



The Diocese of Central New York

"To be the passionate presence of Christ for one another and the world we are called to serve"

Guidelines for the Celebration of New Ministry and the Welcoming of the New Rector or Vicar

Concerning the Service

1. The service is your official institution and induction into the ministry of word and sacrament in this parish.
2. The ministry to which you are called is a collegial ministry of word and sacrament with the bishop and other clergy of the parish and diocese.
3. The ministry to which you are called should also be a collegial ministry with local churches and clergy of other denominations.
4. The ministry to which you are called represents a new chapter in the ongoing life and ministry of the parish.
5. The ministry to which you are called is a mutual ministry with members and officers of the parish. You share with them the responsibility for the future of the parish.

The Gathering

A procession is appropriate which includes acolytes, choir, Master of Ceremonies, non-Episcopal clergy, Episcopal clergy, preacher, and other participants, gospeller, Wardens, Rector or Vicar and Bishop.

Alternatively, the procession may consist of acolytes, wardens, Rector or Vicar and Bishop, with others seated before the opening hymn.

The Institution

Following the opening hymn the Rector or Vicar moves from the front pew with the Wardens and stands before the Bishop.

The Letter of Institution is now read by a representative of the diocese. Alternatively, a statement from the wardens and a response from the Bishop are now read. For an example of this alternative, see Appendix 1.

The Bishop then addresses the Rector or Vicar:

N, do you in the presence of this congregation, commit yourself to this trust and responsibility?

Rector or Vicar I do

The Bishop then addresses the congregation

Will you who witness this new beginning support and uphold N. in this ministry?

The People We will

The Bishop then says

Let us then offer our prayers to God for all his people, for this parish of N. and for N., their Rector (Vicar)

The People kneel

The Prayers may take the form of one of the Intersessory Prayers of the People (BCP p.383) as modified to apply directly to the new Rector or Vicar, his family and to the parish. The Prayers may also be prepared for this specific occasion. (For example, see appendix 2). If a litany is desired, litanies for the Church of Christ or the Renewal of the Church may be used. (See for example, The Wideness of God's Mercy by Jeffery Rowthorn). The Litany for Ordinations is not recommended.

The Prayers may be led by a layperson of the parish or by a priest.

The Liturgy of the Word

The Bishop leads the Collect

The Collect may be an original prayer or other appropriate collect from the BCP or other source.

For example, the Collect #11, BCP p. 817 modified as follows:

Almighty and everliving God, ruler of all things in heaven and earth, hear our prayers for this parish family and for N., their Rector (Vicar). Strengthen the faithful, arouse the careless, and restore the penitent. Grant them all things necessary for their common life, and bring them all to be of one heart and mind within your holy Church; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen*

Or BCP p. 256III

Almighty and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of your faithful people is governed and sanctified; Receive our supplications and prayers, which we offer before you for all members of your holy Church, particularly for the members of N. Church, and for N., their Rector (Vicar), that in their vocation and ministry they may truly and devoutly serve you; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

The Lessons

When the Celebration occurs at a Feast of the Church or a day of Commemoration, the appointed lessons are, of course, in order. Two other sets shift the focus toward the ministry of the whole parish:

For all Christians in their vocation
Exodus 19:3-8 or Ezekiel 36: 24-28
Psalm 15
1 Peter 4: 7-11
Matthew 16: 24-27

For all Baptized Christians
Jeremiah 17: 7-8
Psalm 16: 5-11
Romans 6: 3-11
Mark 10: 35-45

Other appropriate lessons are found in the BCP p. 560. The lessons and Psalm should be read by laypersons of the parish, unless, of course, the Psalm is sung. Readers of the lessons should sit in the congregation, unvested.

The Gradual

The Gospel

The Gospel is read amongst the people by the Deacon or other minister, in the form common to the parish.

The Sermon

A hymn is now sung

The Welcoming of the Rector or Vicar

To help the congregation understand the purpose of the symbols of ministry, the following may be printed in the worship bulletin:

New Ministry is visually exemplified through the use of symbols – symbols of liturgical leadership, symbols of the baptized participants in our liturgy, symbols which help us to see and feel God's presence among us in Word and Sacrament. This parish thus welcomes N. as Rector and Presider of the Eucharist, and N. joins the ministry of the baptized of N. parish.

The new Rector or Vicar now comes to the space before the chancel. Representatives of the parish and diocese, having repaired to the Narthex or entryway during the hymn, now select symbols of ministry and are directed by the Master of Ceremonies to take the symbols to the new Rector or Vicar.

The symbols of ministry should be real elements of parish ministry and the mutual pastoral relationship being entered upon. Thus bread and wine for the Eucharist, water for Baptism, oil for Baptism and the healing ministry, the keys to the parish buildings and the National and Diocesan Canons are appropriate symbols for this purpose. The Bible or Lectionary Book and the Book of Common Prayer are also acceptable symbols of ministry. The stole is not presented here for this is a symbol of ordination. Five to seven elements are sufficient for this action.

Symbolic gifts are also encouraged from the Rector or Vicar to the members of the parish to emphasize the mutual ministry being celebrated and begun in this service.

