



Episcopal Diocese of Georgia Bishop's Liturgical Customary

Appointments, Furniture and Arrangement

There are two basic principles that should be kept: simplicity and cleanliness. Neither the church nor the sacristy should be cluttered. Because there is often limited space in the church and sacristy, they should be frequently cleaned out and kept clean. The meaning of the word sacristy — a place for holy preparation — needs to be taken seriously. The sacristy must be kept simple, clean and reverent. The sacristy is particularly important before worship. The sanctuary party — priests and servers — should find it a quiet place for prayer and preparation.

The Font or Baptismal Area

With the emphasis on Christian initiation and the Paschal mystery in *The Book of Common Prayer*, the Episcopal Church understands baptism as central to the Christian faith and life. Christian life begins in baptism. The font, along with the paschal candle, should be in a prominent place where the congregation can see and participate in the baptism. In more and more places it is the custom to leave the font open and filled with clean water. Persons may make the sign of the cross upon themselves with this water upon entering or leaving the church. If a portable font is used, it should be of an appropriate size and designed to express the dignity of the occasion. A stainless steel bowl from the kitchen is not acceptable.

The Altar or Holy Table

The altar is at the center of Christian worship, so it should be the focus of the liturgical space. Everything possible should be done to emphasize its dignity. Where possible, there should be a frontal in the color of the season or the feast being celebrated. Cover the altar with a clean, white cloth. This fair linen should be the same width as the altar and reach at least half way to

the floor on both ends. Today most churches have freestanding altars. However, if the altar is against the wall and cannot be moved, a table could be set before the people for the regular celebration of the Holy Eucharist. Freestanding altars and tables are to be the norm for worship in this diocese. Except for two candles, nothing should be placed on the altar that is not integral to the Eucharist. The candlesticks are placed in the center of each end of the altar, and in from the ends a distance equal to the width of the base of the candlestick. The chalice and paten should be on the credence table, with purificator, pall, and corporal, until the preparation of the altar for the offering. The server gives the chalice and paten to the priest or deacon at the offertory. Burses and veils are unnecessary, but those who appreciate them may use them. If more than one chalice is to be used, keep the additional chalices on the credence table during the consecration. Only one chalice should be on the altar for the consecration. Consecrate an ewer of wine and pour the consecrated wine into the additional chalice after the gifts are presented.

Lectern and Pulpit

There should be one place from which the Word is proclaimed. From this place, the Bible is read, the Gospel is proclaimed, and the sermon is preached. In small, cramped churches, with both lectern and pulpit, to eliminate either the lectern or the pulpit is a gain in appearance, symbol, and space. Of course, this cannot be done if they are a part of the church's structure. All the readings should be done from a book that expresses through its appearance the dignity of its role in Christian worship and in the life of the Christian community. If the congregation uses bulletin inserts or leaflets for the readings, the translation of the Bible is to be the same as the one read aloud. Do not read or proclaim the Gospel aloud from an insert.

The Place of Reservation

The consecrated bread and wine of the Eucharist is reserved for the care of the sick or, in very special circumstances, for the communion of those who are unable to attend the regular celebration of the community. The sacrament may be reserved in one or both kinds in a secure place such as a tabernacle or ambry. A candle or light, which is properly white, is placed near the place of reservation. The place of reservation should not draw attention away from the Altar as the central sign of God's presence when the congregation is gathered for the Eucharist. In other words, bows and reverence toward the place of reservation should not be done if they direct attention away from the altar, the center of the gathered community.

Banners and Flags

Banners add interest and color to liturgical space. They, however, must be well designed and well made. Banners should be seen and used occasionally. They should not be permanent to the liturgy or worship space. Personal baptismal banners, given to each person at their baptism, proclaiming them to be children of God, are used in several of our congregations. They are a very positive way of marking the importance of baptism and the congregation's participation therein. Flags carried by acolytes in procession can be cumbersome. Moreover, this practice is a recent introduction to the liturgy. Flags should be placed outside the sanctuary to avoid any symbolic conflict.

