

Letter From Bishop Carlson

Dear Fathers, Deacons, Pastoral Administrators, and Faithful of the Diocese:

Since my installation as your bishop more than one year ago, I've had the privilege to celebrate liturgy with many of you and have come to know you as a people of deep faith for the Gospel and a strong commitment to excellence in liturgy.

As I have said before, I am grateful to know that our diocese has benefited from the liturgical leadership of my predecessors, I affirm the rich liturgical involvement of the many lay ministers of our diocese, and I appreciate the educational opportunities in liturgical celebration provided during the past 30 years.

It is in that spirit of commitment to worship that we begin on June 25, 2006, the 12th Sunday of Ordinary Time, the implementation of the General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM) in the Catholic Diocese of Saginaw as promulgated by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) [March 2003], just one short year prior to the death of Bishop Untener [March 2004].

In a previous May 3, 2006 letter to priests, deacons, and pastoral administrators, I already have directed the GIRM and Apostolic Letter *Redemptionis Sacramentum* [April 2004] be followed regarding the preaching of homilies at Mass and the recipe used for substantial bread for the Holy Eucharist as of June 25, 2006.

Also in that letter, I promised that a special insert would be included in a June issue of *The Catholic Weekly* to offer instruction and commentary about the GIRM's implementation in the Saginaw diocese. This issue is being mailed to each registered household in the diocese, regardless of whether they subscribe to the newspaper or not. Families who have not received this mailing should contact their local parish or the diocesan Office of Liturgy at (989) 797-6665 to obtain their complimentary copy.

The directives, posted implementation document, and the educational tools for parishes were prepared by the Implementation Committee following the November Quarterly Meeting of priests, deacons, and pastoral administrators. This letter, along with that instruction and commentary, is meant to be a helpful tool in the process to implement the GIRM in the Saginaw diocese. It is understood that each parish is unique and these guidelines will require more involvement and planning in some communities than in others. For that reason, I ask parish leaders to provide for the proper catechesis during the coming months to ensure the complete implementation of the GIRM by the First Sunday of Advent, Dec. 3, 2006 with the exception of one or two areas mentioned in the commentary that have a different implementation period.

I pray that the coming months will be a time of enrichment and renewal for your lives in the areas of faith and worship as we — as a diocese — continue in our efforts to live as the Body of Christ, united with the Church in the United States, Rome, and the Saints in heaven.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Bishop Robert J. Carlson
Bishop of Saginaw