

LITURGY UPDATE

Liturgical Memos

June 9:

Optional Memorial of Saint Ephrem

One edition of the *Lectionary* mistakenly identifies today's gospel passage to be from Mark. The correct citation for the gospel assigned to this day is Matthew 5:20-26.

July 4:

Independence Day

When the Mass for Independence Day is used, the Gloria should be either said or sung. As well, the optional Memorial of Saint Elizabeth of Portugal is perpetually transferred from July 4 to July 5.

July 14:

Memorial of Saint Kateri Tekakwitha

In the United States, the optional Memorial of Saint Camillus de Lellis is perpetually transferred from July 14 to July 18.

August 14 and 15:

Vigil and Solemnity of the Assumption

On August 14, the prayers and readings for the Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time should be used at all regularly scheduled parish Masses. In the evening, the Vigil Mass for the Assumption may be celebrated at Masses other than the usual Sunday evening Mass. On August 15, the Solemnity of the Assumption is not a holy day of obligation this year, as it falls on a Monday.



The Nuptial Blessing in *The Order of Celebrating Matrimony*

The USCCB has announced that a newly translated and revised *Order of Celebrating Matrimony* has been approved for publication. While this revised text includes a number of alterations and additions, perhaps the most significant of these changes concerns the prayer texts for the nuptial blessing. The nuptial blessing has a long and revered history in the Roman Rite. It is this history which has, in many ways, informed the most recent modifications of these prayers.

The nuptial blessing has its origins in the pagan wedding ceremonies of ancient Rome. In that society, weddings were marked by a procession of the bride from her father's house to the home of the groom, a movement which symbolized the bride's entering into marriage. Many scholars believe that this

focus on the bride's transition to married life had a great influence on the development of Christian prayer texts used in wedding ceremonies, particularly in Rome. Several early Roman sacramentaries, for example, included nuptial blessings that invoked God's blessing exclusively on the bride. The most influential of these works was the 8th century *Gregorian Sacramentary*, which included a reference in its nuptial blessing to the institution of marriage as a sign of the covenant between Christ and His Church (Ephesians 5). It was essentially this prayer that became the sole nuptial blessing used in the Roman Rite until the implementation of the liturgical reforms called for by the Second Vatican Council.

In 1963, the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council asked that the nuptial blessing be "duly amended to remind both spouses of their equal obligation to remain faithful to each other" (*Sacrosanctum concilium*, 78). As a result, the ancient Gregorian text was reformed in accordance with the wishes of the Council Fathers, and two additional nuptial blessings were also composed and included in the 1969 *Ordo celebrandi matrimonium*.

In 1991, a revised Latin edition of the *Ordo celebrandi matrimonium* was promulgated. In this edition, the three post-Conciliar nuptial blessings were further amended so as to include an even greater balance of focus on both spouses. As well, these prayers included a more pronounced emphasis on the role of the Holy Spirit in the celebration of the Sacrament of Matrimony; this was indicated by the incorporation of an explicit invocation of the Spirit upon the new husband and wife in all three prayers.



These revised texts were included in the 2001 third typical edition of the *Missale Romanum*, and an English translation of the three nuptial blessings was published in the 2011 *Roman Missal*. At the time of the introduction of this edition of the *Roman Missal*, celebrants were given the option to choose whether to use the 1969 or 1991 versions of the three nuptial blessings when celebrating a marriage outside of Mass. When the Sacrament was celebrated within the context of Mass, however, the newer forms of the nuptial blessing were prescribed. Once the use of the forthcoming *Order of Celebrating Matrimony* becomes obligatory on December 30, 2016, the older forms of the nuptial blessing may no longer be used for the celebration of marriages either within or outside of Mass.

Those who wish to learn more about these and other aspects of the revised *Order of Celebrating Matrimony* are invited to attend a seminar on the topic that will be held on both June 8 and 9, from 4:00pm-5:30pm, at Saint Joseph's Seminary (see page 3 for more details).

Liturgical Q and A: Celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation

The Liturgy Office has recently received several inquiries regarding the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. One questioner asks whether it is possible to hear confessions at the request of a member or group of the faithful while Mass is being celebrated. In 2001, the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments published a response to a *dubium* (see *Notitiae* 37 [2001]: 259-260), indicating that the faithful may have recourse to the Sacrament of Reconciliation in these circumstances. The Congregation noted that, while the “faithful are to be constantly encouraged to accustom themselves to going to confession outside the celebration of Mass, and especially at the prescribed times,” this does not “prohibit priests, except the one who is celebrating Mass, from hearing confessions of the faithful who so desire, including during the celebration of Mass.” If it is foreseen that the faithful will ask for this ministry, some priests may refrain from concelebrating to attend to this pastoral need. In 2007, the Congregation reiterated these statements in its Instruction, *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, noting that, while the Sacrament of Reconciliation may take place during the time when Mass is being celebrated, it is not permitted to unite this Sacrament with the Mass and to make of them a single celebration, “according to a most ancient tradition of the Church” (76).

