



The Humanistic Catholic Book of Rites

Full Sacramental and Rubrical Edition

Humanistic Catholic Church

Traditional Form, Humanistic Substance

A complete rites book for the seven sacraments, ceremonial rubrics, church calendar, vestment colors, registers, and pastoral forms, adapted for Humanistic Catholicism: Catholic in external form, humanistic in meaning.

Primateal See: Ketchikan, Alaska

Presiding Bishop: Bishop Robert Horwath

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Use of this Book. This book is written as an altar and clergy manual. The black text is spoken or instructional text. Text in red italics is rubrical direction. All rites are original forms for the Humanistic Catholic Church and do not reproduce current Roman Catholic liturgical books.

Part I - Principles and General Rubrics

1. Identity of the Rites

The Humanistic Catholic Church is essentially Catholicism without deity-language: Catholic in external form and humanistic in meaning. Its rites preserve Catholic structure, sacramental names, ceremonial movement, liturgical time, vesture, altar symbolism, blessings, and ecclesiastical offices while interpreting them through human dignity, creation, reason, conscience, compassion, memory, solidarity, ethical responsibility, and community.

The rites are not acts of supernatural invocation. They are solemn ecclesial ceremonies that shape people through symbol, memory, vow, touch, speech, water, oil, bread, cup, silence, procession, blessing, and public recognition.

2. Terms Retained and Terms Reinterpreted

The Church retains the words sacrament, Mass, Eucharist, Baptism, Confirmation, Reconciliation, Anointing, Matrimony, Holy Orders, deacon, priest, bishop, altar, blessing, holy water, chalice, host, vestment, feast, fast, parish, diocese, and ordinal as ceremonial Catholic terms. These words are used in humanistic meaning and must not be interpreted as supernatural claims.

3. Absolute Rubrical Rule

No minister shall add deity-language, supernatural invocation, angelic or demonic references, divine command language, supernatural salvation language, or claims of supernatural transformation to these rites. The official rule is: Traditional Form, Humanistic Substance.

4. General Ceremonial Norms

- The altar or table is covered with a clean white or seasonal cloth.
- Candles may be placed on or near the altar as signs of attention, memory, and human hope.
- Incense may be used as a sensory sign of solemnity and reverent attention.
- Holy water is water ceremonially set apart as a sign of life, cleansing, renewal, and belonging.
- Oil is used as a sign of tenderness, care, strengthening, public recognition, and pastoral presence.
- The ministers bow to the altar as the table of the community.
- The congregation stands for processions, acclamations, Gospel-style ethical readings, vows, and final dismissal unless pastoral need suggests otherwise.
- Silence is an essential liturgical act and may be extended where pastorally helpful.

5. Ministers and Liturgical Roles

The ordinary ministers of the rites are bishops, priests, deacons, and authorized lay ministers of the Humanistic Catholic Church. A bishop presides at ordinations and may preside at all rites. A priest normally presides at Baptism, Eucharist, Reconciliation, Anointing, Matrimony, blessings, and pastoral rites. A deacon assists at the altar, proclaims readings, leads intercessions, prepares the table, and may preside at blessings and rites as authorized. Lay ministers may read, serve, assist, witness, distribute communion when authorized, and lead approved prayers or reflections.

6. Vesture

Ordinary vesture for Mass is alb, stole, and chasuble. For sacraments outside Mass, alb and stole may be used. A bishop may use pectoral cross, ring, mitre, crozier, and cope or chasuble as appropriate. A deacon wears a diaconal stole and dalmatic where available. Lay ministers may wear an alb or approved simple vesture.

7. Books and Registers

A parish, mission, diocese, or online ministry shall keep registers of Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharistic participation where pastorally useful, Reconciliation in confidential form where permitted by discipline, Anointing, Matrimony, Holy Orders, lay ministries, clergy appointments, parish membership, certificates, and letters of good standing.

8. Adaptation and Pastoral Necessity

The Presiding Bishop may authorize adaptations for small communities, homes, hospitals, prisons, online ministry, emergencies, disability access, lack of clergy, or pastoral necessity. Any adaptation must preserve the humanistic rule of the Church and the recognizable Catholic external form.

Part II - Calendar, Seasons, and Vestment Colors

1. Liturgical Year

The Humanistic Catholic Church keeps the liturgical year as a cycle of memory, ethical formation, communal identity, fasting, feasting, and embodied ritual. Seasons are interpreted humanistically and do not require supernatural claims.

