

# PALM SUNDAY CEREMONIES

## An adapted version of the Solemn form without deacon or subdeacon

### FOREWORD

The Solemn form of the Holy Week ceremonies is the ideal method, but this is not always practical in a typical parish situation that lacks the requisite number of ordained ministers for the various positions.<sup>1</sup> This fact was recognized and dealt with during the Holy Week reform, thus several options exist for rendering the ceremonies as solemnly as possible according to the situation, either per the Solemn, Semi-Solemn or Small Churches form. These notes outline a High Mass adaptation<sup>2</sup> of the Solemn form, which is suitable for churches capable of rendering the ceremonies of Holy Week in a more complete manner than the simpler Small Churches form. A number of options are provided for rendering certain parts of the ceremonies, and these are also outlined within these notes.<sup>3</sup>

### PERSONS NEEDED FOR THE CEREMONIES

- Celebrant (C).
- Masters of ceremonies (MC1<sup>4</sup> and MC2<sup>5</sup>).
- Thurifer (Th).
- Crossbearer (Cb).<sup>6</sup>
- Acolytes (Ac1, Ac2).
- Torchbearers (Tb); 4 to 8.<sup>7</sup>
- Boatbearer (Bb).<sup>8</sup>
- Sacristan.<sup>9</sup>

### OPTIONS FOR THE PASSION READING

Several methods exist for enacting the Passion,<sup>10</sup> based upon whether it is sung or read, who are the ministers and which parts will they render. There are three parts for the Passion reading, the *Christus* (Christ), *Chronista* (Narrator), and *Synagoga* (the Synagogue). It is presumed that the Passion will be sung by three clerics who are at least ordained deacons,<sup>11</sup> but this is not usually possible in a parish, hence outlined here are a variety of options:

1. The celebrant may sing (or read) either all or some of the Passion parts; in either case, if C is involved, he must at least take the part of *Christus*, and he does so wearing his Mass vestments,<sup>12</sup> from the Gospel corner of the altar.<sup>13</sup>
2. A deacon may sing (or read) all three parts, in which case, C merely listens from the sedilia.<sup>14</sup>
3. A schola may sing (but not read) the *crowd* (*Turba*) parts of the *Synagoga*.<sup>15</sup> In this case, the individual *Synagoga* parts (e.g., Pontius Pilate) are sung by the *Chronista*.<sup>16</sup>

To summarize the options:

#### If sung:

- a. C sings all three parts.
- b. C sings the *Christus* and D the *Chronista* and *Synagoga*.
- c. C sings the *Christus*, D the *Chronista* and *Synagoga*'s individual parts, and the schola the *Synagoga*'s *crowd* parts.

<sup>1</sup> E.g., the least being, tonsured cleric for Sd, diaconate for D, and diaconate for the three deacons of the Passion.

<sup>2</sup> There are in fact several methods of High Mass, or *missa cantata*, with the most advanced being an adaptation of Solemn Mass, as explained in the High Mass notes offered by Romanitas Press.

<sup>3</sup> The main sources cited throughout these notes are: Rev. Adrian Fortescue, *The Ceremonies of the Roman Rite Described* (Burns & Oates, 1962; reprinted by St. Austin Press, 1996); Rev. J.B. O'Connell, *The Ceremonies of Holy Week: Simple and Solemn Rite* (Burns & Oates, 1963); and Very Rev. Walter J. Schmitz, *Holy Week Manual For Priests* (Bruce, 1962).

<sup>4</sup> He must have a thorough knowledge of the ceremonies, particularly of C's duties, of who he has general charge, as well as overall the other ministers.

<sup>5</sup> He must also have a thorough knowledge of the ceremonies. In general, MC2 leads all processions, has charge of the servers and assisting clerics, and coordinates the faithful as necessary.

<sup>6</sup> This position is optional for Mass and is strictly required only for the procession with palms.

<sup>7</sup> It is also allowed to have a retinue of altar servers in cassock and surplice participate in the procession with palms.

<sup>8</sup> This position is optional.

<sup>9</sup> One should be sufficient for these ceremonies, save possibly for removing the table for the palms.

<sup>10</sup> Though mentioned in the treatment of Small Churches form by Fortescue and O'Connell, the option of using two or three deacons to sing the Passion have been omitted here, since neither one is usually available in a typical parish. See the Solemn and Semi-Solemn form notes for these options, as well as the ones specific with these forms.

<sup>11</sup> Fortescue, p 271 and O'Connell, p 12.

<sup>12</sup> That is, both chasuble and maniple; cf. O'Connell, p 12 and 84, and Schmitz, p 52.

<sup>13</sup> Fortescue, p 315.

<sup>14</sup> An option envisioned by Schmitz on p 26, ff 12.

<sup>15</sup> Fortescue, p 275, ff 1: "*The crowd parts may be sung by the choir*", O'Connell, p 12, and Schmitz, p 42 and in ff 26 citing SRC 4044<sup>2</sup>. This implies an *all-male choir* and *not a mixed choir*, since this is a liturgical function (e.g., Schmitz on p 42, ff 25, cites SRC 2169 and O'Connell on p 12, ff 4, SRC 2740<sup>2</sup> and 3804<sup>3(4)</sup>, which specifically forbid nuns singing the crowd parts). It likewise follows that a schola member would be prohibited from singing the Passion *solo* (because this is a diaconate prerogative). Preferably, the schola members would be vested in cassock and surplice and situated within the sanctuary (but not at a lectern as for a deacon), or close by to facilitate the proper coordination.

<sup>16</sup> Fortescue, p 275, ff 1, and O'Connell, p 12.

- d. C sings the *Christus, Chronista* and individual parts of the *Synagoga*, and the schola the *Synagoga's crowd* parts.

**If read:**

- a. C reads all three parts.  
 b. C reads the *Christus* and D the *Chronista* and *Synagoga*.

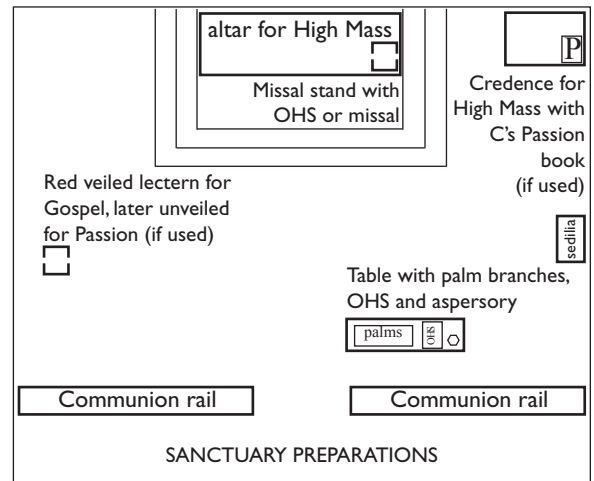
**PREPARATIONS**

**In the sacristy**

- for C: biretta, alb, amice, red stole, cincture, and cope.<sup>17</sup>
- if there is a deacon (or priest) for the Passion reading: biretta, amice, alb, violet cincture and stole.
- if a second priest will assist with distributing the palms, a surplice and red stole.<sup>18</sup>
- the processional cross unveiled.<sup>19</sup>

**On the altar<sup>20</sup>**

- a red antependium over a violet one.
- on the tabernacle, a red veil over a violet one.
- the tabernacle key, already inserted.
- the altar cross is veiled in violet.
- chalice assembly as for High Mass.<sup>21</sup>
- ciborium with hosts (if required).
- OHS<sup>22</sup> (or missal) on a stand covered with a red veil over a violet one; the book is opened to the first text that will be read from it.
- center altar card (only).<sup>23</sup>
- flowers are not allowed, but palm branches (or other shrubs) in vases (or other shrubs) may be placed on the altar.<sup>24</sup>
- as the altar cross is veiled, reliquaries are also not allowed.



