GUIDELINES FOR PARISH LITURGY COMMISSIONS IN THE ARCHDIOCESE OF SAINT LOUIS

SAINT LOUIS ARCHDIOCESAN COMMISSION ON SACRED LITURGY 1986

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PREFACE

LITURGY IN PARISH LIFE

The most important sacrament is not listed among the seven sacraments. It is the Church! Christ calls, constitutes and commissions the Church to be His ongoing presence in the world by the dedicated and shared lives of its members. The Church nourishes this vocation by sacramental celebrations. More than gifts from God for individual souls, the sacraments are the very life-blood of the Church especially as it lives and breathes at its most basic level in the local parish.

The Church refers to these sacramental celebrations, the liturgy, as the source and summit of all Church activity. As summit the sacraments are to be expressions of a parish life founded on lives given to God in trusting faith and given to each other and to the world in loving service. All this is to be celebrated in a spirit the Church calls "noble simplicity."

This ideal may seem remote in contemporary parish life. However, the way we worship forms what we ultimately believe. The liturgy, as source of all Church activity and as experienced in individual celebrations, has a truly formative effect on the total parish life. Prepared with care and well celebrated the sacraments can nourish not only individual Catholic lives but provide as well an experience and realization of the parish's vocation to live and worship as the body of Christ.

The place and potential of the liturgy and sacramental life in a parish requires that it have a rightful priority in the parish budget, calendar and overall agenda. More than a simple fulfillment of legal requirements, the fruitful celebration of the sacraments will also require a cooperative concern among all ministries responsible for the parish's liturgical life.

This call and opportunity are still new to many and because good will alone is seldom an adequate response, the following guidelines have been developed to assist local parish liturgy commissions. They provide initial liturgical education and basic directives and resources for those responsible for providing sacramental experiences rooted in Catholic tradition while expressing and nourishing the spiritual life of the individual parish.

FORMATION OF A PARISH LITURGY COMMISSION

WHY A COMMISSION?

The call within the Archdiocese of St. Louis for each parish to establish a liturgy commission is not a call for the multiplication of meetings or simply an expression of democracy. It is the necessary result of a renewed appreciation of the sacraments and their liturgical celebrations. The Church understands them as neither texts read from a book nor simply the priest's prayer and service for the people. As always, the Church understands the sacraments as actions of Christ and, more recently, as the prayer and worship which occurs when those baptized into Christ assemble to express and nourish their faith as the Church.

True liturgy must be both a real expression of the local parish as well as the authentic prayer of the universal Church. This requires some members within the local community to be responsible for this public prayer. These members will need to represent the community, be sensitive to its needs and possess a working knowledge of the liturgical directives of both the local and universal Church. To fulfill their responsibility these members of the liturgy commission need to acquire an understanding and appreciation of the nature of public prayer and the proper implementation of the liturgical options now available within the rites of the Roman Catholic Church.

MEMBERSHIP

Ideally the commission would primarily include representatives of the ministers most responsible for preparing and celebrating the liturgy: priests, deacons, lectors, musicians, artists, sacristans, ushers, communion ministers, plus some representation of the assembly itself. Depending on the nature of the tasks undertaken by the commission, some representatives would need not be present for every meeting.

Normally those already possessing either a particular talent relative to liturgy or displaying an active interest would be considered for membership. **Elections** would be necessary only when the numbers interested exceed the normal number necessary for a working commission. Should a parish be blessed with a large amount of talented and interested members, the commission may wish to form subcommittees responsible for individual seasons or events.

The <u>attitudes</u> of members are perhaps more important than their roles. Commission members are primarily workers, not simply critics or theoreticians. They must be willing to work together, accepting diversity and moving toward consensus based upon the foundation laid by the documents that guide liturgical prayer. They must be willing to work individually according to their gifts, taking responsibility for matters like physical arrangements, preparing programs, or design and execution of decorations.