Season/Day	Humanistic Meaning	Color
Advent	Longing, preparation, hospitality, moral attention, and hope for a more compassionate world.	Purple or blue
Christmas Season	Birth, tenderness, family, shelter, vulnerability, welcome, and joy.	White or gold
Epiphany / Manifestation	Recognition, discovery, wisdom, human encounter, and light for the journey.	White or gold
Ordinary Time	Daily faithfulness, work, growth, community, pastoral care, and ordinary service.	Green
Lent	Self-examination, simplicity, fasting, truth-telling, moral repair, and discipline.	Purple
Holy Week	Courage, grief, betrayal, public suffering, solidarity, and moral witness.	Red, purple, black, or white by day
Easter Season	Renewal, resilience, courage after grief, restored community, and hope after despair.	White or gold
Pentecost / Human Voice	Common speech, shared courage, public witness, community formation, and service.	Red

2. Feasts and Memorials

The Church may keep memorial days for Jesus in memory, Mary as historical mother and symbol of courage and tenderness, the Apostles as founding witnesses in cultural memory, reformers, humanitarians, martyrs of conscience, teachers, healers, artists, workers, elders, ancestors, and local benefactors. Saints are remembered as moral exemplars and cultural ancestors, not invoked as supernatural intercessors.

3. Vestment Color Table

Color	Use	Meaning
White	Christmas, Easter, weddings, funerals, baptisms, major feasts.	Joy, dignity, tenderness, light, memory, and peace.
Gold	Solemnities, high feasts, ordinations, patronal celebrations.	Honor, ceremonial fullness, beauty, and gratitude.
Green	Ordinary Time, creation rites, teachings on growth and service.	Growth, earth, life, work, and steady practice.
Purple	Advent, Lent, Reconciliation, penitential days.	Longing, honesty, discipline, moral repair, and preparation.
Red	Pentecost, ordination, martyrs of conscience, public witness.	Courage, service, sacrifice, public voice, and leadership.
Rose	Optional for mid-Advent or mid-Lent.	Relief, tenderness, mercy, and refreshment.
Black	Funerals, memorials, Good Friday-style grief rites.	Grief, mortality, lament, and solemn memory.

4. Sample Proper Calendar

The following yearly calendar may be used until expanded by the Presiding Bishop. Local parishes may add patronal days, founding days, civic memorials, and local days of remembrance.

Date/Season	Observance	Color
Jan 1	Day of Peace, Human Dignity, and New Beginnings	White/Gold
Feb 14	Day of Covenantal Love and Household Care	White/Rose
Mar 19	Workers, Guardians, and Caregivers	White
May 1	Founding Day of the Humanistic Catholic Church	Gold
Jun 24	Water, Welcome, and Baptismal Belonging	White
Jul 22	Witness of Courage and Human Memory	White/Red
Oct 4	Creation, Animals, Earth, and Simplicity	Green
Nov 1	All Exemplars of Compassion and Courage	White
Nov 2	All the Dead and the Work of Memory	Black/White
Dec 25	Birth, Shelter, Tenderness, and Human Hope	White/Gold

5. Ritual Color Norms

- Baptism: white or gold; green for creation-themed baptisms may be used.
- Confirmation: red or white.
- Eucharist: seasonal color or white/gold for solemn Mass.
- Reconciliation: purple.
- Anointing: white, purple, or green according to pastoral context.
- Matrimony: white or gold; rose may be used where desired.
- Holy Orders: red or gold; white may be used for solemn ecclesial feasts.
- Funerals: black, white, or purple depending on local custom.

Part III - The Rite of Baptism

Theology of Baptism

Baptism is the rite of welcome, naming, renewal, and entry into the ceremonial life of the Church. Water symbolizes life, cleansing, birth, creation, shared humanity, and the beginning of a recognized path of belonging. Baptism does not remove supernatural guilt or confer supernatural status. It marks the person as received by the community with dignity and care.

Materials

- A bowl, font, or vessel of clean water.
- A white cloth or garment if available.
- A candle if available.
- The parish register and certificate form.
- Oil may be used where customary as a sign of care and strengthening.

Opening Rubrics

The minister stands at the entrance of the church, near the font, or before the gathered community. Parents, sponsors, or the candidate stand nearby. The community may stand.

Minister:

Peace be with you.

People:

And with your spirit.

Minister:

We gather for Baptism, the rite of welcome and belonging. By water, word, name, and community, we receive this person into the ceremonial life of the Humanistic Catholic Church.

Presentation of the Candidate

Minister:

What name is given to this person?

The name is spoken clearly.

Minister:

What do you seek from this church?

Belonging, welcome, dignity, and participation in the life of the community.

For infants or children, parents or sponsors answer. For adults, the candidate answers personally.

Commitment of Parents, Sponsors, or Candidate

Minister:

Will you nurture this person in dignity, truthfulness, compassion, and care for creation?

I will, with the help of this community.

Minister:

Will you teach by example the practices of honesty, reconciliation, service, and respect?

I will.

Minister:

Will you bring this person to the table of community and the rites of the Church?

I will.

Renunciation and Affirmation

The minister faces the candidate or sponsors. The following may be used for all ages.

Minister:

Do you renounce cruelty, contempt, falsehood, and indifference?

I renounce them.

Minister:

Do you renounce the habits that degrade human dignity and wound the human family?

I renounce them.

Minister:

Do you affirm compassion, truth, community, and the work of repair?

I affirm them.