**At the sedilia**

- violet chasuble, stole, maniple and cincture in vesting order.

**Credence**

Prepared as usual for High Mass, with these additional items:

- silver ewer (filled half-way with warm water) and basin.
- silver tray with a bar of soap.
- large, absorbent towel.

**Preparation of the palm branches**

A table is to be placed prominently in the sanctuary, "so placed that the people may easily see the blessing being done".<sup>25</sup> The top is covered with a white cloth<sup>26</sup> and the front and sides in red. The front of the table faces the nave,<sup>27</sup> on which is placed:

17 If a cope is not available, C "ministers in alb and stole," Fortescue, p 276, ff 6, and Schmitz, p 23, ff 1, citing the missal rubrics (*Rub. Gen.*, XIX, 4).

18 O'Connell, p 21, ff 5.

19 Fortescue on p 276 and O'Connell, p 79; it is customary in the United States to affix palms decoratively to the cross. Formerly in the old rite, this was done after the palms were blessed and while they were being distributed. No such mention is made either in the OHS or by the aforementioned authors.

20 If the rite of blessing the palms will be held in another place than where the Mass will be offered, then only the violet veils need to be prepared in the sanctuary and on the altar where Mass will be celebrated. Likewise for the items veiled for the rite of blessing the palms.

21 Fortescue places the various Mass items on a credence for the Simple Form on p 276, while O'Connell places them already prepared at the altar on p 79 if a tonsured cleric is not present. The method given here is more suitable for the typical parish.

22 Short for *Ordo Hebdomadae Sanctae Instauratus*; the first edition was published in 1955 (and its 1956 printing is the most readily available), though subsequent revisions were made in 1957 and 1962 (the latter being encompassed in the 1962 *Missale Romanum*).

23 As the Last Gospel will be omitted, only the center card is required; hence the Last Gospel card should not be placed on the altar (these cards exist for only a practical purpose and not for decoration); cf. p 200, *Handbook for the New Rubrics*, Fr. Frederick McManus (Helicon, 1961). Consequently, neither is the Lavabo card prepared on the altar (as a single side card on the altar would not be aesthetically balanced). If C requires the Lavabo card, this can be held by a server (e.g., Cb if situated on the Epistle side which is presumed by rubricians) at the appointed time, or a small unframed card with the texts can be placed flat on the altar.

24 Fortescue, p 276.

25 Fortescue, p 271; interpreting OHS rubric n. 5 ("et positum in opportuniore loco presbyterii, ita tamen, ut maneat in conspectu populi"), he gives this position either in plano or on the predella. Both of these positions are confirmed by O'Connell in describing the Solemn Form on p 20, ff 5, though he also states the table "will normally be in plano", for in most parish churches, the predella is not deep enough to accommodate such an arrangement. Schmitz on p 23 places the table "near the Communion rail", which is the more common arrangement. In either case, if the Blessed Sacrament is reserved, the table is placed on the Epistle side, otherwise, it can be placed in the center for both options.

26 Per OHS rubric n. 4: "tobalea alba coopertum".

27 Per OHS rubric n. 5: "Celebrans... versus populum".

- the palms on a large tray or in a low-sided basket covered with a veil.<sup>28</sup>
- a specially decorated palm reserved for C should be on the table.<sup>29</sup>
- aspersory and aspergil.
- OHS properly marked and placed on the Epistle corner with the opening facing left.<sup>30</sup>

**Option for the laity to hold their palms during blessing:**<sup>31</sup> If the congregation is large, the faithful may take their palms upon entering the church;<sup>32</sup> Thus the table in the sanctuary will have only the quantity of palms required for the ministers (and schola members if in the sanctuary).

### For the Gospel (blessing of palms rite)

Two options exist for chanting the Gospel during the High Mass form:

- a. **at a lectern** prepared in the usual Solemn Mass Gospel position;<sup>33</sup> if this option is used, a red veiled lectern is prepared on the Gospel side of the sanctuary facing north.
- b. **at the altar;**<sup>34</sup> if this option is used, a red veiled missal stand is prepared on the Epistle side of the altar; on the stand is the missal (or another OHS) opened and marked for the Gospel reading.<sup>35</sup> This will be switched to the Gospel corner during the Tract.

### For the Passion reading

As indicated in the OHS for Palm Sunday, the designated Passion reading is *Passio Domini nostri Jesu Christi secundum Matthaeum* which now starts at: “*In illo tempore: Venit Jesus cum discipulis suis in villam...*” Note that the revised text in the 1955 OHS omits from the older versions of the *Cantus Passionis*<sup>36</sup> the *Chronista*’s introductory line “*Scitis quia post biduum Pascha fiet...*” to the middle of the *Chronista*’s line “*...tunc venit Jesus cum illis in villam...*”<sup>37</sup> Also omitted is the solemn ending by the *Chronista*, as denoted in earlier editions of the *Cantus Passionis* (“*Erat autem Marie Magdelene*” to “*signantes lapidem cum custodibus*”); however some religious congregations still use it.

-*Cantus Passionis* books as required (if the Passion is merely read, an OHS or missal can be used for this purpose), with their ribbons marked and exposed for the proper Passion reading, and if placed on the credence, the opening facing left.

- a. **if a deacon assists**, his book is prepared as described above and placed in the sacristy next to his vestments.
- b. **if only C sings the Passion** (with or without the schola), his book is placed on the credence.

-reading stand:

- a. **if a deacon (or priest) is available:** an unveiled lectern<sup>38</sup> on the Gospel side of the sanctuary facing north.
- b. **if C chants (alone or with a deacon or schola):** the missal stand (covered in violet for the Mass) will be switched by MCI during the Mass from the Epistle corner of the altar to the Gospel corner as he would for the Gospel at High Mass.

## SYNOPSIS OF THE CEREMONY

The order of the ceremonies of Palm Sunday is similar to that of Candlemas and Ash Wednesday with three major exceptions:

- The imposition and blessing of the incense is done after sprinkling the palms with holy water.
- No one presents C’s palm ceremoniously during the distribution of palms.<sup>1</sup>
- There is a Gospel reading between the distribution and procession of the palms.

