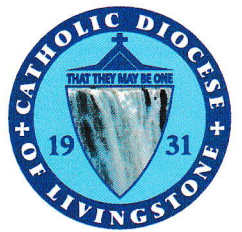




CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF LIVINGSTONE

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MEMO

To: All Parish Priests of the Catholic Diocese of Livingstone
From: Rt. Rev. Valentine Kalumba, OMI – Bishop of Livingstone
CC: Church Councils
Date: Sunday 30th May, 2021.
Re: On Receiving Government and Public Officials into our churches
at Liturgical Celebrations

The question of how to receive High Profile government and Public figures has always arisen in the Church. At times we seem not to know how to deal with this situation when government and other public leaders come for Mass at our Churches. The Catholic Church welcomes all people who wish to worship with us. Therefore, proper hospitality should be shown to such individuals or groups. At no time should we make people who visit our Churches feel unwelcome. Our spirit as a Church is all embracing (Catholics and all people of good will).

Guided by the Ceremonial of Bishops General Norm Number 82 states:

A head of state in official attendance at a liturgical celebration is received by the bishop, who waits investments at the door of the Church. The bishop may offer holy water to a head of state who is a Catholic. After greeting the head of state in a manner that accords with the local custom, the bishop, keeping to the left, escorts the head of state to an appointed place reserved in the church outside the sanctuary (chancel). At the end of the celebration the bishop as he leaves again greets the head of state.

The Ceremonial of Bishops General Norm in Number 83 further on states:

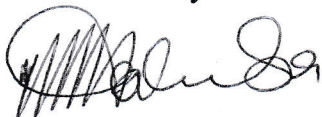
If such is a the practice, other officials holding high position in the government of a nation, region, or city are received at the door of the church in a manner that accords with local custom by an ecclesiastic dignitary, who greets them and escorts them to their appointed place. The bishop may greet such personages during the entrance procession as he goes to the altar, and as he leaves.

Since the Bishop is not always in the parishes of our districts where our high profile government, and public official visit, **I decree**, when it is known that a head of state or any high profile government officer is attending Mass in a parish, the following must be done:

- 1. The Parish Priest or His Associate and the Parish Council Executive (or a select member of the Parish Council Executive) welcomes the dignitary either in the residence or in the offices of the Parish**
- 2. After this brief meeting, the dignitary is led into the Church as stated in Norms Number 82 and 83.**
- 3. No dignitary is given a time to speak during the Celebration of the Eucharist since this moment of speaking has already been done in 1 above. However, if due to limited time the meeting mentioned in 1 does not take place before Mass, it should take place immediately after Mass.**

I instruct Parish Priests of our Parishes in the Diocese to share this information with local government officials (**or those in charge of protocols for the political party**) so that there is no misunderstanding. The local government/party should inform the parishes at least 2 days or conveniently in advance before any dignitary intends to visit the parish so that the parish could prepare this moment of encounter properly.

Yours sincerely in Christ,



† Valentine Kalumba, OMI
Bishop of Livingstone