Minister:

Do you seek to live in dignity and to honor the dignity of others?

I do.

Blessing of the Water

The minister extends hands over the water. This is a ceremonial blessing of dedication, not a supernatural invocation.

Minister:

Water is the sign of life, birth, cleansing, renewal, and creation. From water we come; by water we are sustained; through water we remember our shared humanity. Let this water be set apart for welcome, dignity, and belonging.

Amen.

Baptism

The minister pours water over the head three times or immerses the candidate, using the approved humanistic formula.

Minister:

N., I baptize you into the Humanistic Catholic Church: into dignity, into community, and into the shared life of the human family.

Water is poured at each phrase: into dignity - into community - into the shared life of the human family.

Clothing with the White Garment

A white garment or cloth may be placed on the newly baptized.

Minister:

Receive this white garment as a sign of dignity, welcome, and the beginning of your public life in this community.

Presentation of the Candle

A candle may be lit from the altar candle or another candle.

Minister:

Receive this light as a sign of memory, courage, and hope. May your life bear warmth and compassion among others.

Reception by the Community

Minister:

People of the Humanistic Catholic Church, will you receive N. with dignity and support this person in the path of compassion and belonging?

We will.

Minister:

N., you are received into the ceremonial life of this church. You are welcome at the table, in the community, and in the work of compassion.

Closing Prayer of the Rite

Minister:

May this Baptism mark a life of dignity, courage, truthfulness, and care. May this community surround N. with belonging, and may N. grow in wisdom, compassion, and service.

Amen.

Final Rubrics and Register

The minister signs the register, recording the date, place, full name, minister, parents or sponsors if any, and parish or mission. A certificate may be issued. If performed outside a parish, notice should be sent to the central registrar.

Emergency or Short Form Baptism

In danger of death, extreme circumstance, or pastoral necessity, a priest, deacon, or authorized lay minister may use clean water and the essential formula.

Minister:

N., I baptize you into dignity, community, and the shared life of the human family.

As soon as possible, the rite is recorded, and any omitted ceremonies may be supplied later.

Part IV - The Rite of Confirmation

Theology of Confirmation

Confirmation is the mature public affirmation of belonging, conscience, courage, ethical responsibility, and commitment to the community. It confirms a person in the ceremonial life of the Church and calls them to live with integrity, compassion, and service.

Minister and Materials

The ordinary minister is a bishop. A priest may confirm by faculty of the Presiding Bishop. Materials include oil, the list of candidates, seating for sponsors, and the register.

Opening

After the readings or after the homily within Mass, the candidates are presented. Outside Mass, the minister begins with the greeting.

Bishop:

Peace be with you.

People:

And with your spirit.

Presenter:

Bishop, I present these candidates for Confirmation in the Humanistic Catholic Church.

Address to the Candidates

Bishop:

Beloved candidates, Confirmation is your public affirmation of conscience, courage, and belonging. You stand before the community to claim the work of dignity, truth, compassion, and service as your own.

Renewal of Baptismal Affirmations

Bishop:

Do you affirm your dignity and the dignity of every person?

I do.

Bishop:

Do you commit yourself to truthfulness, accountability, reconciliation, and care for others?

I do.

Bishop:

Do you seek to live as a member of this Church: Catholic in form, humanistic in meaning?

I do.

Laying on of Hands

The bishop extends hands over all candidates. Sponsors place a hand on the candidate shoulder if appropriate.

Bishop:

May these candidates be strengthened in conscience, courage, compassion, and service. May they stand with the vulnerable, speak truth with humility, and live as signs of dignity in the world.

Amen.

Anointing or Signing

The bishop may anoint the forehead with oil or trace a cross or other authorized sign. The gesture is ceremonial and humanistic in meaning.

Bishop:

N., be confirmed in dignity, conscience, courage, and belonging.

Amen.

Bishop:

Peace be with you.

And with your spirit.

Prayer Over the Confirmed

Bishop:

May those confirmed today be steady in truth, generous in compassion, wise in judgment, and faithful in service.

May the community support them and learn from them.

Amen.

Register

The names of the confirmed, sponsors, minister, date, place, and parish are entered in the Confirmation register. Certificates may be issued.

Short Form in Pastoral Necessity

In necessity, the authorized minister lays a hand on the candidate and says the essential formula.

Minister:

N., be confirmed in dignity, conscience, courage, and belonging.

Part V - The Order of the Humanistic Mass

General Rubrics for Mass

The Mass is the central table rite of the Church. It follows the familiar pattern of entrance, greeting, penitential honesty, collect, readings, homily, intercessions, preparation of the table, Eucharistic prayer, communion, and dismissal. It is always non-theistic in official language.

The altar is prepared with cloth, candles, bread, cup, and book. The priest wears the seasonal color. The people stand for the entrance.

Introductory Rites

Priest:

In the name of human dignity, shared memory, and the communion of the human family.

People:

We gather in peace, conscience, and compassion.

Priest:

Peace be with you.

People:

And with your spirit.

