their needs.

Sponsors

1. Only one sponsor is required, though two are customary.
2. The sponsor's role is spiritual accompaniment and witness, not merely ceremonial (can. 892).
3. A sponsor must:
 - a. Be designated by the candidate
 - b. Be at least 16 years old
 - c. Be a confirmed Catholic

- d. Lead a life of faith fitting this role
 - e. Be under no canonical penalty
 - f. Not be the father or mother of the candidate
- 4. Parents are encouraged to present their children but not serve as sponsors.
- 5. It is appropriate – but not required – for baptismal godparents to serve as Confirmation sponsors to highlight the unity of the sacraments of initiation.

Liturgical Guidelines

- 1. The sacrament of Confirmation is to be celebrated in a church within the context of Mass.
- 2. The maximum number for a single Confirmation celebration is 50 candidates. Larger cohorts should be divided.
- 3. The parish may request a preferred date/time; every effort will be made to accommodate this within the Archbishop's schedule. Please contact the Office of the Archbishop for scheduling assistance. Entrance procession includes ministers and celebrants; the procession should not include the candidates.
 - a. In cases where local tradition includes some kind of presentation/procession, this should take place before Mass begins so confirmandi are in the assigned place for the liturgy.

Liturgical Texts/Lectionary

- 1. Sundays, Solemnities, weekdays of Easter or Advent: Use the Mass of the day.
- 2. Weekdays of Ordinary Time: Use the Mass for the Conferral of Confirmation (Roman Missal pp. 1126–1130).
- 3. Consult the Ordo for guidance.
- 4. The parish should communicate the chosen readings to the Archbishop a few days before the celebration.
 - a. Readings according to the day/season:
 - i. Sundays and Solemnities: Use the readings of the day.
 - ii. Weekdays of Easter and Advent: Use the readings of the day plus a second reading from the New Testament (note: during Easter, no Old Testament reading is included).
 - iii. Weekdays of Ordinary Time: Use three readings from the Confirmation Lectionary.
- 5. Two well-prepared candidates may proclaim the readings, or trained parish readers may be assigned.
- 6. Prayers of the Faithful are offered by one reader or one newly confirmed person (or a deacon). Intentions should follow those provided in the official Rite of Confirmation

Letters to the Archbishop

1. All candidates are expected to write a personal letter to the Archbishop expressing their desire for Confirmation. This applies to both youth and adult confirmandi.
2. Candidates should not be given form letters or templates for their letters.
3. Letters should be collected and sent as one package to the Archbishop a minimum of one month before Confirmation is celebrated.

Music

1. Since Confirmation is a solemn celebration, robust congregational singing is expected.
2. At minimum, the following must be sung:
 - a. Entrance song
 - b. Gloria
 - c. Gospel acclamation
 - d. “Holy, Holy, Holy”
 - e. Memorial acclamation
 - f. “Great Amen”
 - g. Communion procession
 - h. Recessional (sung or instrumental)
3. Music may be included throughout the Mass except during the Rite of Confirmation itself; there should be silence during the anointing.

LITURGICAL/PASTORAL PREP

Pastoral/Catechetical Preparation of Candidates

1. Parishes may consider inviting parishioners to pray for individual candidates as prayer partners.
2. Candidates should be encouraged to celebrate the sacrament of Reconciliation before Confirmation.
3. Stoles should not be worn by candidates, as they symbolize ordained ministry.
4. Candidates should ordinarily use their baptismal names, though choosing another saint’s name is permitted.
5. NOTE: See Appendix for Catechetical Recommendations (Coming Fall 2026)

Rite of Confirmation

1. Presentation of Candidates:
 - a. Names are read only if the number is manageable.
 - b. Form C in the former ritual (pp. 94–95) is normally used.
2. Approach for Anointing:
 - a. Candidates approach as they would for Communion.
 - b. Names are not called from the ambo.
3. Communicating Candidate Names:

- a. Either the candidate says their name or the sponsor says, “I present N. for Confirmation.”
 - b. Because voices are often quiet, candidates should wear large-print name tags or present a card with their name to the pastor, who announces it.
4. Anointing:
 - a. Per the Archbishop’s request, the anointing is done in silence, without music of any kind.
5. Care of Sacred Oils:
 - a. Lemon and hot water should be prepared on the credence table for the Archbishop to wash his hands after anointing.
 - b. The Archbishop normally brings his own chrism.

