

Guidelines and Resources for Ministers of Environment and Art and Sacristans

Diocese of Green Bay

Draft 2006

*“The church is favored, the dwelling place of God on earth: a temple built of living stones,
founded on the apostles with Jesus Christ its cornerstone.” 1Peter2*



The Guidelines and Resources for Ministers of Environment and Art and the Sacristans are presented for the formation and development of ministers who prepare the environment for Mass and the celebrations of the Catholic Liturgical Rites in the parishes and institutions of the Diocese of Green Bay, WI. The basic texts and sources for the presentations are the document, *Built of Living Stones: Art, Architecture and Worship, USCCB, 2000* and the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal, USCCB, 2003*

**The Guidelines and Resources for Ministers of Environment and Art and Sacristans
are developed and published by the
Evangelization & Worship of Department and the Liturgical Commission**

For the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve. Matt. 20:28



Ministers of Environment and Art and the Sacristans

Inspiration

Because the assembly gathers in the presence of God to celebrate God's saving deeds, the climate of liturgy is one of awe, mystery, wonder, reverence, thanksgiving and praise. So it cannot be satisfied with anything less than the beautiful in its environment and all its artifacts, movements and appeals to the senses. The beautiful is related to the holy. Where there is evidently no care for this, there is an environment basically unfriendly to the mystery.

Introduction

Therefore, Ministers of Environment and Art and Sacristans are called to serve the parish in preparing an environment for worship that will mediate the presence of God. Their goal is to care for all the elements of worship, insuring that the total environment is clean, appropriate, authentic, beautiful and accessible. Ministers of Environment and Art and Sacristans have a knowledge and understanding of the sacraments, the Catholic rites, the Liturgical Year of Seasons and Feasts and the devotional life of the people.

Prayer of a Minister of Environment & Art and the Sacristans

Blessed are you, O God, Creator of the universe,
who has given the earth and its riches
for us to cultivate.

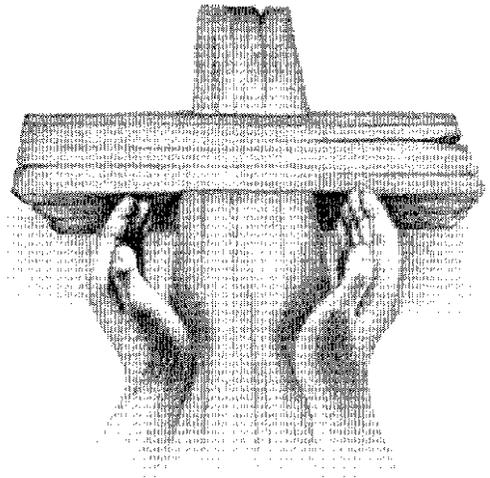
Grant that we may embrace the
things of creation gratefully.

We praise you for the good work
manifest in the imagination and skill of those
who bring beauty and delight to our worship.

Guide our ministry with sacred objects and spaces
that challenge and transform us.

Instill in us a desire to share
the talents entrusted to us
to make beauty a companion of justice and peace.

May your blessing be upon all
who share in this good work
through Christ our Lord, Amen.



Preparing the Environment for Worship

A list of qualities for the items and artifacts as found in the
General Instruction of the Roman Missal 2011, Chapter V,
The Arrangement and Furnishing of Churches for the Celebration of Eucharist

The arrangements and furnishings chosen for the worship space are:

Dignified and beautiful
Placed in moderation
Suitable for carrying out the sacred action
Proper, genuine and solid

Worthy
Well crafted and excellent in artistic form
Noble, harmonious and authentic
Addressing the holiness of the mysteries celebrated

Appropriate in meeting contemporary needs
Simple and suited to the season and feast celebrated
Reverent and functional

Sustainable and well balanced
Having one artifact honoring a subject
Visible and directing attention to the sacred action of the Liturgy

Nourishing faith and fostering devotion
Expressive of the faith of the people
Promoting the active participation of the faithful
Blessed and always acknowledging the prominence of the Liturgy of Eucharist.
*Focus of attention: liturgical space for the altar, ambo, chair,
seating of the assembly, cross with a figure of the crucified Lord, font and candles.*

Notes from the General Instruction

The altar, made of stone or wood is placed to be truly the center toward which the attention of the faithful turns. An old second altar should not be decorated. *General Instruction 301, 303.*

The altar cloth, the uppermost cloth covering the mensa is always white in color. *General Instruction 304.*

Floral decorations, the flowers are chosen with moderation and placed around rather than on the altar. *General Instruction 305.*

Two candles (or more for solemnities) are placed either on or around the altar. *General Instruction 307.*