Rite of Moral Honesty

A brief silence is kept.

Priest:

For the harm we have done by word, action, neglect, or indifference:

People:

We acknowledge our failure and seek repair.

Priest:

For the truth we have avoided and the responsibility we have delayed:

People:

We acknowledge our failure and seek courage.

Priest:

For the people we have wounded, ignored, excluded, or used:

People:

We acknowledge our failure and seek reconciliation.

Priest:

May this gathering strengthen us in honesty, moral repair, and renewed belonging.

People:

Amen.

Collect

Priest:

Let us collect our thoughts, our griefs, our hopes, and our responsibilities.

Silence.

Priest:

May this assembly be formed in dignity and compassion. May our words become honest, our table become open, our memory become wise, and our lives become instruments of care.

People:

Amen.

Liturgy of the Word

The readings are taken from the approved non-theistic lectionary, ethical wisdom, humanistic writings, the catechism, or Gospel-style ethical memories of Jesus that do not require supernatural language.

Reader:

A reading from the witness of the human family.

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They possess reason and conscience and should act toward one another in a spirit of fellowship. The dignity of each person is the foundation of justice, peace, and community.

Reader:

Hear the wisdom of human dignity.

People:

May we receive it with courage.

Responsorial Reflection

Leader:

The table is open.

People:

Let all who hunger for dignity come.

Leader:

The work of repair is before us.

People:

Let all who seek courage come.

Second Reading

Reader:

A reading from the Humanistic Catholic Catechism.

A sacrament is an outward ceremonial act using material signs, ritual words, and communal presence to mark human dignity, belonging, memory, responsibility, healing, covenant, or office.

Reader:

Hear the wisdom of embodied ritual.

People:

May we live what we celebrate.

Gospel-Style Ethical Reading

Deacon or Priest:

A reading from the memory of Jesus.

A wounded man lay beside the road. Some passed by. A stranger saw him, drew near, treated his wounds, brought him to shelter, and cared for him. The question was asked: who was neighbor to the wounded one? The answer was: the one who showed mercy. Go and do likewise.

Deacon or Priest:

This is the memory of compassion.

People:

May we go and do likewise.

Homily and Profession

A homily follows. On Sundays and solemnities, the profession may be said.

We affirm the dignity of every person, the worth of the human family, the beauty of creation, the need for ritual and memory, and the work of truthfulness, compassion, accountability, and moral repair. Traditional Form, Humanistic Substance.

Intercessions

Priest:

Let us hold before this community the needs of the human family.

Leader:

For all who are hungry, unhoused, abandoned, or afraid: may they find shelter, bread, safety, and human care.

People:

May compassion become action.

Leader:

For the sick, aging, grieving, and dying: may they be surrounded by tenderness, dignity, presence, and peace.

People:

May compassion become action.

Leader:

For this Church, its Presiding Bishop, clergy, ministers, parishes, missions, and online community: may we serve with humility and clarity.

People:

May compassion become action.

Preparation of the Table

Bread and cup are brought to the altar. The priest may lift each slightly.

Priest:

Blessed is this bread, fruit of the earth and work of human hands. It will become for us the sign of shared life.

People:

May the table teach us compassion.

Priest:

Blessed is this cup, fruit of the vine and work of human hands. It will become for us the sign of memory, joy, suffering, and solidarity.

People:

May the table teach us compassion.

Eucharistic Prayer

Priest:

The table is prepared.

People:

We come with gratitude and responsibility.

Priest:

Lift up your hearts.

People:

We lift them toward compassion and courage.

Priest:

Let us give thanks for life, memory, and community.

People:

It is right to give thanks and to live with care.

Preface and Sanctus

Priest:

It is right and good to give thanks for the earth that sustains us, for the hands that plant and harvest, for the workers who prepare bread and cup, for the communities that hold us, and for the memory that teaches us. Above all, we remember Jesus, whose table fellowship welcomed the excluded, whose courage challenged hypocrisy, and whose compassion touched the wounded.

All:

Holy is the life we share. Holy is the earth beneath us. Holy is the table that gathers us. Blessed are those who come in compassion. Blessed are those who make peace. Blessed are those who repair what is broken.

Institution Narrative and Memorial

The priest takes the bread, raises eyes briefly toward the people or altar, and speaks clearly.

Priest:

On the night before his death, Jesus gathered with his friends at table. He took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and shared it, saying: Take this, all of you, and eat of it: this is my body, given for you. Do this in memory of me.

The priest elevates the bread. A bell may be rung once. The priest places it on the paten.

Priest:

In the same way, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and shared it, saying: Take this, all of you, and drink from it: this is the cup of my life poured out in love and solidarity. Do this in memory of me.

The priest elevates the cup. A bell may be rung once.

Priest:

The mystery of memory.

People:

We remember the table. We remember the wounded. We remember the excluded. We commit ourselves to compassion.

Doxology

The priest raises bread and cup.

