

## Guidelines for Planning a NOVA Liturgy

Revised January, 2023

**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 2-3 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 under Liturgy tab: [www.novacatholic.org](http://www.novacatholic.org). You can also find music selections there at Music Files under Liturgy tab.

**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 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 Liturgy Schedule published 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 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 3 Communion Ministers, 4 Offertory gift-bearers, 2 Greeters
- Type and print the Program for the liturgy – 55 copies (double-sided saves trees).
- Make sure Communion dishes and linens are clean from the previous week.
- Buy or bake Communion bread and purchase a small bottle of wine (white is easier to clean-up). When dipping only, just need ½ cup. A **small** round loaf of non-crumblly, 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.
- Choose 2 Readers and ask them to rehearse the Readings (see info on Proclaiming the Word below).

### **Sunday Morning:**

- Arrive at least 60 minutes before liturgy begins to set-up, you'll need 2-4 people to help. Linda Christie is usually there to help set-up.
- Arrange 55 chairs preferably in a semi-circle so that people can see one another.
- Set up the altar: linens, a cross, 2 candles with holders and the Sacramentary (big red book with Order of the Mass); put up the screens behind the altar.
- Set up a Welcoming Table in the cafeteria with a tablecloth, the programs in a holder, NOVA photo book, forms for announcements and to sign up for email list, and NOVA calling cards.
- Set up Offertory Table at entrance to liturgy space with a cloth, the bread on 2 platters, wine (1/2 cup) in carafe, water in small pitcher, 2 cups, 2 napkins, 2 offertory baskets, and 2-3 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, seated with the priest and ready to start the liturgy at 10:15.
- Light the altar candles either before Mass begins or before the Offertory.
- Decide with the Chairs who will open the Liturgy and welcome guests.
- Signal the priest to end the shared reflections by 11:00. The priest begins the Prayers of the Faithful at that time.
- After the liturgy, clean up and put everything away in its proper place in Kenmore closet. 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. Always use the microphone as it is our connection to the Zoom participants. Hold it tilted up, perpendicular 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 podium 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 are able to communicate well. Teach them how to hold the microphone close to their mouth and speak slowly and clearly.
- 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 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, artwork, colors, etc.

## **PROGRAM Outline:**

### **NOVA Catholic Community**

**25th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

**September 22, 2013**

“In this place, in Arlington Virginia, we acknowledge with gratitude and deep respect to elders both past and present, that we are gathered on the traditional land of – the Anacostans, the Piscataway and the Pamunkey people”

**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 to the Sick**

**Gratitudes and 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 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. The binder is in the cabinet. 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 and Planners may choose other ways to enhance the liturgical experience.

-Revision by Gloria Mog

January, 2023

# Liturgy Planning @ NOVA: It's easy as 3, 2, 1, 0...



Three weeks before your liturgy –

- ✓ Download the readings from the NOVA website
- ✓ Reflect on any themes that come to you
- ✓ Review the full liturgy planning guidelines on the website
- ✓ Make initial contact with the priest to let him know you are the Planner for that week. Set a time and date to discuss the theme, homily and other aspects of the liturgy – in-person if possible.



Two weeks before your liturgy –

- ✓ Meet with the priest to make decisions on theme, music, setting, etc.
- ✓ Contact the NOVAtones' liaison (for that month) to let them know initial thoughts on music that would work with the Readings, theme and season – or to get suggestions on the music.



One week before your liturgy –

- ✓ Help clean up after liturgy and check closet for supplies for your liturgy.
- ✓ Confirm music with NOVAtone liaison
- ✓ Prepare Program draft for Sunday – share with priest/music liaison; print 55 copies (after Friday morning rehearsal of NOVAtones, if possible).
- ✓ Gather ½ bottle wine and 2 round pieces of non-crumby bread (e.g.pita, naan)
- ✓ Select readers (2) and Eucharistic ministers (3).
- ✓ Arrange for plants, flowers, symbols, etc. to enhance the environment.



Day of your liturgy –

- ✓ Arrive around 9:15 to set up; it's a good idea to arrange extra help
- ✓ Make sure readers have their readings and know how to use mic
- ✓ Confirm 3 eucharistic ministers and 3-4 Offertory gift-bearers
- ✓ Light candles on altar by 10:10
- ✓ Help Presider with vestments and personal microphone
- ✓ Help facilitate use of microphone for shared reflections and prayers of the faithful. Sit with priest for support and cues during the liturgy.
- ✓ Clean-up after liturgy -return everything to closet, take home cloth napkins for washing.