A cross with a figure of Christ Crucified is either on the altar or near it. If a cross with the Crucified Lord is mounted near the altar, the processional Cross need not have a figure upon it. *General Instruction 308.*

The chair of the priest celebrant is placed in a position facing the people. The chair of the deacon is placed near the celebrant. *General Instruction 310.*

MINISTERS of ENVIRONMENT & ART and the SACRISTANS

Summary of responsibilities and directives

Preparation

Study the Liturgy: its prayer, meaning and mystery:

Introductory Rites

Liturgy of the Word

Preparation of the Altar and Presentation of Gifts

Liturgy of Eucharist

The Communion Rite

Concluding Rites

Know the Liturgical Year: Advent/Christmastime, Lent, Triduum/Eastertime and Ordinary Time.
Review the devotional needs and practices of the Community.

Action

1. Review the conditions and effectiveness of the environment for worship in the Church.
2. Prepare the environment for the Liturgy of the seasons and feasts.

Administration

1. Participate as an active member of the Environment and Art Committee.
2. Minister within budget, on time, and in collaboration with the Pastor and Worship Committee.



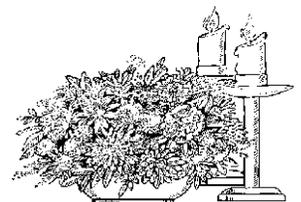
The Parish Environment and Art Committee: Getting Started

by Christina Neff, Artist and Chair of the Environment and Art Committee of St. Nicholas Church, Evanston, IL.

Every parish, large or small, urban or rural, rich or poor, needs to prepare and care for the environment for liturgy. In some places, this may be the work of sacristans. Most parishes have small groups or individuals who make banners or order flowers, often with no real link to other liturgy preparation. So starting a parish Environment and Art Committee is not so much a task of beginning anew. It's an attempt to reorganize those who are already doing things into a focused committee that works with those who prepare the music and the celebration of rituals.

Who are the people of talent and skill needed to pool their gifts as the Environment and Art Committee? Search the congregation – by way of bulletin advertisements, brief announcements at weekend Masses, or maybe a sign-up booth in the vestibule. Comb the parish census for names, paying attention to jobs and educational background/training. Personal contacts will probably yield the best results, however.

Find the architects, the graphic designers, the artisans, the painters, those skilled with textiles and the art history majors. Call on the carpenters, the engineers, the gardeners and the dreamers. Some of them may have already volunteered for various projects in the past, others may need to be asked or courted. Strive for balance by including anyone and everyone who shows interest in working and learning. Don't forget about newly registered parishioners. Many people truly long to involve themselves in the arts. Invite all potential members to an organizational meeting to define roles and responsibilities through discussion.



Requirements of Liturgical Art and Space

“The power to uphold the mystery”

Beauty and Mystery

Because the assembly gathers in the presence of God to celebrate God’s saving deeds, liturgy’s climate is one of awe, mystery, wonder, reverence, thanksgiving and praise. So it cannot be satisfied with anything less than the beautiful in its environment and all its artifacts, movements, and appeals to the senses. The beautiful is related to the holy. Where there is evidently no care for this, there is an environment basically unfriendly to the mystery and awe, an environment too casual, if not careless, for liturgical action.

Relationship and Hospitality

Attention must be given to the demands that liturgy makes upon the space for liturgy: the gathering of the faith community in a participatory and hospitable atmosphere for word and Eucharist, for initiation and reconciliation, for prayer and praise and song. “Every church building is a gathering place for the assembly, a resting place, a place of encounter with God, as well as a point of departure on the Church’s unfinished journey toward the reign of God. The building itself becomes a sign of the pilgrim Church on earth and reflects the Church dwelling in heaven.” (BLS #17) Thus, every aspect of the building, and everything done around and inside the building deserves attention to detail. Avoid unnecessary clutter and organize what needs to be placed throughout the building.

Presence and Participation

Christ, taking on human flesh, reveals the Father, ‘No one has ever seen God.’ (I Jn 4:12)

The liturgical space encourages and fosters a relationship with the Father through Jesus Christ. We encounter this presence sacramentally through symbols, art, words, gestures, music, and the celebrating assembly. God is revealed and encountered within His creation: fire, water, bread, wine, oil, cross and his holy people. The seasonal environment is an essential component that can significantly enhance this encounter. The presence of God is encountered through our participation in His creation. The mystery of God is unfolded in the prayer and ritual of the faithful community.

Quality

Quality is perceived only by contemplation, by standing back from things and really trying to see them, trying to let them speak to the beholder. *Built of Living Stones 146* Quality means love and care in making something, honesty and genuineness with any materials used, and the artist’s special gift introducing a harmonious whole, a well-crafted work. This applies to music, architecture, sculpture, painting, pottery making, furniture making, as well as to dance, mime or drama – in other words, to any form that might be employed in the liturgical environment or action. Quality rules out anything trivial and self-centered, anything fake, cheap or shoddy, anything pretentious or superficial.