Members themselves may often reflect various backgrounds, understandings and opinions relative to worship. This can be beneficial and truly represent the community. Care needs to be exercised, however, to discourage membership for those interested in pursuing only one issue or advocating only one approach.

TERMS OF MEMBERSHIP

The priest(s), deacon(s), musician(s) and artist(s) will normally be considered permanent members by reason of office or skill. Additional membership will vary but not too often. To form a good working relationship, an adequate understanding of liturgy and to implement decisions with some consistency, skill, patience and time are required. To rotate membership too frequently may weaken the educational and experiential knowledge acquired. Too infrequent a change of membership may produce an elite group and neglect other talent and interest within the parish. Membership may change as additional talent or interest surfaces and/or as present members resign. If the commission sets a specific term of membership, it is best to change members on a rotating basis.

MEETINGS

The number and length of meetings will be determined by the scope and amount of responsibilities and projects assumed by the commission. A monthly meeting, normal for most organizations, will permit the commission to handle basic liturgical concerns and provide time to approach seasonal preparations well in advance of the celebrations. Individual events and seasons and specific tasks might be handled by smaller groups which meet as necessary. A semi-monthly meeting may be more beneficial for commissions wishing to educate themselves while, at the same time, reviewing and implementing decisions.

An agenda is distributed to commission members prior to meetings. It includes the topics and goals to be discussed along with the names of those responsible for specific tasks. This preparation expedites the meetings and increases the interest of members. Meetings which appear too disorganized can quickly discourage attendance.

Although seldom a problem, commissions have encountered the issue of other parishioners who wish to attend the liturgy meeting for particular or general purposes. The commission may wish to establish a policy dealing with open meetings and the manner in which nonmembers contribute to the proceedings.

A **Chairperson** of the commission, selected form among its members or appointed from the parish council to serve as a liaison to the commission, normally sets the agenda and directs the meetings. Whichever procedure is used, it is important that 1) there be some liaison with the Parish Council and 2) that the designated Chairperson's name and address be sent to the Archdiocesan Office of Worship for the purpose of receiving diocesan information.

ATMOSPHERE OF MEETINGS

Because a prayerful worship experience is the desired goal of the commission, preparation and planning grounded in prayerful reflection and a charitable collaborative effort would be most appropriate. Approaching the liturgy as a product or production, or the assembly as a passive audience and treating the preparation as simply another task are temptations best overcome.

The *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* states:

> The ceremonies . . . for every liturgical celebration, should be prepared with care and the cooperation of those concerned . . . Nothing should be left for a hurried last minute decision. A well-considered and carefully prepared celebration can do much to dispose the faithful to take their full parts in the Mass.

FUNCTION OF A PARISH LITURGY COMMISSION

INITIAL INTERNAL GOALS

Self-knowledge: Membership of any commission normally includes various personalities and understandings of the subject. Attention is seldom directly given to these basics yet they are often the source of many frustrations and misunderstandings. Surveys are available which, with direction, may allow the commission to better understand and appreciate the personalities present as well as the various models of Church from which people are operating. The Office of Worship can provide information on these resources.

Education: A most necessary first step is education of the membership. Some generous and interested people will gladly volunteer to serve but will naturally feel unprepared. Most commissions find it helpful to devote either a part of each meeting or the first months' meetings to education. For example, it will be necessary to understand a) the spirit of the liturgy, b) the laws of liturgy, c) the options in the liturgy, d) the difference between essentials and options, e) the rhythm of liturgy, f) the meaning and purpose of various parts and g) the basic resources and books. (See "Resource List.")

Spiritual Growth: Lest members lose sight of the spirit and goal of their work, some commissions find it beneficial to plan a Day of Prayer for themselves and/or the liturgical ministers of the parish.

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

Commissions need to be familiar with the basic documents in the field of liturgy:

The *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, 2000.

The *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, 1963.

Music in Catholic Worship, 1972 and *Liturgical Music Today*, 1982.

Directory for Masses with Children, 1973 and the *Archdiocesan Guidelines for Masses with Children*.

