

DIOCESE OF MARQUETTE

LITURGICAL POLICY

VII. SUNDAY WORSHIP IN THE ABSENCE OF A PRIEST

"Whenever and wherever Mass cannot be celebrated on Sunday, the first thing to be ascertained is whether the faithful can go to a church in a place nearby to participate there in the Eucharistic mystery." (*Directory*, #18)

"If in the judgment of the diocesan bishop it is not practical or possible for the community to participate...nearby, they should assemble for Sunday worship in their own community under the leadership of the person the bishop and pastor have designated to lead them in prayer." (*Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest*, #10)

Sunday Worship in the Absence of Priest is hereby authorized under the following conditions:

1. The parish priest is unable to celebrate the scheduled Sunday Masses because of an unforeseen emergency. Unforeseen emergency may include sickness, death in the family, or severe weather conditions when travel is involved.
2. After reasonable effort a replacement priest has not been found.
3. It belongs first of all to the deacon to lead the community in Sunday worship in the absence of a priest.
4. In the absence of both priest and deacon, lay people properly trained and instructed are to be appointed by the bishop upon the request and recommendation of the pastor. They exercise this office of leader of these celebrations according to *Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest* in virtue of their baptism and confirmation.
5. This celebration is an accommodation when a priest is not available and should not be regarded as an optional solution to the shortage of priests. "Therefore...an assembly of this kind can never be held on a Sunday in places

where Mass has already been celebrated or is to be celebrated or was celebrated on the preceding Saturday evening...Nor is it right to have more than one assembly of this kind on any given Sunday." (*Directory for Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest*, #21)

6. "Two options are provided for Sunday worship in the absence of a priest: the celebration of Morning or Evening Prayer from the *Liturgy of the Hours*, or the celebration of the Liturgy of the Word, both of which may include the distribution of Holy Communion." (*Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest*, #52)
7. Only ordained clergy wear a stole and dalmatic. A lay person wears an alb and does not use the presidential chair.
8. "Since the altar is the table of Sacrifice and of the paschal banquet, its only use in one of these celebrations is for the Rite of Holy Communion, when the Eucharist is placed on it at the beginning of the Communion rite." (*Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest*, #24)

March 2016