Appropriateness

The environment is appropriate when it is beautiful, when it is hospitable, when it clearly invites and needs an assembly of people to complete it. If an art form is used in liturgy it must aid and serve the action of liturgy since liturgy has its own structure, rhythm and pace: a gathering, a building up, a climax, and a descent to dismissal. The art form must never seem to interrupt, replace or bring the course of liturgy to a halt.

Liturgical Color

WHITE is used for the seasons of Easter and Christmas; on feasts and memorials of Christ, other than his passion; on feasts and memorials of Mary, the angels, saints who were not martyrs; at baptisms, weddings and, in the United States, funerals.

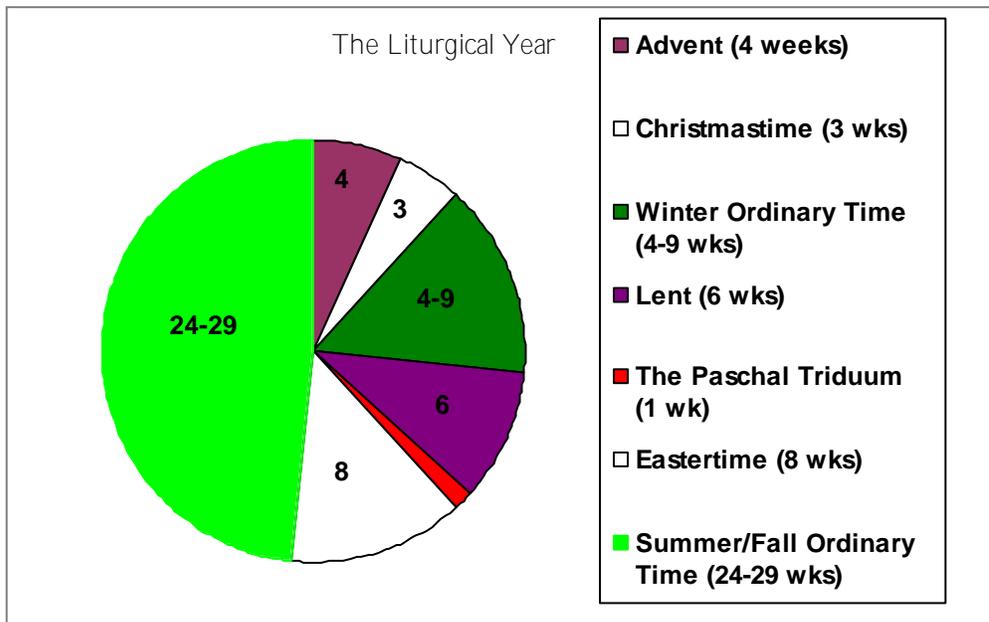
RED is used on Passion Sunday and Good Friday, Pentecost and other Masses of the Holy Spirit, celebrations of the Lord's passion, birthday feasts of the apostles and evangelists, celebrations of martyrs and for confirmation.

VIOLET (shades of blue and red) is used in Lent and Advent. The bluer shades of violet might be used for Advent (suggesting Mary, night) and the red shades of violet for Lent (suggesting the passion) to show the difference in the character of each season. Advent is a time of preparation/anticipation whereas Lent has the notion of penance/renewal.

GREEN is used during Ordinary Time. Varying the shade of green used in vestments and the environment during the wintertime and the summer/fall time can be considered.

The variety in the color of the vestments is meant to give the effective, outward expression to the specific character of the mysteries of the faith being celebrated, and in the course of the year, to a sense of progress in the Christian life.

Color involves emotional and psychological factors. Colors and shades of colors can be soothing, arousing or neutral. The use of colors in liturgical vesture (as well as in banners, paraments and other church textiles) should follow general color theory, be mindful of the tradition and be appropriate for the intended space. *Environment & Art Letter, Liturgy Training Publications, July, 1993, p. 54*



The Liturgical Year

Outline and theological focus of the liturgical seasons

Advent (violet with a deep blue hue)

Celebrate Mary, mother of Jesus.
Prepare for the reign of God in our hearts and in the world.

Christmastime (white)

Celebrate the Incarnation, Jesus coming to earth to be with us.
Rejoice with the manifestation of God

Lent (violet with a red hue)

Recall Baptism remembering the power of water, light and new life in Christ.
Do penance, fasting and embrace conversion of heart, mind and way of life.