Processional Cross (or Crucifix) and Torches

The processional cross (or crucifix) with torches leads processions within the liturgical space and outside the building. They lead the procession of choir and ministers into the liturgical space at the beginning of worship and from the liturgical space at the end of worship. They may also be used at the proclamation of the Gospel and the Offertory. The thurifer precedes the crucifer if incense is used. One cross (or crucifix) for leading the procession is enough. In very large churches multiple processions are possible but in smaller churches there will appear to be a procession of crosses rather than a procession following the cross. The crucifer should carry the cross naturally, not with palms facing front and elbows sticking out to the sides. When the processional cross and torches are not being used they are to be kept in the church in an inconspicuous place.

Flowers

The use of flowers to decorate worship space is ancient. Flowers are commonly given to the glory of God in thanksgiving for God's goodness. Flowers remind us of our Christian responsibility for the care of the earth. Do not use plastic or other artificial flowers. Potted plants can provide another alternative to fresh-cut flowers. Homegrown flowers or wild flowers are to be preferred. The practice of carrying fresh altar flowers to shut-ins following community worship is a good custom.

Liturgical Colors

Most churches use white, red, purple, and green. Other colors, such as Advent blue, Lenten white and Passiontide red, may be used. Blue is increasingly used during Advent in Anglican and Lutheran churches. Lenten white, for altar hangings and veils, was originally unbleached linen. Several materials of similar color and texture are used today. Ornamentation is simple and executed in purple, deep red, black, or a combination of these colors. Passiontide or Holy Week red is commended. This deep red, often trimmed in black, should not be the fiery red used for feasts of the Holy Spirit. For the Burial of the Dead, white is the appropriate color since it is an Easter liturgy.

The Ministers in Church

For all of us, the requirements are the same. Reverence and dignity without stiffness should characterize the competent execution of our liturgical responsibilities. It is the responsibility of the priest to train and oversee the performance of the other ministers, whether clergy, licensed lay ministers, lectors, acolytes, or choristers. The priest is responsible for worship and in charge of those who lead it. Details of services should be worked out carefully ahead of time so that articles needed are available and participants know what to do. For complex liturgical services, a rehearsal is imperative. Last minute rushing about should be avoided. If possible, silence should be kept in the sacristy and in the church before services. Vestments should be clean and fitted properly. A person seated and vested in the sanctuary who crosses his or her legs appears awkward and undignified. Feet should be together and hands should be folded in the lap.

Stand for the Opening Acclamation through the Collect for the Day and stand for the Prayers of the People. Those serving in the sanctuary are encouraged to stand to receive communion. Standing or kneeling for the Great Thanksgiving should be left to the custom of each worshiper. We do not all have to do the same thing. The rubric says, "The people kneel or stand." In no case should a phrase, such as, "Let us pray," or, "Please kneel," be used as a signal to indicate posture. If you have a congregation that customarily kneels, pause to allow the interruption and noise of kneeling to drift away before proceeding. When you want the congregation to stand, please say, "Please stand."

The Peace is a greeting of peace, whether kiss, handshake or embrace. It ought to suggest something of the peace of Christ and the warmth and friendship of the Christian community. It is meant to be extended to those nearby. It is not a time for chatting or a time to see how many people one can greet.

Rites

A seasonal usage is appropriate for the use of Rites I and II. Some use Rite I during Advent and Lent and Rite II during Christmas and Easter. It may not be a good idea to associate Rite I with the more penitential seasons. In any case, too frequent changes are not helpful. Because of the particular focus of the Rite II canons, it is suggested that Prayer A be used during the Season After Pentecost, Prayer B during Advent, Christmas, and the Season after the Epiphany, Prayer C During Lent, and Prayer D during Eastertide. It is preferred that celebrants memorize those parts of the service addressed to the people and not hold a book. The salutations, the summary of the law, the bidding to confession, the absolution, the comfortable words, and the blessing are easily committed to memory. Celebrants must be familiar with the rubrics and guided by them.

Ceremonial

The ceremonial actions of our services are to be reverent, beautiful, and meaningful.

