



**The Episcopal Diocese of Milwaukee
Guidelines for Episcopal Visitations
The Rt. Rev. Steven A. Miller**

The Bishop's visitation is an important event in the life of both the congregation and the diocese.

The norm for every visit is for the Bishop to celebrate the Eucharist, preach, and preside at confirmation. The Bishop strongly encourages baptisms at Episcopal visits as recommended in the Book of Common Prayer. While the Bishop will preside, the local clergy will baptize with water and the Bishop will seal the newly baptized. When no baptisms, confirmations, receptions, or reaffirmations are scheduled, the Episcopal visit continues to include the Eucharist and sermon and may include the reaffirmation of baptismal promises by the congregation.

Visitations by the bishop may also include:

- A visit with clergy prior to the visitation to discuss the state of the congregation, review the service, and plan other events that will occur during the visitation
- A time for the bishop to meet with the vestry, treasurer, and wardens.

With sufficient planning, the visitation may include pastoral visits with homebound members of the congregation; adult or youth classes; time to meet with vestry, treasurer, and wardens; or other special events.

→ For visitations, please adhere to your regular service schedule. If a parish has more than one Sunday service, the Bishop's practice for this Visitation Schedule will be to preside at the principal service. Requests for the Bishop's attendance at additional services will be considered on an individual basis.

The loose offering at the time of the visitation is designated for the Bishop's Purse. These funds are used to help various causes in the life of the diocese and sometimes in parishes, to assist people to attend conferences and workshops, to assist our seminarians and people in preparation for ordained ministry in the diocese and to support other ministries within our diocesan boundaries and beyond. The collection for the Bishop's Purse should be sent to the diocesan office as soon after the visitation as possible in the form of a check. Prior to the visitation please announce to the congregation this offering and its purpose. The use of special envelopes for this offering is appropriate.

As the Bishop transports vestments/crozier to Sunday visitations, if possible, please reserve and clearly designate a parking space close to the church entrance for the Bishop and assign a member of the parish to meet and assist him.

Please send a draft copy of the service bulletin(s) to the Bishop TWO WEEKS prior to the visit, along with the "Form for Bishop's Visitations and list of those being confirmed / received. The lessons should be those appointed in the Eucharistic Lectionary. Please indicate which translation of the Bible will be used. Visitation forms are available from the diocesan office and from the diocesan website www.diomil.org. Visitation materials may be e-mailed to info@diomil.org or mailed to the diocesan office at 804 East Juneau Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53202.

The Liturgy should conform to the Book of Common Prayer; use of other authorized texts must be negotiated with the Bishop. The Bishop prefers Prayer I in Rite I; in Rite II the Bishop prefers NOT to use Prayer C. Prayer D is particularly appropriate for visitations that include confirmation and baptism as it allows for intercessory prayers in the Eucharistic Canon. When the service celebrated during the Bishop's visitation is to include baptism or baptism and confirmation, the service for Holy Baptism (BCP pg. 299) is used; for confirmation/reception/reaffirmation (no baptisms) the service for Confirmation (BCP pg. 413) is used.

The administration of communion by licensed Eucharistic Ministers is intended as an aid to the ministry of the ordained. The Bishop expects the parish clergy to assist him with the distribution of Holy Communion. Lay Eucharistic Ministers are to be used only when there are not a sufficient number of ordained persons to administer the sacrament.

While the bishop will make a Sunday visitation to each parish every two years, it is hoped that these times will not be the only interaction between bishop and congregation. The bishop and the bishop's staff welcome invitations to meet with lay leaders, attend special events, and participate in parish life.

SAM/bjk

August 2019

Form to be completed prior to the Bishop's Visitation

Name of Parish _____

Date of Visitation _____

Eucharistic Rite to be used: Rite I _____ Rite II _____

Time of Service _____ AM/PM _____ AM/PM _____ AM/PM

PLEASE NOTE: Bishop Miller will attend the principal Sunday service. Please do NOT alter the normal schedule of Sunday services for the Bishop's visitation.

Liturgical color _____

Which Biblical translation will be used for readings? _____

What part of the Liturgy will be sung?

Will there be a reception/luncheon (before, after, evening before the service)?

Do you wish for the Bishop to meet with groups (vestry, adult forum, shut-ins, Sunday school students or confirmation students) _____

Baptisms: Have parents and Godparents been instructed? Yes ____ No ____

On the attached form, please list the following: Confirmations
 Receptions
 Reaffirmations

If you are unable to send information on candidates on time, PLEASE send the other information as the Bishop needs to know in advance. Candidate information can be handed to the Bishop or mailed at a later date.

Any other comments about the visitation:

Finally . . . It would be most helpful if the parish would designate a parking place for the Bishop close to the church entrance, as he will be transporting vestments and crozier, etc. Thank you!

Please return completed form to the Bishop's Office at least **TWO WEEKS** prior to date of visitation. Please enclose draft of service bulletin for visitation and list of those to be confirmed / received.

Please send electronically to info@diomil.org or mail hard copies to the Diocese of Milwaukee, Attn: Bishop's Visitation, c/o 804 E. Juneau Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53202.

(This form to be accurately filled out, either printed or typed, and returned to the Diocesan Office)

DIOCESE OF MILWAUKEE

The following were Confirmed at the Episcopal Visitation in _____ Church in _____, Wisconsin, on the _____ day of _____ 20____.

(Signed) _____ Incumbent

Confirmations

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____
- 6. _____
- 7. _____
- 8. _____
- 9. _____
- 10. _____

- 11. _____
- 12. _____
- 13. _____
- 14. _____
- 15. _____
- 16. _____
- 17. _____
- 18. _____
- 19. _____
- 20. _____

Receptions

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____
- 6. _____
- 7. _____
- 8. _____
- 9. _____
- 10. _____

- 11. _____
- 12. _____
- 13. _____
- 14. _____
- 15. _____
- 16. _____
- 17. _____
- 18. _____
- 19. _____
- 20. _____