### 1. PROCESSION

#### 2. BLESSING OF PALMS

- A. Antiphon, *Hosanna filio David* (sung by choir)
- B. Oration, *Benedic, quaesumus, Domine*.
- C. Sprinkling of palms with holy water.
- D. Imposition and blessing of incense, blessing of palms with incense.

#### 3. DISTRIBUTION OF PALMS

- A. C goes to center of predella; MCI puts C’s palm on altar.
- B. Clerics receive palms from C at predella.
- C. Servers receive palms from C at predella.
- D. Laity receive palms from C at Communion rail (unless they already have them).

<sup>28</sup> Fortescue says it is red on p 271, while Schmitz says white on p 23.

<sup>29</sup> This may simply have a red ribbon tied around it, or woven from several palms.

<sup>30</sup> As described by Fortescue, O’Connell and Schmitz, this may be held by an acolyte (as these notes outline), placed on a missal stand, or a lectern; in the latter two cases, the book is prepared opened to the beginning of the ceremony (O’Connell, p 80). If either a stand or lectern are utilized, these may be situated on the Epistle corner as shown in Fortescue’s diagram on p 272, though O’Connell (p 79, ff 3) places them on the opposite side “*nearer the altar*”. Fortescue’s method has been chosen within these notes.

<sup>31</sup> Per OHS rubric n. 4: “*nisi ab ipsis fidelibus jam in manibus teneantur*”.

<sup>32</sup> E.g., on a table in the narthax.

<sup>33</sup> Fortescue, p 277, and O’Connell, p 82.

<sup>34</sup> Schmitz, p 51.

<sup>35</sup> Schmitz, pp 45 and 51.

<sup>36</sup> The 1953 edition printed by Desclee was the last pre-1955 version published.

<sup>37</sup> As found on p 11 of the Desclee edition.

<sup>38</sup> Fortescue, p 271.

#### 4. WASHING C's HANDS

#### 5. GOSPEL READING

- A. Imposition and blessing of incense.
- B. C says *Munda cor meum*.
- C. C chants Gospel.
- D. C is not incensed after Gospel.

#### 6. PROCESSION WITH PALMS

- A. Incense is imposed and blessed.
- B. Procession with palms.
- C. *Ingrediente* chanted as C reenters the church.

#### 7. ORATION, DOMINE JESU CHRISTE

- A. Said by C on the predella facing the people.

#### 8. HIGH MASS AS USUAL, except:

- A. Preparatory Prayers inclusive to *Oramus* are omitted.
- B. All genuflect during Epistle for "*ut in nomine Jesu omne genu flectatur caelestium, terrestrium et infernorum.*"
- C. Passion is enacted according to one of the options, during which:
  - Palms are not held by anyone.
  - Candles are not held by the acolytes.
  - Incense is not used.
  - "*Laus tibi, Christe*" is not said at conclusion.
  - C does not kiss the book at conclusion.
- E. Last Gospel is omitted.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR THE FAITHFUL

It is recommended that the faithful be instructed beforehand on some ceremonial points. These announcements can be made from the pulpit by a priest or by one of the MCs.

1. If the faithful have brought their own or obtained their palms while entering the church, they should hold their branches slightly raised (so they can be seen) during the blessing.<sup>39</sup>
2. If receiving their palms at the rail, the order of receiving is: 1) kiss the palm branch first (as this is a sacramental); 2) then the priest's hand.
3. The palms are also reverently held during the Gospel (during the rite of blessing the palms).
4. Before exiting for the procession with palms, they should genuflect to the altar in their pews in unison with the ministers in the sanctuary, so that the procession can efficiently exit the church. The faithful remain standing while the ministers proceed down the aisle<sup>40</sup> and then exit starting with the front row and so on.
5. Upon reentering into the church, the same procedure is repeated by first taking their place in their pews, then genuflecting to the altar.
6. The palms are not held at Mass, particularly during the reading of the Passion.

### NOTA BENE: THE FIRST APPROACH OF THE ALTAR

OHS rubric n. 13 implies that C will first approach and kiss the altar (the two actions are in fact congruous) just before the imposition of incense for the Gospel during the rite of blessing the palms. However, amongst the three cited rubricians, there is a difference of instructions given:

- a. Fortescue (for Solemn form on p 273), O'Connell (for Solemn form on p 20) and Schmitz (for both forms on pp 25, 29 and 51) comply with the OHS rubrics in the respective citations.
- b. O'Connell states however (for Solemn form on p 20, ff 5) that if the table with the palm branches is prepared at the Epistle corner of the predella,<sup>41</sup> then C would kiss the altar upon ascending to the predella before beginning the rite of blessing the palms.
- c. Fortescue also (for Small Churches on p 277) instructs C to kiss the altar upon ascending to the predella to distribute palms to those in the sanctuary.
- d. It appears that the rubricians omit option c supposing the predella is quite deep; however, this is usually not the case in a typical church. Thus, unless option b is employed, these notes comply with Fortescue's option c which seems to be the most appropriate for the situation entailed.

### PROCESSIONAL

-in the sacristy, C vests in amice, alb, cincture, red stole and cope.

<sup>39</sup> During the blessing with holy water and incense, the faithful should not sign themselves, as these blessings are being directed to the palm branches, not the faithful; i.e., it is not an *Asperges*.

<sup>40</sup> No reverence of any kind should be made by them as either the processional cross or C passes them.

<sup>41</sup> Which as previously noted is impossible for most parish churches.

-if customary, incense is imposed and blessed in usual manner for the processional.<sup>42</sup>

-Th leads the processional, and if bearing blessed incense in the thurible, swings it gently; otherwise merely carries the thurible (without any swinging motion) in his left hand.

-during the processional, MCI and MC2 flank C on their respective sides holding the cope by the ophreys.

-all others process in the same order as for High Mass.

-during the processional the choir sings the antiphon, *Hosanna filio David*.

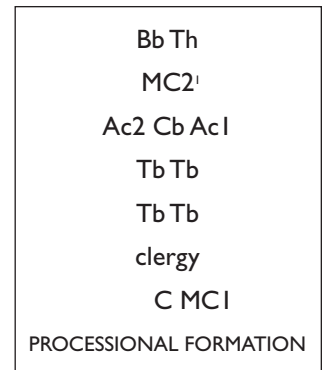
-upon entering the sanctuary, Th and Bb genuflect at the foot and position themselves near the table with palms, leaving room for the other ministers.

-the acolytes and Cb<sup>43</sup> proceed as usual directly to the credence and put their items down; then without any reverence, the acolytes go shoulder to shoulder to the table with palms, while Cb goes to his usual place (the Communion gate is left open if the faithful already have their palms).

-when the acolytes have reached the table with palms, AcI retrieves the aspersory and Ac2 the OHS; both stand aside and await the arrival of C.

-the Tbs enter, genuflect and go to their places as usual.

-the MCs and C go to the foot and before genuflecting MCI takes the biretta *solita oscula*,<sup>44</sup> signals a genuflection for C and MC2, then all go to the table and face the nave.<sup>45</sup>



## BLESSING OF PALMS

### Antiphon, *Hosanna filio David*

-upon arriving at the table,<sup>46</sup> MCI goes to C's right, and indicates Ac2 to come forward with the OHS, which MCI then opens and waits for the choir to chant the introductory antiphon.

