

# Guidelines for Bishops' Visitations

## Schedule and Logistics for the Visitation

- The Bishops will meet with candidates for confirmation, reception, and reaffirmation of baptismal vows at least 45 minutes prior to the service.
- The Bishops will meet with the Vestry following the service.
- The Bishops will meet with the rector to hear about his/her perspective on the ministry and mission of the parish for a minimum of 30 minutes either at the visitation or prior to the visitation.
- Meetings with youth or other parish groups may be arranged as time permits.
- The parish register of church services will be reviewed by the Bishops.
- If Prayer Books and certificates need to be signed, the Bishops will do so prior to the service.
- **Please return the visitation report form to the Bishop's Office in the week following the visitation. (The information on the form is necessary for diocesan recordkeeping.)**

## 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 by Wednesday of the week prior to the visitation.**
- The Bishops will preach.
- The Bishops will assume that the readings are those appointed for the day in the Prayer Book lectionary unless informed two weeks prior to the visit that the parish uses the Revised Common Lectionary or 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.
- The Bishops will administer baptism.
- The Prayers of the People and the Confession are omitted if there is either baptism or confirmation.
- Clergy from the parish should read the Gospel, give the offertory sentence, prepare the table, assist in distributing communion, give the dismissal, and make announcements.
- It is helpful but not essential to have an acolyte assigned to assist the Bishops 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 Bishops lay 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 may be 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:

Treasurer’s Office  
Diocese of Ohio  
2230 Euclid Avenue  
Cleveland, Ohio 44115