

Celebrations of New Ministry

**with the
Welcoming of a New Rector**

**and the
Installation of a New Rector**

*Prepared by
The Liturgical Commission of the Episcopal Diocese of Texas
2020 (with revisions in 2022)*

Letter of Institution of a Minister

N.N., Presbyter of the Church of God, you have been called to work together with your Bishop and fellow-Presbyters as a pastor, priest, and teacher, and to take your share in the councils of the Church.

Now, in accordance with the Canons, you have been selected to serve God in _____ Church [of]_____.

This letter is a sign that you are fully empowered and authorized to exercise this ministry, accepting its privileges and responsibilities as a priest of this Diocese, in communion with your Bishop.

Having committed yourself to this work, do not forget the trust of those who have chosen you. Care alike for young and old, strong and weak, rich and poor. By your words, and in your life, proclaim the Gospel. Love and serve Christ's people. Nourish them, and strengthen them to glorify God in this life and in the life to come.

May the Lord, who has given you the will to do these things, give you the grace and power to perform them.

Given under my hand and seal, in the city of _____,
on the _____ day of _____, 20_____, and in the _____
year of my consecration.

(Signed) _____ Bishop of_____.

Concerning the Services

The occasion of welcoming a new Rector is an opportunity to model acceptance of a new call to ministry and a time to celebrate the intense baptismal ministry carried out by lay leadership during times of clergy transition. These new services are offered to our churches in response to the limitations of the *1979 Book of Common Prayer* and *Enriching Our Worship (EOW)* options for marking this transition; these new services are to be used in their entirety and not mixed with other sources.

A new order of service was needed to respond to observations that the 1979 service focuses its action and its language on the ministry of the individual priest. While wise use of the rubrics can shift this focus, the lived experience in many places is that this service “feels like an ordination.” In attempting to remedy this focus, *EOW* shifts the service to focus on the ministry of the baptized in such a way that the minister to be installed never gets a chance to speak or accept the authority which the service seeks to convey. The result is that the new Rector is deprived of agency, and a valuable chance to model adult acceptance of change in response to the Gospel is lost.

These new services seek to honor the ministry of the laity while illustrating that the authority exercised by a Rector derives from both the call of the People and the authority of the Bishop. Importantly, it also enacts the new Rector’s acceptance of this authority with humility and reliance on God, through the retention of the historic prayer of supplication from the midst of the congregation.

The necessity of a service (Welcoming of a New Rector) for the first Sunday in a new parish arises out of the observation of the presentation of gifts in the 1979 service. Looking back at historic liturgies, the gifts given were restricted to keys and books. The exchange of keys has long historic precedent and is most appropriate on the first Sunday together, marking the inauguration of a new relationship and signifying the trust which the People grant to the new Rector. The first Sunday is also a fitting time to celebrate the ministries of the wardens, vestry, and search committee. This service puts focus on their ministry, in addition to the ministry of the new Rector.

The other gifts prescribed in the 1979 service have been eliminated because the extended induction through gift-giving figures the relationship of the People to the Rector as one of donors and beneficiary; the sharing of only keys and books is historic and illustrates a relationship defined by mutuality and partnership.

The second service (Installation of a New Rector) will take place at the convenience of the officiating Bishop. At the Bishop’s discretion, a dean or representative of the Diocese may conduct this service as the Bishop’s deputy. If the Bishop is not present, it is proper for the new Rector to celebrate at the Eucharist. This service celebrates a ministerial relationship already begun and seeks to illustrate the mutual sources of authority which ratify a Rector’s call: both the People and the Bishop.

It is appropriate for all orders of ministry to be represented at this service and serve according to their order. It is also appropriate to invite members of the wider community of faith as a witness to the shared ministry of all people of good will in the local context. With care, this service may be adapted to install ministers other than a Rector.

These new services emphasize ministry as a mutual endeavor by Rector and People, along with the Bishop, in their given context. The focus of these services is rightly on the Church, rather than the individual minister, the People, or the Bishop.

