

## **The Mass as a Communal Celebration of the Body of Christ**

- 1) The Mass by its very nature is a gathering of God's holy people. Whether there is but the priest himself or an entire basilica filled with the faithful, every Mass is the Church participating in the eternal paschal mystery. The Sunday Masses in a parish are to be rich experiences of the Church gathered together as Christ. In this light there should be no Sunday Masses celebrated for a particular group or segment of the worshipping community. In every Mass the General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM) and the rubrics for the Mass must be observed and the approved liturgical texts must be used.
- 2) On special occasions there may be a Mass for groups (like the Diocesan Council of Catholic Women or the Knights of Columbus). Such Masses are always open to all members of the community.
- 3) In Catholic Schools, the adaptations approved for Children's Liturgies may be used in accord with the norms of the liturgical documents.
- 4) Special interest focused liturgies are problematic and should not be encouraged. Youth-focused liturgy has to be careful not to send a message that youth are more involved if they serve as ushers and lectors and other ministries of service. Rather, we must consistently call all the faithful to full conscious active participation.
- 5) Therefore, in the Diocese of Tyler there should not be Masses in the parish that are targeted to particular segment of the community, like so called 'youth-focused' Masses. People of all ages are to be welcomed at any Mass. Every Mass should be open to incorporating properly trained people of all ages in service of the liturgy.
- 6) In the Diocese of Tyler those doing the Readings can be of any age, but must be trained as lectors to proclaim the Word of God with poise and clarity. We ask that Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are Confirmed, at least 16 years of age, and trained for this service. Altar servers should generally have celebrated the Sacrament of Confirmation.
- 7) In the Diocese of Tyler, there shall be no practice of having a "Children's Liturgy of the Word" wherein the young people are taken out of the church to have a 'special' liturgy of the Word. It is appropriate that children be with their parents/guardians who are their primary teachers.
- 8) The Church entrusts to the ordained priest or deacon the proclamation of the Gospel and the preaching of the Homily. Such preaching is an important exercise of pastoral responsibility. The community should experience the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist together and in the same location.
- 10) The Diocesan Liturgical Commission, with the approval of Bishop Corrada, issues this instruction as part of the process of Liturgical Renewal in the Diocese of Tyler.

Issued this Twenty-fourth day of June, 2010, the Nativity of St. John the Baptist.