Triduum (white, red, white)

Be consoled with the Sacred Oils.
Grow in humility with the mandatum, the washing of the feet.
Give thanksgiving for the Eucharist and the priesthood.
Unite your pain and the sufferings of the world with those of Christ.
Renew the gift of faith with joy in Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist.
Grow in understanding the miracle of death and resurrection

Eastertime (white)

Cherish the appearances of the Lord and the message of peace.
Glory in the Ascension and “be Christ for the world”.
Stand alert at Pentecost, ready to accept the mission to go and serve. (red)

Ordinary Time (shades of green)

Let the mysteries of Christ unfold in your life.
Give witness to faith and take example from the saints
Be a disciple of the Lord guided by the Beatitudes, Creed and Commandments.

Basic Principles for Preparing the Environment and Decorations for the Church during the Liturgical Year

The most important features of environment for worship are cleanliness, orderliness and a simplicity that means clearing the space of all clutter and all items that are distracting and unnecessary. Review and attend to these features each month.

Ideas for Preparation of Worship Space

The Assembly

“Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in their midst.” Mt. 18:20

Churches should be suitable for ensuring the active participation of the faithful.

- **Arrange seating for greatest participation and visibility.**
- **Make certain that people can walk at ease in all processions.**
- **Arrange the decorations to include/surround the assembly.**
- **Provide for people with disabilities and special needs.**

The Sanctuary

The disciples asked: “Where do you wish us to prepare the Passover supper for you?

Jesus instructed them: A man will show you an upstairs room, spacious, furnished and all in order.

That is the place you are to get ready for us. Accordingly they prepared the Passover Supper.” From Mark 14: 12, 15, 16

The sanctuary should be suitable for carrying out the sacred action.

- **Clear the sanctuary of all items other than altar, ambo, chair, cross, candles, credence table and kneelers and chairs for the deacon/servers.**
- **Plan for one dramatic seasonal bouquet, set in proportion to the space, away from the above listed furniture and having a space of its own.**
- **(Avoid multiple, small decorations such as violets, butterflies, doves, etc.)**
- **Use the flowers/plants that grow and bloom in the respective seasons.**

The Font

“Baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” Mt. 28:19

The baptismal font should be stationary, well constructed, of splendid beauty and spotless cleanliness. It is most desirable to have running water.

- **Consider placement of the font so that all can bless themselves with the baptismal water.**
- **Check each week to make certain that the water is fresh and clean.**
- **Add greens/floral and the Paschal Candle for the season of Eastertime.**

The Chair

“You are Peter and upon this rock I will build my Church.” Mt. 16:18

The chair of the celebrant should be in a clear and visible position.

- **In consultation with the priest, review the position of the chair to determine if it is in the best place of prominence and visibility.**
- **Check the lighting for the chair.**
- **Choose a chair with a design in harmony with the other furniture.**

The Ambo

*“Jesus went into the synagogue, according to his custom on the Sabbath Day, and he rose up to read.”
Luke 4:17*

The ambo is a standing desk for proclamation of the Word and preaching. The ambo, also known as a lectern or pulpit, has a designated space in the sanctuary and is visible to all the assembly.

- **Let the ambo stand boldly with honor, dignity and nobility and in a prominent place where the saving word of God can be proclaimed.**
- **Give the ambo visibility without decoration or cover of any kind.**
- **Avoid using the ambo for holding any other object or any purpose except proclamation of the Word. Check the size of the ambo to hold the Lectionary and the Book of the Gospels.**
- **Keep floral bouquets and banners away from the ambo. Let it stand on its own.**

The Altar

“Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. He said to them, I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.” Luke 22:14-15

The altar, a holy table for the Lord’s Supper and a table of sacrifice, is the primary symbol of Christ. The altar needs to be strong enough to hold the mystery of sacrifice and common meal.

- **Let the altar be free-standing, accessible from all sides and central to the Eucharistic celebration.**
- **Use the altar to hold the vessels for Communion and the sacramentary.
(and candles if floor-standing ones are not available)**
- **Keep floral bouquets and banners away from the altar.
(To allow accessibility and the noble appearance of the altar table.)**
- **Cover the top mensa of the altar with a white cloth.
(The cloth over the sides may be of the liturgical colors.)**

The Shrines

Peter spoke to Jesus, “Rabbi, how good it is for us to be here! Let us erect three booths on this site, one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.” Mark 9: 5

Popular shrines honoring Christ, the Blessed Virgin Mary and the saints are important for devotional prayer.

