 ARCHDIOCESE <i>of</i> LOS ANGELES	OFFICE FOR DIVINE WORSHIP (213) 637-7262	4311 WILSHIRE BOULEVARD	LOS ANGELES CALIFORNIA 90010
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**GUIDELINES ON CELEBRATING MASSES OUTSIDE
 A ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH, CHAPEL, OR ORATORY
 WITHIN THE ARCHDIOCESE OF LOS ANGELES**

1. The celebration of the Mass normally takes place in a Roman Catholic Church, Chapel, or Oratory. However, with valid pastoral reasons and permission, the Mass may be celebrated in another suitable and appropriate location.

Canon 932: §1 The Eucharistic celebration is to be carried out in a sacred place unless in a particular case necessity requires otherwise; in such a case the celebration must be done in a decent place. In the understanding of this canon the local ordinary, i.e. Archbishop or Vicars General, determine what is, “a suitable place.”

GIRM, 288 For the celebration of the Eucharist, the People of God are normally gathered together in a church or, if there is no church or if it is too small, then in another respectable place that is nonetheless worthy of so great a mystery. Therefore, churches or other places should be suitable for carrying out the sacred action and for ensuring the active participation of the faithful. Moreover, sacred buildings and requisites for divine worship should be truly worthy and beautiful and be signs and symbols of heavenly realities.

2. The public celebration of Holy Mass outside of a sacred space (Roman Catholic church, chapel, or oratory) within the Archdiocese of Los Angeles **requires the approval** of the Archbishop or the Office of the Regional Bishop in the region where the Mass will be celebrated. In addition, once the necessary approval has been obtained from the Archbishop or Regional Bishop, the local pastor must be informed of the plans. After these steps have taken place, announcements or invitations for the Mass may be distributed.

3. **Letter of Request:** At least two (2) months prior to the liturgy, a letter of request is to be sent to the Archbishop or the Office of the Regional Bishop outlining the pastoral reason for the Mass to be celebrated outside of a sacred space, detailing the following items:

- a. The occasion for which the Mass is being celebrated
- b. A description/introduction of who, or what group is requesting the Mass to be celebrated
- c. The reason why the Mass cannot be celebrated in a local church
- d. The alternate location (non-sacred space) where the Mass will be celebrated
- e. The date and time that the Mass will be celebrated
- f. The name of the priest who will celebrate the Mass, the homilist (if different than the celebrant), and the names of any concelebrating priests.
- g. The number of people that are expected to attend the Mass
- h. Details on any cultural and devotional adaptations to the Mass or Liturgy
- i. Brief description of Pre-Liturgy and Post-Liturgy programming
- j. Name of Music Director, as well as details of Hymn selections
- k. A liturgy planning sheet as well as a script shall be provided
- l. If a collection is to take place, a description of how the funds will be used shall be included
- m. Description of how and where the liturgical furnishings, sacred vessels, ritual books, and vestments will be acquired for the Mass.
- n. Organizers must ensure safety at any Mass held outdoors in a public area to help maintain a safe and respectful environment for worship. Thus, a description of the security measures for all in attendance must be included.

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4. The Archbishop or the Office of the Regional Bishop will grant permission to celebrate a Mass outside of a sacred space based on the following criteria:
 - a. Location:
 - i. Is there a church that can accommodate the Mass in the local area?
 - ii. If there is not, the non-sacred place must be suitable for carrying out the sacred action and must be able to ensure the active participation of the faithful

5. Visiting Clergy Protocol: If the celebrant and any other priest is not from the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, he must follow the directives of the Office of the Vicar for Clergy. See ADLA Handbook 5.13.5.2.


6. Parameters for the Celebration:
 - a. Once the above prerequisites have been provided, a response will be sent to the identified celebrant of the Mass and the event's liturgy coordinator. If permission to celebrate the Mass is granted, the norms stipulated in the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* for the United States and all guidelines set forth by the Office for Divine Worship in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles are to be followed. Archdiocesan guidelines are accessible online at: <https://lacatholics.org/liturgical-guidelines/>
 - b. The Office of the Archbishop or the Regional Bishop Office may ask the Office for Divine Worship to review and approve the request and may require additional information. Please be sure to submit all required documents with anticipation.

7. Considerations:
 - a. The Church discourages the celebration of Mass outside a sacred place.
 - b. The proposed location (the non-sacred place) must be worthy of the Eucharist and not incompatible with the sacred character of the liturgy.
 - c. Outside a sacred place a suitable table can be used, always with an altar cloth and a corporal.
 - d. While the celebration of Mass takes place outside a sacred place, only approved liturgical texts must be used and proper vestments must be worn.

You may contact the Office for Divine Worship if you have any questions.

*** These guidelines are primarily intended for Masses celebrated in locations other than parish grounds, Catholic schools, convalescent homes, jails, and prisons.

Archdiocese of Los Angeles
Office for Divine Worship
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