



MASS WITH A BISHOP

In a regular parish, the diocesan bishop might not visit frequently. If Confirmations are not celebrated on a regular basis, it could be several years between visits. It is understandable therefore that Servers in such parishes may not have many opportunities to gain experience in serving with him. This document aims to help those servers, MC's and others when the bishop comes to visit. This is not an exhaustive list of every contingency but more a helpful guide for serving a bishop in a local parish church. This guide applies to the Ordinary Form of the Mass.

GENERAL

- In speech, a diocesan bishop is addressed as “My Lord”. An archbishop is addressed as “Your Grace”. A Cardinal is addressed as “Your Eminence”. These are the norms in England and Wales but may differ in other territories according to local custom.
- A bishop greets the people using the form “Peace be with you” rather than the usual “The Lord be with you” greeting of the priest. The response is the same.
- The rubrics (instructions) for serving the bishop are found in the “Ceremonial of Bishops”.

From the Ceremonial of Bishops

1. If more than one bishop is present, the presiding bishop is the one attended to by the Servers. It is he alone who carries the Crozier, others may wear Mitres but do not need to be attended to by the servers.
2. The bishop is the shepherd of his diocese, and he carries a shepherd's crook, the “Crozier” as a symbol of his office. It is carried by him:
 - a. With the curved head facing away from him, pointing in his direction of travel.
 - b. During a procession (for example at the start and end of Mass).
 - c. Whilst listening to the Gospel.
 - d. When bestowing a blessing (for example at the end of Mass, “May almighty God bless you...”), unless the blessing requires him to extend his hands for example a Solemn Blessing at the end of a Mass.
 - e. When receiving religious vows and promises or a profession of faith.

3. The bishop wears the Mitre (his hat):
 - a. When he is seated
 - b. While he preaches the Homily (but check his preference)
 - c. When he gives a solemn blessing to the people
 - d. When he confers a sacrament (for example during anointing at Confirmation)
 - e. When he is in procession.
4. The bishop does NOT wear the Mitre:
 - a. During the Introductory Rites (it is removed before he enters the Sanctuary)
 - b. During the Collect (opening prayer) and Prayer after Communion
 - c. During the Gospel
 - d. During the Prayer over the Gifts and the Eucharistic Prayer
 - e. During the General Intercessions
 - f. During Hymns when standing
 - g. During a procession with the Blessed Sacrament or relics of the true cross.
 - h. During any time that the Blessed Sacrament is exposed.
5. The bishop does NOT wear the Zucchetto (skull cap)
 - a. After the Prayer over the Offerings until the Blessed Sacrament is reposed in the Tabernacle.
6. Reverence
 - a. If there are several Bishops present, only the presiding bishop is shown reverence during a service.
 - b. The bishop is greeted with a deep bow by the servers or others when they approach to assist him, when they leave after assisting him, or when they pass in front of him.
7. In procession
 - a. The presiding Bishop always walks alone in the procession following any other bishops, priests, deacons, and servers.
 - b. If servers assist the bishop (Episcopal Servers and the MC), they walk directly behind him in a pair so to be positioned correctly on arrival at the Sanctuary.

BEFORE THE VISIT

- Consult any guidance issued by your diocese for the visitation of the bishop.
- You should ensure that well in advance of the day the bishop is to visit that you have arranged for sufficient servers to be available, especially if the Mass / service is to take place at an irregular time. Ideally 6-7 servers are required for the regular Mass functions including:
 - Thurible and Boat (x2),
 - Processional Cross (x1)
 - Processional Candles (x2)
 - Episcopal Servers (x2, see below)
 - Master of Ceremonies (MC)
- So far as is possible, with the number of servers available, the MC should excuse themselves from any particular roles and be “at large” to help in the smooth running of the service.

BEFORE THE MASS

- Servers should arrive in good time, be well presented, and keep a quiet atmosphere in the Sacristy. The bishop may wish to be introduced to them before the service begins, especially the two allocated to be Episcopal Servers.
- The Sacristy and Sanctuary are prepared as at a normal Mass but with care taken to account for the bishop and any extra concelebrants. He may require parish vestments and assistance unpacking his various items such as the Crozier, Mitre etc. The MC should see to this if the Parish Priest, Curate or Deacon does not.
- If this is a Confirmation Mass, then places should be reserved for the candidates in the nave where the bishop can easily see and address them from the chair.
- Orders of service should be provided for the clergy and servers if appropriate.
- In addition to that required for a normal Mass, the Sanctuary should be set with:
 - Sufficient Chalices etc. for the bishop and the other clergy.
 - If the Mass is concelebrated, Concelebration Missals for the concelebrants.
 - Bowl, pitcher of water, and towel for the bishop to wash his hands after Communion.
 - If this is a Confirmation Mass / Service
 - Confirmation Missal
 - 1 server to assist with Holy Oil during the anointing (unless a priest or deacon assumes this role).
 - 1 server with Confirmation Missal for the Confirmation Rite.