- **Arrange for neat, safe and meaningful decorations at the shrines:
candles, flowers and artifacts. Assign people to care for the shrines.**
- **Provide for a quiet space perhaps with carpet, kneelers, seating and windows with a peaceful view or stained glass.**
- **In particular, decorate the shrines on the celebration of their feasts.**

Considerations for the Environment and Decoration of the Worship Space

Banners

Prepare simple color banners of appropriate size for the church which will effectively announce the season of the Liturgical Year. These simple color banners are particularly important in ornate churches because there is no competition with the design. They are also appropriate for modern churches because they are in harmony with the simplicity of the design.

Avoid any trivial graphics on banners, such as flowers with smiling faces, comic lambs with grins, etc. These distract from the message of Scripture and the religious rituals of our faith.

Floral Bouquets

Arrange one large bouquet for the sanctuary rather than 10 or more tiny flowers. With our large assemblies this size and dramatic presentation of flowers will be visible and make an impression on the community. Be free to include other floral arrangements within the assembly if space allows for it. Often for festive celebrations, the processional cross and the processional candles can be decorated with flowers and color streamers.

Use flowers and items of the season. Choose color in harmony with the season if possible, for example, white at Easter, red during Pentecost. Instead of spending all funds on one day, extend your purchase over the entire season. For example limit the flowers on Easter and purchase flowers all through the 50 days of Eastertime.



The American Flag

On special holidays when we pray for our homeland and for those who served in the armed services (Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Presidents Day, Thanksgiving Day, National Days of Prayer for Peace and Justice, etc.) mount the Flag in the gathering area where people can draw close to honor it. Include a Book of Petitions and/or a Book of the Dead along with floral decorations and other personal memorials. Or if your church has no gathering space, mount the Flag in a respectful place in the Church. Place it to the side where it can be seen but not obstructing the view of the altar and the ambo. After the Mass, remove the flag to its place of honor.

Devotional and Liturgical Space

What is the relationship between liturgy and devotion? In a very practical way devotions lead to liturgy. Devotions allow us to place our particular concerns at the feet of an intercessor who will help us shoulder the burden. The visual image, therefore, is important, because it helps us focus our attention, our concern, our prayer. When we move from devotions to liturgy, this ability to focus can be transferred to the assembly, its proclamation of God's word and its sharing of the meal. *Meeting House Essays, places for Devotion, John Buscemi, LTP, ©1993, p.4,5*

Personal devotion is a way of opening up mystery, and it is rooted in the ability to imagine oneself as a pilgrim, a seeker. A seeker of God must join a personal pilgrimage to the collective journey of faith expressed in the liturgy. *Buscemi, p.8*

How does devotional space differ from liturgical space?

Liturgical space – that gathering space used by the assembly to worship in common and to celebrate the saving works of God in Sunday Eucharist, sacramental celebrations such as baptism and marriage and liturgy of the hours. In the liturgical space, the assembly expresses their beliefs with the symbols of water, oil, incense, the paschal light, the book and the gifts of bread and wine.

Devotional space – that space arranged for private or public devotions, such as stations of the cross, benediction, rosary, visits to the Blessed Sacrament. Eucharistic reservation is devotional in nature. Here individuals can lift up their personal prayers of concern and petition. Devotion and adoration need to lead people to the summit of all prayer: the Liturgy.

Importance of Religious Art

The Church has brought into being a treasure of art that must be very carefully preserved. The art of our own days, coming from every race and region, shall be given free scope in the Church, on condition that it serves the places of worship and sacred rites with the reverence and honor due them. In this way contemporary art can add its own voice to that wonderful chorus of praise sung by the great masters of past ages of Catholic faith. *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (CSL) 123*

All artists who, prompted by their talents, desire to serve God's glory in holy Church, should ever bear in mind that they are engaged in a kind of sacred imitation of God the Creator and are concerned with works intended to be used in Catholic worship, to uplift the faithful, and to foster their devotion and religious formation. *CSL, 127*

Images/Shrines

The practice of placing sacred images in churches so that they may be venerated by the faithful is to be maintained. Nevertheless there is to be restraint regarding their number and prominence so that they do not create confusion among the Christian people or foster religious practices of doubtful orthodoxy. *CSL, 125*

Shrines located in somewhat separate and distinct areas are far more conducive to private devotions than they would be if they were located in the sanctuary. *The Sacristy Manual, p. 80* [Liturgy Training Publications 1993]

Special attention is given to Mary, the Mother of the Church and to the patron saint of the parish community.

Images in painting or sculpture as well as tapestries, cloth hangings, banners and other permanent or seasonal decorations should be introduced into the liturgical space upon consultation with an art consultant. If instead of serving and aiding the action of the assembly, they threaten it or compete with it, then they are unsuitable. A simplifying and refocusing on the primary symbols (assembly, altar, ambo, chair, cross and font) has resulted in more simple interiors of churches.