General Liturgical Logistics

1. Red vestments are worn unless another color is required for the day.
2. Altar servers should be well rehearsed; ideally six are present: cross-bearer, two acolytes, book-bearer, mitre-bearer, crosier-bearer.
3. Materials for cleansing chrism from the Archbishop’s hands must be prepared.
4. The Paschal candle should be present in the sanctuary even outside of Eastertime.
5. Music books should be available for the Archbishop, concelebrants, and servers.
6. Presentation of the Gifts: Several newly confirmed may bring forward the bread/wine and, where appropriate, the collection.

Photography

1. No photos during the Confirmation liturgy.
2. The Archbishop will take individual photos afterward; group photos should use a single photographer.
3. Photos may also be taken at a reception.

Certificates

1. Parishes may distribute certificates at the reception or at another appropriate moment.
2. Distributing certificates during Mass is discouraged unless the number of candidates is very small.

APPENDIX

Both CCCB and Novalis provides resources for those preparing for the sacrament of Confirmation as well as for sponsors:

<https://en.novalis.ca/search?q=sacrament+of+confirmation&options%5Bprefix%5D=last>

[Presentation of Candidates Form C from the former Ritual The.docx](#)

7.1 POLICY FOR THE SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE

INTRODUCTION

The marriage covenant, by which a man and a woman establish between themselves a partnership of their whole life, and which of its very nature is ordered to the well-being of the spouses and to the procreation and upbringing of children, has, between the baptized, been raised by Christ the Lord to the dignity of a sacrament (can. 1055 §1).

NORM

Couples requesting Marriage in the Church must participate in a Marriage preparation course. Any relaxation of this policy depends on the priest who is meeting with the couple. If the Marriage preparation course is waived, the priest is obliged to ensure that there is proper preparation for this Marriage.

Marriage prep may take the form of online courses, courses put on by a parish or group of parishes, or meeting in person with other married couples.

According to canon 1063, pastors are obliged that their own church community provides assistance, including:

1. Preaching, providing catechetical instruction so that the faithful are instructed in the meaning of Christian marriage
2. Personal preparation for entering marriage
3. Fruitful celebration of the marriage liturgy
4. Offering help to those entering marriage

Notes on Required Paperwork

1. The priest should meet at least twice with the couple to prepare them for Marriage and the wedding. “Notes for Meeting Couples Seeking Marriage 2019” (see Appendix) should be used when meeting with the couple.
2. The pre-marital inquiry forms (see Appendix) are to be completed by the priest, deacon, or a delegate who will interview each party individually. PLEASE allow three to six months for the completion and approval of said forms. NOTE: A pastor may delegate a person to meet with the couple to complete the Marriage Inquiry.
3. Proof of marital status (freedom to marry) should be available by means of appropriate documentation, e.g., testimonial letters, affidavits, and civil documents.
4. In the course of getting to know the couple, any previous marriages should be discussed. If an annulment is necessary, the Marriage Tribunal of the Archdiocese should be contacted: <https://halifaxarmouth.org/pastoral-services/marriage-tribunal>
5. A baptismal certificate **dated within the preceding six months is required** of the Catholic party. A baptismal certificate or a sworn affidavit by a family member could attest to the fact of the Baptism of the non-Catholic party. If those cannot be attained, a dispensation is required.

Personal Preparation for the Couple

1. It is highly recommended that the parties receive the sacraments of Reconciliation and first Eucharist before their marriage.
2. Catholics who have not been confirmed should receive the sacrament of Confirmation before their Marriage, if this can be done without serious inconvenience (can. 1065 §1).
3. It must be evident to the priest that nothing prevents the valid and licit celebration of Marriage.
4. When a couple from outside the Archdiocese wishes to marry in the Archdiocese of Halifax-Yarmouth, a *nihil obstat* from the competent authority in this Archdiocese is required for lawfulness.

Where delegation is needed, it is for validity; the priest must be sure he may validly assist at the Marriage. All pre-marital inquiry papers are to be sent to the Chancery for a *nihil obstat* to be given. When a Marriage will take place outside of the Archdiocese, the Chancery will send the pre-marital inquiry forms to the appropriate location.

Different Forms

Validation of a Marriage that has not taken place in accordance with the legislation of the Church is permitted if the couple understands and accepts the Church's teaching on Christian marriage.