General Norms for the Liturgical Year and the Calendar, 1969.

Environment and Art in Catholic Worship, 1978.

Other basic resource books both for the commission members and for the various liturgical ministers are listed in the Resource List (page 57) and are available either from local religious goods stores or directly from the publishers.

A parish may wish to establish a library of liturgical resources so commission members

have access to materials for educational and planning purposes.

The Office of Worship is ready, when possible, to meet with local commissions to guide them in their initial steps. Workshops may also be sponsored by the local parish with the help of the Archdiocesan Commission and the Office of Worship.

Some members may wish to enroll in formal courses through Paul VI Institute, Aquinas Institute, St. Louis University or Fontbonne College.

Musicians will find it helpful to join the National Pastoral Musicians which provides local meetings, regional and national conventions and a monthly publication. The parish or individual members can subscribe to one of several liturgical magazines. (See "Resource List".)

Commission chairpersons will need to check mailings from the Office of Worship notifying them of workshops sponsored on the deanery or Archdiocesan level and advise commission members of these events.

Some parishes have provided finances to supplement members who wish to attend the Notre Dame Conference held annually in June in South Bend, Indiana.

Parishes have found it helpful to join together on a deanery level either for bi-monthly meetings to share ideas or to sponsor yearly deanery workshops.

ASSESSMENT OF PRESENT LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS

Too often parish liturgy commissions take as their first project the planning of unique and special liturgies, attempting to create something new and different. The secret of good liturgical prayer is not so much creativity as it is a discovery of the beauty and power within the rite and disclosing it by simply celebrating <u>well</u> what is provided by the Church.

This simple first step begins by looking at the current status of the local sacramental celebrations in light of the ongoing education of the commission.:

- What is the atmosphere of our public prayer: rushed? prayerful? hospitable?
- How are ministers (lectors, ushers, communion ministers) selected and trained? Do people fulfill their commitments?
- What is the quality of music in our parish and the financial commitment to this ministry?
- What is the appearance of our church, inside and out?
- What do we hear from parishioners? What do they like and not like about their parish experience? (See comment on "Parish Surveys" on page 17.)
- The Office of Worship currently provides two services for the improvement of local liturgies: <u>MINISTRY DAYS</u>: The Office works with a local parish or neighboring parishes in

providing an afternoon or evening in which lectors, musicians, special ministers, ushers and commission members gather to improve knowledge and skills relative to their ministries. The program normally consists of an opening general session on the nature of liturgy, followed by individual workshops for the various ministries. The program has proven helpful in several parishes. Call the Office to arrange a Ministry Day: 961-4320 ext. 117.

LITURGY ASSESSMENT PROGRAM: If invited by both pastor and liturgy commission, the Office of Worship will arrange for a liturgist and musician to visit the parish on a Sunday and attend all morning services. A report is then submitted to the pastor and

commission pointing out strengths and weaknesses in the parish celebrations. The parish may simply work from the report or invite the visiting team to discuss the report with them at their next meeting.

IMMEDIATE IMPROVEMENTS IN MINISTRIES

Selection: The commission needs to address the question of how ministers are chosen. In the early days of renewal when the laity were encouraged to take a more active part, volunteers were sometimes accepted who did not always possess the skill for the task. Today parishes are discovering that the requirement of attending a training session helps to provide needed information and skill as well as determining the level of commitment on the part of volunteers. Local religious goods suppliers have helpful pamphlets on the various ministries which could be given to the ministers as they accept new roles in the community.

Prayer: Too often liturgies are approached only from a practical attitude, forgetting that liturgy is prayer and flows best from a prayerful attitude. Parishes have found it helpful to gather the liturgical ministers for prayer prior to the entrance procession of each Mass. Other parishes have designed Days of Prayer or Recollection for their ministers on a yearly basis.

Gratitude: Parishes find it beneficial for the spirit of those who serve to provide a dinner or banquet for the various ministries. perhaps in conjunction with one of the above training programs. It provides an expression of gratitude as well as a vehicle of support to those who minister.

