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FROM: The Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions

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- NATIONAL MEETING OF LITURGISTS GATHER IN OMAHA  
[FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE]

165 delegates from 97 dioceses gathered in Omaha, Nebraska, October 10-13, 2006, for the annual National Meeting of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions.

The meeting, jointly sponsored by the Federation of Liturgical Commissions (FDLC) and the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy (BCL), focused its theme on *Music and the Art of Celebration*.

The meeting addresses were offered by Rev. Anthony Ruff, O.S.B. of St. John's Abbey and St. John's University in Collegeville; Dr. Marie Rubis Bauer, the Director of Cathedral Music Ministries and Organist at the Cathedral of Saint Cecilia in the Archdiocese of Omaha; and Dr. J. Michael McMahon, the President of the National Association of Pastoral Musicians. The text of these presentations will be posted to the FDLC website ([www.fdlc.org](http://www.fdlc.org)) by November 1.

Business sessions included the presentations of reports from the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy offered by its Chair, Most Reverend Donald Trautman, Bishop of Erie, and from the Federation's Chair of the Board of Directors, Reverend Monsignor John Burton.

In the course of the meeting the Federation presented its annual Frederick R. McManus Award for pastoral liturgy to Dr. Nathan D. Mitchell, Professional Specialist in the University of Notre Dame Department of Theology and Concurrent Associate Director for the Notre Dame Center for Liturgy.

During the meeting the diocesan delegates passed seven position statements that had been formulated during FDLC regional meetings earlier this year and one Executive Committee Resolution. Five of the seven position statements deal with ministerial formation, one with translation of liturgical texts, and the other with education in the utilization of technology in liturgical catechesis. The resolution focused on the revision of *Music in Catholic Worship*. The text of the position statements and resolution follows.

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### **Position Statement 2006/A**

#### **Topic: The Language of Liturgy**

**Vote: 125 votes cast: 120 yes, 3 no; 2 abstain. Passed by 97.56% (2/3 of the Yes/No votes required to pass).**

#### **Preamble**

Whereas, the Bishops of the United States have stated that "good celebrations foster and nourish faith, poor celebrations may weaken and destroy it" (MCW#6); it could be argued that good translations of scriptural and prayer texts do the same;

Whereas, "in the reform and promotion of the liturgy, this full and active participation by all the people is the aim to be considered before all else." (CSL#14) And, "in this reform both texts and rites should be drawn up so that they express more clearly the holy things they signify and that the Christian people, as

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far as possible, are able to understand them with ease and to take part in the rites fully, actively, and as befits a community,” (CSL#21)

Whereas, the Roman Catholic Church in the United States is soon to be blessed with the English translation of the *Missale Romanum—Editio Typica Tertia*;

### Statement

It is the position of the delegates to the 2006 National Meeting of the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions that we are committed to the use of language in our scriptural and liturgical texts that is not only faithful to the original but is also contemporary, beautiful, proclaimable and intelligible, and respectful of all persons. We encourage the BCL in its work in the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Roman Congregations to provide the Church in the United States with such ritual texts that will assure this vision.

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### Position Statement 2006/B

#### Topic: On Lay Ecclesial Ministry

**Vote: 124 votes cast: 102 yes, 17 no; 5 abstain. Passed by 82.26% (2/3 of the Yes/No vote required to pass).**

#### Preamble

Whereas *Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord* was published by the USCCB in December 2005;

Whereas the number of trained and professional lay ministers has increased by 53% from 1990 to 2005 and “30,632 lay ecclesial ministers now work at least twenty hours per week in paid positions in parishes” (*Co-Workers*, p.13);

Whereas many lay ministers serve in parishes and dioceses as directors or coordinators of liturgy, music, and the catechumenate while others serve in related positions, as directors or coordinators of religious education, youth programs, etc.;

Whereas “working in the Church is a path of Christian discipleship to be encouraged by the hierarchy.” (*Co-Workers*, p.8) and the next generation of lay ministers may benefit from a degree of affirmation and encouragement to pursue a vocation as a lay ecclesial minister;

Whereas contributions and charisms of the laity are to be recognized “so that all in their separate ways, but of one mind, may cooperate in the common task” of the Church’s mission; (*Lumen Gentium* #30);

