

Liturgical Customary For Episcopal Visitations

Prior to the Bishop's making an Episcopal visit to St. Richard's, the rector will request and a bishop usually will send a copy of his/her own customary to the church. This customary will detail specific preference on the part of the bishop for the conduct of the service, such as color and styling of name tags for confirmands and color of vestments and parament hangings for the church. In the case of the Hispanic bishops of the diocese, it will also detail whether or not *la alapa* will be used with the candidates for confirmation.

Usually, the bishop visiting St. Richard's will be the celebrant for the Eucharist, so chasubles for the attending priest(s) are not needed. Even if the particular bishop does not celebrate (due to recent illness, for example), the chasuble will not be worn or draped over the chancel rail.

Vergers: Please check with the rector about the bishop's own customary prior to the service. Be certain to specifically ask about the crosier, mitre, cope, and chasuble. If a customary for a particular bishop is not sent, ask the rector about information he has gleaned from conversations with the particular bishop's office and determine how the Rector wants the details of the visit conducted. This gives maximum opportunity for all of the liturgical resources to be gathered, informed, rehearsed, placed in advance etc.

Assignment of a bishop's chaplain for the service is done as a courtesy to the bishop, in order to make it easy for the bishop to focus on the liturgy and the congregation, without having to worry about local variations in liturgical custom, and as an aid in juggling books, mitre, crosier and Order of Service. Whether or not the chaplain carries the crosier in procession, the chaplain processes immediately before the bishop.

The verger will outline the chaplain's duties and review the order of service in advance, so that the chaplain will be more confident in the assistance to be given to the bishop. The chaplain may assist the verger in greeting the bishop upon arrival, taking the bishop's equipment to the sacristy or other room appointed, making certain that there are prayer book/hymnal at the bishop's sedilla, and providing whatever books/service leaflets/order of service etc. are necessary for the entrance procession ready in (the sacristy).

Directions specific to confirmations and baptisms are covered in those customaries local to St. Richard's Episcopal Church.

Chief Verger: Assure that all documents requiring the bishop's attention are in order and ready for his review.

The Acolytes:

If necessary, appoint chaplain. If new chaplain, review duties with Rector and Head Verger..

The Lector and Eucharistic Ministers:

Assure positions filled and preparation of all readings is at high level of performance.

The Altar Guild:

If the bishop desires, after confirmation, she/he will be presented with lavabo bowl, towel, and water to cleanse hands which have touched several heads of hair.

In preparation of the chancel, the altar guild will set out a lavabo bowl and towel for this purpose.

Table or stand for accoutrements handed to confirmands – coordinate with Dir. of Christian Ed.

The Ushers:

Set out reserved signs for confirmands & families

Confirmands and families are communicated immediately after the choir?? Stu?

Assure strategy for keeping the altar rail full for this service.

The Director of Christian Education:

Roster of confirmands

Name Tags

Names on pews

Reception Coordination

Group Picture with Bishop and Rector

Verify with altar guild: Table or stand for accoutrements handed to confirmands

ECW or DOK

Arrangements for reception (if desired)

The Entering Procession

A bishop is always last in procession, with the bishop's chaplain walking immediately in front of the bishop. If a mitre is brought, it will be worn by the bishop in all processions (solemn, Great Litany, to the font, or to a shrine), and the crosier will be used in all processions that include the bishop.

The bishop's chaplain (and/or the vergier) will accompany the bishop, walking slightly ahead of the bishop and carrying whatever the bishop needs at the endpoint of the procession. The chaplain or vergier makes certain that the bishop has a hymnal, *open to the appropriate hymn*, for use during the procession.

If the bishop is preaching, the rector will conduct (escort) (her/him) to the pulpit for the sermon. Make certain a glass of water and the sermon notes are in the pulpit prior to the service. Although the chaplain/verger may be seated during the sermon, be attentive for any last minute needs, and be on your feet right after the conclusion of the sermon to conduct (him) back to the sedilla.

The rector will determine how many chalice bearers are needed. The number of priests (including the bishop) in the altar party determines lay assistance needed.

The Crosier

Occasionally a bishop will bring his own chaplain with him/her. Check with the priest in charge of the particular service if this be so for the service involved. If so, determine at the priest's direction whether or not a chaplain from St. Richard's is also needed for this service.

Each bishop in this diocese will have a preference as to whether or not s/he will carry a crosier in procession. Those who relate to Hispanic congregations, for instance, may prefer

that (he) (himself) will carry the crosier in procession, rather than having a bishop's chaplain carry it.

The bishop will hold the crosier when pronouncing absolution, giving a blessing, and during the reading of the Gospel. It is the responsibility of the bishop's chaplain (or verger assigned as such) to make certain that the crosier is available to the bishop immediately before such events.

If the bishop ordinary (the diocesan) of the diocese is present, the crosier is normally held with the opening of the crook facing the congregation. If a suffragan bishop is also present, the opening of the crook faces back, towards the bishop ordinary. If only the suffragan is present, the crook is carried facing towards the congregation. Visiting bishops will customarily not carry a crosier outside of their own diocese.

The bishop's chaplain (or alternatively, the verger) will receive the crosier from the bishop whenever it is not in use. It is to be placed in the wall hook provided. Alternatively, the bishop may rest the crosier across the mensa of the altar after the entrance procession. Check with the verger or the priest in charge of the service to determine the bishop's preference for your particular service.

For services of confirmation and ordination, when the bishop's hands are otherwise occupied, the chaplain will take the crosier from the bishop, hold it with the opening of the crook pointed inward, and stand next to the bishop. The chaplain's attention should be on the bishop and not on the congregation.

