

Diocesan Manual
Guidelines for Episcopal Visitations

Prior to the visit:

1. After the date and time have been established, please send the Bishop details of the visit on the Episcopal Visitation Notification Form provided on-line, including a draft of the bulletin at least two weeks ahead.
2. Please provide a chaplain or a person to be assigned to the Bishop while he is visiting.
3. Please provide a marked parking space for the Bishop. Have the assigned person meet him and show him where to get vested. The Bishop's wife, Mary Ellen, usually attends visitations with him.
4. The Holy Eucharist will normally be celebrated.
5. The Bishop will be the Celebrant and will take all parts of the liturgy for which the rubric specifies "Celebrant." If present for two or more Eucharist's on the same Sunday, the Bishop will preach, absolve, and bless at both services, but may ask the Rector/Vicar to celebrate at one or more services.
6. If the Bishop is expected to sing parts of the liturgy, please provide the music in advance as well as any additional music for the day.
7. Scripture for a Sunday visitation will normally be the proper for that Sunday unless otherwise preapproved. On a major holy day, the readings will be those for that day. On a ferial day, the proper for Baptism or Confirmation may be used. For a congregation's patronymic festival, the proper for its patron or title may be transferred to a Sunday, except in the seasons of Advent, Lent, or Easter (BCP, p.16). If any proper other than that for the Sunday is to be requested, please notify the Bishop in advance.
8. The Pontifical Blessing will be used by the Bishop and must be printed in the bulletin (BCP, p.523).
9. A check for the undesignated offering should be sent to "The Diocesan Discretionary Fund." Individual envelopes will be sent prior to the visitation for your use in the Bulletin or other means of distribution for your convenience.
10. Photographs, especially those with flash, are not appropriate in any service of the worship of God. The Bishop will pose with the class or individuals before or after the service.
11. Parish Record Books: The Bishop is required to inspect the records of the parish or mission as the canons prescribe. Please have current registers open and available for the Bishop to inspect and sign.
12. If you have any questions not answered above, please contact the Bishop's Executive Assistant, Jan Nothum, at jnothum@episcopalswfl.org or 800-992-7699 or 941-556-0315 ext. 259.

Baptisms:

1. The Bishop's Visitation is one of the appropriate times to celebrate Holy Baptism (BCP, p.312).
2. The Bishop will be the Celebrant.
3. It is the Bishop's custom to offer the Rector/Vicar the privilege of doing the water Rite (BCP, p.307) if the priest so wishes.
4. The Bishop will normally apply chrism to each person baptized.
5. It is expected that the parents and sponsors of infants, and older candidates themselves, will be thoroughly instructed in the meaning of the Sacrament of Baptism.

Confirmations:

1. Theology: " In the course of their Christian development, those baptized at an early age are expected, when they are ready and have been duly prepared, to make a mature public affirmation of their faith and commitment to the responsibilities of their Baptism and to receive the laying on of hands by the Bishop. Those baptized as adults, unless baptized with laying on of hands by a bishop, are also expected to make a public affirmation of their faith and commitment to the responsibilities of their Baptism in the presence of a bishop and to receive the laying on of hands." (BCP, p.412) Those who have been baptized and made a mature public affirmation of faith in another denomination of the church may be received into the Episcopal Church. Those who have already been confirmed may reaffirm their baptismal vows.

2. Concerning the Service:

- a) Please notify the Jan Nothum in the Office of the Bishop in advance of how many Confirmations, Receptions and Reaffirmations you will have at the service. (This may be done on the Visitation Notification Form which will be sent to you prior to your visitation.) The Bishop will sign the certificates at the Parish visitation.
- b) At the service, please provide a comfortable chair with armrests, either the Bishop's chair or another one, positioned at the top of the chancel steps or wherever it is most visible to the congregation for the Confirmations. Please have bottled water available by the Bishop's chair for drinking.
- c) The color of the altar hangings and vestments for Confirmation will normally be the color of the season.
- d) If the Rite of Confirmation is on a feast day, the proper for the feast day is used. If it is on a ferial day, the proper for confirmation is used. The collect is found in the BCP, p.254; the suggested readings are found in the BCP, p.924.
- e) Each candidate is presented by his or her Christian name (without surname).
- f) Please print clearly the Christian name of each candidate on a name tag, and at the bottom indicate "C" for Confirmation, "R" for Reception, or "RA" for Reaffirmation. Remind all candidates that the nametags are there for the Bishop to read, so be sure that clothing or hair does not obstruct them. The presenting priest stands with the Bishop in order to assist with pronunciation of names, kneeling, standing etc.

The Bishop's Visitation schedule will be posted on the Diocese web site in July for the following fall and spring season.

Issued by the Bishop's Commission on Liturgy and Music. Revised March, 2009