The Welcoming ¹ of a New Rector ²

This liturgy is to be used at the principal Eucharist on the first Sunday of the new Rector.

The liturgy begins after the Prayers of the People and Confession, and before the Peace.

The Senior Warden, or other member of the Vestry, stands in front of the congregation and says

N. N., we welcome you as the Rector of this parish.

The Senior Warden, or other member of the Vestry, presents a Bible and also, if desired, a Book of Common Prayer, saying

N., accept this Bible (and Prayer Book), and be among us as one who proclaims the Word (and one who leads us in prayer). ³

The Junior Warden, along with other members of the Vestry as desired, presents the keys to the new Rector.

N., receive these keys, and let the doors of this place be open to all people.

The new Rector then says

I receive the keys of this church and I promise, with God's help, to be a faithful pastor, priest, and teacher among you. ⁴

The Senior Warden, or other member of the Vestry, then presents the new Rector to the congregation, saying

Greet your new Rector. ⁵

Applause is appropriate.

¹ This liturgy is to be used within the context of the principal service of the Holy Eucharist on the first Sunday of the new Rector. There was discussion on the Liturgical Commission about what to call this service; it was determined to use the title: "Welcoming of a New Rector" as it matches the function, and it is similar to "Welcoming New People to a Congregation" in the Book of Occasional Services. The basis of this liturgy is actually in the 1928 Book of Common Prayer (BCP), where the liturgy for the "Office of Institution" begins with a Warden giving the keys to the parish, and the giving of a Bible and Prayer Book.

² This liturgy is only to be used in welcoming a Rector, and not for a Vicar or other minister.

³ The words for the presentation of a Bible (and a Prayer Book), and of the keys of the parish, are directly from the 1979 BCP liturgy.

⁴ The response by the new Rector is a compilation of wording from the 1928 BCP liturgy and from the Examination in the Ordination of Priest in the 1979 BCP.

⁵ In the EOW (Enriching Our Worship) 4 liturgy, the introduction of the new Rector to the congregation is omitted. The introduction makes sense on the new Rector's first Sunday, in addition to the Bishop introducing the new Rector at the Installation, which occurs some time later.

The Rector and Senior Warden may then recognize the work of the other members of the Vestry, the Search Committee, and any others who were involved in the search and calling process. The family of the new Rector may also be introduced, if applicable and if so desired. Applause is appropriate in all of these acknowledgments.

The new Rector then says to the people

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

The service continues with the Offertory.

Other gifts, in addition to the keys of the parish and a Bible and a Prayer Book, are not appropriate within the context of this liturgy. Gifts and tokens of appreciation may be given at a reception following this Eucharist.

The Installation ⁶ of a New Rector ⁷

A hymn, psalm or anthem may be sung. ⁸

The people standing, the Bishop says ⁹

Bishop Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
People And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.

During Advent ¹⁰

Bishop Blessed are you, holy and living God.
People You come to your people and set them free.

From Easter Day through the Day of Pentecost Bishop

People Alleluia. Christ is risen.
 The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia.

In Lent and on other penitential occasions

Bishop Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins.
People His mercy endures for ever.

⁶ There has been a good deal of discussion on the Liturgical Commission about what to call this service: Institution, Induction, Celebration of New Ministry, etc. In our diocese, we invariably call this service an "Installation." Therefore, the name matches colloquial usage.

⁷ The word "Rector" can be modified, with the direction of the officiating Bishop, if this service is used and adapted for a Dean, Vicar, or other minister.

⁸ The new Rector participates in the procession in and goes to a usual place inside the church, rather than sitting with others in a pew in the nave.

⁹ The liturgy begins with Opening Acclamations, as in a usual Eucharist, rather than how it begins in the 1979 BCP Celebration of a New Ministry.