Scheduling: A schedule for the various ministries is prepared well in advance which includes the assignments and phone numbers of those involved. It is understood that ministers are to contact substitutes when necessary.

Finances: Training programs, workshops, resource material, vestments, vessels, environmental needs, music and musicians all require adequate financial resources. The commission, working with the pastor and the parish council, needs to establish early the level of financial commitment and resources available.

ENVIRONMENT

In addition to evaluating and improving the level of ministry at Sunday celebrations, the commission needs to evaluate the overall worship space and the appearance of the church building, from parking lot to sanctuary. The Catholic liturgy is one which has traditionally valued the beauty of symbols and surroundings. Members may wish to evaluate the quality of the items used and the cleanliness of the space for the celebration of the Mystery of Faith. Helpful material will be available in the ART SECTION of this Binder. Commissions will want to have the document from the American Catholic Bishops on hand as a basic resource: *Environment and Art in Catholic Worship*.

LITURGICAL SEASONS

Once a program or strategy has been formulated for dealing with the basic questions of ministries and environment, the commission may then wish to begin actual planning of the liturgical seasons. *Groundwork*, a resource book from Liturgy Training Publications, provides a helpful direction. (See "Resource" List.) Most important, it suggests that the commission schedule its planning well in advance of the particular seasons for adequate preparation time, e.g., Advent planning begins in September.

The purpose of such scheduling is to approach the season well in advance and in an integrated way so the parish calendar, activities, environment, music, etc., may all contribute to the importance and worthy celebration of the season. Christmas parties, for example, planned for the same evening of an Advent service present conflicting images.

SUNDAYS

Where commissions have the time and resources they may wish to approach individual Sundays of Ordinary Time. Extra meetings may be necessary since no more than one or two events can be prepared at any one meeting. Be careful here to avoid reinventing the wheel each Sunday (or season) or striving to outdo previous celebrations. If something has worked well in the past or if a certain local "tradition" has begun and is helpful, repetition is certainly consistent with the nature of liturgy. REMEMBER: The goal is to provide an experience of a worshipping community, not to celebrate a theme or entertain an audience. (See the Section: "ORDINARY SUNDAYS" on page 47.)

SPECIAL EVENTS AND FEASTS

In addition to liturgical season or especially where there are sufficient numbers to form subcommittees, the liturgy commission will probably make special plans for events like Thanksgiving, Communal Anointing of the Sick, Reconciliation Services, Liturgy of the Hours, Family celebrations, etc.

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

More ambitious commissions will want eventually to begin working with school faculties, PSR coordinators, education committees, parish councils, RCIA directors and the parish priests to determine policy and directives in regard to the celebration of baptisms, confirmation, first communions, first penance, marriages, funerals, graduations and other special events.

The parish needs to establish early the scope of responsibilities of the liturgy commission. Although the commission is seldom in charge of these special liturgies, there needs to be some level of communication and cooperation between the commission and those in charge lest the special events are planned and celebrated in a spirit different from that established by the commission. This only sends contrary signals to the overall parish and ignores a basic liturgical principal: The Sunday liturgy is normative for all other celebrations.

ROLE OF PASTOR / ASSOCIATE

The *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, in paragraph 19, states: "With zeal and patience, pastors of souls must promote the liturgical instructions of the faithful, and also their active participation in the liturgy both internally and externally, taking into account their age and condition, their way of life, and standard of religious culture. By so doing pastors will be fulfilling one of the chief duties of a faithful dispenser of the mysteries of God; and in this matter they must lead their flock not only in words but also by example."

In the Archdiocese of Saint Louis the "Guidelines for the Ministry of Parish Councils" lists the liturgy commission as one of the four standing commissions and states that a priest must be a permanent member of the commission and attend all meetings.

Simply stated, by reason of education, vocation and role within the liturgy, to prepare liturgies without the consultation and contribution of the priest(s) is often fruitless and frustrating. The Church considers the priest the liturgist of the local parish. Where the pastor cannot attend all liturgy meetings certainly an associate would be present at the major meetings of the liturgy commission.