Priest:

Through memory, with compassion, and in the shared life of the human family, all honor belongs to dignity, truth, service, and love, now and in every generation.

People:

Amen.

Communion Rite

All:

Source of our memory, depth of our humanity, let dignity be honored among us. Let compassion take flesh. Let justice be practiced on earth. Give bread to the hungry, shelter to the unhoused, comfort to the grieving, and courage to the afraid. Lead us away from cruelty and indifference. Deliver us from hatred, contempt, and despair. Amen.

Sign of Peace

Priest:

Peace is not only a word but a practice. Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

Breaking of the Bread

The priest breaks the bread.

Priest:

We break this bread for the broken places of the world.

People:

May we become repairers of what is broken.

Invitation

Priest:

Behold the bread of shared life. Behold the cup of memory and solidarity. Behold the table of human dignity. Happy are those who come to this table in sincerity and peace.

People:

We come as we are. May this table strengthen us in compassion, courage, and belonging.

Distribution

The minister gives the bread, saying: The bread of shared life. The communicant answers: Amen. The minister gives the cup, saying: The cup of memory and solidarity. The communicant answers: Amen.

Prayer After Communion

Priest:

We have shared bread and cup. We have remembered compassion. We have received the sign of belonging. May what we have done at this table become visible in our lives.

People:

Amen.

Blessing and Dismissal

Priest:

May you leave this place with dignity. May you practice truth with courage. May the memory of this table strengthen you in compassion, solidarity, and service.

People:

Amen.

Deacon or Priest:

The Mass is ended. Go forth in dignity and compassion.

People:

We go in peace.

Part VI - The Rite of Reconciliation

Theology

Reconciliation is the rite of truth-telling, accountability, moral repair, amends, and restoration to community. It is not the removal of supernatural guilt. It is a disciplined pastoral encounter in which a person names harm, accepts responsibility, and seeks a path toward repair.

Confidentiality Rubric

The minister observes the confidentiality required by church discipline and civil law. Where mandatory reporting applies, the minister must follow applicable law and safeguarding policy. The rite is never used to hide ongoing harm.

Individual Rite

The penitent may sit, kneel, or stand. A screen may be used. The minister begins gently.

Minister:

Peace be with you.

Penitent:

And with your spirit.

Minister:

You have come for truth, accountability, and repair. Speak honestly and without fear of humiliation.

Confession

The penitent speaks. The minister listens without interruption except to clarify serious matters or safeguard concerns.

Penitent:

I acknowledge the harm I have done and the responsibility I have avoided.

The penitent confesses particular matters.

Counsel

The minister may offer brief counsel. The counsel should be concrete, moral, pastoral, and proportionate.

Act of Responsibility

Penitent:

I accept responsibility for the harm I have done. I seek the courage to tell the truth, make amends where possible, repair what can be repaired, and live with greater compassion.

Penance

The minister assigns a suitable act of repair: apology, restitution, service, reflection, discipline, counseling referral, or other ethical action.

Minister:

For your penance and repair, undertake the following:

The penance is stated.

Declaration of Reconciliation

The minister may extend a hand or place a hand on the penitent shoulder if appropriate.

Minister:

N., you have spoken truth and accepted responsibility. Walk now in courage. Repair what you can. Seek peace where peace is possible. Return to the community not in denial, but in renewed honesty and responsibility.

Penitent:

Amen.

Dismissal

Minister:

Go in peace and practice repair.

Penitent:

Thanks be to the community we share.

Communal Rite of Reconciliation

The communal rite may be used in Lent, Advent, retreats, or parish days of moral repair. It does not replace individual pastoral confession where individual counsel is needed.

Leader:

We gather to tell the truth about harm, neglect, fear, and the need for repair.

All:

We have failed in compassion. We have avoided truth. We have left wounds unattended.

Leader:

Let silence hold what each person must name honestly.

Silence is kept.

All:

We seek courage for truth, humility for amends, patience for healing, and strength for renewed responsibility.

Register

Individual confessions are not recorded by content. Where a register is maintained, it shall record only date, minister, general rite type, and pastoral statistical count, respecting confidentiality and civil law.

Part VII - The Rite of Anointing of the Sick

Theology

Anointing of the Sick is the rite of comfort, dignity, presence, tenderness, and communal care for the sick, aging, grieving, fearful, disabled, dying, or those facing surgery, diagnosis, trauma, or serious anxiety. Oil signifies tender touch, strengthening, care, and the attention of the community.

Materials and Setting

- Oil suitable for skin contact.
- A small cloth or towel.
- A candle if appropriate.
- A chair, bed, or place where the person is comfortable.
- A register or pastoral record if used.

Opening

The minister greets the sick person by name. If in a hospital or home, the rite should be brief, gentle, and adapted to the person condition.

Minister:

Peace be with you, N.

And with your spirit.

Minister:

We gather around you with dignity, tenderness, and care. This anointing is a sign that you are not alone.

Reading

Reader:

A reading from the wisdom of human care.

