

ASSESSMENT TOOL OF THE LITURGICAL LIFE OF THE PARISH FOR PARISH WORSHIP COMMISSIONS

Introduction

This tool is intended to be used by parish worship commissions and pastors to assess the liturgical life of their community (especially as it related to Sunday Mass), prioritize needed improvements, and make plans for the future. The tool is also intended to be used by schools, Newman Centers, campus ministries, and religious communities—any assembly that celebrates the Church’s liturgies in the Diocese of Owensboro.

There is no perfect liturgy here; and communities may have legitimate reasons why a local practice is not in perfect accord with the liturgical documents. At the same time, improper liturgical practices may slowly develop over time—and an evaluation such as this one will help parishes ensure that their liturgies are celebrated with intention and purpose, in accord with the universal Church, rather than simply out of habit.

It is hoped that this tool will be a source of helpful information to commission members. The relevant liturgical documents are cited, and readers are encouraged to refer to the primary sources if there is any doubt as to meaning or intent. However, intimate knowledge of the documents referenced below is not a requirement to use this form. The Diocesan Office of Worship staff is available to assist parishes in the use of this instrument.

The tool may be used in its entirety, or the parish may decide to study only particular aspects of its liturgical life at any one time. In completing this form, please use the following definitions:

- Yes = this is consistently the norm or practice at the parish
- No = this is not the norm or usual practice at the parish
- N/A = not applicable

In addition, there is space at the end of each section for comments and questions—and its use is encouraged.

What does a “No” mean?

Parishes may answer “no” to a question for a number of reasons. It may be possible that a priest or parish was not aware of the particular norm. Or, it may be impossible for a community to follow exactly what is called for in the books. It may also be the case that a parish, at some point, chose not to follow a particular law or practice. In any case, you may find it helpful to comment on the reason(s) for the “no” – and have a conversation as to why you ought (or ought not) change what you are doing. If a parish has consciously decided not to follow a particular norm, then a parish ought to ask itself: Why have we chosen not to follow the liturgical documents? How does the parish’s practice reflect the *values* underlying that norm? Are we being influenced more by personal preference than by what the Church asks of us? Parish liturgical leadership can then discern which area(s) require(s) more urgent attention and which can wait, taking into consideration the priorities given in the liturgical books.

What does a “Yes” mean?

Certainly not perfection! We may be doing everything that we ought to be doing; but we can always improve on “how” we are doing things. Again, it will be up to the parish’s liturgical leadership—in keeping with the liturgical books—to decide what areas are priorities and what areas can wait for another day.

A note on vocabulary:

In keeping with the GIRM, we have chosen to use the title “priest celebrant” for the priest who is presiding over the liturgical assembly. In order to differentiate instituted acolytes and lectors from other lay ministers, we use the terms “reader” and “altar server” for persons who exercise those ministries in a parish (though the GIRM, presuming instituted ministers, uses lector and acolyte). The more familiar as well as the formal names for the parts of the Mass are used together.

This document is based on assessment tools developed by the Archdiocese of Cincinnati and the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. Their questions were combined and, in many cases, adapted—and other questions added—by the Diocesan Liturgical Commission and Office of Worship to serve the needs of this local church.

List of Abbreviations: Documents referenced in this Assessment Tool

BLS	<i>Built of Living Stones</i>
CB	<i>Ceremonial of Bishops</i>
CIC	<i>Code of Canon Law</i>
CSL	<i>Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy</i>
FIYH	<i>Fulfilled in Your Hearing</i>
GFT	<i>Gather Faithfully Together</i>
GILH	<i>General Instruction of the Liturgy of the Hours</i>
GIRM	<i>General Instruction of the Roman Missal</i>
GNLY	<i>General Norms for the Liturgical Year and Calendar</i>
IOM	<i>Introduction to the Order of the Mass (USCCB)</i>
LMIn	<i>Lectionary For Mass: Introduction</i>
LMT	<i>Liturgical Music Today</i>
MCW	<i>Music in Catholic Worship</i>
MD	<i>Misericordia Dei</i>
NDRHC	<i>Norms for the Distribution and Reception of Holy Communion Under Both Kinds in the Dioceses of the United States of America</i>
NS	<i>National Statues for the Catechumenate (U.S.)</i>
OCF	<i>Order of Christian Funerals</i>
PCS	<i>Pastoral Care of the Sick</i>
RBapC	<i>Rite of Baptism for Children (GI – General Introduction)</i>
RCIA	<i>Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults</i>
RConf	<i>Rite of Confirmation</i>
RMarr	<i>Rite of Marriage</i>
RS	<i>Redemptionis Sacramentum: Instruction on the Eucharist</i>

I. Preparations Before the Liturgy

A. Environment	Yes	No	N/A
Objects used in the Liturgy			
1. The Lectionary, Gospel Book, and Missal (Sacramentary) are in good condition, dignified, and worthy for liturgical celebration. (GIRM 349)			
2. The vessels for Eucharist are of good quality, made for liturgical use, not easily broken (e.g., glass, earthenware, clay), and blessed before use. (GIRM 328-32; RS 117 & 118) If parishes have vessels that do not meet these criteria, there are plans for replacement of vessels over time and in keeping with the parish budget.			
3. The liturgical vesture is of good quality and worn appropriately (in proper order and neatly). (GIRM 335-347; RS 122-128)			
4. There are enough programs/hymnals for all members of the assembly.			
5. The worship aids facilitate the participation of the members of the assembly. Texts of the Scriptures are not included, unless more than one language is being used. The assembly is encouraged to listen to the proclaimed word, not to read along.			
6. Incense is appropriately used on some (more solemn) occasions. (GIRM 277)			
NOTES & COMMENTS			
The Liturgical Space			
7. The number of Masses scheduled is based on need. Ideally, the church should be at least 50% full at each Sunday Mass.			
8. The configuration of the church invites full, active, and conscious participation of the faithful, conveys the image of the gathered assembly, and facilitates the liturgical action. (GIRM 288 & 294; BLS 49-53)			
9. The ambo, altar, baptismal font, and presider's chair are designed and placed appropriately. (GIRM 288-318; BLS 56-69) The reader is referred to the Appendix (<i>Liturgical Environment Self Study</i>) for assistance in answering this question.			
10. The liturgical environment is clean and well cared for, free of clutter and crowding. (GIRM 289, 292, 293) For example, the sanctuary contains only what is necessary for the Eucharistic liturgy and the altar does not have anything on it except the altar cloth (and candles), and (if used) the Book of the			