Normally the priest is not the chairperson but may need to direct the earlier meetings until such time as the commission is prepared to select a chairperson.

PRIEST'S LEADERSHIP ROLE

- To be aware of current liturgical teaching and directives and to educate parish and commission members accordingly.
- Adjust parish Mass schedules to provide only the number of Masses truly required by size of the community.
- Educate parish council in financial priority of liturgical needs: musicians, music, vessels, vesture, environment.
- Provide personal support and just salary for all parish musicians. Guide and support their proper liturgical education, perhaps enrolling them in the National Pastoral Musicians or other local programs.
- See that sanctuaries, altars and vestibules are clear of needless items and that worthy vestments and vessels are employed in the liturgy.
- Guide servers, lectors, musicians, etc., to avoid a rushed and chaotic atmosphere before Mass. Possibly lead all in prayer before beginning.
- Guide the decorating of the church so the major areas of pulpit and altar always remain primary and are not overwhelmed by flowers nor upstaged by devotional areas. Attempt to think of the whole church building when decorating.
- Remind parish council and organizations of the priority of liturgical seasons and events when planning their own calendars and events.
- Initiate or continue to support the RCIA as the proper channel for ministering to "converts."
- Indicate interest and support by attendance at local workshops for liturgical ministries.
- Initiate and guide proper preparation for the reception and celebration of all sacraments.

THE LITURGY COMMISSION AND THE PARISHIONERS AT LARGE

Never before in the history of the Church have its members been asked to change so much so quickly. Liturgy commission members need to keep this in mind as they strive to prepare liturgies which invite people into a full, conscious and active participation. For many, this is all too new, too different from previous teaching. For some it is threatening, while others welcome the reform with open arms.

Commission members need to grow in an understanding of the reforms while remaining sensitive to the community in which they live and worship. There is an ever-present danger of a talented and concerned group becoming "elitist," gathering to complain or to "plot strategies" toward "the others." Be careful to avoid using "them" or "they" when speaking of the parish. It is better to speak of "us," the total parish of which the commission is a part.

The Commission can keep a sense of accountability to the larger community by regularly communicating its goals and intentions. This is especially true when a specific change is involved. Direct comments and brief explanations in the parish bulletin may help to provide the reasons and motivations for certain changes. Remember, however, that often in this area of worship the commission will be dealing with two different levels: the intellectual and the emotional. Clear, rational explanations may not always suffice.

Be cautious in the use of "Parish Surveys" in gathering the pulse and opinion of the parish. Surveys can convey the notion that liturgical practice is a voting matter in which the majority rules. Surveys not properly worded may provide some general overview but often only reveal what is already known, namely, that the parish has a variety of tastes and opinions. The Office of Worship will publicize the availability of well-developed surveys.

Commissions will want to be sensitive to all age groups, often evaluating whether music, homilies, etc., are taking all ages and groups into account. Some parishes have developed various Masses for various groups. While this can be initially helpful and attractive, the ultimate goal and nature of the Church is to be that place where all ages and groups can finally meet and discover and celebrate their unity in the one Lord.

Commissions may remind parishioners that meetings are open to them and develop ways of inviting input. The commission can keep fresh input coming by inviting people to meetings for specific reasons, e.g., to help in certain projects, to evaluate a certain event or simply to sound out new ideas. Certainly, the commission can use appropriate talents of any parish members. There is no reason to rely solely on the time and talents of commission members.

THE LITURGY COMMISSION AND THE PARISH COUNCIL

The liturgy commission is one of four standing commissions of the Parish Council. Its chairperson, as a member of the parish council, would normally be responsible for the following:

- Reporting to the council the current projects, plans and decisions of the liturgy commission.
- Consulting with the council on major issues which affect the life of the parish at large: renovation and building projects, changing or adapting the schedule of Masses, determining policies regarding sacramental preparation and celebrations. acquiring items of major

expense.