When a person suffers, presence matters. The touch of another human being, the sound of a familiar voice, the promise not to abandon, and the courage to sit beside pain are among the deepest works of compassion.

Reader:

Hear the wisdom of tenderness.

May we live it with care.

Litany

Minister:

For comfort in fear:

May compassion surround you.

Minister:

For dignity in weakness:

May compassion surround you.

Minister:

For strength in treatment, waiting, or decline:

May compassion surround you.

Laying on of Hands

The minister lays a hand on the head, shoulder, or hand, or extends hands if touch is not appropriate.

Minister:

N., may you be strengthened in dignity, accompanied in suffering, and held in tenderness by this community.

Anointing

The minister anoints the forehead and hands, or another suitable place. The formula may be repeated for each anointing.

Minister:

N., with this oil, be surrounded by comfort, dignity, courage, and care.

Amen.

Prayer After Anointing

Minister:

May fear be met with presence, pain with tenderness, loneliness with companionship, and uncertainty with courage. May those who care for N. be patient, skilled, and compassionate.

Amen.

Optional Communion

If Communion is given, the minister uses the approved formula: The bread of shared life. The cup of memory and solidarity.

For the Dying

If the person is near death, the rite is simplified. Touch should be gentle and words few.

Minister:

N., your life is held in memory and dignity. May those who love you be strengthened. May your passage be surrounded by tenderness and peace.

Register

Record the name, date, minister, location, and pastoral circumstances in a confidential pastoral register where appropriate.

Part VIII - The Rite of Matrimony

Theology

Matrimony is the public covenant of love, fidelity, equality, mutual care, shared household life, responsibility, and the work of daily reconciliation. The rite celebrates a human covenant before witnesses and the Church. It is inclusive according to civil law and church discipline.

Preparation

The couple must comply with civil marriage law where the rite is intended to accompany civil marriage. The minister should meet with the couple beforehand for pastoral preparation, discussion of consent, household life, finances, conflict, fidelity, and community support.

Entrance and Greeting

The couple may enter together, with attendants, or from the assembly. The minister stands at the place of celebration.

Minister:

We gather to witness the covenant of N. and N., who come freely to join their lives in love, fidelity, equality, and mutual care.

Reading

Reader:

A reading from the wisdom of covenant.

Love is not only feeling. It is patience practiced, fidelity chosen, truth spoken, repair attempted, burdens shared, joy celebrated, and a household made safe for tenderness and growth.

Questions Before Consent

Minister:

N. and N., have you come here freely and without coercion to enter this covenant?

We have.

Minister:

Will you honor one another as equals and protect the dignity of one another in public and private life?

We will.

Minister:

Will you practice fidelity, patience, truthfulness, forgiveness where possible, and mutual care?

We will.

Consent

The couple face one another and join hands. Each says the vow in turn.

Partner A:

I, N., take you, N., to be my spouse. I promise to love you, honor you, remain faithful to you, share household life with you, speak truthfully, seek repair when I fail, and walk with you in joy and sorrow, strength and weakness, all the days of our life together.

Partner B:

I, N., take you, N., to be my spouse. I promise to love you, honor you, remain faithful to you, share household life with you, speak truthfully, seek repair when I fail, and walk with you in joy and sorrow, strength and weakness, all the days of our life together.

Exchange of Rings

The rings are presented. The minister may say the following over them.

Minister:

These rings are signs of covenant, fidelity, and the circle of daily care. May those who wear them remember the promises made today.

Partner A:

N., receive this ring as a sign of my love, fidelity, and shared life.

Partner B:

N., receive this ring as a sign of my love, fidelity, and shared life.

Declaration

Minister:

Before this community and these witnesses, you have given yourselves to one another by solemn vows. I recognize and proclaim your covenant of Matrimony in the Humanistic Catholic Church.

Prayer of the Community

Minister:

May this household be a place of tenderness, truth, patience, laughter, forgiveness, and hospitality. May this covenant strengthen the community, and may the community support this covenant.

Amen.

Signing and Register

Where civil law requires, civil documents are signed. The church register records names, date, place, witnesses, minister, civil status as applicable, and certificate issuance.

Part IX - Holy Orders

Theology of Holy Orders

Holy Orders set apart deacons, priests, and bishops for service, ritual leadership, pastoral care, teaching, governance, and preservation of the ceremonial life of the Church. Ordination is not a supernatural change of essence. It is a solemn ecclesial act of recognition, appointment, authorization, and responsibility.

General Rubrics

Ordinations normally take place within Mass. The bishop is the ordinary minister. Red or gold vestments are used. The candidates are presented after the readings and homily. The people may stand during the promises and sit during the examination and address.

Common Presentation

Presenter:

Bishop, the Church presents N. for ordination to the order of deacon/priest/bishop.

Bishop:

Has the candidate been prepared and found suitable according to the discipline of the Humanistic Catholic Church?

Presenter:

The candidate has been prepared and found suitable.

Bishop:

Relying on the judgment of those responsible for formation and the needs of the Church, we receive this candidate for ordination.

