

General Instruction on the Roman Missal 2012

B) Mass with a Deacon

171. When he is present at the celebration of the Eucharist, a **Deacon** should exercise his ministry, wearing sacred vestments. In fact, the **Deacon**:

- a) assists the Priest and walks at his side;
- b) ministers at the altar, both as regards the chalice and the book;
- c) proclaims the Gospel and may, at the direction of the Priest Celebrant, give the Homily (cf. no. 66);
- d) guides the faithful people by giving appropriate instructions, and announces the intentions of the Universal Prayer;
- e) assists the Priest Celebrant in distributing Communion, and purifies and arranges the sacred vessels;
- f) carries out the duties of other ministers himself, if necessary, when none of them is present.

The Introductory Rites

172. Carrying the Book of the Gospels slightly elevated, the **Deacon** precedes the Priest as he approaches the altar or else walks at the Priest's side.

173. When he reaches the altar, if he is carrying the Book of the Gospels, he omits the sign of reverence and goes up to the altar. It is a praiseworthy practice for him to place the Book of the Gospels on the altar, after which, together with the Priest, he venerates the altar with a kiss.

If, however, he is not carrying the Book of the Gospels, he makes a profound bow to the altar with the Priest in the customary way and with him venerates the altar with a kiss.

Lastly, if incense is being used, he assists the Priest in putting some into the thurible and in incensing the cross and the altar.

174. Once the altar has been incensed, the **Deacon** goes to the chair together with the Priest and there stands at the Priest's side and assists him as necessary.

The Liturgy of the Word

175. During the singing of the Alleluia or other chant, if incense is being used, the **Deacon** ministers to the Priest as he puts incense into the thurible. Then, bowing profoundly before the Priest, he asks for the blessing, saying in a low voice, **Your blessing, Father...** The Priest blesses him, saying, May the Lord be in your heart. The **Deacon** signs himself with the Sign of the Cross and replies, Amen. Having bowed to the altar, he then takes up the Book of the Gospels which was placed on it and proceeds to the ambo, carrying the book slightly elevated. He is preceded by a thurifer carrying a smoking thurible and by ministers with lighted candles. At the ambo the **Deacon** greets the people, *with hands joined*, saying, The

Lord be with you. After this, at the words **A reading from the holy Gospel...**, he signs with his thumb the book and then himself on his forehead, mouth, and breast. He incenses the book and proclaims the Gospel reading. When this is done, he acclaims, **The Gospel of the Lord**, and all reply, Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ. He then venerates the book with a kiss, saying quietly the formula **Per evangelica dicta (Through the words of the Gospel...)**, and returns to the Priest's side.

When the **Deacon** is assisting the Bishop, he carries the book to him to be kissed, or else kisses it himself, saying quietly the formula **Per evangelica dicta (Through the words of the Gospel)**. In more solemn celebrations, if appropriate, the Bishop may impart a blessing to the people with the Book of the Gospels.

Lastly, the **Deacon** may carry the Book of the Gospels to the credence table or to another suitable and dignified place.

176. Moreover, if there is no other suitable reader present, the **Deacon** should proclaim the other readings as well.

177. After the introduction by the Priest, it is **the Deacon himself who announces the intentions of the Universal Prayer**, usually from the ambo.

The Liturgy of the Eucharist

178. After the Universal Prayer, while the Priest remains at the chair, the **Deacon** prepares the altar, assisted by the acolyte, but it is the Deacon's place to take care of the sacred vessels himself. He also assists the Priest in receiving the people's gifts. After this, he hands the Priest the paten with the bread to be consecrated, pours wine and a little water into the chalice, saying quietly, **By the mystery of this water, etc.**, and after this presents the chalice to the Priest. He may also carry out the preparation of the chalice at the credence table. If incense is being used, the **Deacon** assists the Priest during the incensation of the offerings, the cross, and the altar; and after this the **Deacon** himself or the acolyte incenses the Priest and the people.

179. During the Eucharistic Prayer, the **Deacon** stands near the Priest, but slightly behind him, so that when necessary he may assist the Priest with the chalice or the Missal.

From the epiclesis until the Priest shows the chalice, the **Deacon** usually remains kneeling. If several **Deacons** are present, one of them may place incense in the thurible for the Consecration and incense the host and the chalice at the elevation.

180. At the concluding doxology of the Eucharistic Prayer, the **Deacon** stands next to the Priest, and holds the chalice elevated while the Priest elevates the paten with the host, until the people have acclaimed, Amen.

181. After the Priest has said the prayer for the Rite of Peace and the greeting **The peace of the Lord be with you always** and the people have replied, **And with your spirit**, the **Deacon**, if appropriate, says the invitation to the Sign of Peace. **With hands joined**, he faces the people and says, **Let us offer each other the sign of peace.** Then he himself receives the Sign of Peace from the Priest and may offer it to those other ministers who are nearest to him.

182. After the Priest's Communion, the **Deacon** receives Communion under both kinds from the Priest himself and then assists the Priest in distributing Communion to the people. If Communion is given under both kinds, the **Deacon** himself administers the chalice to the communicants; and, when the distribution is over, standing at the altar, he immediately and reverently consumes all of the Blood of Christ that remains, assisted, if the case requires, by other **Deacons** and Priests.

183. When the distribution of Communion is over, the **Deacon** returns to the altar with the Priest, collects the fragments, should any remain, and then carries the chalice and other sacred vessels to the credence table, where he purifies them and arranges them as usual, while the Priest returns to the chair. Nevertheless, it is also permitted to leave vessels needing to be purified on a corporal, suitably covered, on the credence table, and to purify them immediately after Mass, following the Dismissal of the people.

The Concluding Rites

184. Once the Prayer after Communion has been said, the **Deacon** makes brief announcements to the people, if indeed any need to be made, unless the Priest prefers to do this himself.

185. If a Prayer over the People or a formula of Solemn Blessing is used, the **Deacon** says, **Bow down for the blessing**. After the Priest's blessing, **the Deacon**, *with hands joined* and facing the people, dismisses the people, saying, **Ite, missa est (Go forth, the Mass is ended)**.

186. Then, together with the Priest, the **Deacon** venerates the altar with a kiss, makes a profound bow, and withdraws in a manner similar to the Entrance Procession.