Processions

Technically, a procession is "...a distinct, significant act of worship." For this to be experienced we should work to include the whole congregation in an occasional procession: possibly, Palm Sunday procession into church carrying palms, or procession between Stations of the Cross, done outside if the congregation does not fit in the aisles, or between the service of the Word in the Easter Vigil, done around the Easter Fire (Paschal Candle) and the celebration at the main altar, or a procession of candidates at baptism and confirmation. Music is often used in worship to accompany movement. Although the singing of a hymn marks the procession into and out of the church, there may be other ways of processing. For example, the singing of a hymn can begin after the sanctuary party is in place. Instrumental music may accompany the procession; and in Lent, all the ministers may simply walk in, by the shortest route, taking their places quietly and informally. If the choir is seated in the rear of the church, it is distracting to have them process to the front and then go back to their places or to reverse the process upon leaving.

Gospel Processions

This feature of worship can be beautiful and instructive. The procession calls attention to the Gospel as a very important moment in each Eucharistic liturgy. The Gospel Book or Bible should be fairly large and bound. The Gospel Book can be carried in the entrance procession and placed on the altar where it remains until the deacon or priest takes it before the people or among them to be read. A good case can be made for having the Gospel read from a variety of locations. It may be read from within the sanctuary, from the pulpit, from the gate to the choir, or from the nave. Everyone should face in the direction of the one proclaiming the Gospel.

Offertory Processions

The offertory procession is a vehicle for teaching. At the offertory, the Church presents itself to God as a living sacrifice. The offering of bread and wine and money should symbolize the people and community making the offering. If possible, the money should be offered at the altar first, then the bread and wine. There are better ways of presenting the wafers than in tightly wrapped rolls that have to be opened by the priest or deacon to the accompanying crackle of paper. Present the hosts, unwrapped, in the number estimated as needed by the ushers. The lavabo is used after the money, bread and wine have been presented. Keep the number of containers for bread and wine to a minimum. We all eat and drink the same Christ. Many places need more than one chalice full of wine and some need multiple patens for administration. However, bless the bread in one container if possible and the wine in a chalice and a flagon from which other chalices and patens are filled during the fraction anthem. That anthem is in the Rite as a place for the people to offer devotions while the bread and wine is divided up for easy and expeditious communication of the congregation. To place the priest host (easier and better to break for the fraction) on a separate container says something we don't want to say about it being very different from the people. Just put it on top of the other wafers or use real bread that is broken for everyone. If incense is used, the use of the lavabo follows the censuring. The chalice and paten should be covered for the censuring.

Alms and Ushers

The alms basins or offering plates should be at the rear of the church and available for the ushers to begin the collection. To make a great ceremony of an acolyte or two passing out the plates to the ushers is meaningless. The alms are brought forward to be offered at the altar. If there is room on the altar, the alms, representing the people, should be left on the altar with the gifts of bread and wine until after the Eucharist is finished.

Candles

Normally, altar candles are lighted five minutes before the service begins. This should be done as simply as possible. The candles should be extinguished with the same simplicity during the final hymn or before leaving the sanctuary. The care, cleaning and keeping of candles and candlesticks should be taught and observed by the altar guild. The brass should be polished at least twice yearly before the feasts of Christmas and Easter. Neither the lighting nor the

extinguishing of candles should become another liturgical rite. It should be done as simply and quickly as possible. A candle of sufficient size and ornamentation, to be differentiated from all others in the church, is to be the first lighted for Easter. This Paschal Candle signifies the Light of Christ. It should be lighted at all baptisms and funerals and for all services during Eastertide.

Vestments

Today many priests wear the stole draped straight from the neck. It is traditional for a deacon to wear the stole over the left shoulder. If a priest takes the liturgical role of the deacon; i.e., to read the Gospel or set the table, the priest will not wear the stole in the manner of a deacon. The cassock may be worn at any time. The proper choir vesture continues to be black cassock and white surplice. Albs are acceptable, as are unvested choirs. The same holds true for acolytes. Hoods and scapulars are for monastics; stoles are for the ordained.