**This is meant to be a “cheat sheet” for planning – review the full Liturgy Planning Guidelines on the NOVA website. Always feel free to contact Gloria Mog for review of Program, questions/advice/assistance.**

EXAMPLE OF PROGRAM USING 1 SHEET OF PAPER – BACK AND FRONT

**NOVA Catholic Community**

**21<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time      August 27, 2017**

“In this place, in Arlington Virginia, we acknowledge with gratitude and deep respect to elders both past and present, that we are gathered on the traditional land of - the Anacostans, the Piscataway and the Pamunkey people”

**“Who do you say that I am?”**

**Entrance Meditation: “Silence My Soul”** (*please remain seated*)  
*Congregation chants slowly: Silence my Soul*

Silence my soul these trees are prayers \*\* 2X  
I asked the tree \*\* Tell me about God \*\* Then - it blossomed \*\*

Silence my soul the sun is prayer \*\* 2X  
I asked the sun \*\* Tell me about God \*\* Then – it shined \*\*

Silence my soul the moon is prayer \*\* 2X  
I asked the moon \*\* Tell me about God \*\* Then – it glowed \*\*

Silence my soul the earth is prayer \*\* 2X  
I asked the earth \*\* Tell me about God \*\* Then – it gave life \*\*

(Please stand)                      Greeting                      Penitential Rite                      Opening Prayers

**First Reading:** *Who Do Men Say That I Am?* (Excerpt by Cullen Murphy, *The Atlantic*)

**Responsorial:** Adonai, you are gracious and merciful, gracious and merciful.

**Second Reading:** Romans 11:33-36 –“*Oh the depths of the riches and wisdom . . .of God!*”

*Alleluia: Halle, Halle, Halle*

**Gospel:** Matthew 16: 13-20 – “*Who do people say that the Son of Man is?*”

**Homily & Guided Meditation** with written response

**Sharing** of a few responses with “yes, and . . .”

**Prayers of the Faithful**

Sung **Kiss of Peace** – We are sending you peace, to guide you, to hold you  
We are sending you peace, to hold you in love. (2X)

**Liturgy of the Eucharist**

**Offertory Song: “Song of God Among Us”** – Marty Haugen

Lest the Word be far from us, God prepared his coming.

One who longed to share our fate    made with us his dwelling.

In the midst of you    is One you do not know.

Who is everywhere at hand, who is wholly human,

One who goes unrecognized silent, never spoken.  
In the midst of you is One you do not know.

God from God and light from light, hope of earth's sad crying,  
Face to face with humankind speaks of love and dying.  
In the midst of you, is One you do not know.

### **Eucharistic Prayer**

**Communion Song: By Breath** – Sara Thomsen

**Refrain: By breath, by blood, by body, by spirit we are all one (2X)**

The air that is my breath is the air that you are breathing,  
And the air that is your breath is the air that I am breathing.  
The wind rising in my breast is the wind from the East, from the West,  
From the North, from the South. Breathing in, breathing out.

The water that is my blood, my sweat, tears from crying  
Is the water that is your blood, your sweat, tears from crying,  
And the rising of the tide is in my veins and in the ocean wide.  
We are in the rising steam, rushing river, running stream.

The earth is dust, the earth is clay, flowers blossoming and fading.  
We are dust and we are clay, we are blossoming and fading.  
Every color, every sound, every place is holy ground.  
Oh, every living thing, can you hear it laugh, can you hear it sing?

**Blessing of the Communion Ministers & Farewell Blessing for John Heffernan  
Community Life Announcements**

**Closing Prayers and Final Blessing**

**Closing Song: I Am the Way** – Tom Parker

**Refrain:** I am the way, I am the truth, I am the light and the life.

Come, I invite you to come follow me,  
And be blessed and refreshed and made one in my love.

Hear, all of you who do not have a dream that you reach out to hold;  
Come, let me show you a dream if you just look around.  
Come be blessed and refreshed and made one in my love.

Hear, all of you who have chosen to follow the road that I walk;  
Come, in my word and my bread you will find what you need to walk faithful and strong.  
Come be blessed and refreshed and made one in my love.

**Planners: John Heffernan, OFM & Gloria Mog**