**Guidelines for**

**Weekday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest**

*Reprinted from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops website,* [*www.usccb.org*](http://www.usccb.org)

1. Whenever possible, daily Mass should be celebrated in each parish.
2. Whenever the *Rite for Distributing Holy Communion Outside Mass* with a Celebration of the Word is scheduled on a weekday, every effort must be undertaken to avoid any confusion between this celebration and the Mass. Indeed, such celebrations should encourage the faithful to be present at and to participate in the celebration of the Eucharist.5
3. Whenever possible, the Mass schedule of nearby parishes should be available to parishioners. If a nearby parish is celebrating Mass on a given weekday, serious consideration should be given to encouraging people to participate in that Mass rather than the parish scheduling a Liturgy of the Word with Distribution of Holy Communion.
4. When daily Mass is scheduled in a parish, it is usually not appropriate to schedule a Liturgy of the Word with Distribution of Holy Communion. This rite is designed for "those who are prevented from being present at the community's celebration." When necessary, the scheduling of these celebrations should never detract from "the celebration of the Eucharist [as] the center of the entire Christian life."6 Such celebrations should never be seen as an equal choice with participation at Mass.
5. The proper ritual for the Liturgy of the Word with Distribution of *Holy Communion is found in Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist Outside Mass.* The specialized provisions of *Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest* are not appropriate to weekday celebrations.
6. A Liturgy of the Word with Distribution of Holy Communion should never be scheduled for the purpose of 'providing a role' for deacons or lay ministers. Likewise, choosing the option of the Funeral Liturgy outside Mass solely to provide a role for the deacon is inappropriate. It is also inappropriate to have the deacon preside at the Funeral Liturgy outside Mass when a priest is available to celebrate a Funeral Mass.