Gospels, until the Preparation of Gifts and Altar. (GIRM 73, 306)			
11. The liturgical environment is enhanced by appropriate decoration in the sanctuary area, the assembly area, and even outside the church building in such a way that the decorations do not impede or distract from ritual actions. (GIRM 289, 292, 293; see also BLS 122-129)			
12. The lighting and sound systems are adequate and fully functional. (BLS 221-225; 228-233)			
13. The church is fully accessible to those with special needs. (BLS 42) [for example: hearing-assistive devices for the hearing-impaired, ramp access for those in wheelchairs]			
14. The Blessed Sacrament is reserved in a place that is noble, prominent, and suitable for prayer in accord with the norms of the local bishop. (GIRM 314-316; RS 130)			
NOTES & COMMENTS			

B. Assembly	Yes	No	N/A
Identity / Formation			
1. Efforts have been made to help the members of the assembly understand that they are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy people God has made God's own. (CSL 14; RS 36)			
2. Efforts have been made to help the assembly become aware that by virtue of their baptism it is their right and duty to participate in liturgical celebrations. (CSL 14; RS 37)			
3. Efforts have been made to help the members of the assembly understand that they are called to offer themselves as a living and holy sacrifice of praise through prayer and worship. (RS 37)			
4. Efforts have been made to instill in the faithful that sense of deep wonder before the greatness of the mystery of faith that is the Eucharist. (RS 40)			
5. Efforts have been made to help the assembly see their participation in the Eucharist as not only sharing in a meal, but also a sharing in the sacrifice of Christ. (RS 38)			
6. The manner in which the liturgy is celebrated reflects the above understandings.			
NOTES & COMMENTS			
Participation			
7. The faithful understand the importance of their role as members of the assembly; that they are not there "as strangers or silent spectators", but through a good understanding of the rites and prayers they take part in the liturgy conscious of what they are doing, with devotion and full involvement, (CSL 48) doing all, but only, what is theirs to do (CSL 28).			
8. The assembly actively and knowingly participates in the liturgy through their listening, their singing and taking part in the responses, and through their actions (movement, gestures, postures). (CSL 14 & 30; RS 39)			
9. The assembly appreciates that active participation includes a participation in sacred silence. (GIRM 45; RS 39)			
10. The liturgy is properly adapted to the needs of the faithful, with respect to cultural and ethnic traditions. (CSL 37-40; RS 39)			

11. Members of the assembly are NOT embarrassed or made to feel out of place if they do not show desired external conformity.			
NOTES & COMMENTS			

C. Ministries	Yes	No	N/A
1. Liturgical ministries appropriate to the laity (e.g., reader, music minister, extraordinary minister of Holy Communion, hospitality minister, altar server) are distributed among a number of trained liturgical lay ministers. (GIRM 97; RS 43)			
2. The lay liturgical ministers reflect the assembly in age, gender, and ethnic background.			
3. Lay liturgical ministers exercise only one ministry at a given liturgy. (CSL 28; RS 44)			
4. All lay liturgical ministers have received liturgical formation and are properly trained to perform their ministry. (CSL 29; RS 46) They are familiar with the Church’s documents and norms, particularly those relating to their role.			
5. Lay liturgical ministers are “deeply imbued with the spirit of the liturgy,” and perform their office with “sincere devotion and decorum demanded by so exulted a ministry.” (CSL 29) There is a sense of prayer and reverence among the liturgical ministers.			
6. The priest(s) and deacon(s) are imbued with the spirit of the liturgy and exercise their liturgical role with sincere decorum and devotion. (CSL 14 & 17) Each does all, but only, what is his to do.			
7. By exercising their ministry, all the liturgical ministers (lay and ordained) enhance the full and active participation of the faithful, each in their own way. All the liturgical ministers see themselves primarily as servants of the assembly’s communal worship.			
8. All ministers, lay and ordained, strive to be transparent—so their ministry becomes an opportunity to encounter Christ. They do not draw attention to themselves and away from the mysteries they serve (for example, by overly dramatic readings or by distracting/idiosyncratic actions and/or speech).			
9. The priest(s) and deacon(s) strive to deepen their own liturgical knowledge and ability. (CSL 16 & 17; RS 33)			
10. There is a competent person responsible for liturgy preparation and coordination in the parish.			