- Evaluating with the council the relationship between the liturgy and other parish events, arranging a calendar of events which avoids conflict and provides proper priority among parish events.
- Formulating with the council a budget which provides both a proper and a realistic priority to liturgical needs: musician salaries, published participation aids, vessels, vesture, decorations, education, etc.

THE LITURGY COMMISSION: PARISH SCHOOL AND SCHOOL OF RELIGION

Both the school and the liturgy commission share the same goals as regards to children and worship:

- To encourage both intellectual and spiritual growth in communion with Christ and the local parish community.
- To effectively model charity and service through ministry.
- To provide legitimate opportunities for children to participate fully in liturgical celebrations.
- To support parents in the sacramental preparation of and by their children.
- To create an environment with the parish community which supports liturgical prayer.
- To assure that liturgies with children are a true reflection of the Sunday worship experience of the parish, ultimately leading the children to their participation as adults in a worshipping community.

To accomplish these goals the liturgy commission need not be the ultimate responsible party but rather a cooperative resource and liaison with the parish community, exercising concern for a consistent liturgical life within the parish.

To cooperate in the liturgical formation of children the liturgy commission will need:

- To be sure school faculties and commission members are familiar with both the *Directives for Liturgies with Children* (printed in the *Sacramentary*) and the *Archdiocesan Guidelines for Liturgies with Children* (contained in the Administrative Manual for Archdiocesan Schools).
- To treat the Sunday worship experience as the goal and norm of liturgies with children.
- To assist in the liturgical aspects of sacramental preparation and foster sacramental celebrations as parish events rather than family, school or class events only.
- To provide support ministries for major celebrations with children.

LITURGY PREPARATION IN GENERAL

The *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, chapter one, paragraph five, provides the goal of liturgical planning and preparation:

> The celebration of the eucharist, and the entire liturgy, is carried out by the use of signs. By these signs faith is nourished, strengthened, and expressed. It is thus very important to select and arrange the forms and elements proposed by the Church, which, taking into account individual and local circumstances, will best foster active and full participation and promote the spiritual welfare of the faithful.

The task of liturgical planning and preparation is both simple and challenging. It is simple because there is little need to start from scratch. The Church has already planned the liturgy and provided the basic rite. It is challenging because optional or changeable elements can be selected which will allow a particular liturgy to become a nourishing and celebrative event for an individual community. This is what it means to prepare the liturgy.

In accomplishing this task it may be helpful to keep the following in mind:

- The liturgy is an experience primarily celebrated to nourish the heart and the spirit and a way of influencing attitudes. It is not primarily aimed at the intellect. Exercise caution in the use of words, explanations and commentaries. Look more for a "tone" or a "focus" rather than a theme.
- The liturgy exercises its effects in the manner of the arts. The way something is done is often more important than simply fulfilling the rubrical requirements.
- The *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* encourages noble simplicity. Avoid the multiplication of images, actions and additions. In liturgy "less may be best."
- View the entire rite as one whole and integral composition. Each part has its own place and purpose and a relationship to other parts. The rhythm of the entire liturgy and the interrelationship of parts needs to be respected. Spaces and pauses can be as important as words and actions.
- The assembly is the main celebrant of the liturgy, not an audience. In this stance it takes on an active liturgical role.
- The liturgy is an experience of grace and prayer for all. It is neither entertainment nor education prepared by one group for another.
- The liturgy celebrates and realizes a present reality: the death and resurrection of Christ as present and lived out in the life of the Church. It never simply recalls a past event or celebrates an idea.
- Reading and workshops can help commission members become familiar with liturgical options and alternatives to what are often understood as absolute requirements.
- Remember to review and evaluate completed plans and celebrations.

PREPARING FOR THE EUCHARIST (A SUGGESTED APPROACH)

TWO STEPS:

1. For Everyone, at home or a place of worship;
2. For Those Planning the Mass, presider, homilist, deacon, lectors, and others functionally involved.