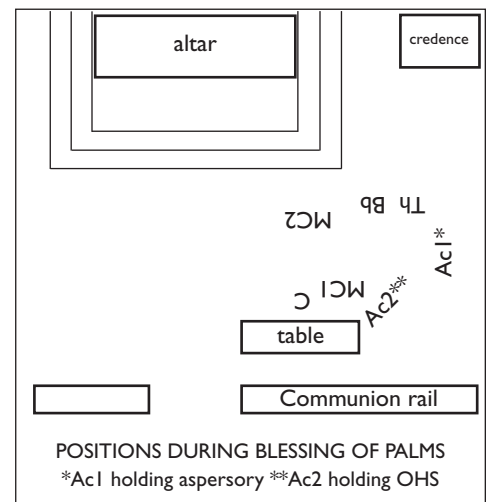
-meanwhile, MC2 (on C's left) removes the veil from the palms, put its aside and takes position in a convenient place; if necessary, MC2 prompts the servers assisting at the table.

### Oration, *Benedic, quaesumus, Domine*

-when the choir has finished singing the antiphon, MCI indicates to C the oration, *Benedic, quaesumus, Domine*.

-during the oration, the bows are made straight ahead by all the ministers. C sings the versicle and blessing in the second ferial tone.

-when C blesses the palms (at the very beginning of the oration), MCI holds back the cope.



### Sprinkling of the palms with holy water

-after C has concluded the oration, MCI marks the concluding oration (*Domine Jesu Christe*) with the ribbon and closes the book.

-Ac2 returns the OHS to the credence (the opening facing left) and goes to his usual Mass position.

-AcI then approaches MCI, gives him the aspersory and immediately goes to C's left to assist with the cope.

-MCI presents the aspergil to C with *solita oscula*, who sprinkles the palms "*crosswise (i.e. before him, to his left, to his right)*" saying nothing;<sup>47</sup> both MCI and AcI hold the ophreys while C sprinkles the palms.

-if the faithful are holding their palms, all three go to the center of the sanctuary, genuflect and proceed into the nave as for the *Asperges* action to sprinkle the palms held by the congregation, again with C saying nothing. Upon reentering the sanctuary, all genuflect and return to the table.

-after the sprinkling the branches, MCI receives the aspergil from C with *solita oscula* and returns both the aspersory and aspergil to AcI behind C.

-AcI then returns the aspersory to the table and remains nearby for his next task.

42 Cf. J.B. O'Connell, p 32 in *The Celebration of Mass: A Study of the Rubrics of the Roman Missal* (Bruce 1964- Preserving Christian Publications, 2007) within his section on Liturgical Law, where he states that this has been effectively established as a custom for non-pontifical functions. This practice is a common usage in the United States.

43 *Ibid* and the same as the footnote above. These notes presume that Cb will be used not just for the procession with the palm branches, but for the entire Mass per the Crossbearer at High Mass notes available from Romanitas Press.

44 Since the acolytes are already holding items, Cb could be on hand to take the biretta to the sedilia. Otherwise, if at the foot, per Schmitz on p 53, MCI can place the biretta on the altar step as it will be retrieved momentarily for the procession. Likewise, Cb could also place the biretta here. These notes though presume it will be placed on the sedilia, since a large number of servers (and possibly schola members) will be accessing the predella to obtain their palms which could result in the biretta being trampled accidentally.

45 C does not ascend to the predella and kiss the altar, unless the table is prepared there; cf. O'Connell, p 20, ff 5 and Fortescue, p 276.

46 If this has been prepared on the predella, C, accompanied by the MCs, immediately ascends to the center of the altar and kisses it, as this will be his first approach of the altar; O'Connell, p 20, ff 5.

47 Fortescue, p 272.

## Imposition and blessing of incense, blessing of the palms with incense<sup>48</sup>

-Th and Bb then approach for the imposition of incense.

-MCI receives the boat from Bb and incense is imposed as usual with MCI saying, “*Benedicite, Pater reverende.*”

-MCI returns the boat to Bb, receives the thurible from Th who then immediately goes to C’s left to assist with the cope.

-meanwhile, Bb returns to his usual Mass position.

-MCI presents the thurible to C as usual with *solita oscula* and C incenses the palms crosswise with three singles, saying nothing; both MCI and Th hold the ophreys while C incenses the palms.

-if the faithful are holding their palms, all three then go to the center of the sanctuary, genuflect and proceed into the nave as before to incense with continuous swings the palms held by the congregation, again with C saying nothing. Upon reentering the sanctuary, they go directly to the foot and genuflect.

-MCI receives the thurible back from C with *solita oscula* and returns it to Th who then returns to his usual position and puts aside the thurible.<sup>49</sup>

-remaining on C’s right side, MCI conducts him to the predella, where C kisses the altar.<sup>50</sup>

-meanwhile, AcI retrieves C’s palm with a bundle of branches (enough for those in the sanctuary to receive) from the table and takes them directly to the Epistle side of the predella; there MCI takes C’s palm<sup>51</sup> and places it on the Epistle side of the mensa between the chalice assembly and missal.

-AcI remains at the predella holding the palms to assist with their distribution to those in the sanctuary.

-meanwhile, MC2 directs the servers (and schola members if vested) to line up in pairs at the foot in processional order to receive their palms by order of precedence (cf. the diagram).

-if there is a D to assist with the Passion (or any other cleric), he will receive his palm before the servers.

## DISTRIBUTION OF PALMS

-MCI assists C by holding back the cope during the distribution of the palms.<sup>52</sup>

-each pair genuflects before ascending to the predella, where they kneel together and receive their palms, kissing the palm first, then C’s hand.<sup>53</sup> To better facilitate this action, C should hold the palm horizontally between both hands, leaving a sizeable gap between them so the person can kiss the palm and then kiss the hand in rapid succession.

-after the pair of servers have received their palms (holding them in their outside hands), they arise, turn inwards, descend *in plano* and genuflect with the next pair awaiting to ascend, then return to their usual places.

-situated near the Epistle corner of the foot, MC2 ensures the pairs act accordingly; when the servers are nearly finished receiving their palms, MC2 should signal the faithful to approach the rail (unless they are already holding their palms).

-immediately after receiving their palms, Th and Bb go to the sacristy and prepare the thurible and boat for the Gospel and procession with palms; the thurible should be sufficiently filled with well-lit charcoals and the boat should be nearly full.

-if the faithful do not have their palms already, when all in the sanctuary have received and returned to their places, MCI, AcI and C descend to the foot with C, where they turn and face the altar, genuflect, and then go to the Epistle side of the Communion rail for distribution to the faithful; along the way, MCI and AcI cross behind C to be on his right side.