Dispensations

Dispensations are needed from the following impediments:

1. Abduction
2. Affinity
3. Age
4. Consanguinity
5. Crime
6. Legal relationship
7. Perpetual vow of chastity
8. Public propriety
9. Sacred orders

Mixed Marriages

1. Between a Catholic and a baptized non-Catholic: Requires a permission, *nihil obstat*, of competent authority for lawfulness.
2. Between a Catholic and a non-baptized person: Requires a dispensation from the impediment of disparity of cult for validity.
3. Between a Catholic and a person whose Baptism is doubtful: Requires a dispensation from the impediment of disparity of cult, *ad cautelam*, for validity.
4. Between a Catholic and a non-Catholic in a place other than the Catholic Church: Requires a dispensation from canonical form for lawfulness and validity. In this

Archdiocese, this dispensation is granted only if the couple is to be married in a religious ceremony.

5. Between a Catholic of Latin rite and a Catholic of the Eastern rite: Requires no special permission.
6. Between a Catholic of the Eastern rite and a non-Catholic: Requires that only the proper authority of the Eastern rite may give the necessary permission or dispensation.

The *Order of Celebrating Matrimony* (2017) from the CCCB and the “Pastoral Notes” contained within the book are to be followed.

PASTORAL/LITURGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Preparation of the wedding liturgy takes time; PLEASE allow time to meet with presider, musicians, and family to ensure all understand the liturgy.

Rite

Whenever Marriage is celebrated within Mass, the Ritual Mass is used. There are specific readings, psalms, and music to be used. The Nuptial Blessing is always included. The Liturgy of the Word is also adapted for the Marriage ritual, and specific readings, music, as well as the Nuptial Blessing is used.

Main Elements

1. Liturgy of the Word: story of salvation and duties of Marriage
2. The consent of the contracting parties
3. Blessing of God invoked upon bride and bridegroom
4. Eucharistic Communion (if a Ritual Mass is used)
5. Nuptial Blessing

Pastoral

Parishes are encouraged to use an “Intake Form” that begins conversation around an upcoming Marriage. This establishes and records: names, dates, reminders of paperwork, and an appointment to meet with priest/pastor.

Conversations with couple should also explain/include the following:

1. The couple should check with priest/deacon and parish on availability of both location and priest/deacon BEFORE planning the reception.
2. The priest and parish should work with the couple to discern the use of music, musicians, and type of music that will be part of the liturgy.
3. Possible costs for the liturgy, such as payment for musicians, stole fee for presider, donation to the parish.
4. Give reading choices to the couple and ask them to choose readings under the direction of the priest/presider.

5. Set a rehearsal day and time that works for all. Please note that this is a time of understanding and practicing the ritual, the readings, and the overall flow of the liturgy. The decoration of the church is secondary.
6. Arrival time at the church for the wedding should be agreed upon and adhered to. Late bridal parties add stress to both family and presider, who may only have so much time.
7. Ensure photographers know where they can take pictures during the liturgy: In the sanctuary or around the altar is not appropriate.
8. The church should be left as found, with no litter in pews, outside spaces, halls, etc. Couple should check with presider in advance regarding taking pictures after the wedding and timing.
9. Advise couple to assign one person to make certain presider; musicians, and parish receive their stole fees/donations.

APPENDIX

Archdiocese of Halifax-Yarmouth website contains important forms and info for preparing for Marriage: <https://halifaxyarmouth.org/chancerydownloads>

CCCB resources include: <https://cccb.stjoseph.com/Shopping/ProductView/17829-order-of-celebrating-matrimony-the>

Marriage Papers:

1. “Notes for Meeting couples seeking marriage 2019” from Archdiocesan website, www.halifaxyarmouth.org/chancerydownloads) should be used when meeting with the couple.
2. The “Pre-marital Inquiry -2020” form is on the Archdiocesan website (www.halifaxyarmouth.org/chancerydownloads).
3. Marriage Intake Form: [2026 Marriage Request Intake Form Template.docx](#)

8.1 POLICY FOR THE SACRAMENT OF ANOINTING OF THE SICK

INTRODUCTION

The anointing of the sick, by which the Church commends to the suffering and glorified Lord the faithful who are dangerously ill so that he may support and save them, is conferred by anointing them with oil and pronouncing the words prescribed in the liturgical books (can. 998).

