

Guidelines for Planning a NOVA Liturgy

Revised November, 2016

Gathering the Team: Ask other NOVA members to help in planning your liturgy, it is a great way to build community and often adds more creativity and less burden for the planner. It's also a good opportunity to involve newer folks. Call/email the presider 3-4 weeks before your liturgy to **set a date for a planning meeting**. Inviting the priest to share a meal or traveling to their home/office is often welcomed. If they are unable to meet in person, set a date for a phone planning session. Find the Readings for your Sunday located on the NOVA website: www.novacatholic.org/nova-files (will need password in current use). You can also find music selections there at nova-files.

Planning Meeting: Discuss the meaning of the Readings and their relevance to the lives of NOVA members and the larger world community. Decide on a theme or focus for your liturgy (see notes on theme-setting below) and how you might develop it – e.g. other readings or meditations, music, symbols, environment, dramatizations, etc. Discuss how the homily will develop the theme and whether to have a community shared reflections or some other response to the homily. Clarify who will be preparing the program, bringing the bread and wine, other symbols, and doing the Readings.

Music Selections: The NOVA Music Group has designated a Music Liaison for each month of the year (see monthly announcement on NOVA email list). Call, email or speak to the liaison about your music selections **no later than the Sunday before your liturgy**. If you would like help in making your selections, you can also discuss that with the liaison. If you would like to introduce new music, the Music Group needs at least 2 weeks advance notice. Tell the liaison which 4 hymns you'd like to use and your preference for singing or reading the Responsorial (between 1st and 2nd Readings) as well as a sung or spoken Peace Greeting after the Prayers of the Faithful. If you have a preference on which Mass parts to use, share that as well.

Final Week Before the Liturgy:

- Recruit 5 Communion Ministers, 5 Offertory gift-bearers, 2 Greeters
- Type and print the Program for the liturgy – 75 copies in winter, 60 in summer (double-sided saves trees).
- Make sure Communion dishes and linens are clean from the previous week.
- Buy or bake Communion bread and purchase a 750ml bottle of wine (white is easier to clean-up). A **small** round loaf of non-crumbly, unflavored bread is best – e.g. pita, challah, naan.
- Arrange for flowers, plants or other items to enhance the environment.
- At Kenmore, help clean-up the week before your liturgy and check storeroom for candles, linens, screens, vestments you wish to use. In summer, on the Sunday before your liturgy, take home the altar table, 2 rolling platforms for moving picnic tables, rolling tub with supplies and plastic bag with banner (or arrange for someone to do that for you). See Victoria or Gloria if you need help locating any items.
- Choose 2 Readers and ask them to rehearse the Readings (see info on Proclaiming the Word below).

Sunday Morning:

- Arrive at least 45 minutes before liturgy begins to set-up, you'll need 2-4 people to help.
- In Kenmore, arrange 75 chairs preferably so that people can see one another. In the park, get help to arrange picnic tables in semi-circle and bring brooms to sweep the Pavilion.
- Set up the altar: place linens, a cross, 2 candles with holders and the Sacramentary (big red book with Order of the Mass); put up the screens or banner. Set the Peace Candle and its stand near the side of the altar.
- Set up a Welcoming Table by the door with a table cloth, the programs in holder, NOVA photo book, forms for announcements and to sign up for email list, and NOVA calling cards.
- Set up Offertory Table near the altar with a cloth, the bread on 2 platters, wine (3/4 of a bottle) in pitcher, water in small pitcher, 4 cups, 4 napkins, 2 offertory baskets, and 2 small communion boxes for the sick.
- Greet the priest and help him to find vestments. Do final review of logistics with him. Music group member will provide priest's microphone.
- Planners keep one wireless microphone for Introductions, Readings, shared reflections after homily and announcements (Chair).
- Have all preparations completed 15 minutes before liturgy begins so that you are stress-free and ready to start the liturgy at the announced time (10:15 at Kenmore, 9:30 in the park).
- Light the special Peace Candle that usually stands to left of the altar before liturgy and the altar candles either before Mass or before the Offertory.
- Decide with the Chairs who will open the Liturgy and welcome guests.
- Signal the priest to end the shared reflections either by 11:00 at Kenmore or 10:15 in the park. The priest begins the Prayers of the Faithful at that time. Planners may include a brief spontaneous prayer for peace from their seat as part of Prayers of the Faithful.
- After the liturgy, clean up and put everything away in its proper place in Kenmore closet or in the summer liturgy containers. If anything is broken or needs replacement, notify Victoria Robinson or Gloria Mog.

