

Ordination brings eucharistic responsibility

EDITORS' NOTE: Through July the Catholic Courier is publishing the diocesan document, "The Centrality of Sunday Eucharist: Guidelines for Parish Planning," in place of Bishop Matthew H. Clark's column. The bishop's column will return in August.

The Role of the Presider

We, the Church of Rochester, believe that through the ministerial priesthood conferred through Ordination, some members of the Body of Christ are given the responsibility of acting in persona Christi in leading the assembly in prayer and representing the assembly before God, especially in the celebration of the Eucharist. Of particular responsibility for the presider is the praying of the Eucharistic Prayer in the name of and in union with the other members of the assembly. In the praying of this memorial of Christ's sacrifice, Christ is made present in the species of bread and wine and made available to the assembly.

Therefore, the Church of Rochester, in all its parishes and faith communities:

- encourages all presiders to maintain a personal and communal prayer life that provides them with the spiritual nourishment needed to reflect consciously their responsibility of acting in persona Christi in their role as leader of the assembly in prayer. (General Instruction on the Roman Missal, #60).

- encourages presiders to develop vehicles for feedback on presiding style, homiletic quality and evi-



dence of a conscious awareness of the role they fulfill for the community. Encouragement, too, should be given to presiders to develop their musical skills, especially in the case of those in formation towards priestly ordination. We commit the Office of Liturgy and the Office of Continuing Education to assist presiders in fulfilling this role. (GIRM, #54).

- expects all presiders to participate in Scripture and/or homily workshops or classes on a regular ba-

sis. We recommend this participation take place at least once every three years. This is expected because the Scriptures are an integral part of the celebration of the Eucharist. The Office of Continuing Education is responsible for the scheduling of local classes/workshops, as well as the providing of information for such programs elsewhere. Presiders are also encouraged to obtain materials regularly that will keep them updated and fresh in their weekly and daily homilies. ("Fulfilled In Your Hearing," #16-39).

- expects all Pastors/Pastoral Administrators to collaborate with parish and diocesan staffs to assure that presiders and other ministers (e.g., lectors, homilists, ministers of Communion, altar servers) are given the opportunity for the proper formation, updating and evaluation needed to maintain a dignified and quality celebration of the Eucharist. This is encouraged because the Pastor/Pastoral Administrator is the primary person responsible for a dignified and prayerful celebration of the Eucharist. (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, #19).

- recognizes the importance of the Pastor/Pastoral Administrator's role for the ongoing instruction of their congregations, based on the documents, about the nature of the eucharist, the elements of the eucharistic rite (e.g., music, Word, eucharistic prayer) and the congregation's participation in it "both internally and externally." (CSL, #14,19).

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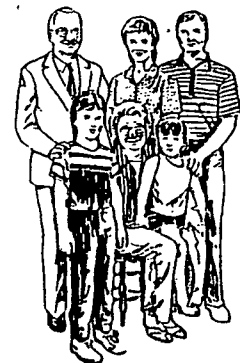
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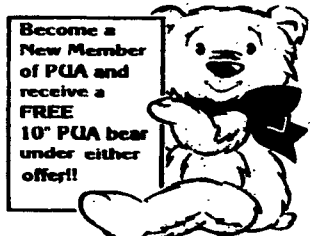
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