Incense

Since ancient times incense has been used in Jewish and Christian worship. Many of our congregations use it for festal celebrations of the Eucharist. The mechanics of handling a thurible cannot be described in writing. Ask a competent thurifer to show you how, and then pass along this skill to the servers. Too much incense in a small room can be stifling. It is not necessary to fill the room with smoke. Use incense sparingly and your people are more likely to come to appreciate it. When the bishop is present, he prefers the simple censuring of the Gospel, the offertory, the entire altar party and the congregation. If you have a more complicated liturgical pattern at major feasts, the bishop will follow your custom. For more information, see Howard Galley's *Ceremonies of the Eucharist*, published by Cowley Press.

Silence

Silence is an important element of worship. If used inappropriately it may cause some discomfort; but with adequate teaching, silence can add immeasurably to the experience of liturgy. It is suggested that silence be kept for a space at the following places in the Eucharist:

- After each of the readings. (30 seconds)
- After the homily and before the creed. (1 minute)
- After communion (1-2 minutes).

The Baptismal Rite

Baptisms are wet. A significant amount of water should be available to pour on the candidate. Immersion is biblical and a richly symbolic method of baptism, although it is seldom observed. The sacristan or Altar Guild member can provide towels for drying the candidate after baptism. The custom used in some places of clothing the candidate in a white robe after baptism is ancient and good. The white robe is to be a substantial garment; it is not a bib. The custom of giving a Baptismal Candle to the family to be lighted on the anniversary of the baptism is a good one. The congregation may wish to make its own distinctive candles for this purpose. The

candle should be large and beautiful and one the family will wish to keep. The sponsors may wish to purchase the candle as a gift to the family.

THE HOLY EUCHARIST

Communion and Hospitality

Generally speaking, all baptized persons are welcome to share in the banquet of the Lord's Supper, and no unbaptized person shall be eligible to receive Holy Communion in the Church (Canon I.17.7). More specifically, occasional visitors from other Christian churches who are baptized and in good standing in their own church, and who are permitted to do so by their own church, and who understand the standards of this church regarding faith and repentance, are eligible to receive Holy Communion. Because our ministry extends commonly to people of other denominations and because we wish them to be comfortable with our ways of worship, publishing an instruction regarding the mechanics of making communion is helpful. For example, "*All baptized persons are welcome to share in the Eucharist. Come toward the altar at the direction of the ushers. Kneel at the rail or stand and receive the bread in the palm of your outstretched hands. Receive the wine that follows by drinking from the cup as it is extended toward you. Cross your arms if you don't wish to receive the wine. Jesus is present in both species.*"

The church has authorized intinction. The manner of intinction is found in *The Book of Common Prayer*, page 407. Our bishop authorizes one way to intinct; viz., having the person administering the chalice take the host, intinct it, and place it on the communicant's tongue. Dipping numerous fingers into the chalice increases the possibility of germ pollution.

Bread and Wine

The bread and wine of the Eucharist should be clearly bread and wine. Both the bread and wine should taste good. With modern methods of preservation, there is no excuse for the use of stale bread or soured wine. Something is to be said for the use of unleavened whole wheat bread. It tastes good, is available in large wafers and does not crumble. The wine should be red. Customarily, the wine for the Eucharist is unfortified. Unfermented grape juice is not to be used. The ushers or acolytes should estimate the number of worshipers to determine how much bread and wine should be consecrated. There should always be enough of both bread and wine. When it appears that insufficient wine has been consecrated to communicate the people remaining, use the short prayer of consecration provided in *The Book of Common Prayer*, page 408, for this purpose. Needless to say, water or unconsecrated wine must never be added to the consecrated wine if it runs low.

The Blessing and Communicating of Small Children

The Book of Common Prayer, page 298, is clear when it says, "Holy Baptism is full initiation by water and the Holy Spirit into Christ's Body the Church." This, of course, means all baptized persons are welcome at the table of the Lord. Our Lord said, "Take and eat;" fortunately, he did not say, "Understand and eat." As full members of the Church after baptism, baptized persons of any age are able to receive communion. Children should receive instruction, appropriate to

their ages, regarding the making of communion. Parents should teach and model an attitude of reverence for their children. Parents should see to it that their child demonstrates to the person administering the sacrament whether or not the child wishes to receive, i.e., by extending hands in the accustomed way to receive the bread. If the child does not wish to receive, the child's arms should be crossed on the chest. Children at the altar rail who do not wish to receive the sacrament may receive a blessing. If blessing is the custom of the parish, a short sentence of blessing is appropriate, being cautious that the child does not feel pushed away.