¹⁰ 1979 BCP liturgies do not include an acclamation for Advent. To distinguish Advent from Lent, the acclamation from EOW 1 is given as an option here.

The Bishop continues ¹¹

 There is one Body and one Spirit;
People There is one hope in God's call to us;
Bishop One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism;
People One God and Father of all.

Bishop The Lord be with you.
People And also with you.
Bishop Let us pray.

O God of unchangeable power and eternal light: Look favorably on your whole Church, that wonderful and sacred mystery; by the effectual working of your providence, carry out in tranquility the plan of salvation; let the whole world see and know that things which were cast down are being raised up, and things which had grown old are being made new, and that all things are being brought to their perfection by him through whom all things were made, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen. ¹²

The Institution ¹³

The people are seated.

The Warden(s) and the new Rector face the Bishop, who is seated in front of the congregation in a chair, if desired.

The Bishop then says

People of _____, you have reflected on your ministry and discerned your choice for a new Rector.

The Wardens then say

We have chosen and called *N.N.* to be our Rector, and *he* has accepted.

The Bishop responds by saying

I commend your choice and affirm this call.

The Letter of Institution (BCP, p. 557) is read. The Bishop then addresses the congregation

¹¹ The liturgy continues with the responses as in the liturgy for Baptism, grounding the service in baptismal ministry.

¹² The Collect is a traditional Collect focusing on the Church, rather than the Collect given in the 1979 BCP liturgy, which focuses primarily on the new rector.

¹³ The Institution is largely from the EOW 4 liturgy; there are verbal responses from the Bishop, the Wardens, the People and the new Rector.

Are you, the People of _____, ready to continue in your ministry, with N. as your priest?

People We are.

The Bishop then says to the new Rector

N., do you, in the presence of this congregation, commit yourself to this trust and responsibility?

New rector I do. ¹⁴

If the liturgy for the Welcoming of a New Rector has not occurred, the presentation by the Wardens of a Bible (and a Prayer Book), and of the keys of the parish, may occur at this time.

Bishop The Lord be with you.

People And also with you.

Bishop Let us pray.

Christ Jesus, you go before and behind us, you are our light and our shield; guide our path, be our clear sight, lift us up in your Gospel joy, and bless the work we do in your name and honor, for you are our beloved, and our life made new. *Amen.* ¹⁵

The Word of God

The Lessons

The people sit. One or two Lessons, as appointed, are read, the Reader first saying

A Reading (Lesson) from_____.

A citation giving chapter and verse may be added.

After each Reading, the Reader may say

 The Word of the Lord.
People Thanks be to God.

¹⁴ The EOW 4 liturgy does not include a verbal response by the new rector. The response by the new rector from the 1979 BCP liturgy is retained here, with the omission of the word "new" since it is assumed that the rector has already been exercising this trust and responsibility, and also so that the language matches the Letter of Institution.

¹⁵ The Institution is completed by this beautiful prayer of corporate dedication offered by the Bishop. This prayer is from the Book of Occasional Services (2018), in the section on additional prayers for church planting (page 256).

Silence may follow.

A Psalm, hymn, or anthem may follow each Reading.

Then, all standing, the Deacon¹⁶ reads the Gospel, first saying

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to ____.

People Glory to you, Lord Christ.

After the Gospel, the Deacon says

People The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Christ.

The Sermon ¹⁷

Renewal of Baptismal Vows ¹⁸

The Bishop then stands in front of the new Rector, and presents a vessel of water, saying

N., take this water, and help me baptize in obedience to our Lord. Let this be a sign of the ministry which is mine and yours in this place. ¹⁹

People Amen.

Bishop

Let us renew the solemn promises and vows of Holy Baptism, by which we renounced Satan and all his works, and promised to serve God faithfully in God's holy Catholic Church. ²⁰

Bishop Do you reaffirm your renunciation of evil and renew your commitment to Jesus Christ?

