

ARCHDIOCESE OF SAINT PAUL AND MINNEAPOLIS

CLERGY BULLETIN

April 10, 2011

Volume XI, Number 5, Revised

The Frequency of the Celebration of the Mass

Reverend and dear Fathers,

As you are aware, one of the goals of the Strategic Plan for this Archdiocese was to provide structures to assist priests in focusing on their essential ministry: to imitate the mystery of the Eucharist which they are called upon to celebrate with and for the members of the faithful entrusted to their pastoral care. As we begin the process of merging and clustering parishes, the frequency with which the Mass is offered at a particular parish or worship site must be carefully considered.

To assist pastors and lay parish leaders in crafting appropriate policies regarding the celebration of the Eucharist, I wish to remind pastors and parish staff of the following regulations, which can be found in the *Code of Canon Law*.

Can. 905 §1. A priest is not permitted to celebrate the Eucharist more than once a day except in cases where the law permits him to celebrate or concelebrate more than once on the same day.

§2. If there is a shortage of priests, the local ordinary can allow priests to celebrate twice a day for a just cause, or if pastoral necessity requires it, even three times on Sundays and holy days of obligation.

Having discussed this with the Presbyteral Council, and in light of the pastoral circumstances of this Archdiocese, I hereby grant permission to celebrate Mass twice on a weekday to all priests assigned to parish ministry. Furthermore, I grant permission for the same priests to celebrate Mass three times on Sundays and other holy days of obligation. Priests may count Vigil Masses

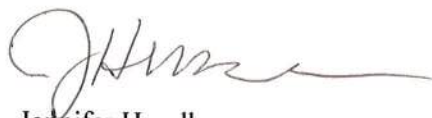
celebrated on Saturday evenings and on the day preceding another holy day of obligation as counting towards the day on which the Mass was celebrated (i.e. Saturday).

Pastors, associates, and parish leadership are advised that celebrating more than two Masses on a weekday, and more than three Masses on a Sunday or other holy day of obligation, is not permitted without the express authorization of the Holy See. Therefore, it may be necessary for some parishes to adjust their schedule of Masses to comply with these requirements. This is especially likely at those parishes involved in mergers or cluster arrangements.

Given at Saint Paul, Minnesota, this 10th day of April, in the year of Our Lord 2011. All things to the contrary notwithstanding.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John C. Nienstedt", with a small cross symbol to the left.

The Most Reverend John C. Nienstedt
Archbishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jennifer Haselberger", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jennifer Haselberger
Chancellor for Canonical Affairs