Traditionally, the water for Baptism is given by the Bishop. Care should also be taken as to where the symbols are placed; thus, water can be poured into the font by the Rector or Vicar, Bread and wine can be placed on the altar, the lesson book or Bible can be placed on the lecturn; this action should be simply done and prepared in advance.

An example of the Welcoming of the Rector or Vicar is given in Appendix 3.

The Bishop concludes the symbolic action with this prayer:

N., let all these be signs of the ministry that is ours as the baptized people of God. We rejoice that the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of Central New York are present in this community and that of this parish. Amen

We come next to the "priests prayer". The Book of Common Prayer (p.562) contains the commitment prayer for the new Rector or Vicar. Its use is perfectly satisfactory. An alternative prayer, however, can be recommended. It follows.

O Lord my God, you have made me worthy, through the free gift of grace bestowed upon me at baptism, to have you come under my roof; you have called your servant to stand in your house, and to serve at your altar. To you and to your service, I devote my self, body, soul and spirit. Fill my memory with the record of your mighty works; enlighten my understanding with the light of your Holy Spirit; and may all the desires of my heart and will center in what you would have me do. Make me an instrument of your salvation for the people entrusted to my care, and may I be open to the ministries of those who serve with me in this place. Grant that I may faithfully administer your holy sacraments and, by my life and teaching, set forth your true and living word. Be always with me in carrying out the duties of my ministry. In prayer, quicken my devotion; in praises, heighten my love and gratitude; in preaching, give me readiness of thought and expression; and grant that, by the clearness and brightness of your holy word, all the world may be drawn into your blessed kingdom. All this I ask for the sake of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ.
Amen

The prayer is said by the Rector or Vicar kneeling.

The Prayer of St. Francis, (BCP p. 833 #62), said kneeling by both Rector and congregation is most appropriate at this time.

The Bishop then presents the new Rector or Vicar to the parish, saying,

Greet your new Rector(Vicar)

The Peace

Announcements (if this is the customary place at the parish Eucharist)

Commentary by the Bishop, the District Dean or by Ecumenical representatives is appropriate at this time.

The Offertory

A decision should be made prior to the service whether the collection is to go to the new Rector's discretionary fund, the Bishop or other provision. An announcement to that effect is proper at this time.

The Great Thanksgiving

Proper Prefaces

Lord's Day 3, BCP 378

For by water and the Holy Spirit, you have made us a new people in Jesus Christ our Lord, to show forth your glory in all the world.

Dedication of a Church BCP 381

Through Jesus Christ our great High Priest, in whom we are built up as living stones of a holy temple, that we might offer before you a sacrifice of praise and prayer which is holy and pleasing in your sight.

Baptism BCP 381

Because in Jesus Christ our Lord you have received us as your sons and daughters, made us citizens of your kingdom, and given us the Holy Spirit to guide us into all truth.

The Lord's Prayer

The Fraction

The Communion

The Post Communion

The Bishop leads the Post Communion Collect in unison with the congregation using the prayer in the BCP p. 564.

The Blessing

The Dismissal

Other considerations for the service:

The Bishop will stand in the center of the chancel for the institution and the welcoming; for other parts of the service, he will preside from his chair.

If possible, clergy with roles in the service should be seated in the chancel.

Seating should be provided as follows: new Rector (Vicar) with wardens in the first pew of the nave, pulpit side; visiting clergy including ecumenical clergy in front pews, other side.

Symbols of ministry should be placed on a table in the narthex or entryway.

It may be desirable to distribute communion standing at designated stations.

Designated vesting areas should be assigned for participants and vesting clergy; worship bulletins should be available in these areas.

Clergy with roles in the service should vest alike: alb and stole or cassock, surplice and stole. The new Rector should vest in alb and stole. If the Rector is to don chasuble at the offertory, it should be laid at the rail or other convenient place.

The color of the stole (white or red) for visiting clergy should be noted on the invitations.

Ushers should have detailed instructions for the service.

At this service it is advisable to have a Master of Ceremonies to coordinate the action of the participants and to organize a rehearsal the day before or just before the service. In a procession the MC should precede the visiting clergy and seat them in their designated spaces. If possible the MC should be a member of the parish who is familiar with both the building, the organist and choir and the practices of the parish Eucharist. The MC should organize the procession, move the Rector, wardens, leader of the prayers or litanist to their positions as required, train the ushers, acolytes, direct the providers of the symbols of ministry, devise the seating chart and organize the concluding procession. It is not necessary to include the visiting clergy in the final procession.

Appendix 1

An alternative to the reading of the Letter of Institution

Wardens: Bishop Adams, we have come together today to welcome N. who has been chosen to serve as Rector (Vicar) of N. parish. We believe that he is well qualified and that he has been prayerfully and lawfully selected.

N., we invite you to participate in the ministry and mission of this congregation. You are called to be a pastor among us, empowering us to become a stronger, more connected community. We invite you to participate with us in proclaiming God's word and to preside at the Eucharist we celebrate together.