¹⁶ It is preferable that a Deacon, either in the parish or in the diocese, read the Gospel, to highlight this order of ordained ministry. If a Deacon cannot be obtained, a Priest may read the Gospel, with the officiating Bishop's permission.

¹⁷ The 1979 BCP liturgy directs that a hymn is to be sung after the sermon. That provision has been deleted here, more closely resembling a usual Eucharist. The Renewal of Baptismal Vows directly follows the sermon.

¹⁸ The Renewal of Baptismal Vows anchors the liturgy within the context of baptismal ministry. In the 1979 BCP liturgy, there is no provision for the Nicene Creed nor the Renewal of Baptismal Vows.

¹⁹ The presenting of water for Baptism, from the Bishop to the new Rector, is retained from the 1979 BCP liturgy of induction, providing an introduction to the Renewal of Baptismal Vows and demonstrating the shared ministry between Bishop and Priest.

²⁰ These words of bidding by the Bishop directing the congregation to the Renewal of Baptismal Vows are from EOW 4 and a shorter version of the bidding including in the 1979 BCP liturgy for the Easter Vigil.

People I do.

Bishop Do you believe in God the Father?

People I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

Bishop Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

People I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

Bishop Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

People I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.

Bishop Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and
fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?

People I will, with God's help.

Bishop Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever
you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

People I will, with God's help.

Bishop Will you proclaim by word and example the Good
News of God in Christ?

People I will, with God's help.

Bishop Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving
your neighbor as yourself?

People I will, with God's help.

Bishop Will you strive for justice and peace among all
people, and respect the dignity of every human being?

People I will, with God's help.

Bishop

May Almighty God, who has given us a new birth by water and the Holy Spirit, bestowed upon us the forgiveness of sins, and called us to ministry in Jesus Christ, keep us in eternal life by his grace; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

If the Bishop and the Rector desire to asperge the congregation, it may occur at this time.

The Prayers ²¹

Bishop

Let us now offer our prayers to God, for all people, and especially for this congregation. ²²

A Deacon, or other person appointed, leads the Litany which follows

Holy God, in whom all things in heaven and earth have their being,
Have mercy on us.

Jesus the Christ, through whom the world is reconciled to the Father,
Have mercy on us.

Holy Spirit, whose glory fills the world and searches the depths of God,
Have mercy on us.

Blessed Trinity, source of both unity and diversity,
Have mercy on us.

From blind hearts and petty spirits, that refuse to see the need of all humankind for your love,
Savior, deliver us.

From pride, self-sufficiency and the unwillingness to admit our own need of your compassion,
Savior, deliver us.

²¹ The Prayers are the Litany for the Mission of the Church from the Book of Occasional Services (2018). The Litany of Thanksgiving for a Church in the 1979 BCP (page 578) may be used instead. It is important to emphasize, as it is also emphasized in EOW 4, that the Litany for Ordinations is not to be used in this liturgy, as it is a celebration of all the baptized and should not resemble an Ordination.

²² The Bidding by the Bishop is from the 1979 BCP liturgy, as opposed to the bidding in EOW 4, with a few minor changes.

From discouragement in the face of pain and disappointment, and from lack of persistence and thoroughness,
Savior, deliver us.

From ignorance, apathy, and complacency that prevent us from spreading the Gospel,
Savior, deliver us.

O God, we pray for the gifts of ministry.
Inspire our minds with a vision of your kingdom in this time and place.
Hear us, O Christ.

Touch our eyes, that we may see your glory in all creation.
Hear us, O Christ.

Touch our ears, that we may hear from every mouth the hunger for hope and stories of refreshment.
Hear us, O Christ.

Touch our lips, that we may tell in every tongue and dialect the wonderful works of God.
Hear us, O Christ.

Touch our hearts, that we may discern the mission to which you call us.
Hear us, O Christ.

Touch our feet, that we may take your Good News into our neighborhoods, communities, and all parts of the world.
Hear us, O Christ.

Touch our hands, that we may each accomplish the work you give us to do.
Hear us, O Christ.

