



ADDITIONAL NOTES ON THE USE OF BOOK OF GOSPELS

With the newly received *Book of Gospels*, the Office of the Bishop brings to your attention the following instructions in order to assure a consistent practice in the Diocese of Prince George in conformity with the universal law of the Church. The oneness of our faith is to be apparent in the unity of gestures and posture at the Sacred Liturgy (cf. GIRM, 96). Please read:

- Introduction to *Book of Gospels* 1-22 found in the first pages of the *Book of Gospels*
- An Introduction and Guide to the *Book of Gospels*

PROCESSION OF MINISTERS

The General Instruction of the Roman Missal mentioned the following:

Number 44: Among the gestures are included also actions and processions, by which the Priest, with the Deacon and **ministers**, goes to the altar...

Number 47: When the people are gathered, and as the Priest enters with the Deacon and **ministers**, the Entrance Chant begins.

Number 49: When they arrive at the sanctuary, the Priest, the Deacon and the ministers reverence the altar with a profound bow. . .

Please take into consideration, Number 274

If, however, the tabernacle with the Most Blessed Sacrament is situated in the sanctuary, the Priest, the Deacon, and the other ministers genuflect when they approach the altar and when they depart from it, but not during the celebration of Mass itself.

Number 120: When the people are gathered, the Priest and **ministers**, wearing the sacred vestments, **go in procession** to the altar in this order:

- a) the thurifer carrying a smoking thurible, if incense is being used;
- b) ministers who carry lighted candles, and between them an acolyte or other minister with the cross;
- c) the acolytes and **other ministers**;
- d) a reader, who may carry a Book of the Gospels (though not a lectionary), slightly elevated;
- e) the Priest who is to celebrate the Mass.

THE CONCLUDING RITES:

The *Book of Gospels* is not carried in the procession at the end of the Mass. (Introduction to Book of Gospels, Number 22)

Number 90:

- d) the kissing of the altar by the Priest and the Deacon, followed by a profound bow to the altar by the Priest, the Deacon, and **other ministers**.



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Number 169: Then the priest venerates the altar as usual with a kiss and, after making a profound bow **with the lay ministers**, he withdraws with them.

*Please take into consideration, **Number 274** instruction mentioned previously.*

PASTORAL SUGGESTION: As the Mass begins, the procession goes naturally, the ministers who will assist in the Sacred Liturgy joins the procession and reverence the altar with a profound bow or genuflection (depending upon where the tabernacle is situated, please see GIRM, **Number 274**) as they approach the foot of the sanctuary and then, they proceed immediately to their respective places. This practice will eliminate two things: waiting for the priest celebrant to reach the foot of the sanctuary and forming line in front of the sanctuary before reverencing the altar.

CANDLESTICKS

The altar candles are to be lit prior to the beginning of Mass. They are to remain lit until after the recessional. The number of candles to be used can vary in accordance with the nature of the celebration, but there are to be at least two lit candles in any celebration of the Mass. (cf. GIRM, 117)

There is no mention in the General Instruction of the Roman Missal to place permanent candles beside the ambo. Hence, when the *Book of Gospels* is processed and it is preceded by altar servers carrying lit candles. During the proclamation of the Gospel the altar servers carrying candles, stand on either side of the Ambo. (cf. GIRM, 133, 175) After the proclamation of the Gospel, the altar servers should place the candles in a suitable place or near the processional cross in the sanctuary, then they return to their seats.

PLACEMENT OF THE LECTIONARY AND BOOK OF GOSPEL AFTER USE

Following a time of silence after the Second reading, the reader removes the Lectionary from the Ambo and sets it in an appropriate place of respect. (An Introduction and Guide to Book of Gospels, Bullet 3)

...the Deacon may carry the *Book of Gospels* to the credence table or to another suitable and dignified place. (GIRM, 175)

PASTORAL SUGGESTION: If the Ambo has a shelving section, after the second reading the reader should place the Lectionary on it. Otherwise, the reader should place it on the credence table.

After the Gospel proclamation, the *Book of Gospels* remains on the Ambo during the homily. After the homily, the *Book of Gospels* may be left closed on the Ambo. Reverence and dignity should be observed to honour the presence of Christ in His word proclaimed.

If the Bishop is the main celebrant, the instruction laid out in the General Instruction of the Roman Missal 175, should be properly observed.