Administering the Chalice

The authorization for Lay Eucharistic Ministers is granted to meet liturgical needs, particularly the undue amount of time required to communicate a large number of people. It is not lay ministry; it is to be understood as a simple and useful liturgical service performed by laypersons. When a priest, deacon, or bishop is available, that person must be used first. Church canons are clear regarding the licensing and function of the Lay Eucharistic Minister. (See Canon III.3.5. and *The Book of Common Prayer* page 408.)

Hospitable Feeding

No one gives a big party and serves himself or herself first. Church tradition, however, is for the celebrant to communicate himself or herself first. Communicate those who will actually be distributing communion, including one or two who can then communicate the rest of the sanctuary party while the others start the people's communion.

The Ablutions

There are several ways to accomplish the ablutions. If there is a hymn after the communions are completed, this is the best time. If the Sacrament is to be reserved, have a tabernacle or other place of reservation nearby. If there are assisting members of the clergy, they may do the ablutions in the sacristy. The simplest method for cleansing the vessels is the best method.

EPISCOPAL

General

If a bishop is in the congregation, please do not ask the bishop to give the absolution or blessing. Where the rubrics say, "When a bishop is present..." the writers of the rubric mean liturgically present, i.e., presiding or celebrating. However, when present as a liturgical officer, the bishop does all the blessings - including incense, etc. The Bishop's Chair is a cathedral feature. A celebrant's chair makes better sense in a parish. A portable chair or low stool should be placed at the entrance of the choir or sanctuary from which the bishop confirms and receives. A folding chair is inappropriate. It may be less awkward to have the chair in place before the liturgy begins and for the bishop to preside from this chair for the entire Liturgy of the Word if the chair does not obscure or overshadow the altar.

Confirmation, Reception, and Reaffirmation

After study and experience, the following is to be the usage in this diocese. When a bishop presides at baptism of an infant or child, the priest performs the sacramental act and the signing with the chrism. Otherwise, this constitutes the infant or child's Confirmation. If an adult is presented for baptism when the bishop is presiding, he will perform the sacramental act of both baptism and confirmation. The bishop expects the clergy to thoroughly prepare and present only those people who wish to take responsibility for the baptismal vows made for them as children.

The Rite of:

Confirmation is for those baptized persons who are making a mature public commitment to Christ for the first time, and for adults baptized in our Church when the bishop was not present.

Reception is for those already baptized and who have previously made a mature public commitment to Christ in another part of God's Church.

Reaffirmation is for Episcopalians who have fallen away from the Church or who wish to reaffirm their faith and commitment to the Christian life and community.

Bishop's Visitation with Baptism/Confirmation

The bishop needs an attendant to assist with books, miter, oil and crozier. For that person to be helpful, he or she must stand or be seated next to the bishop. The bishop sits in the chancel or sanctuary for the baptism/confirmation liturgy. Please use a respectable chair with a small table beside it.

During the rehearsal for baptism/confirmation, include the actual exchange of questions and answers to be sure the candidates are well acquainted with their responses and ready to speak clearly. The presenters are asked to know the names of the candidates and to say them clearly at the time of presentation.

When the candidates are presented for confirmation, the bishop will ask them to stand in place in the congregation to answer the questions of faith. After each candidate is questioned, the candidates will be seated and the bishop will ask the whole congregation to stand to ask their willingness to support the candidates in their confirmed life with Christ.

Photographs are appropriate following baptism and confirmation. Photographs may be taken before or after, but not during, the liturgical celebration. If photos are to be taken after the celebration, make plans for this with the photographer and the participants so that all will be present and so that the photos can be taken quickly.

Liturgical color for baptism and confirmation is always white.

Offertory with Bishop as Celebrant

It is helpful for a priest or deacon who knows the congregation and how the count is taken to prepare the elements at the offertory. Then the bishop will take the lavabo. Acolytes should be taught to open a folded lavabo towel before it is offered to the celebrant. Bishop's hands sometimes are sticky even without chrism if he has been laying his hands on people's heads!

