

HIGH MASS CELEBRATED BY A BISHOP

GENERAL NOTES

It is allowed for a bishop (B) to celebrate a High Mass if the situation necessitates it.¹ In this case, High Mass is celebrated *as usual* with the following additions that are outlined on these sheets.

SACRISTY & SANCTUARY PREPARATIONS

The preparations are as usual for High Mass with the following additions.

On the vesting table

- The pectoral cross is laid out between the stole and cincture
- A silver tray for B's skullcap² is placed to the right of the vestments
- B's purple biretta (if used)

On the credence

- a ewer and basin filled half-way with warm water
- a linen towel³ on a tray

On the altar

- a tray⁴ on the Epistle side (mensa or gradine) for the skullcap⁵
- B's maniple on the first altar step on the Epistle side⁶ where MC kneels for the Preparatory Prayers (if there is an *Asperges*, this is placed with the chasuble on the sedilia, and carried to the foot after B vests in the chasuble after the *Asperges* rite)

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Reverences

When serving a bishop, the *solita oscula* are given at the usual times, except to B's ring (worn on his right hand) is kissed, not his hand.

If serving the local ordinary (e.g., the diocesan bishop) or a greater prelate (e.g., a cardinal or archbishop) the ministers reverence B in the same manner as a priest celebrating High Mass with these exceptions:

Imposition of incense: MC and Th kneel while incense is being imposed.

Lavabos: acolytes kneel when performing each of the *Lavabos* and kiss B's ring after being blessed by him.

¹ I.e., there are not enough clerics to fill the various offices of sacred ministers for either an ordinary Solemn Mass, let alone either the pontifical form at the throne of faldstool. This had been practiced by indult in some missionary regions, and was formally sanctioned by the Sacred Congregation of Rites in the instruction, *Inter oecumenici*, on September 26, 1964; n. 48, l.

² Also called by its Italian name, *zucchetto*.

³ A 15 inch square towel is sufficient; it is recommended to actually have two towels available on the tray.

⁴ A small circular tray, about the size of a Communion plate is ideal for this function.

⁵ This is placed on the tray from the Secret until the first ablution.

⁶ If there is an MC2, then this should be prepared on the Gospel side of the center of the foot.

However, if serving an auxiliary bishop,⁷ all reverences remain the same as ministering to a priest.

SERVING HIGH MASS CELEBRATED BY A BISHOP

In the sacristy

- it is presumed that B will simply wash his hands in the sacristy sink.
- MC should assist B to vest as he would for a priest, adding the step of presenting the pectoral cross (before the stole) to B to kiss before giving it to him (however MC does not kiss the cross)
- MC and Th then come forward and kneel to have incense imposed. In every case, MC always uses the episcopal formula, "*Benedicite, Pater Reverendissime*" instead of the formula for a priest.

If there is an Asperges

- if the Sunday Mass, incense is not imposed and the processional followed by the *Asperges* rite takes place as usual.

Preparatory Prayers

- these are as usual, except after B has said the *Indulgentiam*, MC⁸ puts the maniple on B's left fore arm, having kissed the maniple first, allowing B to kiss the maniple and then kissing B's ring.
- the prayers are then concluded as usual.

First incensation of altar

- MC and Th ascend to the predella and kneel in their positions to have incense imposed with MC using the episcopal formula. All other times during Mass when incense is imposed (*i.e.*, Gospel, Offertory and recessional), it is done in this fashion.
- after the altar has been incensed as usual, MC incenses B as he would a priest celebrating a High Mass, bowing profoundly to B before and after.

Collect

- if there was a *Gloria*, B will turn to the people and sing, "*Pax vobis.*" If there was not a *Gloria*, B will simply sing the usual "*Dominus vobiscum*".

Lavabo

- the acolytes perform the *Lavabo* with the ewer, basin and towel kneeling on the Epistle edge of the predella, afterwards kissing B's ring and then receiving his blessing with bowed heads. There is no bow to B before and after the *Lavabo*, as the act of kneeling replaces the usual bows. Ac1 hold the ewer and basin, and Ac2 holds the towel.

Secret

- after B has read the Secret, B will remove his skullcap and place it on the tray on the altar.

⁷ This also applies to a suffragan bishop outside of his diocese.

⁸ If there is an MC2, then he performs this task instead.

Ablutions

- after consuming the first abluion of wine, B puts the skullcap back on.
- after the acolytes have performed the ablutions, they switch the missal and the chalice veil as usual, and then proceed immediately to the credence and pick up the ewer, basin and towel. Then both proceed to the Epistle edge of the predella and perform the washing as before.
- the acolytes then return their items to the credence and turn over the Communion cloth.

Last Blessing

- after saying the *Placeat tibi*, B will sing, “*Sit nomen Domini benedictum,*” to which the response is: “*Ex hoc nunc et usque in sæculum.*” Then B sings, “*Adjutorium nostrum in nomine Domini*” to which the usual response is given. B then blesses all with the episcopal triple-sign of the cross; all sign themselves only once though.

Recessional

- when B is *in plano* at the foot, MC and Th kneel in front of B and have incense imposed as before (if used for the processional, otherwise it is omitted).
- Th then takes position at the head of the formation and swings the thurible gently during the recessional.