Whereas the laity, “incorporated into Christ’s Mystical Body through Baptism and strengthened by the power of the Holy Spirit through Confirmation,” ... “are consecrated into a royal priesthood and a holy people in order that they may offer spiritual sacrifices ...and may witness to Christ throughout the world.” (*Lumen Gentium* #31);

Whereas “the ministry of the priest ...aims at promoting the exercise of the common priesthood of the entire people of God.” (*Co-Workers*, p.24);

Whereas the bishops in *Co-Workers in the Vineyard* and *Called and Gifted* call “both lay and ordained ministers to learn the skill of collaboration, to value the benefit it brings to Church life and ministry and to commit themselves to practice it in their places of ministry”;

Whereas the term “ecclesial lay ministry” remains only partially defined;

Whereas the “best organization practices are consistent with Gospel values” (*Co-Workers*, p. 61);

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### Statement

It is the position of the delegates to the 2006 National Meeting of the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions that: the FDLC membership affirm the work of the bishops on *Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord* and their position of support for appropriately trained, competent and spiritually mature laity who serve the church. We ask that the chair of the FDLC contact Most Reverend David A. Zubik, chair of the USCCB Committee on the Laity on behalf of the Federation to encourage continued research and reflection within the USCCB on the role, formation and management of lay ecclesial ministers; to pursue a discussion on the theology of vocation, proposed by Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord, as it pertains to lay ecclesial ministry; to create and encourage initiatives by the bishops of the United States that foster an atmosphere of collaboration and recognition of the charisms and gifts of lay ministers in the church; to encourage the use of “best organizational practices” as outlined in the document, *Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord* (pages 61-64), in human resource management in the hiring, evaluation, and management of lay ministers.

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### Position Statement 2006/C

#### The Necessity of Formation for Music Ministers

**Vote: 123 votes cast: 97 yes, 24 no; 2 abstain. Passed by 78.86% (2/3 of the votes required to pass).**

#### Preamble

Whereas the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, 29, states that “members of the choir also exercise a genuine liturgical function. They ought to discharge their office, therefore, with the sincere devotion and decorum demanded by so exalted a ministry and rightly expected of them by God’s people. Consequently, they must be deeply imbued with the spirit of the liturgy, in the measure proper to each one, and they must be trained to perform their functions in a correct and orderly manner”;

Whereas the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, 2002, states that “The Bishop should therefore be determined that the priests, the deacons, and the lay Christian faithful grasp ever more deeply the genuine meaning of the rites and liturgical texts, and thereby be led to an active and fruitful celebration of the Eucharist. To the same end, he should also be vigilant that the dignity of these celebrations be enhanced. In promoting this dignity, the beauty of the sacred place, of music, and of art should contribute as greatly as possible.” (no. 22);

Whereas “good celebrations foster and nourish faith, poor celebrations weaken and destroy it” (*Music in Catholic Worship*, 6) and “music is of preeminent importance” (*Music in Catholic Worship*, 23) in achieving good celebrations;

Whereas the *Lectionary for Mass: Introduction*, 55, delineates the basic preparation for lectors that includes spiritual, biblical, liturgical and technical aspects, and similar preparations are implied for the psalmist or cantor;

Whereas in many parishes across the United States of America resources, both musical and economic, are limited, poor, or non-existent;

Whereas the level of musical skills and the ministerial posture of those who exercise this role is of uneven quality from parish to parish;

#### Statement

It is the position of the delegates to the 2006 National Meeting of the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions that the FDLC ask the Bishops’ Committee on the Liturgy to dedicate one issue of the *BCL Newsletter*, and to post it on their web site in question and answer format, to reaffirm the importance of on-going liturgical formation of music ministers, in order that such ministers develop: basic technical skills necessary for musical leadership; a knowledge of the scriptures and an understanding of the Liturgical Year; a spirituality of ministry through music; and a knowledge of the basic elements of the liturgical rites and of the role of music in the liturgy.

