Updated for 2015-2016

The Episcopal Diocese of Milwaukee
Guidelines for Sunday Visitations
The Rt. Rev. Steven A. Miller

The Bishop's visitation is an important event in the life of both the congregation and the diocese.

The norm for every Sunday visitation is for the Bishop to celebrate the Eucharist, preach, and preside at confirmation. The Bishop strongly encourages baptisms at Episcopal visits as recommended in the Book of Common Prayer. While the Bishop will preside, the local clergy will baptize with water and the Bishop will seal the newly baptized. When no baptisms, confirmations, receptions, or reaffirmations are scheduled, the Episcopal visit continues to include the Eucharist and sermon and may include the reaffirmation of baptismal promises by the congregation.

With sufficient planning, the visitation may include pastoral visits with homebound members of the congregation; adult or youth classes; time to meet with vestry, treasurer, and wardens; or other special events.

For visitations, please adhere to your regular service schedule. If a parish has three services, the Bishop will preside at the two primary services. It would be helpful, however, if members were encouraged to attend the primary service.

The loose offering at the time of the visitation is designated for the Bishop's Purse. These funds are used to help various causes in the life of the diocese and sometimes in parishes, to assist people to attend conferences and workshops, to assist our seminarians and people in preparation for ordained ministry in the diocese and to support other ministries within our diocesan boundaries and beyond. The collection for the Bishop's Purse should be sent to the diocesan office as soon after the visitation as possible in the form of a check. Prior to the visitation please announce to the congregation this offering and its purpose. The use of special envelopes for this offering is appropriate.

As the Bishop transports vestments/crozier to Sunday visitations, if possible, please reserve and clearly designate a parking space close to the church entrance for the Bishop and assign a member of the parish to meet and assist him. Please also have any certificates (confirmation, etc.) ready for the Bishop to sign before the liturgy.

Please send a draft copy of the service bulletin(s) to the Bishop TWO WEEKS prior to the visit, along with the "Form for Bishop's Visitations and list of those being confirmed / received. The lessons should be those appointed in the Eucharistic Lectionary. Please indicate which translation of the Bible will be used. Visitation forms are available from the diocesan office and from the diocesan website www.diomil.org. Visitation materials may be e-mailed to info@diomil.org or mailed to the diocesan office at 804 East Juneau Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53202.

The Liturgy should conform to the Book of Common Prayer; use of other authorized texts must be negotiated with the Bishop. The Bishop prefers Prayer I in Rite I; in Rite II the Bishop prefers NOT to use Prayer C. Prayer D is particularly appropriate for visitations that include confirmation and baptism as it allows for intercessory prayers in the Eucharistic Canon. When the service celebrated during the Bishop's visitation is to include baptism or baptism and confirmation, the service for Holy Baptism (BCP pg. 299) is used; for confirmation/reception/reaffirmation (no baptisms) the service for Confirmation (BCP pg. 413) is used.

The administration of communion by licensed Lay Eucharistic Ministers is intended as an aid to the ministry of the ordained. The Bishop expects the parish clergy to assist him with the distribution of Holy Communion. Lay Eucharistic Ministers are to be used only when there are not a sufficient number of ordained persons to administer the sacrament.

While the Bishop will make a Sunday visitation to each parish every two years, it is hoped that these times will not be the only interaction between Bishop and congregation. The bishop and the Bishop's staff welcome invitations to meet with lay leaders, attend special events, and participate in parish life.

SAM/bjk

Updated June 2015

THE EPISCOPAL
DIOCESE
OF MILWAUKEE

The Rt. Rev. Steven
Andrew Miller, D.D.,
Bishop

Form to be completed prior to the Bishop's Visitation

Name of Parish _____

Date of Visitation _____

Eucharistic Rite to be used: **Rite I** _____ **Rite II** _____

Time of Service(s) _____ AM/PM _____ AM/PM _____ AM/PM

PLEASE NOTE: **Bishop Miller will attend the TWO main Sunday services. Please do NOT alter the normal schedule of Sunday services for the Bishop's visitation.**

Liturgical color _____

Which Biblical translation will be used for readings? _____

What part of the Liturgy will be sung?