We hope to grow together into the image of Christ as we share with you in the ministries of teaching and spiritual formation. Your discernment and guidance are encouraged as we seek to articulate and perform our role as Christian people in society. We welcome you as Rector (Vicar).

Bishop: N., the people of N. parish have called you to share in the varied ministries of this parish and diocese. You have been selected in accordance with the Canons of the Church to serve as pastor, priest, and teacher. You also are expected to share in the councils of the Church.

This evening we recognize the new relationship between you and the people of N. parish and between you and your Bishop. I charge you always to remember the trust that has been put in you and shown by your election. N., your highest calling as a priest is to love the people of this congregation and to inspire them to live faithfully in the world Christ calls us to serve. May you always find the greatest joy in doing so.

We pray that the Lord our God who has called you to this place and given you the gifts necessary to accomplish your ministry may always guide, comfort and empower you.

Appendix 2

The Prayers

The People kneel

On this evening of communal celebration, when we recall our ministry to each other and to the people of our town and city, we look now to the future, to revitalize our commitment to you, God, and to work as the people of God on proclaiming your Word and saving grace to those around us.

Beloved God, we thank you for giving us power through your Spirit to reveal your life to the world; strengthen, bless, and guide us to make you known by word and example.

We are your Church, O God.

Guide us in your grace.

We thank you God for your extravagant creation, the blessed sky, earth and ocean given to us as our cosmic home, and ask that you remind us of our solemn responsibility to protect this gift for generations to come.

We are stewards of your creation.

Give us the strength to honor your gift of life in all that we have.

We give thanks this night for N., chosen Rector of this parish, and pray that his devotion to his calling, his strength of leadership, and his example in prayer will surely guide us to you, O God, in the days ahead.

The Holy Spirit has blessed us.

In God's name, we thank you.

We give grateful thanks to God for the presence among us of N., N's wife and their children N., N., that they may grow daily in your care and protection.

We are made in your image, Lord.

It is in faith that we see and love you.

Look with favor, Lord, upon our Bishop Skip, upon the parishes of the diocese, and upon all who serve you in this bountiful and pleasant land.

May your grace be always with your people.

Be with us and help us, O God.

We pray for this nation in its fear and trembling, in its political and economic divisions, in its troubled relationship with the world, that the spirit that founded our society may rise unvarnished in the years ahead; and we pray for our community, for an end to the culture of violence in the streets of our city, and for the relief of the misery of millions of people about the world who look to you, God, for safety and hope in their lives.

We are the people who stand for justice
Give us strength to preserve and serve all your people.

We thank you for calling us to a glorious heritage as your holy people. Free us from dullness of vision, from inertia of will and spirit; open our eyes and minds to your service, that we may rejoice in our witness to your Gospel of good news in Jesus Christ.

You are the life within us, O God.
Keep us ever in your grace and protection.

We thank you for the gift of life, with all its blessings and sorrows. Shield the joyous, comfort and strengthen those in pain, those rejected by society, those without hope. Bless those who will be born today and those who will die, that joining with the company of all your saints we may rejoice in one unending song of praise.

In you alone we have eternal life.
Keep us as the apple of your eye.

Bishop

O Lord our God, accept the fervent prayers of your people; in the multitude of your mercies, look with compassion upon us and all who turn to you for help; for you are gracious, O lover of souls, and to you we give glory, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen**

Appendix 3

The Welcoming of the Rector

The keys to the parish are presented by members of the Vestry, the Search committee and the Treasurer

N., this church building stands as a symbol of Christ's presence in the midst of our world.

Join us in opening the doors of this place to all people.

The Bishop presents a vessel of water, saying

N., receive this water and help me baptize in obedience to our Lord.

N., carries the water to the font and pours it, saying

May this water be a sign of our ministry as baptized members of the body of Christ. Let us remember and celebrate the many ministries of the Church, among them hospitality, friendship, music, stewardship, administration and service.

Join us in baptizing in obedience to our Lord.

The cruets of wine and water and the bread are presented by members of the Altar Guild and placed on the altar.

N., in the Eucharist, we gather to be nourished and to be sent forth in service.

Join us in the breaking of the bread as we offer our gifts of praise and thanksgiving to God.

The oil of healing is given by members of the Pastoral Care Committee.

N., Jesus came among us to bring healing and wholeness to our broken world.

Join us as we take part in Christ's ministry of reconciliation.

The National and Diocesan Canons are presented by members of the Diocesan Clergy.

N., as members of the body of Christ, we are responsible to one another and depend on each other.

Join us in obeying these canons and sharing in the councils of this diocese.

The Holy Scriptures, resting on the lecturn, are proclaimed by the Readers of the parish as the Word of God and the gift of our tradition.

We recognize these Holy Scriptures as God's Word and the teaching of the Church.

Join us in listening to and learning from this Word.

N., presents a book of prayers to representatives of the Church School

I present to you, the young members of this parish, this book of prayers. May you continue to offer to God your deepest desires and concerns. May you hold each other and the members of your church family in prayer to God. My prayer for you is that God will nurture you and bless you so that you may grow in image of Christ our Savior.

Amen.