I. PREPARATION FOR EVERYBODY: FINDING THE SPIRIT OF THE CELEBRATION

1. Read the texts for the liturgy of the word.
   - Pray for the presence of the Spirit, an understanding of the scripture; for those with whom you worship.
   - Read the gospel aloud, slowly, pausing after sentences and at end.
   - Read the first reading in the same way, straight through.
   - Read the responsorial psalm in similar fashion.
   - Read the gospel acclamation.
   - Read the second reading in the same manner as above.

2. Return to the reading and identify sections which attracted you.
   - What sentences, what phrases or words "struck you"?
   - It is not necessary to articulate why they did so.

3. Identify the biblical message(s) and how you were religiously moved.
   - What thoughts, feelings, desires arose within you during the readings? e.g., I think God is saying to us . . . Jesus is asking us to . . . I am lifted up . . . I am stirred to gratitude . . . I am filled with awe . . . I am dry, afraid . . . or I hear or feel nothing.
   - If you are with others, pay attention to how others are affected.

4. Let the ideas and feelings cluster together and begin to focus on texts.

   NOTE: The word of God is multifaceted; the Holy Spirit breathes in many ways in those attending to the Scriptures. But since the scripture passages are selected for each Sunday and feast (the first reading chosen in relation to the gospel, the responsorial psalm in relation to the first reading, the psalm antiphon and alleluia verse in relation to the readings) certain clusters of meaning and feeling will naturally emerge. *This is the Spirit of the celebration! It will have some of the richness and variation of the very mystery of our union with the Lord, Jesus, and our union with the Father and each other through Him.*

   - The message(s) and feelings will cluster; express them, but do not give a homily.

5. Let this clustering relate to the eucharist.

   NOTE: While the liturgy of the word relates to our lives, it is related MOST IMMEDIATELY AND DIRECTLY TO THE CELEBRATION OF THE EUCHARIST HERE AND NOW.

   - Reflect: Where will our gratitude, our confidence, our desire for forgiveness be expressed in the liturgy for which we are preparing?

II. PREPARATION FOR THOSE PLANNING THE EUCHARIST

WHO are they? Priest presider/homilist, deacon/homilist, music director, lectors, liturgical consultant, others as needed.

WHAT do they do?

1. Do the preparation on the first page TOGETHER.
2. The homilist organizes the clustering of ideas and feelings which have surfaced.
3. The music director does the same, judging what can be expressed in music, and at WHAT POINTS IN THE MASS.
4. The liturgical consultant focuses attention on the actual movement of the liturgical elements, and on what worked well or poorly in previous events.

6. Relate the clustering to the dynamics and movement of the liturgy.

   NOTE: The eucharist is a liturgical action made up of individual elements. Each have their own specificity, yet all are parts of one, integrated, living faith action. Faith should come alive through the integration of the various liturgical elements.

   - The clustering of the message(s) and feelings from the reflections on the word now has to be inserted into the liturgy itself.

7. The priest decides how to insert the spirit of the word into his parts.
   - What will he say after the greeting; what shape will he give the penitential rite?
   - What will he say in the homily?
   - Will he introduce the eucharistic prayer? What choices will he make in the eucharistic prayer?
   - Will he sing? What parts? Will he offer a word before the dismissal?

8. The music is selected.
   - Consideration is given to what the homilist is going to say.
   - Priority is given to the spirit the music carries in choosing a piece, and what can be better highlighted by music than by recitation.
   - Who will sing? What can they sing? What can they learn to sing? What do they think of, and how do they feel about what they sing?

9. Other elements are incorporated.
   - What actions or items will enhance the spirit of the celebration?
   - Who will prepare them, and when will they be used?

SOME FINAL POINTS:

- Using a commentary by an accepted authority can be helpful in planning.
- Only plan one day's liturgy at a time and as far prior to the celebration as possible.
- Forty-five minutes to an hour should be enough time for planning.
- If the meeting is held in the place where worship will occur, the time afterwards can be spent rehearsing elements of the celebration.