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### Position Statement 2006/D

#### The Liturgical Formation of the Deacon

**Vote: 123 votes cast: 121 yes, 0 no; 2 abstain. Passed by 98.37% (2/3 of the votes required to pass)**

#### Preamble

Whereas “for the Church gathered at worship ... the ministry of the deacon is a visible, grace-filled sign of the integral connection between sharing at the Lord’s Eucharistic table and serving the many hungers felt

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so keenly by all God's children (*National Directory for the Formation, Life and Ministry of Permanent Deacons in the United States*, 33);

Whereas that "in the context of the Church's public worship, because of its centrality in the life of the believing community, the ministry of the deacon in the threefold diakonia of the word, of the liturgy, and of charity is uniquely concentrated and integrated." (NDFLMPM, 2004, no. 34);

Whereas, in the pastoral formation of the deacon, leaders "need to pay particular attention to" the Church's ministry of the Word; the Church's ministry of Liturgy, and the Church's ministry of Charity and Justice... (NDFLMPD, 130);

Whereas, the theological content of his formation must include "Liturgy and its historical, spiritual, and juridical aspects, with particular attention to the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (NDFLMPM, 124.f);

Whereas, the "diaconia at the altar, since founded on the Sacrament of Orders, differs in essence from any liturgical ministry entrusted to the lay faithful and ...is also distinct from the ordained priestly ministry (*Directory for the Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons*, 1998, no. 28);

Whereas, the deacon has been ordained for the nurture and increase of the people of God, it belongs to him to lead the prayers, to proclaim the gospel, to preach the homily and give Communion" (SCAP, Introduction, 18);

Whereas, the deacon may assist at Mass; preside at marriages, baptisms, funeral liturgies outside Mass; and invoke various blessings;

Whereas, current norms and directories do not provide detailed guidelines for the liturgical formation of a deacon;

### Statement

It is the position of the delegates to the 2006 National Meeting of the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions that the FDLC Board ask the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy to form a task force, consisting of a BCL Secretariat member, representatives from the Bishops' Committee for the Diaconate, the National Association of Diaconate Directors, and representatives from the FDLC, that will dialogue on the effective liturgical formation of permanent deacons in the USA. It is our sincere hope that this dialogue will produce guidelines and identify resources that will enable (arch)dioceses to better prepare deacon candidates for their role in the liturgy and to provide for the ongoing liturgical formation of permanent deacons.

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### Position Statement 2006/E

#### Transition Assistance for International Priests

**Vote: 124 votes cast: 91 yes, 27 no; 6 abstain. Passed by 73.39% (2/3 of the Yes/No votes required to pass).**

#### Preamble

Whereas the Church in the United States is in need of priests from other countries to minister to the growing number of Catholics and to respond to the declining number of clergy available for ministry in parishes;

Whereas priests from other countries engaging in parochial ministry in the United States are faced with cultural differences, which can result in experiences of isolation and culture shock, wherein they suffer a loss of support systems, the regular access to familiar resources and relationships;

Whereas parish communities are often unaware of the elements necessary to truly welcome a priest from another culture and land (e.g., intercultural communication skills);

Whereas the arrival of a priest from another country and culture can often challenge parish communities to be open to new cultural experiences and concerns;

Whereas the presence of priests from other lands and cultures brings a rich diversity reminding the local Church of the universal nature of the Church to which they belong;

Whereas the USCCB's *Guidelines for Receiving Pastoral Ministers in the United States* notes that "the need for orientation of the missionary to the local church and society, and an understanding of the cultural contexts, are vital for effective ministry, both for the minister and the community to which he or she ministers" (p.5);

Whereas the faith of a parish community finds expression in the liturgical customs and traditions born out of the local culture, i.e. language, music, liturgical and presidential style, etc.;

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Whereas priests from other countries may lack knowledge and awareness of these customs and traditions, which can lead to tension and conflict;

Whereas the General Instruction, nos. 111 and 352 remind us of the importance of the priest-celebrant's fruitful collaboration with the faithful and that to this end a fairly common cultural understanding is needed by priest-celebrant and the faithful;

Whereas recent literature on this topic raises concerns regarding the necessary preparation time and process for the acculturation of priests from other lands and cultures, supporting the work of established cultural orientation programs for international priests (e.g., the Cultural Orientation Program of International Ministries [COPIM], the Vincentian Center at St. John's University, the International Priest Internship, the Southeast Pastoral Institute, the Maryknoll Cross-Cultural Services, the Institute for Black Catholic Studies at Xavier University);

### Statement

It is the position of the delegates to the 2006 National Meeting of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions, that the Board of Directors of the FDLC, through the standing Ministry Committee, support the liturgical formation and acclimation of international priests and seminarians coming to the United States by exploring ways to interact with the centers for acculturation of priests and seminarians through dialogue and collaboration, and that the Members of the FDLC take steps in their own (arch)dioceses to promote these centers with appropriate (arch)diocesan agencies which have the charge of working with international priests and seminarians.