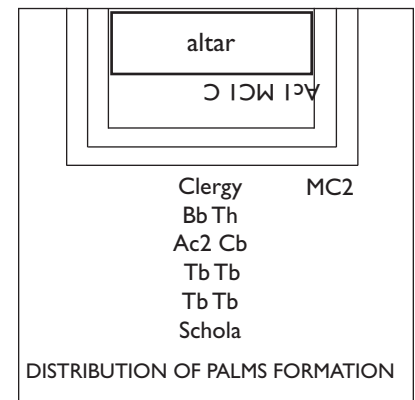
-during the entire distribution, MCI continues to hold back the cope while AcI retrieves more branches from the table as needed. Whenever the ministers come to the center of the rail, they must turn and face the altar, genuflect and then continue.

-if a second priest assists with the distribution of palms, Ac2 will assist him in bringing bundles of branches as required.

-like those in the sanctuary, the faithful kneeling at the rail, kiss the palm first, then C’s hand.

-during this time the choir sings the appointed antiphons and psalms.

-when the distribution is completed, the acolytes go to the credence genuflecting at the foot along the way. The acolytes pick up their items (Ac1: ewer and basin; Ac2: tray with soap and towel) and then proceed to the place where C will wash his hands.



## WASHING C’s HANDS<sup>54</sup>

There are several options available, but here are the two most common:

48 The usual Roman method is to perform all of the preparatory blessings, then the blessing of the objects in question. Per OHS rubric nn 8-9, this order differs (only) for the rite of blessing the palm branches. All three cited rubricians likewise outline this order.

49 If the sacristy is not conveniently nearby, a thurible stand may be temporarily set up here for this purpose, or Th may carefully set the thurible on the floor.

50 Fortescue, p 277.

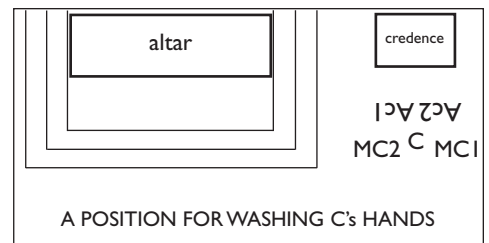
51 The celebrant “no longer receives it ceremonially,” Fortescue, p 273, ff 1, O’Connell, p 21, ff 2, and Schmitz, pp 24 and 51.

52 As both MCs are preoccupied in assisting or directing, neither should receive a palm. The same is true of AcI at the predella.

53 The palm takes precedence because it is a sacramental; cf. O’Connell, p 21 and Very Rev. L. O’Connell, *The Book of Ceremonies* (Bruce, 1958), p 41, ff 25: “If the object is blessed, however, kiss the object first and then the hand, even when receiving it.”

54 OHS rubric n. 13 states “*et abaco remoto*” though the cited rubricians offer a variety of interpretations for this direction: Fortescue for the Solemn form (p 273) at the “extra credence”; for Small Churches form (p 277) in front of the sedilia (then he imposes incense there). O’Connell for the Solemn (p 22) at the credence (adding in ff 1, if “C does not distribute palms to the people he may wash his hands standing on the footpace at the Epistle corner”); for Small Churches (p 82) at the sedilia. Schmitz for the Solemn (p 25) at the center of the foot *in plano*; for Small Churches (p 51) the Epistle corner of the foot *in plano*. Any of these options are legitimate.

- a. If C distributed palms at the rail, MCI conducts him to the foot, both genuflect and then go to the sedilia and face across the sanctuary; the acolytes approach and administer the washing with ewer and basin, bowing before and after as usual, while the MCs hold back the cope. C stands and says nothing during this.
- b. If C distributes palms only to those in the sanctuary, thus not leaving the predella, he goes to the Epistle corner and the acolytes ascend to the second altar step and administer the washing with ewer and basin, bowing before and after as usual. MCI holds back the cope on his right side. C says nothing during the washing.<sup>55</sup>



### GOSPEL READING: AT THE LECTERN; OPTION I

For sake of brevity, this action is essentially the same as for the Gospel at Solemn Mass, except the preparatory imposition of incense, presentation of book, and initial formation of the Gospel procession take place at the sedilia and C's preparatory prayers for the Gospel occur at the foot (as D would normally do). Both Fortescue and O'Connell outline this method in their descriptions of the Small Churches form, thereby keeping more closely to the Solemn form. See below for the altar option, as denoted by Schmitz which mimics the Gospel action at High Mass.

-at this time, Th and Bb should be ready with their items at their normal High Mass positions.

-after the washing, MCI leads C to the sedilia, while the acolytes put the washing items down and retrieve their candles, but remain at the credence.

-MC2 goes to the credence where he retrieves the OHS and waits nearby.

-when the washing is completed and MC2 and the acolytes are at the credence, Th and Bb approach C at the sedilia, where MCI takes the boat from Bb. Incense is imposed as usual, after which MCI returns the boat to Bb, who returns to his usual place.

-Th steps slightly in front of the sedilia to take his place at the front right of the Gospel formation, leaving sufficient room for the acolytes behind him.

-when the incense has been blessed and Th has taken his position, followed by the acolytes, MC2 goes to the sedilia and facing C presents the OHS to him with the usual bows. MC2 then takes his place at the front left of the Gospel formation.<sup>56</sup>

-meanwhile, the acolytes have gone directly to their position behind Th (and eventually MC2).

-once MCI and C are ready at the rear of the Gospel processional formation,<sup>57</sup> MC2 and Th lead the entire formation to the foot. There the servers line up as for the Gospel at Solemn Mass (either in a box formation or *recta linea* as is convenient) leaving sufficient space in the formation's center to allow C and MCI<sup>58</sup> to pass through to reach the foot; then all genuflect on MCI's signal.

-C kneels on the first altar step and recites all of the usual preparatory prayers for the Gospel (e.g., *Munda cor meum*, etc.) while the servers remain standing.

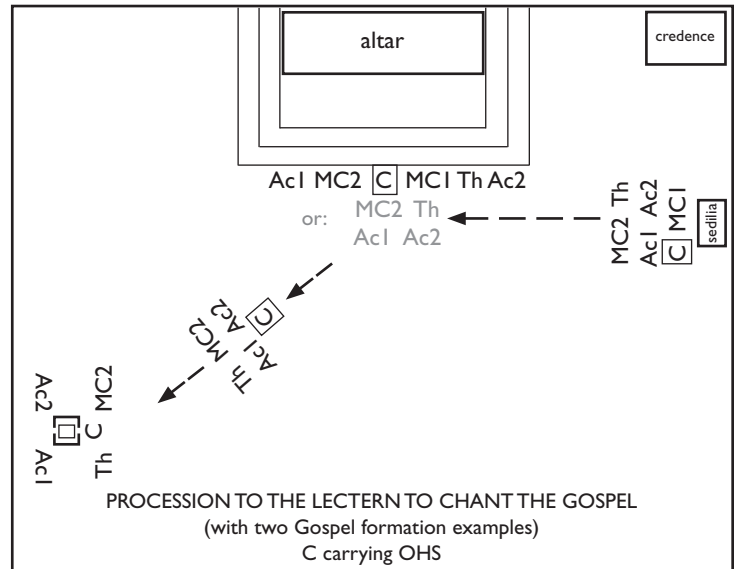
-C stands, and all genuflect on MCI's signal, then all except MCI (who takes his usual position at the Epistle corner<sup>59</sup>), go to the lectern on the Gospel side of the sanctuary, with MC2 and Th leading, followed by the acolytes and finally C carrying the book slightly elevated in front of his chest.

