

Guidelines for a Bishop's Visitation

Schedule and Logistics for the Visitation

- The visiting Bishop will meet with candidates for confirmation, reception, and reaffirmation of baptismal vows 1 hour prior to the service time.
- The Bishop will meet with the Vestry following the service.
- The Bishop will meet with the rector to hear about his/her perspective on the ministry and mission of the parish either at the visitation or prior to the visitation.
- Meetings with youth or other parish groups may be arranged as time permits.
- The service register and registers of sacramental rites will be reviewed by the Bishop.
- If Prayer Books and certificates need to be signed, the Bishop will do so prior to the service.
- Please **return the Visitation Report** form to the Bishop's Office the week after the visitation. The information goes to the Archives for diocesan recordkeeping.
NOTE: If there are no baptisms, confirmations, etc. put a zero in each field and return the form.

Liturgical Preferences

- Parishes may use either the Book of Common Prayer or a printed service booklet.
- **E-mail or fax a copy of the Sunday bulletin or booklet to the appropriate Bishop *no later than* Monday of the week prior to the visitation.**
- The Bishop will preach.
- The Bishop will assume that the readings are those appointed for the day in the Revised Common Lectionary unless informed and approved two weeks prior to the visit that different readings have been chosen due to the occasion being celebrated.
- The liturgical color will be the color of the season unless there is a baptism, in which case the color will be white. At the Bishop's discretion, red may be used during Epiphany and Pentecost.
- The Bishops will administer baptism.
- The Prayers of the People and the Confession are omitted if there is either baptism or confirmation.
- The Celebrant gives the offertory sentence.
- Clergy from the parish should read the Gospel, prepare the table and do the ablutions, assist in distributing communion, give the dismissal, and make announcements.
- It is helpful but not essential to have an acolyte assigned to assist the Bishop in holding or retrieving their crosier, miter (if applicable) or Prayer Book.

Details about Confirmation, Reception, and Reaffirmation

- As per Title I, Canon 17.1.c, “Those who have previously made a mature public commitment in another Church may be received by the laying on of hands by a Bishop of this Church, rather than confirmed.”
- The Bishop lays hands on all people being confirmed, received, or reaffirming baptismal vows.
- Each person being confirmed, received, or reaffirming vows should have a nametag with his or her name and the rite being conferred in legible writing.
- Names of those being confirmed, received, or reaffirming vows should appear in the bulletin.

Offering

- The undesignated offering at visitations goes to the Bishop’s Discretionary Fund.
- It is helpful to announce this to the congregation the week prior to the service and to print the following sentence in the bulletin the Sunday of the visitation:

“The undesignated offering today is for the Bishop’s Discretionary Fund to enable him to meet a variety of pastoral and emergency needs in his ministry as Bishop.”
- A check in the amount of the undesignated offering is to be made out to the **Diocese of Ohio** with a memo noting the Bishop’s Discretionary Fund.
- Mail the check to:

Office of the Bishop
Diocese of Ohio
2230 Euclid Avenue
Cleveland, Ohio 44115