The Mitre

While the individual bishop's customs will undoubtedly be modified to speak to the use of mitres, the following guidelines are included here for reference by appropriate vergers, masters of ceremonies, and bishop's chaplains at St. Richard's.

Whenever the bishop is seated (as for the act of confirmation or ordination), is pronouncing absolution, or is moving in procession, the mitre is worn. It is removed prior to the Collect, the Gospel, prayers of the people, confession, the eucharistic prayer, and the post communion prayer.

When removed, it may be placed either on a piece of Plexiglas on the mensa (altar) or on the bishop's sedilla (throne) if the bishop will be standing for some time (as, at the eucharistic prayer). If placed on the throne, the front is placed facing the back of the chair and the lappets spread out neatly over the cushion. If placed on the altar, it is placed standing on the Plexiglas.

The bishop may elect to remove the mitre, or may turn to (the bishop's chaplain) to remove it. If someone other than the bishop is to remove it, that person grasps it at the sides with the fingertips, removes it sideways to avoid hitting the bishop in the face with the lappets. Hold the mitre in upturned palms, with the front facing (the chaplain) and the lappets hanging freely. Place it on either the altar or the bishop's throne, as appropriate.

When the bishop is ready to put it on, turn the mitre so that the front faces down and fold the lappets over the back. The bishop will take it from (the chaplain) and place it over his/her head so that the lappets fall down the back. (The chaplain) may then check that the lappets fall appropriately.

Books and Other Items

The bishop's chaplain (or alternatively, a verger, if available) will customarily hold a prayer book or hymnal for the bishop at such times as they are needed. Hold whatever book from behind, turned to the appropriate page, and stand to the bishop's left turned slightly

inward. Take care not to cover any text. Follow the service yourself so that you can prompt the bishop should he or she lose his or her place. Always have a service leaflet with you so that you can guide the bishop appropriately.

Who presides?

The bishop ordinarily will be the celebrant and preacher on all visitations. When a bishop from our diocese or a visiting bishop elects not to celebrate, the bishop will preside from the bishop's chair while another priest celebrates. In this case, protocol remains the same. Whenever they go to perform an action, the sacred ministers in the latter case make a slight bow to the bishop. The bishop may lead prayers in the sacristy before/after the service.

If incense is to be used, the bishop customarily blesses the incense. The thurifer would take the thurible and boat to the bishop (with the chaplain assisting, in the same manner as a deacon). If the bishop remains seated, the thurifer approaches, holding the thurible for the bishop to spoon in the incense. The celebrant is censed first, then the bishop if s/he is not the celebrant, then everyone else.

As to the Gospel procession, the bishop blesses (the priest/deacon) who will read the Gospel before the Gospel procession. If choosing not to celebrate but rather to remain seated, the bishop receives communion after the celebrant and before the sacred ministers.

The bishop always gives the absolution and benediction.

If the bishop has confirmed people prior to the Eucharist, (he) may want to wash (his) hands prior to the beginning of the Eucharist. An acolyte is to be prompted to offer lavabo bowl, towel, and water, after confirmation and prior to the beginning of the Eucharist.

With chaplain in attendance, the bishop follows the sacred ministers in procession. While the bishop faces the liturgical action, he does not face the east because the bishop *is* the east.

More than One Bishop Present

St. Richard's will probably never have an occasion to have more than one bishop in procession for a service on our campus. For a diocesan service, or in the case of an ordination at St. Richard's, each bishop may be assigned a chaplain, with the presiding bishop having two, in addition to the crucifer who carries the primatial staff ahead of the PB. The chief vergers would ordinarily determine order of rank and arrange seating and order of censing in advance. The diocesan bishop ("the ordinary") usually performs all the official functions, At the ordination of a bishop, those functions may be divided amongst the bishops present.

After the Service

After the service is over, the vergers and chaplain help the bishop to remove vestments and place them in their traveling case. If the rector or senior warden are temporarily unavailable, conduct the bishop to the coffee hour/reception, being certain to introduce (him) to some of those attending the reception.

If the bishop is in a receiving line in the narthex, assist the bishop to remove the mitre, cope & stole, and take them, along with the crosier to the sacristy. Begin to pack them up. Part of "the job" of the vergers and chaplain is to discourage would-be junior bishops from wanting to try on the paraphernalia.

Above all, stay calm, pay attention, and be proud of your part in helping the bishop to carry out his/her ministry in an effective and gracious manner.

Instruments that the Bishop Will Need to Sign Before Leaving St. Richard's Campus

The certificates for baptismal candidates, confirmation candidates, and those renewing baptismal vows are to be signed by the bishop. Make certain ahead of time that those certificates are appropriately filled out and available to the bishop in the room being used as (his) sacristy.

The Register of Church Services is to be available to the bishop for signature after each service where (he) was present. Make certain that it is appropriately filled out through that date. If notations for services prior to the service(s) being celebrated by the bishop are incomplete or are blank, ask the rector about appropriate procedure.

The appropriate Parish Register is to be made available in the room being used as a sacristy. Make certain that all baptismal/confirmation candidates are listed appropriately.

In the case of each Register, have that register open to the page needed for the bishop's signature.

A sheet enumerating confirmations, receptions, and baptisms by name and address, and listing the name of bishop presiding at these services, will be filled out by (the coordinator of ministry or administrative assistant) and returned to the Episcopal Diocese of Texas. Please inform (her) if a particular candidate did not show up for the service.

Part of the duties assigned to a bishop of the Diocese of Texas is to examine these Registers, to determine that they are appropriately kept, and that regular services of the Episcopal Church are being held at this location. These Registers are also legal documents; hence, having them filled out appropriately is part of the caring duty of both priest and verger at St. Richard's. Additionally, it is difficult to chase down someone days or months later, to have a signature attached where needed.