_____

_____

Will there be a reception/luncheon (before, after, evening before the service)?

_____

Do you wish for the Bishop to meet with groups (vestry, adult forum, shut-ins, Sunday school students or confirmation students) _____

Baptisms: **Have parents and Godparents been instructed?** **Yes** ____ **No** ____

On the attached form, please list the following: **Confirmations**
Receptions
Reaffirmations

If you are unable to send information on candidates on time, PLEASE send the other information as the Bishop needs to know in advance. Candidate information can be handed to the Bishop or mailed at a later date.

Any other comments about the visitation:

_____

_____

_____

Finally . . . It would be most helpful if the parish would designate and mark a parking place for the Bishop close to the church entrance, as he will be transporting vestments and crozier, etc. Thank you!

Please return completed form to the Bishop's Office at least TWO WEEKS prior to date of visitation. Please enclose draft of service bulletin for visitation and list of those to be confirmed / received.

Please send electronically to info@diomil.org or mail hard copies to the Diocese of Milwaukee, Attn: Bishop's Visitation, c/o 804 E. Juneau Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53202.

Bishop Nicholson House
804 East Juneau Avenue,
Milwaukee WI 53202
414-272-3028
800-236-3028
fax 866-499-1973
www.diomil.org

(This form to be accurately filled out, either printed or typed, and returned to the Diocesan Office)

DIOCESE OF MILWAUKEE

The following were Confirmed at the Episcopal Visitation in _____ Church in

_____, Wisconsin, on the _____ day of _____ 20_____ .

(Signed) _____ Incumbent

Confirmations

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____
16. _____
17. _____
18. _____
19. _____
20. _____

Receptions

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____
16. _____
17. _____
18. _____
19. _____
20. _____

The Episcopal Diocese of Milwaukee
Guidelines for Weekday Visitations
The Rt. Rev. Steven A. Miller

Weekday visitations are not simply Sunday visitations taking place on a weekday; they are distinct in both intent and form. Weekday visitations offer bishop and parish a different way of interacting with each other. Briefly, at a weekday visitation, the bishop will participate in the parish's regular mid-week liturgy or an observance of their patronal feast, Christian Formation offerings of the congregation, and other agreed upon activities including some hospitality time with parishioners.

Weekday visitations take place every other year, in the year when the parish is not scheduled for a Sunday visitation. They are scheduled by the Bishop's office in consultation with the parish. Weekday visitations take place between Monday – Thursday and they do not exceed eight hours in length.

What does a Weekday Visitation consist of?

The structure of weekday visitations varies from parish to parish but at a minimum, they should include:

- Time to pray together
  Celebration of a mid-week liturgy (e.g., Morning Prayer) or the parish's patronal feast.
  *Weekday visitations do not include Confirmation.
- Time for fellowship
  Informal "coffee hour" time for fellowship between bishop, parish clergy and lay leaders,

In addition to the minimum components, parishes are encouraged to be creative in planning their weekday visitation. In addition to the minimal components, the Bishop is pleased to consider such activities as:

- In depth meeting with rector, wardens, and vestry
- Bible study or other formation activity
- Visiting shut-ins
- Visiting the work place of a parish member (such as an artist's studio)
- Meeting leaders of an ecumenical ministry in which the parish takes part
- Tour of the facilities
  The tour might include recent improvements to the facility or areas of concern to the parish.

How are Weekday Visitations scheduled?

A list of those parishes that will receive a weekday visitation is published along with the Bishop's annual Sunday visitation schedule. Parish clergy / (or Sr. Warden in absence of rector/priest-in-charge) are asked to give some thought to how they would like to structure their weekday visit and then to contact the Bishop's assistant, Patty Jaffke, who will work with them to schedule a date and a suitable block of time. Patty Jaffke may be reached at patty@diomil.org or (414) 272-3028/ext. 156 or (800) 236-3028/ext. 156.

*However, the Bishop is always willing to work with parishes interested in arranging a regional Confirmation when a number of parishes have Confirmation needs not accommodated by the Bishop's Sunday visitation schedule.