11. This person has the support of the pastor, other clergy, and liturgy committee to carry out her or his responsibilities.			
12. Language that is inclusive and uses a rich variety of theologically sound metaphors for naming God is used in the texts composed by the parish (e.g., introductions, intercessions, preaching).			
13. The liturgy is characterized by “noble simplicity.” The extremes of excessive informality and ostentation are avoided. Intentional attention is paid to flow and beauty.			
NOTES & COMMENTS			
D. Music	Yes	No	N/A
The Choice of Music			
1. The liturgical music is suitable sacred music. (RS 57; see also GIRM 39-41) Music should be “technically, aesthetically, and expressively good” (MCW 26); serve the liturgy (MCW 30); and enable the particular assembly to express their faith (MCW 39).			
2. Liturgical music, appropriate for the part of the Mass for which it is chosen, is provided for: (CSL 112; GIRM 40; MCW 23 & 31) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Entrance Procession · Responsorial Psalm · Eucharistic Acclamations · Communion Procession · Glory to God (<i>Gloria</i>) · Gospel Acclamation · Lamb of God 			
3. The choice of music gives primacy to the Gospel and Eucharistic acclamations which should be sung “even at Masses in which little else is sung.” The doxology to the Lord’s Prayer is sung if the prayer itself is also sung. (MCW 54; GIRM 40; IOM 126)			
4. The liturgical music serves the liturgical year. (MCW 19)			
5. The liturgical music is able to be sung and understood by the assembly gathered. (MCW 40)			
6. The music is performed competently. (MCW 37)			
7. The liturgical music lifts the hearts of the faithful to offer praise and thanksgiving to God. (GIRM 39)			
8. The liturgical music repertoire of the parish reflects the variety of styles and forms that enrich church music today. (MCW 28)			
9. The parish musician has a plan to add/develop a repertoire of solid liturgical music. (MCW 27)			
NOTES & COMMENTS			

The Music Ministers			
10. The choir understands their role as ministers who support the assembly's singing. (MCW 36)			
11. There is a clearly visible, well-prepared cantor. (MCW 35)			
12. The musicians lead first by example rather than merely by directing and instructing.			
13. The cantors, song leaders and other musicians project a welcoming and hospitable presence.			
14. There is ongoing study of the documents relating to music in our liturgy.			
NOTES & COMMENTS			

E. The Liturgical Year	Yes	No	N/A
1. Sunday is experienced as THE Christian feast day. (CSL 106; GNLY 4-7)			
2. The liturgy committee (or equivalent) has studied <i>Dies Domini</i> (by Pope John Paul II).			
3. The Paschal Triduum has become the center of the parish's liturgical life and is prepared with great care. (GNLY 18-21; BLS, 81- 84)			
4. The Lent and Easter seasons are prepared according to the norms laid out in <i>The Circular Letter Concerning the Preparation and Celebration of the Easter Feasts</i> and in the rubrics of the new Roman Missal (available at the USCCB website).			
NOTES & COMMENTS			

II. The Proper Celebration of the Mass

A. Immediate preparations before Mass	Yes	No	N/A
1. Sacristans put everything in place well before the Mass is scheduled to begin.			
2. The choir is in place and musical instruments and other equipment set up well before the liturgy begins.			
3. Other ministers arrive sufficiently early to allow time for last-minute preparations or changes, as well as quiet prayer before the Mass begins.			
4. Ministers of hospitality are present in the gathering space or at entrances to the church, and they extend a sincere and warm welcome to everyone who comes.			
5. There is silence and an atmosphere of prayer created before Mass. (GIRM 45)			
6. The appropriate gesture of reverence is made by all those entering the church or crossing in front of the sanctuary. That is, all bow to the altar. If the tabernacle is present in the sanctuary, then all genuflect.			
NOTES & COMMENTS			

B. Introductory Rites	Yes	No	N/A
1. The rites preceding the Liturgy of the Word introduces, gathers, and prepares the assembly for the celebration of the liturgy. (GIRM, no. 46)			
2. The entrance procession begins at the back of the church and includes the servers, readers, and clergy. If possible, at least a cross-bearer, two altar servers, readers, deacon (if present), and priest celebrant are included. (GIRM, nos. 120 & 171) If candles are used, they are carried on either side of the cross (or just behind, if there is insufficient space in the aisle). If used, the server with the censer precedes the cross.			
3. The deacon, if present, carries the Book of the Gospels. In his absence, it is carried by a reader. The Lectionary is not carried in procession. (GIRM 120, 172) Neither is processed out at the conclusion of the liturgy.			
4. The entrance procession is carried out in a dignified manner.			
5. The introductory rites normally include: an Entrance Song or Antiphon, the Greeting, an Act of Penitence or Sprinkling Rite, the Glory to God (<i>Gloria</i>; omitted in Advent and Lent), and the Opening Prayer (Collect). (GIRM 46)			
6. The entrance song is chosen to reflect the character of the season, the occasion, and the assembly; it serves to unite the assembly in a spirit of common prayer.			
7. The text of the entrance song is respected. That is, if the structure of the hymn calls for it, then all the verses are sung.			
8. The sign of the cross and the liturgical greeting are the first words spoken by the priest celebrant, without additional “secular” words of greeting.			

9. The introductory words of the priest celebrant are clear and concise.			
10. The introduction to the Act of Penitence (Penitential Rite) is clear and concise.			
11. Forms I (the <i>Confiteor</i> , or I Confess) and II of the Act of Penitence are proclaimed by the priest celebrant. If Form III (<i>Kyrie</i> with invocations) is chosen, the opening and closing are prayed by the priest celebrant but the invocations are made by the priest celebrant, deacon, or other suitable minister (Order of Mass; CB 132) The <i>Kyrie</i> (Lord, have mercy) is never used alone.			
12. If the option to use “other invocations” is used in the Act of Penitence, Form III, the invocations are “christocentric” and in praise of God’s saving action in Christ (and not a listing of sins).			
13. The concluding words of the Act of Penitence are spoken or sung <i>without</i> making the sign of the cross.			
14. The Rite of Sprinkling used on occasions when it is especially significant (e.g., Easter Season) and is done in a way that its meaning is evident to all.			
15. On the days on which it is called for (e.g., Sundays outside of Lent and Advent), the Glory to God (<i>Gloria</i>) is sung in such a way that the assembly can express joy and praise.			
16. Time is allowed between the invitation to the Collect (opening prayer) and the spoken prayer for members of the assembly to collect their thoughts and prayers and silently express them. (GIRM 54)			
17. The Missal (Sacramentary) is treated with reverence throughout the entire liturgical celebration.			
NOTES & COMMENTS			