-upon reaching the lectern, all assume their usual Solemn Mass Gospel positions; in front facing north: C in the center, flanked by MC2 on the right and Th on the left; in the back flanking the lectern and facing its front: the acolytes.

-all of the actions are performed as usual for a Gospel during Solemn Mass,<sup>60</sup> except:

- MC2 does not turn towards the altar for the signing during the title or the Holy Name because C is next to him.
- C leaves the book on the lectern after the reading.
- C is not incensed after the reading of the Gospel.

-after C announces the title,<sup>61</sup> the book of the Gospels is incensed as usual with MC2 and Th bowing profoundly with C before and



55 Schmitz, p 51.

56 The servers are reversed here so after genuflecting and turning at the foot, they are now on the correct sides without having to switch while proceeding to where the Gospel will be sung.

57 C should be in position at the rear of the formation, like the deacon during the Gospel procession at Solemn Mass.

58 During the entire Gospel action, C acts like D at Solemn Mass. This is confusing for some priests who are accustomed to how this action is enacted during Low or High Mass whereby they stand instead of kneeling; some also become confused about which prayers they should recite. So though it is not strictly necessary for MCI to accompany C to the foot, it is advisable in case C should require a reminder on how to act.

59 I.e., as he would during a High Mass with MC2.

60 Cf. the Solemn Mass notes for details.

61 For which all sign themselves.

after, while holding back his cope (but only for this action).

-when the Gospel<sup>62</sup> is completed<sup>63</sup> and after C has kissed and closed the book,<sup>64</sup> MC2 and Th lead all back to the foot in the same order as before leaving a gap for C to pass through to the foot where MC1 rejoins the group next to C, then signals all to genuflect.

-after the Gospel formation has genuflected at the foot, Bb proceeds there, while Th positions himself just behind C.<sup>65</sup> MC1 takes the boat from Bb and incense is imposed as usual at the foot.

-MC1 then retrieves C's palm from the altar and gives it to him standing with *solita oscula*, kissing the palm first, then C's hand.

-upon MC1's signal (see below), C turns to the nave and chants, "*Procedamus in pace*", and then MC1 presents the biretta with *solita oscula*.

## GOSPEL READING: AT THE ALTAR; OPTION 2

This method, as outlined by Schmitz, is essentially the same as for the Gospel at High Mass. Because an OHS or missal (opened to the Gospel) is already at the altar, the method differs slightly as given above for a lectern.

-when the washing is completed, if not already at the predella, MC1 leads C back to the altar as at High Mass for the Tract<sup>66</sup> where upon ascending to the predella, C kisses the altar, then imposes incense as usual. Then C recites in the same manner as at High Mass all of the usual Gospel preparatory prayers (e.g., *Munda cor meum*, etc.).

-meanwhile MC2 queues up with the acolytes at the credence as usual and await Th to descend from the predella and join them.

-the rest of the Gospel actions then occur as at High Mass (with MC2) with these exceptions:

- C is not incensed after the reading of the Gospel.
- MC2 does not move the missal stand from the Gospel corner to the Canon position.

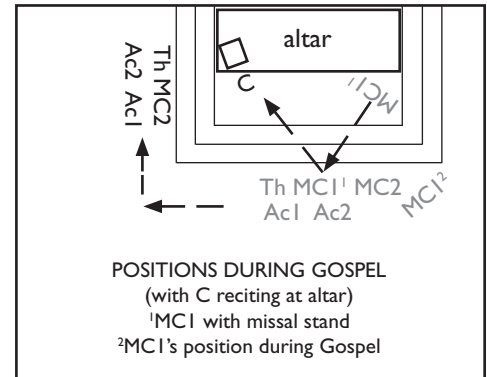
-after kissing the Gospel book, C goes to the center of the predella.

-after the Gospel is concluded,<sup>67</sup> MC2 conducts Th and the acolytes back to the foot as usual, where they genuflect on his signal.

-meanwhile, MC1 has retrieved the boat from Bb and then with Th, ascends the front of the Epistle side altar steps (i.e., *per breviorum*) to the predella to have incense imposed for the procession with palms; afterwards, MC1 returns the boat to Bb who ascends to the predella via the front of the foot to retrieve it.

-MC1 then retrieves C's palm from the altar and gives it to him standing with *solita oscula*, kissing the palm first, then C's hand.

-upon MC1's signal (see below), C turns to the nave and chants, "*Procedamus in pace*", then descends to the foot, where MC1 presents the biretta with *solita oscula*.<sup>68</sup>



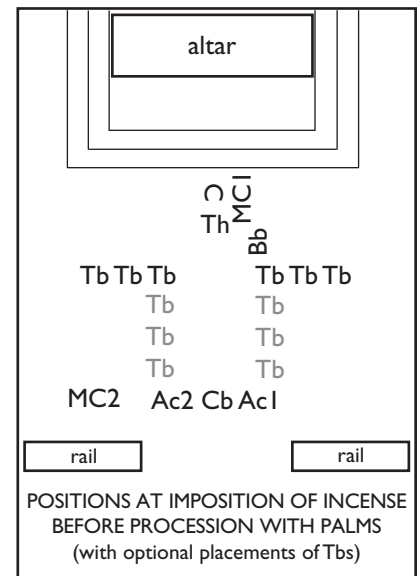
## PROCESSION WITH PALMS

-during the imposition of incense, Cb retrieves the cross and joins the acolytes at the foot; the group then goes to the perimeter of the sanctuary and faces the altar, leaving sufficient room for Th and Bb to pass behind them.

-meanwhile, MC2 arranges the servers<sup>69</sup> (and schola if present in the sanctuary) in their usual High Mass recessional positions: Cb and the acolytes near the sanctuary's perimeter, (leaving room for Th and Bb to take the lead position) and the Tbs as convenient (cf. the diagram for examples). MC2 arranges the schola, any clergy (e.g. the deacon)<sup>70</sup> and lay confraternities into position as required.<sup>71</sup> He also ensures that those carrying palms do so in their outside hand. Afterwards, he takes his place near the head of the procession.

-after the incense has been blessed, Th and Bb go to the head of the formation at the sanctuary's perimeter.

-meanwhile as previously described above for the two Gospel reading options, MC1 ascends *per breviorum* to the altar and retrieves C's palm, returns to the foot and presents the branch



62 As usual, because the acolytes are flanking the book of the Gospels, they do not bow for the Holy Name when said.

63 As at all sung Masses, particularly Solemn, "*Laus, tibi, Christi*" is not said at the end.

64 With the opening towards the altar.

65 As he would for Benediction.

66 I.e., *per longiorum* and genuflecting at the foot, and after C ascends to the altar, meeting Th and Bb on the Epistle side to obtain the boat, etc.