Common Promises

Bishop:

Will you serve the human family with dignity, humility, and compassion?

I will.

Bishop:

Will you preserve the rites of this Church: Catholic in form, humanistic in meaning?

I will.

Bishop:

Will you avoid all abuse of office, all coercion of conscience, and all exploitation of the vulnerable?

I will.

Bishop:

Will you obey the lawful discipline of the Humanistic Catholic Church and the pastoral direction of those set over you?

I will.

Litany of Service

Leader:

For courage in service:

Strengthen this minister in dignity and compassion.

Leader:

For truth in teaching:

Strengthen this minister in dignity and compassion.

Leader:

For humility in leadership:

Strengthen this minister in dignity and compassion.

Ordination of a Deacon

Examination

Bishop:

A deacon is ordained for service, assistance at the altar, proclamation of readings, care for the vulnerable, and works of charity. Will you serve in these ways?

I will.

Bishop:

Will you assist priests and bishops, care for the poor and excluded, and call the Church to practical compassion?

I will.

Laying on of Hands

The candidate kneels. The bishop lays hands on the head in silence.

Ordination Formula

Bishop:

N., by the authority of the Humanistic Catholic Church, I ordain you deacon: a minister of service, table, word, charity, and public compassion.

Amen.

Vesting and Presentation

The new deacon is vested with stole and dalmatic, if available. The Book of Rites or Gospel-style ethical readings may be presented.

Bishop:

Receive the book of the Church. Proclaim wisdom, serve the table, and care for the vulnerable.

Kiss or Sign of Peace

The bishop and clergy offer a sign of peace.

Ordination of a Priest

Examination

Bishop:

A priest is ordained for sacramental leadership, pastoral care, teaching, preaching, reconciliation, anointing, blessing, and presiding at the table. Will you undertake this office with humility and discipline?

I will.

Bishop:

Will you preside at the Mass and sacraments according to the rites of this Church, without adding deity-language or supernatural claims?

I will.

Laying on of Hands

The candidate kneels. The bishop lays hands in silence. Priests present may also lay hands in silence after the bishop.

Ordination Formula

Bishop:

N., by the authority of the Humanistic Catholic Church, I ordain you priest: a minister of the table, sacraments, pastoral care, teaching, reconciliation, and blessing.

Amen.

Vesting and Anointing

The new priest is vested with stole and chasuble. Hands may be anointed with oil as a sign of service and tenderness.

Bishop:

May your hands serve the table, comfort the suffering, bless the community, and repair what is broken.

Presentation of Bread and Cup

Bishop:

Receive the bread and cup of the community. Preside with dignity, compassion, and truth.

Ordination of a Bishop

Examination

Presiding Bishop or Principal Consecrator:

A bishop is ordained for oversight, unity, teaching, governance, ordination, discipline, and preservation of the Church ceremonial life. Will you accept this responsibility?

I will.

Principal Consecrator:

Will you guard the identity of the Church: Traditional Form, Humanistic Substance?

I will.

Principal Consecrator:

Will you protect the vulnerable, discipline clergy justly, establish parishes and missions wisely, and serve without arrogance?

I will.

Laying on of Hands

The candidate kneels. The principal consecrator lays hands in silence. Other bishops, if present, lay hands in silence.

Ordination Formula

Principal Consecrator:

N., by the authority of the Humanistic Catholic Church, I ordain you bishop: a guardian of unity, a minister of oversight, a teacher of humanistic Catholicism, and a steward of the Church rites, clergy, and mission.

Amen.

Investiture

The new bishop may receive the ring, mitre, crozier, pectoral cross, and book of rites. Each is interpreted humanistically.

Consecrator:

Receive the ring as a sign of fidelity to the Church and its people.

Consecrator:

Receive the mitre as a sign of disciplined thought and public responsibility.

Consecrator:

Receive the crozier as a sign of pastoral care, oversight, and service.

Seating and Peace

The new bishop may be seated in the chair and receive the sign of peace. The Mass continues with the preparation of the table.

Registers and Letters

All ordinations are entered in the central register with candidate name, order, date, place, ordaining bishop, assisting ministers, mandate or authorization, and certificate number.

Part X - Blessings, Registers, Certificates, and Appendices

General Rite of Blessing

A blessing is a ceremonial dedication of a person, place, object, meal, journey, ministry, animal, home, or moment to dignity, care, compassion, memory, and ethical purpose. A blessing does not call down supernatural power; it publicly names meaning and responsibility.

The minister may wear alb and stole. Holy water, candle, or incense may be used according to context.

Minister:

Peace be with this place/person/object and all who are connected to it.

People:

May dignity and compassion be strengthened here.

Minister:

We set apart this moment for memory, care, and responsible use. May what is blessed serve life, protect dignity, and deepen community.

Amen.

Blessing of a Home

Minister:

May this home be a place of safety, hospitality, honesty, rest, laughter, forgiveness, and mutual care. May those who enter find welcome, and those who dwell here practice patience and peace.