C. Liturgy of the Word: Readings (First, Psalm, Second)	Yes	No	N/A
1. Means are provided to encourage parishioners to reflect on the Scripture readings before coming to the Sunday liturgy. (GFT 41)			
2. The readings are proclaimed at the ambo and follow the prescribed norms for the day. (GIRM 57-60; RS 61-63; LMIn 22)			
3. The Scriptures are always proclaimed, as written, from the appropriate books (and not missalettes, loose papers, or the like). On rare occasion and for pastoral need (such as in bilingual liturgies) a dignified binder may be used.			
4. The Lectionary and Book of the Gospels are treated with reverence throughout the entire liturgical celebration.			
5. The readers are well-prepared and read with expression.			
6. There is an ongoing program of preparation, study, and practice for readers.			
7. There are two readers who proclaim the first two readings.			
8. The responsorial psalm (the one assigned or a seasonal psalm) is sung at the ambo by the psalmist (cantor). (GIRM 61)			
9. Songs or hymns are not used in place of the responsorial psalm (GIRM 61)			
NOTES & COMMENTS			

--

D. Liturgy of the Word: Readings (Gospel)	Yes	No	N/A
1. The gospel acclamation is sung by all, and led in a lively and spirited way; the gospel verse is sung by cantor or choir. (GIRM 62)			
2. If the Book of the Gospels is used, the Gospel procession is carried out in a dignified manner while the gospel acclamation is being sung. (GIRM 132-33) Minimally, the procession includes the deacon or the priest celebrant. More appropriately, two servers with the processional candles (and another with incense, if being used) accompany the cleric. (GIRM 133-4, 175)			
3. A deacon or, in his absence, a priest proclaims the Gospel. (GIRM 59) The priest celebrant proclaims the gospel only if there is no deacon or concelebrating priest to do so.			
4. The assembly actively listens to the Word being proclaimed, rather than following along in a missalette. (GFT. No. 52)			
5. The priest celebrant and other liturgical ministers model active listening by visibly paying attention to the readers.			
6. There is significant time for prayerful silence after each reading and the homily. (GIRM 56; RS 39) Any sense of haste or busy-ness is avoided.			
7. All who proclaim the Scripture readings and the homilist			

can be clearly heard and seen by all in the assembly, including those who may be hearing impaired.			
NOTES & COMMENTS			

E. Liturgy of the Word: Preaching	Yes	No	N/A
In General			
1. The homily provides nourishment for the Christian life of the faithful and is rooted in the readings, or the liturgy or the feast being celebrated. (GIRM 65; RS 67)			
2. The homily is preached by an ordained minister who has the faculty to preach; laypersons, including seminarians, do not proclaim the homily. (GIRM 66; RS 64-66)			
3. The homilist(s) involve(s) other members of the community in the preparation of the homily, as recommended. (FIYH 106; GFT 58)			
4. The homilist prepares his own homily; homilies written by another source (such as a homily preparation service) are not used.			
5. The homily is NOT set off from the rest of the Mass by the making of the sign of the cross or other action.			
6. Catechumens are dismissed appropriately, after the homily. The dismissal emphasizes their growing unity with the Christian community and the importance of their continued reflection on the Scripture readings. The dismissal is done in a way that speaks to the whole assembly of the value of the gift of faith.			
In Specific			

(Answers in this section may reflect a particular homily or may refer to preaching in general at the parish; please specify how you are answering this section. A more detailed homily evaluation form is available if desired.)			
The homily is <i>personal</i>. Did the preacher (or does the preacher usually) come across as a real person, genuine and sincerely concerned for the community?			
The homily is <i>liturgical</i>. Did the preacher (or does the preacher usually) speak and act in a way that helped you worship?			
The homily is <i>inculturated</i>. Did the preacher (or does the preacher usually) make helpful connections between the Scriptures and “real life” today—especially the “real life” of <i>this</i> parish?			
The homily is <i>clarifying</i>. Did the preacher (or does the preacher usually) make a single, clear point?			
The homily is <i>actualizing</i>. Did you experience (or do you usually experience) the good news of salvation as a result of this preacher’s homily(ies)?			
NOTES & COMMENTS			

F. Liturgy of the Word: Creed and Intercessions	Yes	No	N/A
1. The Creed used is the approved liturgical text. (GIRM 67; RS 69)			
2. The Creed is recited slowly and deliberately, not in a rushed or perfunctory manner. During the creed, all are led to bow at the appropriate words by the example of the presider and other ministers. (GIRM 137)			
3. The Prayer of the Faithful is general in nature, includes timely issues of the day (reflecting the important needs of church, nation, world, the suffering, and the local community) and is appropriate in content. (GIRM 69 & 70) On occasion, the dead are also remembered. The response is brief and familiar.			
4. There is a brief pause after each petition to enable assembly members to make the prayer their own before speaking the response.			
5. The Prayer of the Faithful is proclaimed from the ambo, or some other suitable place (for example, if being sung by the cantor, the intentions may be announced from the cantor’s stand). (GIRM 71)			