- 2 servers to assist with bowl, pitcher of warm water, lemon, and towel for the bishop to wash his hands after anointing
 - Seven (or at least two if this is not possible) Altar Candles (representing each sacrament, the extra seventh candle represents the sacrament of Holy Orders which can only be administered by the bishop).
- Check bishops' preference for the Mitre and Crozier at the Homily.

EPISCOPAL SERVERS

- Two suitable servers should be identified to function as Episcopal Servers (the bishop's assistants). These should be vested as normal with the addition of the Vimpa shawls which the bishop ordinarily provides. In the absence of the shawls, they should wear white gloves.
- The function of the shawl is to protect the liturgical items of the Mitre and Crozier from skin oils, finger marks etc. As symbols of his office, by tradition these should only be handled by the bishop. The servers should for both reasons therefore, only handle these items through the shawl.
- The MC should direct these servers in their duties and accompany them if required.
- On approaching the bishop and leaving him the Episcopal Servers make a deep bow.

The Mitre and Crozier

- The Mitre is presented to the bishop flat, with the tails folded over on top, with the pointed end towards the server. This way the bishop does not need to adjust its position to put it on.
- The Crozier is presented to the bishop with the curved head facing towards the server.

AT THE MASS

Opening Procession

The procession forms as normal led by the Servers, any Deacons, Priests and finally the Bishop with the Episcopal Servers and MC last behind him. On arrival at the foot of the Sanctuary the Bishop:

- Removes the Mitre and hands it to one of the Episcopal Servers.
- Hands the Crozier to the other Episcopal Server.

He then reverences the Altar with the other clergy, if used, the Thurible is serviced as usual. He then goes to the chair.

Liturgy of the Word

Once the Bishop has prayed the Collect (Opening Prayer) and sat down,

- The Mitre is brought to him by the Episcopal Server responsible.

He wears it until the start of the Gospel.

Gospel

The Thurifer approaches the bishop, and it is serviced as usual. If a deacon or concelebrant is present at the chair, they may assist the bishop.

After the Thurifer moves off, the deacon or priest who is to proclaim the Gospel receives a blessing from the bishop at the chair. At the same time both Episcopal Servers position themselves near the bishop, one with the Crozier.

- The bishop removes the Mitre and hands it to the Episcopal Server.

The deacon or concelebrant who is proclaiming the Gospel goes to the ambo and after all have signed themselves (“*A reading from the Holy Gospel...*”):

- The Crozier is handed to the bishop with the crook facing away from him toward the server.
- Both Episcopal Servers return to their places.

After the Gospel, the Book of the Gospels is brought to the bishop for him to reverence by the deacon or priest who proclaimed it, it is then set aside in a suitable place. Do not sit down until the bishop has revered the Book of the Gospels.

Presentation of the Candidates

In a Confirmation Mass or service, the candidates are introduced to the bishop one by one after the Gospel, they stand in place, everyone else is seated. The bishop then invites them to be seated and begins the homily, otherwise the homily begins as normal. During this he wears the Mitre.

Homily

The bishop may use the Mitre and Crozier during the homily depending on the circumstances. You should check with him before the service begins for his preference on this occasion and adapt accordingly. For example, at a Mass with young people he may wish to address them in a less formal or more interactive manner from the floor of the Nave rather than from the Ambo or Chair.

Confirmation Rite

- The bishop receives the Mitre.
- After the Homily a server approaches with the Confirmation Missal. If required, the server may kneel in-front of the bishop who remains seated. He questions the candidates with the Baptismal Promises.
- The bishop, the server and the clergy then gather together at the front of the Sanctuary or near the candidates, the server with the missal stands in front of the bishop. With arms extended they perform the laying on of hands.
- The server with the Missal then withdraws.
- At the Chair the anointing then begins. A server brings the Holy Oils, apron (optional) to the bishop at the chair. If required, the server sits next to him and holds the oil vessel although it may be more appropriate for the Parish Priest or the clergy who have been involved in their instruction to assume this function.
- The bishop receives the Crozier.
- The candidates approach one by one and are anointed, completing their Confirmation.
- Once complete the Mitre and Crozier are removed, as is the apron, Holy Oils and any other items.
- 2 servers approach with a pitcher of warm water, bowl, towel and lemon for the bishop to wash his hands.

Profession of faith (Creed) and General Intercessions

- The Creed is omitted if the Baptismal Promises have been used (Confirmation).
- If he has them, the Mitre and Crozier are removed. The Episcopal Servers approach as appropriate.

Offertory

The Mitre is brought to the Bishop at the Chair, he wears it while the Altar is prepared, and the Gifts of bread and wine are received.

- The bishop goes to the Altar where he removes the Mitre and hands it to an Episcopal Server.