An icon is a painted panel with representations of Christ, the Blessed Virgin Mary or a saint used mainly in the official liturgy of the Eastern Church tradition and in the decoration of its churches. Icons are becoming more meaningful to all Christians as they seek to understand the realities of the Gospel and to enter the mysteries of faith.

Tabernacle

The word tabernacle, with all of its rich religious history, came to designate the locked container or safe in which the Eucharist is reserved. There is to be only one in each church complex. The various documents of our age describe the tabernacle as solid, unbreakable, made of nontransparent or opaque material, dignified and properly ornamented. It may be placed in a wall niche, on a pillar, or eucharistic tower. It is to be locked and its key to be kept carefully. A lamp should burn continuously near it. Some tabernacles still contain linen pieces or panels. These should be removable for periodic cleaning, perhaps when the tabernacle is empty, from Good Friday to the Easter Vigil. *The Sacristy Manual, p. 78-79*



Stations

Another prevalent work of devotional art is the stations of the cross. The list of 14 has only been codified for a few hundred years. In most cases, these 14 crosses (and the optional images accompanying them) are already in place. They need only cleaning and regular maintenance. Where not yet set, planners can have them placed in any part of the church complex, preferably in a way that permits those who are making the stations actually to progress along a path. This usually rules out placing the stations in a small devotional chapel or bunching them in a small area along one wall; rather, the action suggests an installation in the floor. The stone or tile crosses and images could be embedded along a side aisle or in a devotional garden. *The Sacristy Manual, p. 81*



Exterior Space

Every aspect of the church has its importance in revealing the gospel, in drawing people into the liturgical action. The exterior areas associated with parish churches are no exception. Parking areas, walkways, yards and outdoor shrines need to be clean, hospitable, and well suited to their gathering function. They not only draw all into the buildings; they often serve as gathering places for devotions and receptions, blessings and processions. *The Sacristy Manual, p. 84*

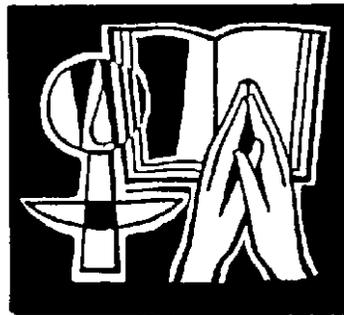
Waking/Funeral Vigil Space

A space that is accessible, has a prayerful environment and enables the people to see care given to the bereaved should be provided. This space helps us realize the completion of the Paschal Mystery cycle from birth to death – baptism through death to the hope of rising. It is a subtle site for evangelization, allowing other faiths to experience the depths of our ritual tradition of honoring the dead.

Reconciliation Space/Chapel

A room or rooms for the reconciliation of individual penitents may be located near the baptismal area (when that is at the entrance) or in another convenient place. Furnishings and decoration should be simple and austere, offering the penitent a choice between face-to-face encounter or the anonymity provided by a screen, with nothing superfluous in evidence beyond a simple cross, table and Bible.

The purpose of this room is primarily for the celebration of the reconciliation liturgy; it is not a lounge, counseling room, etc. The word “chapel” more appropriately describes this space.



The Use of Flowers in the Worship Space

When we gather for worship we celebrate the paschal mystery – the life, death, and resurrection of the Lord. In the northern hemisphere we are fortunate to experience that mystery through the prominent changes in the four seasons of spring, summer, fall, and winter. The flowers and plants used in our buildings should reflect the seasons that we are experiencing. A good rule to follow: what happens outside in nature is what we should see inside. Because funeral and wedding flowers often come from florists who ship in flowers from out of the area, they may not always fit the season.

Flowers speak to us of the beatific vision, the fullness of life experienced in the kingdom, and the greatness of God's creation. When they are picked they give of themselves for others and serve to remind us of our call to serve. Flowers like candles give of themselves as an offering and then die. They remind us of the sacrifice all are called to make in worship.

Other forms of plants and foliage also can be used including berries, pods, fruit, grasses as they too are part of God's creations.

While flowers and plants do beautify the space, the space should be beautiful and uncluttered on its own. As a rule ribbons and bows are not necessary on floral bouquets and should be removed from wedding and funeral arrangements after those celebrations. We are reminded that nothing fake, cheap, or shoddy has a place where we encounter our God.

Each church space is different and the size and placement of flowers will require individual assessment. Balance is a basic ingredient to beauty but does not mean that symmetrical or formal arrangement is best. In fact, an informal setting is usually more inviting and beautiful. **Usually one large bouquet is better than several small ones.**



There are no set rules for the placement of flowers/plants other than they should never impede full access to the primary areas in worship such as the altar, ambo, chair or font. When something is placed in front of something else it usually means the object in front is more important than what is behind. Places to consider would be in the entry way, the gathering area, the font, to the side or behind the altar, near the cross, to the side of the ambo, near the images of the patron, Mary, and near the tabernacle, as well as any appropriate place in the assembly areas.