Choosing a Theme for Eucharistic Celebrations

A theme is often chosen to help focus the worship experience on one facet of our faith - a specific meaning or emphasis that connects us in a more personal way to the liturgy. It is a type of "wake-up call" that moves the familiar ritual out of habit into a real connection with our lives. It often helps to deepen the liturgical experience and to increase full community participation. The theme is like a melody in a piece of music. It creates a "whole cloth" of the liturgy experience, weaving in and out of the various parts of the liturgy. The following thoughts are offered to aid in theme selection:

- There is no prescribed way to choose a theme – you can be creative. Ideas usually start with the Readings and may expand through the newspaper, internet sites on the liturgy for that day, a film, prayer, discussion, a novel, etc.

- A theme which expresses a felt issue or need for the community often gains the most attention and involvement.
- Be specific and particular – it usually helps to avoid general themes like “love”, “peace”, “community” since every Eucharist celebrates these.
- In developing the theme consider: Readings for the day, major events in the life of the community, the season of the year, themes that have been developing in liturgies in the weeks past or to come; major news events.
- State the theme briefly in simple language familiar to all in the community.
- When planning a liturgy, select the theme first so that most of the major elements reflect and enhance it.

Proclaiming the Word

The readers, or Ministers of the Word, have a very important role in bringing the Scriptures or other chosen readings to the hearts of the congregation.

- Proclaim the Word/Readings in a deliberate, heartfelt, evocative manner. Remember you are usually relating a story rather than giving a discourse. Go over the reading 2 or 3 times until you are clear what it is saying and what the feeling tone is. Then communicate that in a Spirit-filled manner to the community.
- Approach the altar slowly, stand at the designated place, pause, establish eye contact and when all is quiet, begin reading **slowly** and emphatically in a voice **loud enough** for all to hear. When available, always use the microphone, holding it tilted up and close to your mouth. At the end of the reading, pause again to let the words and their meaning sink in. Do not leave the altar until the community has responded to, “This is the Word of God”.
- It is usually best to avoid explanations before the readings. Everyone will hear something different as they listen, that’s how the Spirit works.
- You can be creative in your presentation - memorize it and tell it as a story, act it out, repeat certain lines for emphasis, use multiple voices, give the congregation a part, etc.
- When using children as readers, practice with them until they are comfortable and can communicate well. Teach them how to hold the microphone close to their mouth.
- Place the readings in an attractive folder or book that honors their importance.

Preparing the Program

The Program serves as a guide to the congregation and the presider for the order of the liturgy. The most important element is the words to the songs that everyone is invited to sing. Many like to print the words to the Readings so that they can follow along or save for later. A complete program includes: Naming which Sunday it is, the date, and the overall theme for the liturgy if you have one. The Opening Song, Penitential Rite, Opening Prayers, First Reading, Responsorial line or song that the congregation will sing or say, Second Reading, Alleluia, Gospel. The Homily and Community Reflections (if planned) follow, then Prayers of the Faithful which and then the sharing of the Peace Greeting – sung or spoken to one another. Then the Offertory Song and the Eucharistic Prayer is noted, Communion Song, Blessing of the Ministers to the Sick, Community Announcements, Final Prayers and Blessing, and Closing Song. The names of the Presider and Planners are at the end. Any other special rituals, songs or recognitions

should also be included. Print the program on both sides to save paper, you may wish to be creative with papers, art work, colors, etc.

PROGRAM TEMPLATE/EXAMPLE:

**Nova Catholic Community
25th Sunday in Ordinary Time
September 22, 2013**

Welcome (Chairs) Theme Statement (if have one)

Opening Song:

Greeting

Penitential Rite

Opening Prayers

First Reading: (Give citation. May print Readings in the Program or make 20 copies of just the Readings and set on welcoming table for those who like to see them in writing.)

Responsorial: (Print just the line that the congregation sings or recites)

Second Reading:

Alleluia

Gospel:

Homily & Community Shared Reflections

Prayers of the Faithful

Peace Greeting - (if singing it, print words and note that it is a sung greeting)

Liturgy of the Eucharist

Offertory Song:

Eucharistic Prayer Holy, Holy, Holy Memorial Acclamation Amen

Lord's Prayer

Communion Song:

Blessing of the Communion Ministers

Community Life Sharing (Chairs)

Closing Prayers and Final Blessing

Closing Song:

Planners:

Community Led Liturgies (CLL)

On those Sundays when we do not have an ordained priest to preside, the Community has developed and approved the use of a format for a liturgy led by Community members. The format is on the website. There are 75 copies of the Breaking of the Bread Prayer which is the part of the liturgy in which all participate. There are 10 copies of the Leader's part of the liturgy. These copies are kept in plastic sleeves in a 3-ring binder and are to be returned to the binder at the end of the liturgy. At Kenmore the binder is in the cabinet; during the summer Victoria keeps it. Planners will need to do a

Program only for the Liturgy of the Word and song lyrics to be used in tandem with the CLL pages. Alternatively, there are several other Bread Breaking Prayer formats which will be posted on the website as they are developed.

-Revision by *Gloria Mog*