Another inquiry concerns whether a penitent has the right to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation anonymously and behind a screen. Canon 964 §2 indicates the following: “The conference of bishops is to establish norms regarding the confessional; it is to take care, however, that there are always confessionals with a fixed grate between the penitent and the confessor in an open place so that the faithful who wish to can use them freely.” Thus, a penitent may always elect to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation behind a screen. In 1994, the Pontifical Council for Legislative Texts clarified that a priest may also legitimately decide to hear a confession behind a fixed grille, “for a just cause and excluding cases of necessity.” Bearing this in mind, the bishops of the United States have directed that the place for sacramental confession be visible and accessible, and that it contain a fixed grille, as well as allow for confession face-to-face for those who wish to celebrate the Sacrament in this manner.

Revised Rite of Marriage Seminar

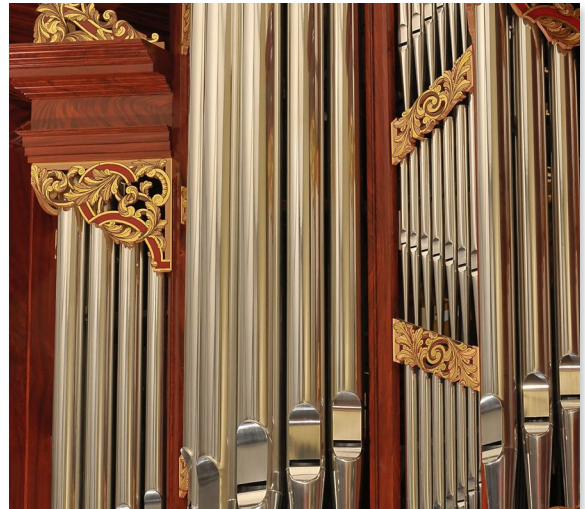
- June 8 and 9

On both June 8 and 9, from 4:00pm-5:30pm, the Office of Liturgy will host a seminar focusing on the history, new features, and pastoral implementation of the revised and forthcoming *Order of Celebrating Matrimony*. This presentation will be directed to clergy, parish musicians, pastoral associates, and all who wish to learn more about this newly updated ritual book. The cost of the workshop is \$10. Registration may be found at the [Liturgy Office website](#).



Archdiocesan Summer Organ School

Members of the archdiocesan Music Commission are offering a 10-week program of private lessons for qualified keyboardists who wish to apply their keyboard skills to the “king of instruments”. The cost for 10 lessons is \$400. The Summer Organ School is part of the archdiocesan Organist Training Program, which seeks to provide the qualified keyboardist with the skills and training to successfully serve as an organist in a parish setting through a low-cost, goal-oriented, and flexible pedagogical structure. For more information, visit the [Liturgy Office website](#) or [contact the Liturgy Office](#).



Summer Liturgy Course in Poughkeepsie - June 20-August 1

Clergy, religious, and lay faithful are invited to attend a ten-week, introductory course on the subject of liturgy this summer at Our Lady of Lourdes High School in Poughkeepsie. The class will be taught by Fr. Matthew Ernest, S.T.D. and will take place on Mondays and Wednesdays, from June 20-August 1, at 7:00pm-10:00pm. Class meetings will also be televised via in-classroom technology to Saint Joseph's Seminary in Yonkers and the Seminary of the Immaculate Conception in Huntington (Long Island).

Tuition Rates:

First-time students: \$250 (audit)/\$750 (3 credits)

Parish Musicians : \$500 (audit)/\$750 (3 credits)

Others: \$500 (audit)/\$1500 (3 credits)

This course is being offered in conjunction with the Saint Cecilia Academy for Pastoral Musicians, a four-course, fully accredited program offered through Saint Joseph's Seminary in the field of liturgical music for the purpose of introducing musicians to the history, theology, and pastoral principles of liturgy and sacred music. For more information about this summer liturgy course or the Saint Cecilia Academy, visit the [Liturgy Office website](#).



Archdiocesan Hymn Festival *- November 14*

Musicians are encouraged to save the date for this one-day festival of music on November 14 from 7:00pm-8:30pm, at Saint Barnabas Church in the Bronx. Join fellow musicians from around the archdiocese in singing hymns and chants from all of the seasons and feasts of the liturgical year! More information may be found at the [Liturgy Office website](http://www.nyliturgy.org).

Upcoming Events

Welcoming the Order of Celebrating Matrimony. June 23, 8:30am-8:30pm. Saint Patrick Parish (Bay Shore, Long Island). Registration fee: \$55. More information: www.fdlc.org.

Liturgical Music Institute. July 25-29. Seminary of the Immaculate Conception (Huntington). More information: music@icseminary.edu or www.liturgicalmusicinstitute.org.

Summer Music Course: “Teaching Gregorian Chant to Children”. August 1-8. Saint Joseph’s Seminary. Dr. Jennifer Donelson, DMA, instructor. More information: www.dunwoodie.edu.

Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions National Meeting. October 5-7. Hosted at the Desmond Hotel and Conference Center (Albany). More information: www.fdlc.org.

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