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Bishop's Visit Customary

Dear People,

I greet you in this first year of my Episcopate with much gratitude and anticipation as I prepare to share in the life and ministry of your congregation.

This revised Customary is intended to provide some support in making our time together effective and useful for you. Keep in mind that we can always make adjustments to how our time together in a visitation is utilized, as I want to be present to you in the manner which is most supportive and appropriate to your needs.

I am especially interested in this first year to have ample time with the whole congregation in meaningful dialogue so that I can listen intently to the hopes and concerns of our members. Please encourage the whole congregation's participation so that I might fully hear from all the people of God in our beloved community.

Should you have any questions, do not hesitate to call the Diocesan Office, or call me directly.

I am so very much anticipating our blessed time together.

With much love, and prayers for the ongoing fruitfulness of your ministry,

Patrick

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him."

Colossians 3:16-17

PRIOR TO BISHOP'S VISIT

Arrange Phone Conversation: Please contact the Diocesan Office at least two weeks prior to the Bishop's visit to arrange a conversation with the Bishop regarding the visit and the liturgy.

When possible please email the service bulletin, if one is used, to the Bishop by Tuesday preceding the visit. It is fine if it is only a draft.

Schedule of the Weekend: The Bishop's visit typically will be scheduled for two or three days. For his first year, the Bishop would suggest a Saturday evening meeting with the Vestry or Bishop's Committee, possibly including supper, and lasting up to two hours. A general meeting of the entire congregation allowing for substantial question and answer time is also desired. This can be scheduled on Sunday or anytime best suited for congregants. In the cases where it makes more sense to combine the Bishop's Committee with the congregation in one meeting, it is recommended to do so. Arrangements for other meetings with community groups or leaders as may be constructive for the local congregations are encouraged, and can be planned into the schedule for Friday and/or Monday.

GENERAL LITURGICAL GUIDELINES

The Bishop will be the preacher, celebrant and officiant of the entire liturgy, unless otherwise arranged.

Rite II: The Rite II liturgy from the 1979 Book of Common Prayer is the normative rite for liturgies of baptism and confirmation. Eucharist without baptism or confirmation may be Rite I or Rite II according to the custom of the congregation.

Lectionary: It is expected that the Revised Common Lectionary (Episcopal edition) will be used. During ordinary time (Epiphany and Pentecost seasons), there are alternatives for the readings depending on the cycle being used by the parish. Please alert the Bishop to the actual readings that will be used.

Color of the Day: The Bishop prefers the liturgical color of the day or season when celebrating a confirmation or baptism, but red may be used at any time except during Easter.

Renewal of Vows Replace the Nicene Creed: If the Bishop is visiting on a Sunday with no special liturgy, the Renewal of Baptismal Vows (p. 292, BCP) should be used in place of the Nicene Creed.

Confirmation

At a liturgy for Confirmation when there is no baptism, the service will follow p. 413 and following in the Book of Common Prayer. If there is also to be baptism, the liturgy is found on page 299 and following. (NB: If prayers for candidates are according to form on page 305, the concluding collect, is on top of page 418.)

There is an expectation that confirmands and baptism candidates will have attended a rehearsal before the liturgy and have some understanding of their roles and movements during the service. Please discuss with the Bishop if you would like the Bishop present at the rehearsal.

It is very helpful for those being confirmed, received, or reaffirmed in the faith to have nametags clearly stating their first names.

Baptism

The Bishop will offer Prayer of Thanksgiving over Water (p. 306) and the prayers following the baptism. The Bishop will normally baptize and perform the chrismation, but may invite the priest to do so.

Adult baptismal candidates may receive chrismation by the Bishop or laying on of hands with the confirmation class but not both.

If there is both a baptism and a confirmation, baptismal candidates are presented first and examined, followed by candidates for confirmation, reception, and reaffirmation.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Announcements: The Rector, Vicar or Priest-in-Charge will make announcements during the liturgy at the accustomed time.

Offering: The offering, unless otherwise designated, will be designated for the Bishop's discretionary fund, used for religious and charitable purposes, pastoral emergencies, and ministries which arise during the course do the year

Inspection of Registers: The Bishop will expect to review the register of services, and registers recording baptisms, confirmations, marriages and burials.