Concelebration with Bishop

Priests of the parish will stand at the altar with the bishop for the Great Thanksgiving. Those close enough are asked to elevate a chalice or paten at the closing doxology of the Eucharistic Prayer.

OTHER RITES AND CEREMONIES

The Sacrament of Reconciliation or Confession

The bishop asks that all priests include in their announcements/publications some notice regarding their availability for confessions. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is important to discipleship and spiritual growth, and should be offered at least before Christmas and Easter.

Healing Ministry

The Book of Common Prayer provides for the Anointing of the Sick and the Laying on of Hands. This sacramental act is priestly. The ministry of healing is, however, not limited to the priest.

Some laypersons have a special charism for this ministry. They are permitted to lay on hands employing any of the fine prayers available, but not the sacramental rite from *The Book of Common Prayer*. The faithful may also wish to join the priest in the laying on of hands. The ministry of healing is a pastoral ministry in which our church should take a leading part.

Holy Week and Easter

The worshipping communities of this Diocese are encouraged to celebrate Holy Week in its fullness. Prayer Book rites are to be used on these eight days. No additional liturgical material is necessary, but use of The Stations (Way) of the Cross from *The Book of Occasional Services* is authorized. The Great Vigil of Easter, including the Easter Eucharist, is to be strongly encouraged in every congregation. The Vigil of Easter is best scheduled on Holy Saturday after sunset and with the celebration of baptisms and the first Eucharist of Easter.

Holy Days

In the institutional setting of our ministry, the practice of transferring certain movable holy days to a regularly scheduled mid-week Eucharist may be required. Episcopalians have so much to gain from a greater appreciation and knowledge of the saints and their lives. In addition to the "red letter" days, the "black letter" days further enrich the calendar to our advantage.

The Daily Office

It is expected that every ordained person will pray at least one office daily.

The Celebration and Blessing of Holy Matrimony

At least 30 days before the chosen date, the priest should be consulted before public announcement of wedding plans. A priest can refuse to solemnize any marriage. The Church's marriage rite is for Christians. In accordance with Church canons, at least one party must be baptized. We should require that at least one party show evidence of trying to live up to his or her baptismal vows. The church canons require premarital counseling. To benefit the couple, this should be done as much before the wedding as is possible. Counseling may be arranged in the community where the couple resides. Group premarital counseling is encouraged.

All arrangements for the wedding, as they pertain to the liturgy, are under the direction of the priest and not a wedding consultant. Non-liturgical nuptial practices; e.g., unity candle, are discouraged.

The Declaration of Intention should be signed at the first conference with the couple and the priest, and the general details of the wedding agreed upon. *The Book of Common Prayer* pp. 422, 437, 438 should be studied.

Normally, weddings should take place in the church. A celebration of the Holy Communion is recommended as a part of the marriage liturgy if the persons are both baptized.

The season of Lent is not suitable for the celebration of Holy Matrimony. In exceptional circumstances, a very simple wedding may take place, but never in Holy Week.

The banns of marriage (verbal and printed) are provided in *The Book of Common Prayer*, page 437. The inclusion of prayers for the couple in the intercessions in the weeks preceding the wedding is appropriate.

The clergy must approve the proposed decoration of the church. No changes should be made in the church furniture and appointments. Decorations for the wedding should not exceed what is customary at Christmas and Easter.

The music is under the direction of the priest in consultation with the organist. Music should be appropriate to Christian worship on a festive occasion. Congregational hymns are strongly recommended. Please see *The Book of Common Prayer*, p. 14. [Some suggested hymns for marriages are Hymnal 1982: Nos. 366, 376, 377, 390, 397, 410, 487 (solo), 518.]

A well-ordered rehearsal is called for with the clergy in charge. It is recommended that the clergy wear cassock, begin the rehearsal with prayer, and make a brief statement of the purpose of the rehearsal, the solemnity of the occasion and the responsibility of the wedding party. The

Declaration of Intention may be read. All except the officiating priest, who will sign it after the wedding liturgy, should then sign the forms.