Strengthen and encourage all who minister in your name in lonely, dangerous and unresponsive places.
Hear us, O Christ.

Open the hearts and hands of many to support your Church in this and every place.
Hear us, O Christ.

The new Rector ²³ *then proceeds down the center aisle, kneels, as able, in the midst of the church or some other convenient place, and says*

O Lord my God, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; yet you have called your servant to stand in your house, and to serve at your altar. To you and to your service I devote myself, body, soul, and spirit. Fill my memory with the record of your mighty works; enlighten my understanding with the light of your Holy Spirit; and may all the desires of my heart and will center in what you would have me do. Make me an instrument of your salvation for the people entrusted to my care, and grant that I may faithfully administer your holy Sacraments, and by my life and teaching set forth your true and living Word. Be always with me in carrying out the duties of my ministry. In prayer, quicken my devotion; in praises, heighten my love and gratitude; in preaching, give me readiness of thought and expression; and grant that, by the clearness and brightness of your holy Word, all the world may be drawn into your blessed kingdom. All this I ask for the sake of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ. *Amen.* ²⁴

The new Rector stands and returns to the front of the church, facing the People, and standing next to the Bishop.

The congregation stands and says together this Collect for the Parish.

Almighty and everliving God, ruler of all things in heaven and earth, hear our prayers for this parish family. Strengthen the faithful, arouse the careless, and restore the penitent. Grant us all things necessary for our common life, and bring us all to be of one heart and mind within your holy Church; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.* ²⁵

The Bishop then presents the new rector to the congregation, saying

Greet your new Rector.

When appropriate, the family of the new rector may also be presented at this time.

The Congregation expresses its approval. Applause is appropriate. The Bishop greets the new rector.

The new Rector then says to the people

 The peace of the Lord be always with you.
People And also with you.

The new Rector then greets other members of the clergy, family members, and the congregation. The People greet one another.

²³ If this service is adapted for a minister who is not a rector, this prayer is omitted.

²⁴ This prayer from the 1979 BCP liturgy was originally composed in 1799, an American addition to our liturgical tradition. The prayer is omitted in EOW 4, yet is retained here. This prayer is a beautiful expression of reliance on God, combining humility and authority.

²⁵ This prayer is from the 1979 BCP (page 817) and is a congregational response to the priest's prayer which is said kneeling in the midst of the church. In the Diocese of Texas, in the transition process, congregations are invited to utilize this exact prayer in weekly worship, and other occasions, while they are in the discernment and search process for a new rector. It is appropriate that the congregation conclude the mutual discernment process by offering this prayer during this liturgy.

At the Eucharist

The service continues with the Offertory.

The Bishop, or in the Bishop's absence the new Rector, standing at the Lord's Table as chief celebrant, proceeds with the Great Thanksgiving of the Eucharist. Other clergy who are present do not "concelebrate" with the Bishop and the new Rector.

Except on Major Feasts, the Preface is that for Baptism, rather than Apostles and Ordinations. ²⁶

After Communion

One of the usual post-communion prayers is offered.

The post-communion prayer for Ordinations is not appropriate for this occasion. ²⁷

The new Rector may, at the bishop's request, pronounce a blessing.

A Deacon, or a Priest if no deacon is present, dismisses the assembly.

²⁶ Specifying that the Proper Preface is that of Baptism, rather than Apostles and Ordinations, keeps the liturgy focused on the ministry of the baptized, as opposed to the liturgy resembling an Ordination.

²⁷ The Post-Communion Prayer should be one of those used in a usual Celebration of the Eucharist, rather than the post-communion prayer used at Ordinations.

Additional Directions

Suggested Propers:

For All Baptized Christians

At Baptism

The Mission of the Church

Feast of Title or Patronal Feast

Proper of the Day

Hymns and anthems should reflect themes of the lessons, emphasizing a celebration of the Church, rather than resembling an Ordination.