6. If a deacon is present, he announces the intentions of the Prayer of the Faithful (GIRM 171d).			
NOTES & COMMENTS			

G. Liturgy of the Eucharist: Preparation of the Gifts & Altar	Yes	No	N/A
1. The bread and wine used for Eucharist truly have the appearance of food and are made of appropriate material. (GIRM, 320-322; RS 48) Recipes for substantial bread must be both licit and valid. The bread is to be made from only wheat flour and water; no leavening or sweetening agents are to be added. The wine is to be made from grapes, natural and unadulterated.			
2. Enough bread and wine is prepared for the faithful to receive Communion consecrated at that Mass. (GIRM 85; RS 49)			
3. The Eucharistic Bread used by the priest celebrant is large enough that at least some parts coming from the fraction may be distributed to some of the faithful during Communion. (RS 49)			
4. The bread, wine, and collection are brought forward at the same time by members of the assembly (other than the ushers). The procession is done in a way that emphasizes that			

<p>these are truly the gifts of the faithful, representative of the true gift that God expects from us. (GIRM 73; RS 70) The actions are allowed to speak for themselves, without additional commentary.</p> <p>RS 70: <i>“Moreover, external gifts must always be a visible expression of that true gift that God expects from us: <u>a contrite heart, the love of God and neighbor by which we are conformed to the sacrifice of Christ, who offered himself for us.</u>”</i></p>			
<p>5. Only bread and wine (and the monetary or other gifts of the faithful for the poor or for the Church as appropriate) are brought up, with no other “symbolic” gifts. The gifts other than the bread and wine are put in a suitable place away from the altar (GIRM 73).</p>			
<p>6. The gestures of placing the bread and wine on the altar (and pouring the unconsecrated wine into chalices) are done simply.</p> <p>The bread and wine are placed on the altar by the priest celebrant; the chalice(s) are prepared by the priest celebrant or by the deacon if one is present. (GIRM 75, 141-2, 178)</p>			
<p>7 Wine is poured into chalices at the Preparation of Gifts (not after consecration). (RS 106) This may be done at the credence table.</p>			
<p>8. The private prayers of the priest celebrant are said <i>inaudibly</i>.</p>			
<p>9. The community stands <i>after</i> the priest celebrant completes the invitation to the Prayer over the Gifts (“Pray, my brothers and sisters...”).</p>			
<p>10. There should be one large paten for all the hosts—not a separate paten for the priest. (GIRM 331)</p>			
<p>NOTES & COMMENTS</p>			

H. Liturgy of the Eucharist: The Eucharistic Prayer	Yes	No	N/A
<p>1. In preparing for the Mass, sufficient attention is given to the vast selection of prefaces and Eucharistic Prayers, emphasizing various themes, which is offered in the Roman Missal.</p>			
<p>2. The priest celebrant prays the Eucharistic Prayer in a manner that engages the assembly in the prayer. The assembly perceives him praying in the name of all. (GIRM 78) For example, is the direction of the priest celebrant’s gaze consistent with</p>			

prayer, or is he looking at the people? Does he wait for posture changes or does he begin speaking while people are still moving?			
3. The priest celebrant pauses for a moment after the Prayer over the Gifts and after the Great Amen to help convey the distinct importance and unity of the Eucharistic Prayer.			
4. The priest celebrant refrains from <i>any</i> commentary at any point during the Eucharistic Prayer itself.			
5. The celebrant's posture and gestures are simple and dignified as called for in the rubrics. For example, does he refrain from breaking the host or making an exaggerated gesture of "giving" the host and chalice at the institution narrative? (RS 55)			
6. The priest celebrant respects the differences in the four elevations called for during the Mass. At the preparation of the gifts, the elements are " <i>raised slightly</i> above the altar;" at the consecration, the consecrated elements are " <i>shown to the people;</i> " during the doxology the chalice and paten are " <i>elevated;</i> " at the invitation to Communion, the consecrated host over a paten or chalice is " <i>held before the people.</i> "			
7. The Eucharistic Prayer is prayed without musical accompaniment, except for the acclamations which are integral to the prayer. (GIRM 32; RS 53)			
8. The Eucharistic Acclamations (Holy, Holy [<i>Sanctus</i>]; Memorial Accl.; Amen) are sung well by the assembly. (GIRM 79b, 148, 151)			
9. The assembly's attitude is one of active and prayerful participation.			
10. The particular norms for the United States and for this diocese regarding the posture of the assembly are followed (e.g., kneeling until the conclusion of the Amen).			
11. The people do not sing/say the doxology; the priest celebrant does not sing/say the Amen. (GIRM 78, 79h)			
NOTES & COMMENTS			

I. Liturgy of the Eucharist: Preparation for Communion	Yes	No	N/A
1. Is the sign of peace given by the assembly to those nearest them? (GIRM 82; RS 72)			
2. The priest celebrant remains in the sanctuary during the sign of peace, unless there is a special reason not to do so (e.g., a funeral). (GIRM 154)			

3. The practice of the sign of peace embodies its meaning as an expression of peace and reconciliation, signifying our unity as members of the Body of Christ, as we move towards Communion (as opposed to becoming simply a time for socializing).			
4. The Lord’s Prayer is prayed with intention. The use of a particular gesture unifies rather than divides the community. Neither the holding of hands nor the <i>orans</i> (hands held palm up in front) position is prescribed by the rubrics. If parishes have adopted these practices they should ask themselves if people find them unifying or divisive/distracting.			
5. The breaking of the bread is carried out reverently and understood to signify that though the faithful are many, they are made one in Christ. (GIRM 83; RS 74)			
6. The Lamb of God (<i>Agnus Dei</i>) accompanies the breaking of the bread; the chant is repeated as necessary to complete the action. (GIRM 83) The breaking of the bread does not begin until the <i>Agnus Dei</i> is begun, and the singing (or reciting) continues until the fraction is completed. No other texts may be substituted for the chant; if extra time is needed the given text is to be repeated rather than additional “verses” added. (GIRM 366)			
7. The hosts for Communion are consecrated at the Mass being celebrated, and extra hosts are not taken from the tabernacle unless absolutely necessary. (GIRM 85; RS 89)			
8. In order not to multiply the wordiness of the liturgy, the priest celebrant is careful to say the private prayers of the priest <i>inaudibly</i> . GIRM 84, 156)			
9. The invitation to Communion (“This is the Lamb of God...”) is made in a simple and dignified way according to the rite, without addition or commentary. (GIRM 157)			
10. The parish is sensitive to the needs of those with celiac disease (gluten-sensitive enteropathy) and accommodations consistent with church teaching are made.			
NOTES & COMMENTS			