The purpose of the Anointing of the Sick is firstly to strengthen the faithful to overcome the difficulties that go with the condition of a serious illness or the frailty of old age. Through the grace of the Holy Spirit, it is meant to renew trust and faith in God and strengthen one against the temptations of the evil one. It is also meant to lead the sick person to healing of the soul, and healing of the body as the Lord wills.

It is the hope that with this pastoral guidance we as the Church will be able to offer the Lord's healing grace in as many ways as possible to a broken and wounded world. In our efforts to evangelize, healing is a sign of the truth of the Gospel – Jesus Christ is risen from the dead and offers each and every person reconciliation with the Father through His work on the cross. The Holy Spirit continues to be poured out, and, through signs and wonders, bears witness to the risen Christ.

NORM

Those Who Are Disposed to Receive the Sacrament

1. The anointing of the sick can be administered to any member of the faithful who has reached the age of reason and begins to be in danger of death by reason of illness or old age.
 - a. Today in our world we find and come in contact with people experiencing a multitude of sicknesses, conditions, and suffering. They are often not physically sick but suffer from conditions such as chronic depression, anxiety, fear, eating disorders, phobias, PTSD, ADHD, OCD, and the list goes on. All of these conditions dispose a person to receive the sacrament of Anointing of the Sick.
 - b. Additionally, many people suffer from emotional wounds from past abuse, trauma, or terrible words that have been spoken to them. While these conditions and situations do not normally come under the criteria for the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick, both Jesus and His Church desire to bring relief and healing to these people. The full ministry of healing that the Lord makes available by means of His Church goes beyond the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick, and its full breadth should be made available to the faithful. See below (page 44) for policies related to other forms of healing ministries.
 - c. The above situations must be discerned carefully by the pastor when considering whether the condition provides sufficient cause to be presented for the sacrament.
2. This sacrament may be repeated if the sick person, having recovered again, becomes seriously ill or if, in the same illness, the danger becomes more serious.

3. This sacrament is to be administered to the sick who, when in possession of their faculties, at least implicitly asked for it.
4. Note regarding MAID: According to archdiocesan policy, those who have determined to seek out MAID and persist in this decision are not capable of receiving the Anointing of the Sick, as their decision to take part in a gravely immoral act manifests absence of the proper disposition for reception of the sacraments. A person may receive these sacraments only when they have modified their decision in regard to euthanasia or assisted suicide. Please see the archdiocesan "Guidelines Regarding the Funeral Rites for Those Who Have Asked for Euthanasia or Physician-Assisted Suicide" in the Appendix.

Minister of the Sacrament

1. Only priests (bishops and presbyters) are ministers of the Anointing of the Sick.
2. All priests, to whom have been committed the care of souls, have an obligation and the right to administer the anointing of the sick to those entrusted to their pastoral care.
3. Any priest may carry the holy oil with him.
4. The priest should pray for the sick with faith and confidence in the Lord's desire to heal His people, leaving the results to the Lord.

Ritual Details and Locations of the Sacrament

1. The oil to be used in the anointing of the sick is blessed by the Archbishop.
2. The anointings are to be carried out accurately, with the words and in the order and manner prescribed in the liturgical books. In case of emergency, however, a single anointing on the forehead, or even another part of the body, is sufficient while the full formula is recited.

Communal Celebrations of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick and of Other Healing Ministries

1. Communal celebrations of anointing the sick, for a number of sick together who have been appropriately prepared and rightly disposed, may be held in accordance with regulations of the Archbishop. This is a recent practice that has emerged due to pastoral need and with consideration of the decline of available priests and the desire to make the Lord's healing grace more accessible to the faithful. In these situations, there is a need to offer proper catechesis to the faithful on the purpose and criteria for communal sacramental celebrations.
2. Whenever communal celebrations of the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick are celebrated, the following should be observed:
 - a. Parishes are to request permission from the Archbishop for the celebration of this kind (*Pastoral Care*, #. 108), which can be a means of ensuring the sacrament is readily available to those who may be in need of its effects. Permission can be given to parishes that seek to offer the sacrament on a regular basis.