Ideally, it would be helpful if each church had it's own perennial garden so it would always have a supply of flowers. Asking for donations of flowers from the yards and gardens of people should be encouraged as it gets many more people involved.

To provide and care for cut flowers takes time and energy, but it can be very rewarding. People do notice and appreciate.

Flowers, plants and trees – genuine, of course – are particularly apt for the decoration of the liturgical space, always discrete in their message, never cheap or tawdry or ill-made. Decoration should never impede the approach to or the encircling of the altar or any of the ritual movement and action. The whole space is to be considered the arena of decoration, not merely the sanctuary.

Our culture revolves around the denial of death, which leads us to keep denying the fullness of the paschal mystery. We deny that the call to conversion is both about dying and rising. Silk flowers are a perfect example of the denial of death. We want everything always in its most pristine, most beautiful form. By using silk flowers or other artificial things, we don't have to acknowledge any growth or decline. A real flower or plant blossoms and declines. Everything is journeying, everything is changing. How do we embrace the shadow that is part of the mystery?

Lists of Flowers and Flowering Shrubs That Will Work Well in Churches

SPRING

Pussy Willow	Lilac
Dog Wood	Crab Apple blossoms
Yellow Forsythia	Peony
Apple/Cherry/Plum blossoms	Bridle Wreath
Highland Cranberry flowers	Honey Suckle

SUMMER

Hydrangea	Black Eyed Susan
Queen Anne's Lace	Cone Flowers
Lilies	Long Stem Annuals (zinnias, larkspur)
Delphinium	Sweet Corn tops
* Baby Breath	Phlox
Yarrow	Sun Flowers
Grasses	Daisy

AUTUMN

<i>(Used fresh or dried)</i>	* Silver dollars
Broom Corn	Straw Flowers
Indian Corn	* Hydrangea
* Chinese Lanterns	Chrysanthemum
Cat tails	Highland Cranberry berries
Bitter Sweet	

* *When dried, these are excellent for winter arrangements. Use with evergreens.*

General Diocesan Guidelines for Lay Liturgical Ministers

Diocese of Green Bay

Revised 2006

Qualifications: Lay Liturgical Ministers should be Catholics in good standing with the Church, practicing the faith and fully initiated through the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and Eucharist (with the exception of young family members, not fully initiated, but serving in the ministry of Altar Serving, Hospitality and Music).

Age: The age of 18 is established as the minimum age for Lay Liturgical Ministers with the exception of family ministry for Altar Serving, Hospitality and Music. Exceptions to the age requirement, outside of family ministry, require permission from the Pastor and the Vicar General/Chancellor. Besides the age factor, the question of maturity is taken into account as well as the necessary training and competencies. Consideration can be given for mature and qualified high school students to serve as lectors.

Selection of Lay Liturgical Ministers:

When the pastor, parish director or pastoral team has determined a need for additional Lay Liturgical Ministers, they begin to surface qualified parishioners. A personal invitation to each is the normative procedure rather than a general call for volunteers. Selection should consider that

- Candidates selected for Lay Liturgical Ministries need to reflect the diversity of the parish community which includes individuals of various ages, abilities, social and ethnic background; male and female; married, single and widowed.
- The number of ministers is determined by need. There should not be so few as to require multiple services on any one day nor so many that each does not serve at least monthly.
- The lives of potential ministers need to reflect service to the community. The ministry is not a reward for those active in the parish or the creation of any type of elite status.
- The Christian Community, who calls forth the Lay Liturgical Ministers, needs to be instructed so that the ministry may be fully appreciated as service at the Eucharist.

Terms of Service: Parishes have found that it is generally desirable to commission Lay Liturgical Ministers for a three-year period with the exception of musicians and artists. After three years of service, it is helpful for ministers to evaluate their service. Each may decide to take time for renewal, serve in another ministry or be commissioned for another three-year term. It is not recommended that ministers serve more than three terms in succession, that is, nine years. Reasons: It encourages turnover in this ministry and gives many people the opportunity to serve. It also prevents the parish staff and Worship and Spiritual Life Committee from relying too heavily on a limited group and ensures that ministers will not be called upon to serve indefinitely in one form of ministry.

Liturgical Role: Lay Liturgical Ministers normally assume only one liturgical role at a liturgy. In liturgical celebrations each one, priest and layperson, who has an office to perform, should do all of, but only, those parts which pertain to that office by the nature of the rite and the principles of liturgy. *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (CSL)*, 28. In this way no one needs to serve in more than one area of liturgical ministry for a given year.

