

**NORMS REGARDING COMMUNION SERVICES
WHEN DAILY MASS CANNOT BE CELEBRATED
IN THE ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA**

Every priest knows the great privilege it is to celebrate Mass on Sunday for the faithful, as well as on a daily basis.

Legitimate occasions, however, arise when a priest cannot be available for daily Mass. These include times for priests to be away from the parish, such as retreat, workshop and vacation, as well as pressing pastoral needs and the weekly day off. These occasions when daily Mass cannot be celebrated require a pastoral response for the benefit of both the priests and the faithful.

The cancellation of a daily Mass, when known in advance, should be well published for the faithful, together with the schedule of Masses at nearby locations.

If a parish has more than one daily Mass but, for the legitimate occasions listed above, must cancel one of these, then the faithful should be encouraged to participate, when possible, at another scheduled Mass.

A priest may permit a Communion Service consisting of the Liturgy of the Word with the distribution of Holy Communion only when it is difficult for the faithful to participate at Mass (as may happen in certain parishes, health care institutions, schools, etc.). A Communion Service which is typically an exception is not to be scheduled on a regular basis.

When there is the need for a Communion Service, deacons and, in their absence, extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion, may be delegated by the priest to provide for it. Deacons and extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion should be prepared in advance according to the proper liturgical rites.

The theological and liturgical primacy of the reception of Holy Communion during Mass is rightly safeguarded when a Communion Service occurs only by way of exception.

When a daily Mass is cancelled, and another Mass or a Communion Service is not available, other laudable practices would include the Liturgy of the Hours, a Liturgy of the Word, adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament, or the communal recitation of the rosary.

Cardinal Justin Rigali
Archbishop of Philadelphia
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