J. Liturgy of the Eucharist: Communion Rite	Yes	No	N/A
1. The Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (EMHCs)			

are well-prepared and use the proper ritual words for distribution of Holy Communion. (NDRHC 28, 41, & 43)			
2. The EMHCs enter the sanctuary after the priest has received Communion.			
3. The EMHCs (and deacon) receive Communion from the presider, and not in the manner of concelebrants—receiving before distributing Communion in order to show that ministry is most appropriately giving what one has received.			
4. Given the size of the assembly, there are enough ministers of Holy Communion at each Sunday Mass. (NDRHC 27 & 30)			
5. The Communion stations and ministers are arranged in a way that facilitates a unified and dignified Communion procession. If possible, the procession should move towards the altar for Communion, rather than towards the back of the church.			
6. If needed, ushers assist the procession reverently and attentively.			
7. Music properly accompanies the Communion procession. That is, the communion song begins when the priest celebrant drinks from the chalice and concludes after the last person has received (GIRM 86)			
8. For the Communion song, it is preferable that the congregation sing a refrain with a cantor or choir singing the verses so as not to encumber the congregation with books or scripts during the procession (IOM 137.3)			
9. Both species (bread and wine) are offered to the assembly. (GIRM 281; NDRHC 20 & 21)			
10. Most members of the assembly receive from the chalice.			
11. Members of the assembly remain standing during the entire Communion procession—and understand why this is the preferred posture (GIRM 43). While this is the stated posture in the documents, according to diocesan policy persons may sit or kneel after returning from Communion. Parishes should strive for unity in posture.			
12. The posture for reception of Holy Communion (standing) and the sign of veneration (simple bow of the head) which have been determined by the USCCB are followed. (RS 90)			
13. Any hosts that are not consumed are reserved in the tabernacle immediately following Communion (GIRM 163)			
14. Any of the Precious Blood remaining is immediately consumed and not disposed of in the sacrarium. (GIRM 163; NDRHC 52 & 55; RS 107) A cleric consumes at the altar. An EMHC consumes “at the place of distribution, at the altar, at a side table, or the sacristy, whichever is more dignified to local circumstances.” Ministers should not consume while walking.			
15. Communion vessels are reverently purified immediately following Mass in a manner consistent with the liturgical directives. (NDRHC 53; GIRM 163) While purification immediately after Communion is allowed, it is preferable			

to perform such tasks after the conclusion of the liturgy in order to limit distractions.			
16. After Communion, there is a significant period of profound silence. A hymn of praise may also be sung by everyone. (GIRM 88; RS 88)			
17. It is clear that the Prayer after Communion concludes the entire Communion Rite. (GIRM 89; RS 88)			
18. Announcements and other activities take place after the Prayer after Communion. (GIRM 166)			
19. The choir and other musicians receive Communion with the assembly.			
20. If non-communicants present themselves for a blessing, it is given in an appropriate manner. For example, saying simply “May the Lord bless you” is appropriate. Making the sign of the cross over the person (unless one is a priest or deacon) is not. No one should bless with the Host in the manner of Benediction.			
21. No one gives communion to him- or herself (including by intinction) (RS 94, 104)			
NOTES & COMMENTS			

K. Concluding Rites	Yes	No	N/A
1. Announcements are made after the Prayer after Communion and apart from the ambo. (GIRM 90)			
2. An effort is made to keep any announcements brief, clear, and pertinent.			
3. In cases of need or pastoral advantage, and in keeping with church legislation, the option for involving qualified lay persons to preach brief reflections or instructions at this time of Mass is utilized.			
4. The blessing is given in a reverent and intentional manner.			
5. Solemn blessings are employed on occasions when they are appropriate and meaningful.			
6. The music (sung or instrumental) that accompanies the recessional is appropriate for sending forth.			
7. The assembly is dismissed with a sense of mission.			
8. The assembly is encouraged to remain until the recessional hymn (or procession, if there is no hymn) is concluded.			
NOTES & COMMENTS			
After Mass...			
9. There is ongoing mystagogical catechesis on the liturgy.			
10. The celebrants and other liturgical ministers lead by example to embody the connection between Eucharist and mission, liturgy and life.			
11. The liturgical ministers help the members of the assembly to see and understand the Eucharist as an invitation and challenge to bring all aspects of their daily lives into conformity with Christ.			
12. The parish provides opportunities for members of the assembly to engage in genuine Christian witness outside the liturgy, acting upon the commission at the end of Mass.			
13. The parish recognizes the Christian witness given by its members in all forms of service, whether or not sponsored by the Church.			
14. There is a place and period of time following the liturgy for people to meet and visit with one another.			
15. There are persons assigned to the task of putting the church environment in order for the next Mass.			
NOTES & COMMENTS			