Training: All who serve as Lay Liturgical Ministers need to attend special training sessions to become aware of the theological, pastoral and procedural aspects of their service. Appropriate knowledge, a prayerful life and particular skills are essential for those who serve in the ministries. The Diocesan Worship Office provides a *Leader's Guide* and *Participant's Notes* for a training session of the Lay Liturgical Ministers.

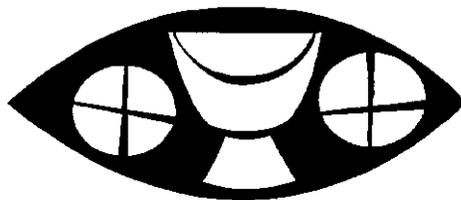
Attire: Attire for Lay Liturgical Ministers is the choice of the parish. It is the responsibility of the Pastor and the Worship and Spiritual Life Committee to study the nature of their celebrations and recommend the appropriate attire for ministers in their parish.

Lay Liturgical Ministers are first and foremost members of the assembly. Their attire needs to speak authentically and respectfully of their identity and of reverence for the ministry in which they are privileged to serve.

The **alb** is the robe of the Baptized Christian. There is an option for all Lay Liturgical Ministers to wear the alb since Baptism is the source of all ministry. Or the alb may be worn weekly or selectively to add festivity to the great feasts and seasons of the church year. Some parishes give a personal white alb to all who serve as ministers.

Ordinary attire of dignity, such as what would be worn for business or similar circumstances, is also appropriate for all Lay Liturgical Ministers.

Commissioning: Commissioning ministers for their role is recommended in accordance with the Rite found in the *Book of Blessings*, Chapter 63, #1871-1896. It is appropriate that those selected as liturgical ministers be formally commissioned during the weekend liturgies. In this way they will be supported by the prayer of the people they will serve. Commissioning some ministers at each liturgy gives the entire parish the opportunity to participate and becomes a means of catechizing all on the importance and meaning of this ministry. New parish members who have been Lay Liturgical Ministers in their former parishes are commissioned in the same way.



...NOTES...

Resources

Built of Living Stones: Art, Architecture and Worship

USCCB Catholic Conference of Bishops, 1-800-235-8722

General Instruction of the Roman Missal, Chapter 5

USCCB Catholic Conference of Bishops, 1-800-235-8722

The Sacristy Manual, Thomas Ryan

And **Guide for Sacristans**, Christina Neff

Liturgy Training Publications

1-800-933-1800

Sourcebook for Sundays and Seasons, An Almanac of Parish Liturgy

(produced each year)

and **To Crown the Year**, Decorating the Church through the Seasons

Liturgy Training Publications

1-800-933-1800

At the Heart of the Liturgy, Russell Hardiman

Twenty Third Publications

Flowers in Church, Jean Taylor

Morehouse Publishing, ISBN 0-8192-1361-6

Basket, Basin, Plate and Cup: Vessels in the Liturgy, David Philippart

Clothed in Glory, Vesting the Church, David Philippart

Saving Signs, Wondrous Words, David Philippart

Liturgy Training Publications

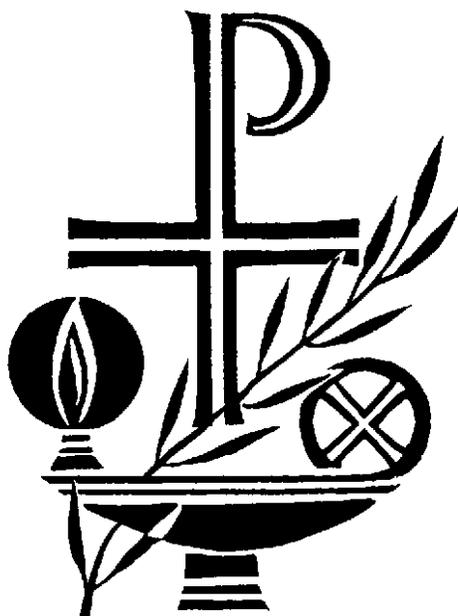
1-800-933-1800



Acknowledgment

The Committee that provided information and resources for the Ministers of Environment and Art and the Sacristans included:

*Rev. Stephen Rossey, O.Praem,
Rev. James Neilson, O.Praem
and Diann Wimmer*



Thank you for serving as a minister of Environment and Art and/or Sacristan during a time of great need in the Church.

*You share the love of God with all who enter the house of the Lord:
the stranger, the poor, the well and the troubled.
With gratitude and blessing,*

*Evangelization & Worship Department- Diocese of Green Bay
evangworship@gbdioc.org or call 920-272-8311 with questions.*

Draft 2006 (Update of 2012)

