

Sunday and Feast Day Liturgical Notes for Priests and Deacons

Suggestions for Leading Worship



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RE: Liturgical Suggestions for the Second Sunday of Easter – Cycle A

Sunday date: March 29-30, 2008

Dear Fathers and Deacons,

An Overview...

1. Today marks the conclusion of the octave of Easter. It is the Eighth Day, the Day of New Creation. This is the day on which Jesus appeared to the fearful disciples offering a word of “Peace,” the breath of the Holy Spirit and the forgiveness of sins.
2. Today is also known as Divine Mercy Sunday. A devotional day established by our late Holy Father, John Paul II. John Paul understood the Resurrection as a “Miracle of Mercy” which “has radically changed humanity’s destiny.” The readings today lend themselves well to the theme of divine mercy.
3. Today is also known as “*Dominica in albis*” (“white Sunday”) referring to the white baptismal garments that are still worn by Neophytes on this Sunday. The newly baptized and received members should have a place of prominence at Mass today. Remembrance of baptism as the way to new life remains a strong theme on this Easter Sunday.

Some Considerations as You Prepare...

1. The joy and festivity of Easter continues on this “day that the Lord has made.” Elements of high solemnity should continue in the ritual and music of today’s Mass.
2. Especially today and during the whole Easter season it is most appropriate to use the Rite of Sprinkling of Holy Water instead of a Penitential Rite.
3. The singing of the Glory to God in a festive, Easter-time setting helps to mark the high festivity of the 50 days of Easter.
4. Both Opening Prayers make references to the saving waters of Baptism, and are good choices.
5. The Preface of Easter I (P21) is still proper (mandatory) today, with the phrase “on this Easter Day.”
6. The Prayer over the Gifts asks God to “accept the offering of your people and of those newly born again in baptism.”
7. Eucharistic Prayer I (The Roman Canon) also is especially appropriate today, for its special inserts for use during the Octave of Easter remember the newly-baptized.
8. A Solemn Blessing is provided today. Consider using the Solemn Blessing of Easter throughout the entire 50 days to give unity and a sense of solemnity to the season.
9. The deacon’s dismissal contains the double, concluding Alleluia (e.g., “The Mass is ended, go in peace, alleluia, alleluia.). This unique aspect to the dismissal is done throughout the Octave of Easter and on Pentecost, but not during the rest of the Easter season.

Questions for Faith Sharing:

1. How do I proclaim that Jesus is “My Lord and my God?”
2. How am I like Thomas? How does my faith move me beyond doubt?
3. How does my belief in the Resurrection help me to carry on Jesus’ mission?

Sample Prayer of the Faithful for the Second Sunday of Easter

(adapted from *Prayers for Feasts and Seasons, Year A*, P. Scagnelli, Chicago, LTP, 1997)

Priest: Baptized into one church, holding all God's gifts in common, let us offer our prayer in Jesus' name.

Deacon (or other reader if there is no deacon):

1. That the Church may give praise to God and gain the goodwill of all by the witness of its devoted faith and great charity, we pray to the Lord.
2. That war and violence, especially in Iraq and the Middle East, may yield to deeds of peace and forgiveness, we pray to the Lord.
3. That those who suffer the distress of many trials may one day lead our praise, giving glory when Jesus Christ is revealed, we pray to the Lord.
4. That the Lord may confirm the newly-baptized in their new birth unto a living hope, and day-by-day add to our number those who are being saved, we pray to the Lord.
5. That this community of believers may give generously of its goods, and distribute to all, as any may have need, we pray to the Lord.
6. That we, who have not seen the Risen Lord and still have come to believe may share the divine mercy and forgiveness we have received, we pray to the Lord.
7. That the dead who acknowledged Jesus as their Lord and their God (especially _____) may rejoice forever with the Living One, we pray to the Lord.

[*pause; the presider alone concludes*]

Priest: On this Lord's Day, we come together, O God,
to proclaim the Living One, the First and the Last,
who was dead but now is forever alive.
Open our hearts to the Spirit that Jesus breathes on us.
Help us, who have not seen, to believe.
Send us, as you have sent Jesus,
to greet the world with the Easter word of peace
and to share with all the new life of forgiveness.
We ask this through the same Jesus Christ, our Risen Lord.
Amen.