III. Sacramental and Other Liturgical Celebrations of the Parish

A. Infant Baptism	Yes	No	N/A
1. The celebration of baptism takes place at Sunday Mass at least several times during the year. (RBapC 9)			
2. Except for a good reason, the Rite of Baptism is celebrated only once on a given day in the same church. (RBapC.GI 27) The purpose of this legislation is to avoid the scheduling of multiple “private” baptisms and to emphasize the communal nature of the sacrament.			
3. The processional nature of the Rite of Baptism is respected. (RBapC 26)			
4. There are persons from the parish who can assist with the flow of the rite. (RBapC 15)			
5. There are lectors and musicians to assist in the celebration when Baptism is celebrated apart from Mass. (RBapC.GI 7)			
6. There is a team of parishioners and parish staff to prepare parents for the baptism of their children. (RBapC.GI 7)			
7. There is an opportunity to meet with the parents soon after the baptism of their infant for some mystagogical reflection.			
8. The font allows for the possibility of baptism by immersion. (BLS 69.2; RBapC GI 22)			
9. Families are encouraged to have their children baptized by immersion. (CIC 854; see also RCIA, NS 17 “baptism by immersion is the fuller sign....”)			
NOTES & COMMENTS			

B. Confirmation	Yes	No	N/A
1. Confirmation is celebrated in a way that invites/involves the parish community. (RConf 4)			
2. The Sacred Chrism is displayed in a place of honor in the Sanctuary for the ritual celebration.			
3. Liturgical ministers for the celebration are taken from those who have been trained to perform their specific ministry (i.e. lectors, extraordinary ministers, hospitality ministers etc.) These ministers are not the confirmandi themselves. (CSL 28)			
4. There is an opportunity for some mystagogical reflection with the confirmandi and their sponsors soon after the celebration.			
5. Liturgical catechesis for the whole parish has prepared parishioners to appreciate the true nature of this celebration as a sacrament of initiation. (CSL 19 & 59; see also Pope Paul VI Apostolic Constitution of the Sacrament of Confirmation)			
NOTES & COMMENTS			

C. First Communion	Yes	No	N/A
1. Respecting its nature as a sacrament of initiation, First Communion takes place within the midst of the Sunday Assembly during the Easter season. (RS 87)			
2. First Communion is preceded by the Sacrament of First Penance. (RS 87)			
3. First communicants receive Communion from the priest. (He may be assisted by the deacon or another minister with the chalice. (RS 87)			
4. First Communion always takes place during the celebration of Mass. (RS 87)			
5. Because of the close link of this sacrament to Baptism, the sprinkling rite and/or renewal of baptismal promises are used at the celebration.			
6. The candidates for First Communion have received liturgical catechesis and are ready to take their place as full, conscious, and active participants of the Sunday assembly.			
7. Liturgical ministers for the celebration are taken from those who have been trained to perform their specific ministry (i.e. lectors, extraordinary ministers, hospitality ministers etc.) These ministers are not the first communicants themselves. (SC 28)			
8. There is an opportunity for some mystagogical reflection with both First Communicants and their parents soon after the celebration.			
9. Liturgical catechesis for the whole parish has prepared the parishioners to appreciate the true nature of this celebration as a sacrament of initiation. (CSL 19 & 59)			
NOTES & COMMENTS			

D. RCIA	Yes	No	N/A
1. There is an RCIA process in the parish. (CSL 64-66)			
2. The process includes an ongoing (year round) pre-catechumenate. (RCIA 7.1 & 36-37)			
3. The process includes an ongoing (year round) catechumenate. (RCIA 75 and NS 6)			
4. There are a few dates each year for celebration of the Rite of Acceptance into the Order of the Catechumenate. (RCIA 18.3)			
5. There are members of the parish (priest, deacon, lay) trained to serve on the RCIA team. (RCIA 9-16)			
6. The various rites take place in the midst of the Sunday liturgical assembly: (RCIA 9) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Rite of Acceptance and/or Rite of Welcome (RCIA 45 & 412) · Dismissal of catechumens at Sunday and Holy Day Masses, and at school Masses (RCIA 83.2) · Rite of Sending to the Rite of Election (RCIA 107) · The Scrutinies on the 3rd, 4th, and 5th Sundays of Lent (RCIA, 146) · The Presentation of the Creed and Lord's Prayer (RCIA 157 & 178) · The Easter Vigil (RCIA 207) 			
7. The entire church space is used well in celebrating the rites (e.g., Processions; Placement of catechumens/candidates in the midst of the assembly)			
8. The parish musician is involved in preparation of the rites and is developing a repertoire of ritual music for the assembly for these rites. (See various major rituals)			
9. The parish community receives ongoing catechesis regarding their role in the initiation of those seeking to come to the Church. (RCIA 9)			
10. Children of catechetical age in need of baptism or being received into the full communion of the Church are formed through the process of the RCIA. (RCIA 252)			
11. Children of catechetical age in the RCIA celebrate the rites with the adults.			
12. Children of catechetical age receive all three sacraments of initiation (baptism, confirmation, and First Communion) at the Easter Vigil. (NS 18; CIC, c.852)			
13. The font allows for baptism by immersion for adults and children. (RCIA 213; NS 17)			
14. The Baptism of those seeking to come into full communion is respected. Reception of these Christians does not take place at the Easter Vigil, which is reserved for the baptism of catechumens. (NS 30-33)			

NOTES & COMMENTS

E. Rite of Marriage	Yes	No	N/A
1. Appropriate decisions are made with regard to celebration of the Rite of Marriage within Mass or outside of Mass. (RMarr 8)			
2. There are liturgical ministers from the parish prepared to fulfill the role of: (CSL 28; see rubrics of RMarr) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · cantor · lector(s)/musician · usher/greeter · extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion (at Mass) Friends or family of the bride and groom may fulfill these ministries so long as they are properly trained and commissioned (at least for the single occasion).			
3. Steps have been taken to encourage the full, conscious and active participation of the assembly gathered for the wedding celebration. (CSL 14 & 82)			
4. The liturgical music serves the rite and is appropriate for liturgy, in accord with the Diocesan document “Music Guidelines for the Celebration of Marriage.” (MCW, no. 23)			
5. The parish liturgical musician is involved in the decision making process with regard to music. (MCW 82)			
6. The liturgical season is taken into consideration in preparing the liturgy. (RMarr 11)			
7. There is an opportunity for some mystagogical reflection soon after the rite is celebrated.			
NOTES & COMMENTS			