- b. Those wishing to receive the sacrament should register, either in advance or before the celebration begins. A list with the date and name of the individual should be prepared.
 - c. The sacrament of Penance should be offered immediately before the celebration for those who require it, since it is closely connected to the Sacrament of the Sick.
 - d. At every celebration of this kind, catechesis must be given on the nature of the sacrament and on who may receive the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick, namely:
 - i. Those who are suffering from a serious illness or chronic condition. This may be physical or psychological.
 - ii. Those who are going into hospital for an operation or to be treated for a serious illness.
 - iii. Those with mental health conditions – see above.
 - iv. Those who are frail by reason of old age. Elderly are exempt from fasting if communion is given.
 - e. Those present who are not receiving the sacrament should be encouraged to intercede for those being prayed for, in union with the communion of saints.
 - f. The liturgical norms laid out in the *Pastoral Care of the Sick* book should be observed, especially that in communal celebrations, the sacrament is to be administered after the homily.
3. The opportunity to minister and pray for healing and wholeness in ways that fall outside the Sacrament of the Sick is to be encouraged and could be offered privately, in communal settings with a para-liturgy, or even following the celebration of the Eucharist. When other prayers for healing are offered in communal settings, either on their own or in connection with a liturgy, the following should be observed:
- a. Any healing prayers/ministry should follow the liturgical celebration rather than be inserted within the liturgy itself.
 - b. Prayer for healing may be offered in these circumstances by a priest, a deacon, or a lay person who is recognized as mature and gifted in praying for healing. In these circumstances, there should be good pastoral oversight that the faithful are guided in who is commissioned by the Church to pray for them for healing. This can be done by having prayer team stations of those praying at the front of the church.
 - c. Prayers for healing may be included in the Prayers of the Faithful, and other prayers and readings that relate to the healing ministry of the Church may be used, drawing from the Roman Missal and the Lectionary.
 - d. The Oil of the Sick (*Oleum Infirmorum*) is only used when administering the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. For all other anointings, regular oil is used, which may be blessed using another rite (different from that given for the blessing of the Oil of the Sick), or another sacramental oil may be used, such as

the Oil of St. Joseph. In circumstances where blessed oil is used, the faithful should be made aware that although they are not receiving the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick, the Church recognizes the charism of healing, which God uses in addition to the sacraments to bring His grace, healing, and sanctification to His people.

- e. Catechesis must be regularly given on the distinction between the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick and other charismatic prayers for healing.
- f. Clergy and laity who serve in ministries of healing should be well catechized and trained and gifted with the necessary charisms to effectively carry out this ministry.
- g. The terms “Extreme Unction” and “Last Rites” were abrogated. The sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick replaced the former and the Commendation of the Dying replaced the latter. Please refer to the *Pastoral Care of the Sick* book for fuller details on these experiences of prayer.

PASTORAL/LITURGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Church’s liturgical and canonical norms for the celebration of the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick are found in the liturgical book *Pastoral Care of the Sick: Rites of Anointing and Viaticum*.

The Role of Laity

Laity shows love for the sick by celebrating the sacraments with them. Like all other sacraments, there is a community aspect that should be present when the Anointing of the Sick is celebrated. Laity, be it family, friends, or community, have an important role as they journey with the sick, visit with the sick, pray with the sick, and are a source of comfort and presence for the family of the sick.

Laity is invited to be involved in the ministry of healing in a variety of ways.

1. Visiting with the sick. Those who visit the sick should help them to pray, sharing with them the Word of God, listening to them, and being a presence of faith and hope to both the sick and the family.
2. Visits to a sick child are an important way for the entire family to remain connected to the faith community. It is a way for parents to feel the support and love of the entire Christian community.
3. Communion to the sick is of utmost importance, as it unites the sick sacramentally to the Lord and reunites them with the Eucharistic community. Communion to the sick requires formation and knowledge of the liturgical ritual. Also important is a true sensitivity for those who are suffering. Please see “4.3 Policy on Taking Communion to the Sick and Homebound.”

4. At Mass the names of those who are sick may be added to the intercessions, after permission from family has been received to do so. In this way, the entire community is made aware of and able to hold the sick in prayer.
5. Responsible Ministry Protocol must be followed for any visits for the protection of both parties.

APPENDIX

Resources for formation and theology of this sacrament may be found at:

cccb.stjoseph.com/Shopping/ProductView/17827-communication-of-the-sick---ritual-and-past

Novalis: <https://en.novalis.ca/search?q=pastoral+care+of+the+sick>

Archdiocese of Halifax-Yarmouth Guidelines Regarding the Funeral Rites for Those Who Have Asked for Euthanasia or Physician-Assisted Suicide:

https://halifaxyarmouth.org/images/downloads/liturgy_documents/Guidelines%20-%20Funeral%20%20Maid%20final.pdf