67 As at all sung Masses, "*Laus, tibi, Christe*" is not said at the end.

68 This is the order given by Schmitz, p 51.

69 If there are additional servers vested in cassock and surplice (e.g., members of the Archconfraternity of St. Stephen), these come after the torchbearers in pairs.

70 Per the principle of precedence for a procession, male religious first, then junior clergy, followed by the senior clergy.

71 Men's confraternities lead, followed by Tertiaries, then women's confraternities, each with their banner if they have one. "*These three classes enjoy precedence in a liturgical procession only when walking as a body, behind their own cross or banner, and in the dress and insignia of their society. (C.J.C. 701)*", Fortescue on p 327, ff 3. The mixed congregation follows behind these groups, though O'Connell on p 7, recommends the men to process together at the head, followed by the boys, then the girls, followed by the women. As to the disposition of female religious, these may come before the men's confraternities, but only when as a group, and not alone.

to C with *solita oscula* (palm first, then C's hand).<sup>72</sup> MCI retrieves the biretta from the sedilia, but retains it upon returning to the foot.

-when all are ready, MCI indicates this to C, who turns towards the faithful and sings, "Procedamus in pace," to which all reply, "In nomine Christi. Amen."

-MCI signals a genuflection loudly for all in the church to hear, and presents the biretta to C with the usual order of *solita oscula*.

### During the procession:

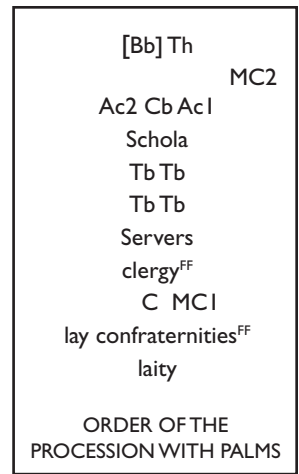
-the church bells are jubilantly pealed.

-Th leads the procession gently swinging the thurible.<sup>73</sup>

-MCI holds back the cope for C.

-MC2 does not necessarily have a static position during the pilgrimage as his duty is to ensure the procession is carried out properly and with due solemnity. He should watch over the pairs of servers, schola members and clergy to ensure they are spaced at least ten feet apart, or that Th does not process too quickly, thereby unevenly bunching up the pairs or stretching the processional formation too thin.

-the schola sings the seven appointed hymns, *Gloria laus* and Psalm 147, or only some of the hymns if time does not permit. Other vernacular hymns in honor of Christ the King are also allowed.



### Sacristan's duties during procession with palm branches

While the procession is taking place, the sacristan takes care of the following items:

-OHS:

- **if the lectern was used for the Gospel:** moves the OHS from the lectern to the right side of the credence.
- **if the missal stand was used for the Gospel:** transfers the stand and OHS back to the Epistle corner.

-removes all the red veils; i.e., from the tabernacle, altar, missal stand and lectern (if used).

-removes the table with palms from the sanctuary (or if impractical, to a convenient place that does not interfere with the Mass ceremonies).

-if a deacon will chant the Passion: prepares an unveiled lectern on the Gospel side of the sanctuary (if used for the Gospel, then leaves it in place after unveiling).

### Returning to the church:

-the schola chants the *Ingremente* as C enters the church.<sup>74</sup>

### FINAL ORATION (DOMINE, JESU CHRISTE)

-upon reentering the sanctuary, the servers genuflect to the altar (except Cb and the acolytes) and immediately proceed to their usual Mass positions.

-if necessary, Th and Bb go immediately to the sacristy to prepare the thurible and boat for the incensation of the altar which will occur momentarily.<sup>75</sup>

-the acolytes place their candles on the credence, where Ac2 retrieves the OHS and with Ac1 proceeds immediately to the Epistle corner of the foot to await the arrival of C; Ac1 on the left (closest to MCI) and Ac2 on the right.

-when MCI and C arrive at the foot, MCI takes the biretta first with the usual *solita oscula*, then the palm, kissing the palm first, then C's hand, gives both items to Ac1, genuflects with C<sup>76</sup> and conducts him to the predella, where in the center C turns and faces the nave.<sup>77</sup>

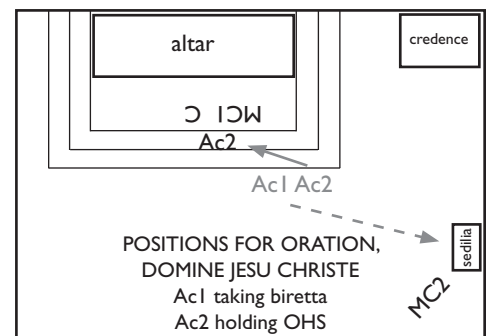
-meanwhile, Ac1 puts the biretta on the sedilia and the palm aside (preferably in the sacristy, as it will no longer be needed).

-Ac2 ascends to the second altar step slightly off to the Epistle side where MCI (standing to C's left) opens the OHS to the proper page.

-meanwhile, MC2 remains on the Epistle side.

-C says the oration, *Domine Jesu Christe*, with joined hands and in the second ferial tone. When he has finished the prayer, MCI closes the book and Ac2 descends to the foot and returns the book to credence. Meanwhile, C and MCI turn and face the altar, genuflect, turn inward and go *per breviorum* to the sedilia to vest for Mass, where MC2 joins them.

-C changes into his Mass vestments, MCI passing the red cope and stole to Ac1 (or sacristan) as usual to return to the sacristy.



<sup>72</sup> All rubricians are clear on this point.

<sup>73</sup> The Roman method is from front to back which is also the practice in English-speaking countries.

<sup>74</sup> Fortescue, pp 273 and 278, O'Connell, p 23 and Schmitz, p 47.

<sup>75</sup> If possible, Th should begin preparing a new set of charcoals before departing for the procession with palms; the sacristan can tend these in Th's absence, thus having a fresh batch ready immediately upon his return.

<sup>76</sup> Cf. Fortescue, pp 273 and 278 for this order.

<sup>77</sup> OHS rubric n. 22, Fortescue, p 278, O'Connell, p 24, and Schmitz, p 49.

## MASS

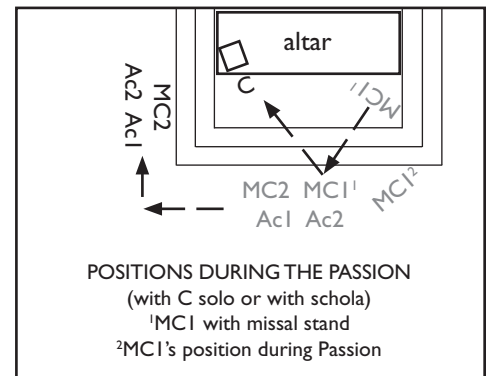
The ceremonies of High Mass (with MC2) are as usual with these exceptions:

- A.** The Preparatory Prayers inclusive to *Oramus* are omitted. C immediately ascends to the predella, kisses the altar as usual<sup>78</sup> and imposes incense for the first incensation of the altar.
- B.** During the Epistle,<sup>79</sup> MCI signals a genuflection for all in church during the phrase, “*ut in nomine Jesu omne genu flectatur caelestium, terrestrium, et infernorum.*”<sup>80</sup>
- C.** The reading of the Passion takes the place of the Gospel, though it is enacted with the following amendments:
  - incense is not used, so Th remains in his normal position.
  - there is no introductory “*Dominus vobiscum*”; the reading begins with the *Chronista* announcing the scriptural title of the Passion.
  - there is no signing of the cross over the Passion books or over any persons.
  - palms are not held.
  - MCI signals loudly for all to kneel for a short time at: “*emisit spiritum*”;<sup>81</sup> C and MCI kneel facing the altar, not the deacon (because C is exercising one of the Passion parts).
  - nothing is said at the conclusion of the Passion (e.g., “*Laus, tibi, Christe*”).
  - C is not incensed, nor does he kiss the book.

