El Camino Real Visitation Customary for Liturgical Deacon

For the Bishop’s Visitation, it is important that a Deacon be present to fulfill the liturgical role prescribed. If the parish has a Deacon, they should serve in the traditional ways that Deacons do liturgically. If the parish does not have a Deacon, they should contact a nearby parish to “borrow” one for the visitation.

The role of the Deacon in the Eucharistic Liturgy is to be a servant of God and a prophetic presence in worship by proclaiming the gospel to the people and sending them forth to be proclaimers of the gospel. Deacons attend to the setting of the altar as a tangible symbol of their prophetic role as servant.

Deacons should:

- Proclaim the Gospel
- Tend to the Prayers of the People
- Set and clear the Table
- Dismiss the people

At the discretion of the Rector or Bishop, the Deacon may also bid the Creed, the Confession, the Prayers of the People and the Lord’s Prayer.

**Vestments:** The Liturgical Deacon should vest in alb and deacon’s stole. Occasionally there may be a dalmatic for use depending on the place and the liturgical color. Most often, the color when the Bishop is present is RED.

**Proclaim the Gospel:** The Deacon should collect the Gospel book from the Altar and go to the Bishop for a blessing. After reading the Gospel, the Deacon should return the Gospel book to the Altar. They should process with the Gospel book elevated during the processional, during the Gospel procession, and at the close of the service.

**Tend to the Prayers of the People:** Many parishes assign a Lay Leader to lead the prayers. The Deacon should ensure that someone is assigned and may bid the prayers. If no Lay Leader is assigned, the Deacon should either assign someone or lead the Prayers.

**Set the Table:** The Deacon should set the table and direct the acolyte(s) in assisting the actions. The Presider’s Book should be placed on the left side, and the purificator on the right. Elements already consecrated should be kept on the credence table. The altar should be kept clear of books, binders, extra papers, etc. The veil, burse and pall should be moved to the credence table. The Liturgical Deacon should point the Altar Book for the Bishop.

**Clear the Table:** After communion is finished, and after all have been served, the Deacon and Eucharistic Minister will administer the bread and wine to the Bishop. The table should be cleared of everything except the Presider’s Book and missal stand (and candles). The Bishop stands alone at the altar for the Post-communion Prayer, with her chaplain behind her.

**Dismiss the People:** The dismissal shall normally occur from the rear of the nave. The Deacon may choose the dismissal, and “Alleluia” may be used if the Deacon chooses, always during Eastertide, and never during Lent.
**Paschal Candle:** For most Bishop’s Visitations, the Paschal Candle should be lit; most visitations would have baptism, confirmation, reception, reaffirmation, and/or renewal of baptismal covenant.

**For Baptism:** Please be sure that the following are present—the ewer (pitcher) with water, the shell, towels for the candidates. Sometimes a baptismal candle may be given to the newly baptized.

**For Confirmation:** Have Chrism in either an oil stock or a small bowl, and a towel for the Bishop’s hands.