

March 01, 2017

Ash Wednesday

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Ordained Ministry,

RE: NEW GUIDELINES FOR USING ENRICHING OUR WORSHIP AND RELATED MATTERS

The purpose of this letter is to communicate new Guidelines for the use of materials from *Enriching our Worship* and to address some other related matters.

As of this date, I am establishing a new policy regarding the authorization of materials found in *Enriching Our Worship 1* (Church Pension Group, 2000). The materials may be used at Sunday Liturgies from the Second Sunday after the Epiphany through the Last Sunday after the Epiphany and from the Third Sunday after Pentecost through the Sunday before the last Sunday after Pentecost. They may be used at any time throughout the year at weekday celebrations.

This authorization should not be taken as encouragement. I find the materials to be weak in many respects, particularly in the areas of sin, salvation, and redemption and Christ's presence in the Eucharist.

In the past year, I have run across the practice in several parishes of using the collect written for the week's designated diocesan cycle of prayer congregation in the midst of the prayers of the people. I am grateful to Miranda Hassett for these collects as an aid in our daily prayers. They are not, however, designed to be used in the Sunday Intercessions. Rather, the congregation of the week should simply be named. If there is an intention stated from the congregation, the bidding could be stated like this, "In our diocesan cycle of Prayer we remember ... and join with them as they (here state intention)." I also commend to you the many resources available for the Prayers of the People. One resource I found particularly helpful were the prayers written by the late Ormonde Plater. The forms found in the BCP are meant to be guidelines and examples.

Earlier this year, I instructed the deacons of the Diocese that they are no longer authorized to lead liturgies which included communion from the reserve sacrament (what is wrongly called in some places a "Deacon's Mass") at principal Sunday and midweek services. Instead, they may lead a liturgy of the word without communion or the Daily Office. I ask the presbyters of this diocese to respect this instruction and help your congregations understand the reasons for this decision which are outlined in my recent pastoral addresses to the diocese.

I also want to let you know that once this visitation cycle is completed, I will not be resuming visitations until Jan. 2018 as I will be on Sabbatical following our Diocesan Convention until the first of January.

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I look forward to seeing you at Convocation clericus gatherings this spring. At those gatherings one topic I wish to discuss is our practices and pattern around Confirmation and Reception. I am sure there are concerns you wish to share and I look forward to these discussions. I also look forward to seeing you all at the Chrismal Eucharist at Zion, Oconomowoc on Tuesday in Holy Week, April 11 at 11am and at our Clergy Day on May 4, 2017. Representatives from the Pension Fund will be with us on May 4 to discuss the recent changes to the Pension Plan.

May God bless you in your ministry,

The Rt. Rev. Steven Andrew Miller
Bishop of Milwaukee

SAM/bjk