Worship Meeting Agenda

(Editor’s note: These agenda items provide a listing of topics to consider at your liturgy committee meeting. Select the topics that will guide your preparation for the liturgical season ahead.)

OPENING REFLECTION

• As the Month of All Souls, November evokes the multitudes of holy men and women who now rest in eternal peace and joy. Begin the meetings with a prayerful recitation of the Litany of Saints. (Refer to the litany in the Baptismal Liturgy on Holy Saturday.) Allow twenty seconds of silence after every six invocations to quietly recall your loved ones who are deceased, continuing to the final “Christ, graciously hear us.”

• Recognize the deepening of the liturgical year by proclaiming the last Gospel (Luke 21:34–36) before Advent begins. Follow with a brief lectio divina on this Scripture.

• Read Genesis 28:10–22, and sing “Christ, Be Our Light” (Bernadette Farrell ©1993, 2000 Oregon Catholic Press). Spanish verses are available also.

CURRENT SEASONAL PREPARATION

Welcome Cycle B: Locate the appropriate Lectionary, switch to the new ordo, and write three bulletin inserts on Mark’s account of the Gospel. Closer to Advent, provide information on the O Antiphons in the bulletin and website.

• Unpack the crèche early and plan a shrine rather than a nostalgic display. Look critically at the worship space to find a site that doesn’t distract from the Eucharistic action. Review “The Light Shines in the Darkness” in the current issue of Pastoral Liturgy®. Discuss the article for fifteen minutes.

• Work with the pastoral staff and the hospitality ministry to make the Sacrament of Penance truly accessible during Advent. Some dioceses have a night in which confessions are heard for several hours. Schedule sitters to entertain small children, and supply examinations of conscience and prayer booklets for those who wait. Review Pastoral Liturgy® (July/August 2014) “Evangelizing through Hospitality,” by Christina Spahn.

• Make certain that everyone understands the length of the season of Christmas. Gradually adorn the church during Advent, so that the first Mass on Christmas does not explode with surprise but rather tingle with desire for the Eucharist.

• Bless families on the Feast of the Holy Family. Prepare catechesis for the congregation to hear “The Annunciation of Easter and Moveable Feasts” to aid them in connecting the liturgical year. Read Kristopher W. Seaman’s article (this issue of Pastoral Liturgy®) about blessing the domestic church on Epiphany. Adapt for your parish bulletin and website.

• Plan the next meeting for Ordinary Time, and announce a “Respite Reception”: all bring an ordinary snack. These snacks parallel the comfortable rejoicing after Christmas Time.

DETERMINE PRIORITIES AHEAD

• Evaluate Christmas liturgies. Ask if preparations were effective, if liturgical ministers were stressed, if liturgies scheduled properly, and if evangelization occurred. Store notes for the summer meeting.

• Plan Ash Wednesday as an intentional evangelizing opportunity this year.

• Host a Ministry Morning for liturgical ministers in January. Update, refresh, and celebrate their commitment. Have copies of The Liturgical Ministry Series® (LTP, available in Spanish and English) for review. Better yet, gift each person with a copy.

• If your parish is not engaged in Liturgy of the Word for children, designate a team of two to review the resource Children’s Liturgy of the Word 2014–15 (LTP). Consider implementing (including necessary catechesis of the congregation) at one Mass during Lent. Evaluate before the Triduum, to re-engage volunteers for Easter Time and beyond.

• Find the day and date of the dedication of your parish church, and put it on the calendar. Prepare to annually celebrate the anniversary with the Mass “On the Anniversary of Dedication.”

MOVING FORWARD

• Discuss and list the popular devotions that occur in your parish. Homework this month: decide how to honor popular devotions in a more public way, especially if your parish has relegated some devotions to an area other than the worship space. Pastoral Liturgy® contributor Hosffman Ospino’s article can help prep the committee. Read “Popular Catholicism and the New Evangelization” (July/August 2014).

• Find ways to pray for peace in the world. Include at least one petition for peace in the Prayer of the Faithful each weekend. Helpful data is also on the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ website (www.usccb.org).

• Read “The Benefits of a Year-Round Catechumenate,” by Jim Peters, in this issue’s Pastoral Liturgy®. Invite a member of the RCIA team to a meeting to discuss the article.

PATRICIA J. HUGHES, DMIN, is the director of the Office of Worship for the Diocese of Dallas. Her master’s degree in pastoral theology is from Loyola University (New Orleans) and her master’s degree in divinity and her doctorate in ministry is from Catholic Theological Union.

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Find and share this article with parish staff and the liturgy committee at the following URL: http://www.pastoralliturgy.org/resources/PSLV045I06WorshipMeetingAgenda.pdf.