Amen.

Blessing of a Meal

Minister:

We give thanks for food, earth, labor, hands, table, and companionship. May this meal strengthen us for compassion and remind us of those who hunger.

Amen.

Blessing of Animals

Minister:

We honor the lives of these creatures and the companionship they give. May they be treated with gentleness, protection, and care.

Amen.

Blessing of Ministry

Minister:

N., receive this ministry as a trust. Serve with humility, honesty, diligence, and compassion. Let your work protect dignity and build community.

Amen.

Registers Required

Register	Minimum Contents
Baptism	Name, date, place, minister, parents/sponsors if any, parish/mission, certificate number.
Confirmation	Name, date, place, minister, sponsor, parish/mission, certificate number.
Eucharist	First communion or public reception if tracked; date, place, minister, parish/mission.
Reconciliation	No content of confession. Statistical or pastoral note only where permitted.
Anointing	Name, date, place, minister, pastoral circumstance, confidentiality level.
Matrimony	Names, date, place, minister, witnesses, civil status if applicable, certificate number.
Holy Orders	Name, order, date, place, ordaining bishop, mandate, witnesses, certificate number.
Membership	Name, contact, status, parish/mission, reception date, active/inactive status.

Certificates

Certificates may be issued for Baptism, Confirmation, First Communion, Matrimony, Holy Orders, Lay Ministry, Membership, Good Standing, Transfer, Reception, and Special Blessings. Certificates should carry the church seal, the signature of the authorized minister or Presiding Bishop, the date, register number, and parish or mission name.

Safeguarding Rubrics

- No rite may be used to coerce, humiliate, exploit, or control a person.
- Consent must be honored in touch, anointing, photography, publication, and online participation.
- Children and vulnerable adults are protected by church policy and applicable law.
- Clergy must never use confession, counseling, anointing, spiritual direction, or sacramental preparation for sexual, financial, emotional, or institutional exploitation.
- Mandatory reporting laws must be followed.

Online and Remote Ministry

The Church may provide online pastoral care, teaching, catechesis, blessings, prayerful reflection, and certain rites where authorized. Baptism ordinarily requires water physically applied to the candidate by an authorized minister or in emergency by a delegated person. Communion may be provided according to the discipline of the Presiding Bishop. Ordinations by secure two-way video require explicit authorization and proper recordkeeping.

Appendix A - Approved Non-Theistic Readings

Reading I - Human Dignity

Every person is born into the human family with worth that cannot be erased by poverty, failure, shame, prison, sickness, exclusion, doubt, or unbelief. A community becomes just when it recognizes dignity not as a reward but as the foundation of moral life.

Reading II - Compassion

Compassion is not sentiment alone. It is the decision to notice suffering, to draw near, to bear cost, and to respond with care. A merciful person does not ask first whether the wounded deserve help, but whether help can be given.

Reading III - Moral Repair

Truth is the beginning of repair. No community can heal where harm is hidden, denied, excused, or made invisible. To confess is to come into the light of responsibility and begin the work of restoration.

Reading IV - Table Fellowship

Bread is never only bread. It carries the work of hands, the patience of fields, the hunger of bodies, and the possibility of welcome. A table becomes solemn in the human sense when it refuses contempt and makes room for the stranger.

Reading V - Creation

Water cleanses. Bread nourishes. Oil strengthens. Fire gives light. Breath carries song. Bodies remember what words alone cannot hold. Creation is the ground beneath our feet, the air in our lungs, and the life we share.

Gospel-Style Ethical Reading - The Neighbor

A wounded person lay beside the road. Some saw and passed by. A stranger drew near, treated the wounds, carried the wounded one to shelter, and provided care. Which one became neighbor? The one who showed mercy. Go and do likewise.

Appendix B - Short Formulae

Baptism

N., I baptize you into the Humanistic Catholic Church: into dignity, into community, and into the shared life of the human family.

Confirmation

N., be confirmed in dignity, conscience, courage, and belonging.

Communion

The bread of shared life. Amen. The cup of memory and solidarity. Amen.

Reconciliation

Walk now in courage. Repair what you can. Seek peace where peace is possible. Return to the community in honesty and responsibility.

Anointing

N., with this oil, be surrounded by comfort, dignity, courage, and care.

Matrimony

Before this community and these witnesses, you have given yourselves to one another by solemn vows. I recognize and proclaim your covenant of Matrimony in the Humanistic Catholic Church.

Holy Orders

N., by the authority of the Humanistic Catholic Church, I ordain you to the order of deacon/priest/bishop, for service, ritual leadership, pastoral care, teaching, governance, and the preservation of the Church ceremonial life.

Final Rule

These rites are to be celebrated as Catholic in external form and humanistic in meaning. No minister may alter them to include deity-language, supernatural invocation, or claims of supernatural transformation without invalidating the official humanistic use of the rite.

End of the Humanistic Catholic Book of Rites - Rubrical Edition