

## Newsletter notes Summer 2023



Welcome to our latest Liturgy Newsletter. I hope you have had an enjoyable Summer, making the most of the sun whilst avoiding the worst of the rain. In our last newsletter we were in the middle of Lent, looking forward to Easter, but the year seems to have raced ahead: Easter and Pentecost have come and gone and we will shortly be thinking about Advent and Christmas. The shops will no doubt be full of Christmas cakes, puddings and toys within a couple of weeks!

Following on from our article last time on Holy Communion under both kinds we have had a number of enquiries about this, so we are repeating the item below. We also have a confirmed date for the introduction of the Revised Translation of the Lectionary – Advent 2024 – and we have a little more information about that. The Bishops' Conference is providing some resources for us and we are planning formation to share these, when they become available, with both clergy and laity. We have also had some enquiries about Intinction, the practice of dipping the consecrated host into the precious blood prior to consumption, a practice which is very clearly not recommended by the Bishops of England and Wales. The guidelines for this are given in the Handbook for Extraordinary Ministers of Communion (see <https://cliftondiocese.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/EMHC-guidelines.pdf>) and are given below.

It might seem a little early to be thinking about Christmas, almost as if we've been caught up in consumerism, but this Christmas we will be celebrating the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first nativity scene, created by St Francis in Greccio, Italy. See the box below for the story of St Francis' Christmas crib. Meanwhile, it might be a good time to begin thinking about how our parishes can celebrate this anniversary: perhaps we could create a larger-than-usual crib in the front of our church, with an invitation to passers by to call in and spend some time with Jesus in the church. Why not consider approaching the Local Council and asking them to display a Christmas Crib alongside, or instead of, the usual Christmas Tree? Or we could encourage some of our shopkeepers to display a nativity scene in their windows... You will also find some Christmas blessings in Appendix Six of the Diocesan Liturgical Diary.

The long promised New Translation of the Lectionary will finally begin on the First Sunday of Advent, 1 December 2004. The Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales is busy producing resources as we type and formation will begin early next year. More detail can be seen below.

We also repeat the article on Art & Architecture, with a reminder of the need to contact the Liturgy Office if you are planning to make any changes which might affect the liturgical or devotional life of the church. It is better to contact us in the early stages as this may help to avoid costly mistakes.

## Art & Architecture



The Liturgy Office is responsible for advising the bishop and our parishes on matters of liturgical Art and Architecture – building, re-ordering, alterations and additions and artistic commissions – for the churches of the diocese. Any proposed changes which affect the liturgical and devotional life of the parish or community will need to be referred to the Liturgy Office for advice and permission where necessary. This may also require diocesan approval and possibly approval from the Historic Churches Committee (in the case of a listed building).

### Is Diocesan Permission Needed?

Permission is required for all works that affect the liturgical and devotional life of the parish or community. This is wide-ranging and may range from the construction of a new church building to a major re-ordering or even provision of works of sacred art. It may also extend to the grounds of the church especially where this area includes the approach to the building, its use for the celebration of the Sacred Liturgy (burials, Palm Sunday Liturgy, Eucharistic processions etc), devotional areas and where such grounds are the context for works of sacred art. The interior of the church or chapel includes the narthex, nave, sanctuary, baptistery, Blessed Sacrament chapel, sacristy, places for the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, shrines, galleries and other places.

This will include such things as

1. the overall liturgical environment;
2. the provision of altar, ambo, font, presidential chair, place for the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament and Holy Oils, musical instruments, seating, altar rails, confessionals and also substantial brass and silverware;
3. décor, lighting schemes, furnishings, floor coverings, glazing, sound systems, heating, memorial plaques etc;
4. works of Sacred Art including stained and etched glass, statuary, Stations of the Cross, icons, paintings, mosaics, murals, banners etc;
5. any item that is intended to be a permanent fixture. 'Permanent' is understood to refer to placing of an object, whether fixed or moveable, in the church for a continuous period exceeding three months;
6. the restoration, removal or disposal of any work of art, historic vestments, plate and furnishings from a church or chapel belonging to the Clifton Diocese.

### Early Consultation

It often saves time and frustration if you approach the Liturgy Office at the outset, before submitting a formal application. Please do contact the Liturgy Office for comments and advice about your plans as early on in the project as possible. The Liturgy Office seeks to serve our communities and offers a consultancy service on the various aspects of sacred space and the general liturgical environment.

### Site Visits

It may be that the Liturgy Office will wish to send a member or a small group to discuss your proposals on site or to meet with the parish priest, members of the PPC and other

parishioners or members of your community. It will help if you can send as much information as possible, such as sketch plans, brief etc. in advance if you have reached such a stage of development.