F. Order of Christian Funerals	Yes	No	N/A
1. There is a bereavement committee trained to assist the family of the deceased in preparing the Funeral liturgy. (OCF 9 & 17)			
2. The parish liturgical musician has consciously made an effort to develop a repertoire of music familiar to the parish that will serve the needs of the <i>Order of Christian Funerals</i>. (OCF 30-33; MCW 23 & 83)			
3. The various times for prayer are provided by the appropriate parish minister needed in each situation: (OCF 50) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Prayers for the dying · Gathering in the presence of the body · Vigil · Morning Prayer/Evening Prayer · Transfer of the Body to the Church/Place of Committal · The Funeral Mass · The Committal 			
4. There are liturgical ministers from the parish to perform the various ministries needed at the Vigil: (OCF 15 & 64) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Leader of prayer · Lector · Cantor/Leader of Song 			
5. There are liturgical ministers from the parish to perform the various ministries needed at the Funeral Mass: (OCF 15 & 150) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Ushers/greeters · Cantor/Musician (OCF 153) · Lector · Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion <p>Friends or family of the deceased or bereaved may fulfill these ministries so long as they are properly trained and commissioned (at least for the single occasion) and are able to do so given the circumstances.</p>			
6. Liturgical catechesis has been provided to the entire parish community concerning the nature and celebration of the <i>Order of Christian Funerals</i>. (CSL 19 & 59)			
7. The liturgical music serves the rite and is appropriate for use in the liturgy. (OCF 30)			
8. The liturgical signs and symbols used affirm Christian belief and hope in the paschal mystery. (OCF 21)			
9. A homily, and not a eulogy, is preached at the Vigil and at			

the Funeral Liturgy. (OCF 27, 61, 141)			
NOTES & COMMENTS			

G. The Rite of Penance	Yes	No	N/A
Chapter 1, The Rite for Individual Penitents			
1. A chapel is properly appointed for individual penitents. (BLS 104 & 105)			
2. The penitent has the option to choose either face-to-face or anonymous confession. (BLS 103; CIC 964)			
3. The opportunity for individual confession is regularly scheduled and clearly published. (RPen 13)			
4. There is a bible available for the proclamation of Scriptures during the celebration.			
Chapter 2, The Rite for Several Penitents with Individual Absolution			
5. There are regularly scheduled times for the communal celebration of the Rite of Penance (especially during Advent, Lent, and for First Reconciliation).			
6. The service is prepared in harmony with the Rite (Chapter II) and the liturgical season. (RPen 13)			
7. Liturgical music is carefully chosen to enhance the rite and the communal nature of this celebration. (MCW 81; LMT 27)			
8. There are properly trained lectors to proclaim the various scripture readings and litanies.			
9. There are enough confessors to assist so that the rite can be celebrated by all gathered. (RPen 22)			
General Absolution			
10. Recourse is not made to general absolution except in situations of grave necessity. What is considered “grave necessity” was defined by Pope John Paul II in <i>Misericordia Dei</i> (2002). Only if the danger of death is imminent, confession cannot be heard in an appropriate way and within an appropriate time, and the penitent is at risk for being deprived of sacramental grace for “a long time” may recourse to general absolution be made. (MD 4)			
11. The penitents receiving general absolution are informed of their responsibilities regarding future confession. That is, individual confession is to be made “as soon as there is an opportunity to do so before receiving another general absolution.” (MD 8)			
12. Report of the use of general absolution is made to the bishop’s office.			
NOTES & COMMENTS			

--

H. Communal Anointing of the Sick	Yes	No	N/A
1. There is an opportunity for the communal anointing of the sick at the appropriate times of the year. (PCS 131-134) · At a regularly scheduled Sunday Mass · At a time apart from Sunday Mass (i.e. weekday, school, special celebrations)			
2. Liturgical catechesis is provided for the parishioners to understand the nature of the rite and to help them discern their appropriate participation in the sacrament. (CSL 19 & 59)			
3. Liturgical music is carefully chosen to enhance the rite.			
NOTES & COMMENTS			

I. Liturgy of the Hours	Yes	No	N/A
1. There is an opportunity for the celebration of Morning Prayer with some regularity to serve the needs of the parish. (GILH 1, 9, & 21)			
2. There is an opportunity for the celebration of Evening Prayer with some regularity to serve the needs of the parish. (GILH 1, 9, 21, & 37)			
3. Liturgical ministers are present to lead the celebration: (GILH 253-261) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Leader of prayer · Lector · Cantor/Musician · Greeters (if necessary) 			
4. Catechesis for the Liturgy of the Hours is ongoing to invite parishioners to develop an understanding and appreciation for the nature of this liturgical prayer.			
5. There is an effort made by the liturgical music minister to develop repertoire that will serve the unique needs of this liturgical prayer. (LMT 34-45)			
NOTES & COMMENTS			

J. Devotional Prayer	Yes	No	N/A
1. The place of reservation of the Blessed Sacrament is available to parishioners. (BLS 71)			
2. The <i>Rite of Exposition</i> is celebrated at some time each year. (RS 139)			
3. When the <i>Rite of Exposition</i> is celebrated, great care is taken to ensure that someone is always present before the Blessed Sacrament. (RS 138)			
4. Other devotional celebrations are scheduled, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Stations of the Cross · The Rosary and other Marian Devotions · Corpus Christi Procession 			
NOTES & COMMENTS			