Liturgy of the Eucharist

If incense is used then the bishop (as celebrant) is incensed first (3 doubles), then the other clergy (3 doubles as a group), then the people (3 singles).

Once the bishop has prayed the Prayer over the Offerings, he (or the deacon or concelebrant) removes the Zucchetto and hands it to the MC who puts it aside on the Credence table or other suitable place.

The sequence of events goes like this:

- *“Pray brethren that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God the Almighty Father”.*
- *“May the Lord accept this sacrifice...”*
- [Prayer over the Offerings] *“... Amen”.*
- **Zucchetto removed.**
- *“The Lord be with you... Lift up your hearts...”* [Eucharistic Prayer] ...

The bishop continues with the Liturgy of the Eucharist and the Communion Rite in the normal way.

After Communion

Only once the Blessed Sacrament has been reposed in the Tabernacle.

- The bishop receives the Zucchetto (Episcopal Server to bring it to him).
- The bishop washes his hands at the chair (2 servers to assist).

Once the Prayer after Communion has been said and any announcements made:

- The bishop receives the Mitre.




He then imparts the appropriate blessing or the apostolic blessing. After the final response and before the *“May almighty God bless you ...”*:

- The bishop receives the Crozier.

The procession then forms in the usual way with the bishop last. The Episcopal Servers are no longer required and process with the other servers back to the Sacristy.

Confirmation Mass – Roman Missal (CTS) – Page 1186, with Preface for the Holy Spirit on pages 1405-8. Note misprint in rubric page references in some editions of the CTS Roman Missal on bottom of page 1186.

Mass with a Bishop - Quick Reference

						
Introductory Rites	Opening Procession	The procession forms, the bishop wears the Mitre and holds the Crozier, 2 Episcopal Servers wearing Vimpa's walk behind him.	✓	✓	✓	
		Before entering the Sanctuary, he hands both to the servers.		x	x	
	Sign of the Cross	In the name of the Father... Peace be with you...				
	Penitential Act	Lord have mercy...				
	<i>The Gloria</i>	<i>If indicated, the Gloria in Excelsis is sung or said.</i>				
Collect	Let us Pray...					
Liturgy of the Word	First Reading	At the end of the Collect everyone sits, the bishop sits and receives the Mitre to wear during the readings.	✓	✓	x	
	Psalm					
	Second Reading					
	Gospel - Concelebrant	Acclamation		The bishop removes the Mitre after putting incense in the Thurible (if used) and blessing the priest or deacon who is to proclaim the Gospel.	x	✓
		During the Gospel		After signing himself, he receives the Crozier for the duration of the Gospel.		
Gospel – Bishop	<i>If the bishop proclaims the Gospel himself remove the Mitre, no Crozier required.</i>					
Confirmation Rite	Presentation of Candidates	<i>Once the Gospel is completed the bishop sits and he receives the Mitre. The Crozier is removed if he does not want it for the Homily.</i>	✓	✓	x	
	The Homily	<i>Both, but check bishop's preference before Mass.</i>			✓	
	Baptismal Promises	<i>Server with Confirmation Missal to Bishop. Bishop receives the Mitre, Episcopal Servers to stay close to Bishop.</i>		x	x	
	Laying on of hands	<i>Bishop removes Mitre hands to Episcopal Server.</i>				
	Anointing	<i>Server with Holy Oil and apron to Bishop The bishop sits to begin the Anointing, bring Mitre and Crozier to him.</i>				
	Washing of Hands	<i>After all candidates have been Anointed, the Bishop washes his hands (2 servers to Bishop with warm water, lemon, and bowl). Take the Crozier away first and after he has washed his hands take the Mitre.</i>				
Liturgy of the Word	The Homily	<i>Both, but check bishop's preference before Mass.</i>	✓	✓	✓	
	Creed	<i>Not in a Confirmation Mass as Baptismal Promises used. All retrieved.</i>		x		
	Intercessions	Neither required.				
Liturgy of the Eucharist	Offertory to Prayer over the Offerings	Once the Bishop sits down after the Intercessions, he wears the Mitre while the Offertory procession forms, and the Altar is prepared.	x	✓	x	
		Arriving at the Altar or at the Chair, the Bishop removes the Mitre.				
Communion Rite	Communion	Bishop washes his hands at the Chair	x	x		
		When the Bishop sits down after Communion and after the Blessed Sacrament has been placed in the Tabernacle, bring the Zucchetto to him.				
	Prayer after Communion and Announcements	Neither required.			✓	
Concluding Rites	Blessing	Bring the Mitre and Crozier to the Bishop. He wears the Mitre , " <i>The Lord be with you....</i> ", then for the final blessing he receives the Crozier .	x	x		
	Dismissal	Episcopal Servers return to places.				
	Recessional	Assistants and Bishops MC walk in front of the bishop.				