Apparel of the wedding party is determined by the dignity and reverence customary in the house of God.

The use of flash equipment by a photographer during the service is distracting and in poor taste. If a video camera operator or a photographer is able to function under the direction of the priest, quietly and without intruding on the service, permission may be given. If there is a reception, wedding guests should not be kept waiting unduly by the photographer.

The couple may recite the vows without prompting from the priest or repeat the vows after the celebrant. Seating should be provided for the wedding party for use during the readings and the homily. Chairs may be placed in front of the pews.

Burial of the Dead

Priests are to give instruction to their congregations, at a time when the crisis of death is not imminent, on the meaning of death and the Church's way of dealing with death and burial. Priests should be notified at the time of extreme illness, so that he or she may be present to minister. Families should be encouraged to call immediately in the case of death. No funeral arrangements are made without first consulting with the priest.

The use of "Prayers for a Vigil," *Book of Common Prayer*, page 465 and "Reception of the Body," *Book of Common Prayer*, page 466, is strongly recommended. Often, "Prayers for a Vigil" can be used to close the period of visitation, much to the comfort of the family. In the case of communicants, the Order for the Burial of the Dead, *The Book of Common Prayer* page 469 or 491, with Eucharist, is appropriate and recommended.

The casket will be closed throughout the service, as well as while the body lies in state in the church. A funeral pall for deceased civilians or a United States flag for deceased servicemen and women will be used.

Music for a funeral is under the direction of the celebrant. Hymns from the Easter and All Saints' Day sections of the hymnal are appropriate and recommended.

At the time of committal, it is best if the casket is lowered into the ground before the committal service begins. Earth is preferable to undertaker's sand.

The use of any other rites or ceremonies, either in the church or before the time of committal, is not allowed. Members of fraternal organizations may serve as honorary pallbearers and be seated as a group in the church. Fraternal organizations may also conduct ceremonies at the grave after the services of the Church have been completed.

Cremation is an acceptable practice in Christian burial. It may prove practical to have the funeral prior to the cremation and to have the interment of the ashes later.

The foregoing instructions and suggestions apply especially to the faithful departed. In other cases where a priest officiates at the burial of the dead, discretion should be used in employing those parts of the Prayer Book liturgy that are suitable to the situation. A priest will officiate at the burial of anyone; it is one of the corporal acts of charity. None of the rubrics or the foregoing suggestions precludes the use of the services of the Church for non-Episcopalians or for those who have taken their own life. Please be guided by directions of *The Book of Common Prayer*, pages 468, 506,507.

The death of a priest, deacon, or bishop is a death in the diocesan family. If you live within a couple of hours of the site of the liturgical rites, please make every effort to attend. It makes no difference how well you may have known the deceased person.

MUSIC

Sung Liturgy

Often we seem to have many hymns but little sung liturgy. The bishop encourages, at the very least, the singing of the Sanctus (Sursum Corda and Preface). Next, he would encourage the singing of the Gloria, Kyrie or Trisagion, and then, thirdly, the psalm.

Hymns

The hymns must be singable. The Bishop encourages using all our hymnals. *The Hymnal 1982, Lift Every Voice and Sing II, Wonder, Love and Praise*, and other authorized hymnals. No hymn should be connected with the sermon, before or following. A hymn should not be sung between the Gospel proclamation and the sermon.

Responsorial Psalm

Often the style of the psalm recitation is incorrectly carried over to the Eucharist from Morning or Evening Prayer. In the Eucharist, the psalm is a response to the preceding reading(s). It should be sung or read seated. If said, the pace of the psalm should be meditative. The reader of the second lesson should be encouraged to go to the lectern during the recitation of this psalm.

Concluding Note

The above customary represents the best of our Anglican tradition. Where conditional language such “should” or “may” is used, church leaders ought to recognize that the Bishop expects them to use their best judgment in the choices they make, but is not mandating only one way. In other instances, the customary is clear without conditional language, and leaders should recognize and follow the direction they are given.

Any questions about this customary should be directed to the Bishop or the Canon to the Ordinary.