



## DIOCESE OF VIRGINIA Visitation Checklist

### As soon as possible, but no later than 3-4 weeks prior to Visitation:

- o Return the completed *Episcopal Visitation Information Form* to the Bishop's office. This form must be in hand prior to the call between the bishop and rector/vicar/priest-in-charge/lay pastoral leader.
  - Include a photo of the church interior – particularly a shot of the altar area, taken from the aisle far enough back to see that space.
- o Contact Anita Lisk in the Bishops Office to schedule a phone or ZOOM call with your visiting Bishop during the week prior to your visitation.
- o Just prior to the call, please send a copy of your most recent newsletter or other general parish communication to help update the bishop.
- o If sacramental rites will be included in the service, you will be sent in advance the number of appropriate certificates requested or an electronic template to create certificates (adult baptism/confirmation/ reception/ reaffirmation). Note that infant/child baptism and Godparent certificates should come from the parish and not the diocesan office.
  - **Confirmation:** Candidates who are baptized (at any age) and now wish to express a mature public affirmation of their faith, recommit themselves to the responsibilities of their baptism, and receive laying on of hands by a bishop. This includes persons confirmed in any denomination other than those listed below\*.
  - **Reception:** Candidates who have already been Confirmed in one of the denominations listed below\* who wish to be received into the fellowship of The Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion.
  - **Reaffirmation:** Candidates who have returned from a time of religious inactivity or wish to publicly recommit themselves to an active practice of faith.

Please contact the Bishop's office if you have questions about the appropriate sacramental rite.

### Two weeks prior to Visitation:

- o Prepare the Order of Service and send it to the Bishops Office for approval.
- o The Bishop's visitation always includes the Holy Eucharist with the Bishop as celebrant and preacher. Sacramental rites are within the context of the Eucharist.
- o When there are no sacramental rites the service should include The Renewal of Baptismal Vows on page 292 of the Book of Common Prayer in place of the Nicene Creed.
- o The Propers of the Day are used for Sunday visits, except under extraordinary circumstances and with the consent of the Bishop.
- o Altar hangings, stoles, etc. should be the liturgical seasonal color.

- o For Bishop Stevenson’s visitations, please have a lavabo bowl and towel, and a pall for/on the chalice, for use at the Eucharistic Prayer.
- o The bishops in the Diocese of Virginia typically use the first prayer for Confirmation: “Strengthen, O Lord, your servant *N.* with your Holy Spirit; empower *him* for your service; and sustain *him* all the days of *his* life. Amen.”

**Date of Visitation:**

- o Please provide a marked parking space for the bishop and send directions to the space to the Bishops Office.
- o Have the Parish Registers, including the Service Register, available for review and be prepared “to give the Bishop information on the state of the congregation, spiritual and temporal,” as the canons require.
- o Remind the congregation that the loose offering received is to be designated for the Bishop’s Discretionary Fund.

**Within two weeks after the Visitation:**

- o Return the “Rites Performed Report” form to the Bishops Office, **even if no Rites were performed.**
- o Send a check for the loose offering **payable to the Diocese of Virginia** with a note on the check specifying the name of the bishop who visited and the date of the visitation and send to “Bishops Office” at the address below. *(Please note that travel expenses for visiting bishops are paid by the Diocese.)*

**\* Denominations appropriate for Reception into The Episcopal Church:**

Another province of the Anglican Communion  
The Orthodox Church  
The Roman Catholic Church  
The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
The Old Catholic Church  
The Philippine Independent Church  
The Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar  
The Moravian Church in America

**Contact for questions or further information and return forms to:**

Anita Lisk, Executive Assistant to the Bishops  
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