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### Position Statement 2006/F

#### Professional Formation in Roman Catholic Music Ministry

**Vote: 100 votes cast: 94 yes, 5 no; 1 abstain. Passed by 94%. (2/3 of the Yes/No vote required to pass).**

#### Preamble

Whereas Sacrosanctum Concilium (1963) calls for the teaching and practice of music in seminaries, novitiates, and houses of study of religious, and for higher institutes of sacred music to be established... (SC #115);

Whereas *Musicam Sacram* (1967) calls for territorial authority to approve texts for songs...(MS #42);

Whereas *Music in Catholic Worship* (1972, 1982) recognizes the needs for qualified Musicians... (MCW #77);

Whereas *Liturgical Music Today* (1982) calls for colleges and universities as well as regional and diocesan centers to develop musical skills and impart a thorough understanding of the liturgy... (LMT #65);

Whereas *Dies Domini* (1998) calls for ensuring the quality both of texts and melodies... (DD #50);

Whereas The General Instruction of the Roman Missal (2002) affirms the need for the psalmist to have the ability for singing and a facility in correct pronunciation and diction (GIRM #102) and that the choir, organist, and other musicians properly carry out and foster the active participation of the faithful through the singing... (GIRM #103);

Whereas *Liturgiam Authenticam* (2001) called upon Conferences of Bishops to complete a directory or repertory of texts intended for liturgical singing with the assistance of the Committee on the Liturgy and other experts by March 28, 2006;

Whereas the USCCB Commission on Certification and Accreditation (USCCB/CCA) has approved standards of the National Association of Lay Ministry Formation initiative (NALM), (refer to June-July 2005 issue of *Pastoral Music*, letter from President J. Michael McMahan, p. 2);

Whereas the National Association of Pastoral Musicians is setting standards by developing certification for musicians...(The USCCB Commission on Certification and Accreditation has approved the NPM's Director of Music Ministries Division (DMMD) certification standard modeled by NALM; again refer to McMahan letter listed above);

Whereas the Music Education Division of the National Association of Pastoral Musicians issued a statement about the centrality of music for the life and worship of the Church (Catholic Connections to Music, [www.npm.org](http://www.npm.org));

#### Statement

It is the position of the delegates to the 2006 National Meeting of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions that the FDLC affirm the National Association of Pastoral Musicians (NPM) in their work of recently

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developed standards for certification and formation for pastoral musicians and ask NPM to further address the continued need for formation in Roman Catholic Music Ministry by calling together diocesan personnel, academic institutions, and ministry formation programs to identify structures, personnel and resources.

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### Position Statement 2006/G

#### Technology and the Liturgical Life of the Church

**Vote: 101 votes cast: 66 yes, 31 no; 4 abstain. Passed by 68.04%. (2/3 of the Yes/No votes required to pass).**

#### Preamble

Whereas the use of electronic technology is increasingly a fact of life;

Whereas such technology provides a powerful means of communication and formation;

Whereas these means of outreach & evangelization are used to great effect by significant numbers of religious groups (both inside and outside the Roman Catholic Church);

Whereas the Catholic Church has traditionally been quick to use new means of technology;

Whereas many of us are unaware of the existence, basics, and potential of the technologies such as 'Godcasts', blogs, interactive websites, video conferencing, instant messaging, etc.

#### Statement

It is the position of the delegates to the 2006 National Meeting of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions that the FDLC Executive Committee suggest to the National Meeting Planning Committee that the next several national meetings include presentations addressing ways of harnessing electronic technology for the promotion of the liturgical reform, as well as the dissemination of information on those issues which may affect the celebration of the liturgy.

We request that a time-line and procedure for implementation of this resolution be set by the FDLC Board of Directors by *31 January 2007*.

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

#### 2006/ECR-1

**Vote: 101 votes cast: 94 yes, 4 no; 3 abstain. Passed by 95.91 %. (2/3 of the Yes/No vote required to pass).**

It is a matter of immediate concern to the delegates of the 2006 FDLC National Meeting: to reaffirm the importance of the BCL documents, *Music in Catholic Worship* and *Liturgical Music Today*, to support the BCL Sub-Committee on Music and Liturgy in retaining the basic principles of these documents in any revisions.