### Passion reading options:

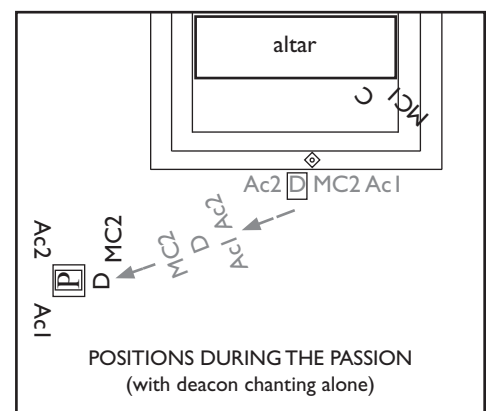
**1. If only C will chant the Passion** (or with the schola rendering the *Synagoga* parts):

- C recites the *Munda cor meum*, etc., in his usual place at the center of the altar wearing the chasuble and maniple.
- if a Passion book is used by C, after MCI conducts C to the foot and genuflects with him, he removes the missal from the stand, placing it on the credence, then puts the Passion book on the stand. MCI then switches the missal stand to the Gospel corner in conjunction with the usual Gospel movement made by MC2 and the acolytes (who are not carrying candles) to the Gospel side.
- C chants the Passion from the Gospel corner of the altar.
- after the Passion, MC2 moves the stand as usual to the Canon position, removes the Passion book, and descends *per breviorem* to the center of the foot joining MCI (and the acolytes who have positioned themselves behind both MCs), who has already retrieved the missal at the conclusion of the Passion. All genuflect and MCI ascends *per breviorem* to put the missal on the stand, while MC2 puts the Passion book on the credence (or in the sacristy) and the acolytes return their candles to the credence.



**2. If a deacon assists:**

- after the Epistle has been read, the deacon goes alone without escort<sup>82</sup> to the sacristy to vest.
- meanwhile MC2 leads the acolytes to the sacristy, genuflecting at the foot first.
- towards the end of the Tract, MCI conducts C to the Epistle corner of the predella *per breviorem*.<sup>83</sup>
- when the schola has finished chanting the Tract, MC2 leads into the sanctuary the deacon carrying his Passion book followed by the pair of acolytes without their candles.<sup>84</sup>
- upon arriving at the foot, MC2 takes position to the deacon's right, while the acolytes flank to each side of D and MC2 (if C will join the group, MC2 will go to D's left and Ac1 and Ac2 will leave room for C and MCI). The deacon removes his biretta (either giving it to an acolyte or placing it on the altar step while genuflecting with the others at MC2's signal<sup>85</sup>) and then MC2 signals all to genuflect (unless C and MCI join D, then MC1 signals).



78 Per all the cited rubricians.

79 Which may be read by a clerical lector; if so, C listens to this from the sedilia and genuflects there facing across the sanctuary.

80 As indicated by the text, the genuflection ends at the colon symbol.

81 Schmitz recommends “for about the length of a Pater noster” on p 52.

82 This is implied by Fortescue, O’Connell and Schmitz because at this moment he is not vested in sacred vestments (i.e., he is not a *parati*), but only in cassock and surplice.

83 O’Connell, p 24 and Schmitz, p 26.

84 This is the processional order given by Fortescue on p 275.

85 So Schmitz instructs on p 42; Fortescue, p 275 and O’Connell, p 25, instruct the deacons to give their birettas away to the servers at the entrance of the sanctuary, or choir; as they presume they are being led in via the Communion rail, rather than the sacristy, and would immediately bow to the clergy in choir (a ceremonial courtesy now generally omitted).

- a. **If C chants with the deacon:** both meet at the foot, kneel on the first altar step and with bowed heads recite the *Munda cor meum*, etc. silently,<sup>86</sup> then stand, genuflect and go to their places to chant the Passion; C to the missal stand on the Gospel corner (with MC1 and the acolytes proceeding to their usual Gospel positions for High Mass) and D (conducted by MC2 on his right) to the lectern prepared on the Gospel side of the sanctuary.
- b. **If the deacon chants alone:** he kneels and with his head bowed, recites the *Munda cor meum* in a low tone, and then in a medium tone for C to hear, “*Jube, domne, benedicere.*”

-meanwhile towards the end of the Tract, MC1 conducts C *per breviorum* to the Epistle corner of the predella, where C turns to face the deacon asks C for his blessing, which C gives in a medium tone<sup>87</sup> to which the deacon answers, “*Amen.*”

-the deacon rises, and genuflects on MC2’s signal in unison with him and the acolytes.

-MC2 leads the deacon with the acolytes following shoulder to shoulder to the lectern prepared on the Gospel side of the sanctuary. There MC2 goes to the right of the lectern, while the acolytes go to each side and face south (without staring at the deacon). During the reading, when the Holy Name is about to be said, MC2 turns (without bowing first to the Passion book) and signals C and MC1 at the altar in sufficient time for them to turn and bow to the altar cross. Those at the lectern kneel in their positions (*i.e.*, straight ahead as facing) at “*emisit spiritum*”.<sup>88</sup>

-during the Passion, C remains on the Epistle side of the predella as for the Gospel during Solemn Mass, while MC1 remains next to him. Both face the lectern during the reading, and when the Holy Name is mentioned (upon MC2’s signal), both C and MC1 turn and bow towards the altar cross. At “*emisit spiritum*”, C and MC1 (and the others in the sanctuary) kneel facing the deacon.<sup>89</sup>

-when the Passion is concluded, the deacon closes the book, picks it up, and is conducted by MC2 to the foot, the acolytes following and taking position as before. There the deacon genuflects on MC2’s signal in unison with him and the acolytes, retrieves his biretta and is then escorted back to the sacristy with MC2 leading and the acolytes following.

**E.** Mass continues on as usual, except there is no Last Gospel.

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86 Neither Fortescue, O’Connell or Schmitz mention C blessing D or Sd if they chant the Passion with him in the event that three separate deacons are not available during the Solemn form, hence it seems that the deacon would not be blessed C if the latter were chanting (exercising one of the offices of the Passion) as well.

87 Per Fortescue (p 275, “*medium voice*”) and Schmitz (p 29, “*moderate voice*”); O’Connell (p 25) says in a “*clear voice*”.

88 Specifically for the acolytes, Schmitz, p 39.

89 Per all the cited rubricians.