### **Please remember**

Any works carried out without approval may have to be reversed. Furthermore, no work is to be commenced in a listed church until a faculty has been received from the Historic Churches Committee.

For further information please contact [liturgy@cliftondiocese.com](mailto:liturgy@cliftondiocese.com)

### **The Crib at Christmas**

The first nativity scene was created, in Greccio, Italy, by Saint Francis of Assisi in 1223. With an aim of promoting the worship of Christ, he designed the Christmas crib. This live scene became so popular among different communities that throughout Catholic churches this tradition became a part of Christmas celebration.

St. Francis had a special devotion to the Child Jesus, and it is believed that he was first inspired by this idea after visiting the historical place of Christ's birth on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land - the humble stable in a Bethlehem cave. It is likely that this event deepened his devotion to the Child Jesus, who was born into the world in such poverty, humility, and simplicity. In fact, Francis founded his new religious Order to imitate these very virtues. He recreated the scene of Christ's birth in a special ritual and Mass he held, inside a cave in Greccio, inviting both his fellow friars and the townspeople to join in the celebration. Later he told a friend why he desired to create the first nativity scene in his town:

**'I want to do something that will recall the memory of that Child who was born in Bethlehem, to see with bodily eyes the inconveniences of his infancy, how he lay in the manger, and how the ox and ass stood by.'**

He set up an empty manger (the feeding trough of farm animals which served as Jesus' crib) inside a cave, and even included a live ox and donkey beside the manger just as it was believed to have happened on that first Christmas night. Through these visual aids he wanted everyone to impress more deeply into their understanding how Christ came into the world in such poverty and simplicity. This was a typical perspective of St. Francis' unique charism of simple, poverty-centred spirituality.

It is also said that St. Francis - who was radically devoted to the virtue of evangelical poverty - was inspired to recreate the original nativity scene to overcome the rampant greed and materialism prevalent at that time in Italy.

Holy Communion under both kinds

The Bishops' Conference of England and Wales now states that the practice of receiving both the Body and Blood of Christ may be resumed on Maundy Thursday or, if that is felt to be too early, Corpus Christi. An information leaflet is attached. Guidelines for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion can be found here <https://cliftondiocese.com/liturgy-office/> under the 'Ministries' tab. If you wish,

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Communion under both kinds A4

### **Intinction**

Ministering Holy Communion by intinction is not recommended in the Dioceses of England and Wales.

However, should Communion be distributed in this way, the minister of Holy Communion should be accompanied by a server holding a communion plate and another minister holding the chalice. The minister takes a host, dips it partly into the chalice and, showing it, says, 'The Body and Blood of Christ'. The communicant responds, 'Amen.'

He or she receives the host on the tongue from the minister and then withdraws. When intinction is offered, all members of the congregation should be invited to receive Holy Communion under this form. However individual communicants can choose to receive under the form of Bread alone. Holy Communion by intinction can only be administered by a minister and may not be self-administered.

### **New Translation of the Lectionary**

We are advised by CBCEW that the New Translation of the Lectionary will come into use on 1 December 2024, the First Sunday of Advent. It is important to remember that this is a new **translation**, not a new Lectionary, in the same way that the new Translation of the Roman Missal

was a new translation and not a completely new Missal. The readings will have the same references, but the translation we encounter will be different.

***The English Standard Version: Catholic Edition*** is seen as fulfilling the qualities the Church seeks.

The Lectionary texts will be set out in 'sense' lines – rather like St John's Prologue – and will consequently take up more space. There will therefore be four volumes, not three, namely

- Sundays, Solemnities, Feasts of the Lord
- Weekdays: Advent, Christmas, OT 1-9, Lent, Easter + Saints (December–May) & Commons
- Weekdays: OT 6-34 + Saints (June–November) & Commons
- Ritual Masses, VNO, Votive Masses, Dead

There will also be a Book of the Gospels, and all of these will be published by the CTS.

The ESV Catholic Edition of the Bible is available to buy from SPCK Publishing and People's Missals, Missallettes and Annual Missals will be available in plenty of time for the first use in Advent 2024.

As always, please contact us at the Liturgy Office [liturgy@clifondiocese.com](mailto:liturgy@clifondiocese.com) or 0117 902 5595 if you have any queries or any formation needs that you would like us to help you with.

Finally, do take a look at the content of the tabs on our webpage – they contain a lot of useful information.

**Wishing you a happy and blessed Autumn Term**