



ARCHDIOCESE OF PORTLAND IN OREGON
OFFICE OF DIVINE WORSHIP

To: Pastors and Administrators
From: Office of Divine Worship
Re: Blessings during the Distribution of Holy Communion
Date: 11th February 2019

Archbishop Sample understands that the practice of blessings during the distribution of Holy Communion has been a concern to many of you in recent times, especially with the diversity of practices not only between parishes but between ministers in individual parishes.

The Presbyteral Council has discussed this topic over the last year and deliberated over the concerns and issues which surround this practice, understanding that the Church's liturgy does not provide for such a blessing at this time, and yet wanting to offer a pastoral solution which will be uniform across the Archdiocese.

The Archbishop has asked this office to communicate to you the decision of the Presbyteral Council concerning the issue of blessings during the distribution of Holy Communion.

The solution agreed upon was that when a member of the faithful approaches a minister (ordinary or extraordinary) indicating that they will not be receiving Holy Communion, the minister is to say to them “**May Christ be with you or Cristo esté contigo.**” There should be no gesture, just the words as given. It is unadvisable for ministers to touch the person in any way. All the faithful are encouraged to make a sign of reverence as they approach the Blessed Sacrament even if not receiving, in the United States this has been determined to be a bow of the head. [GIRM 160]

Pastors and administrators are asked to implement this new approach within a time scale they see fit, through a brief catechesis to the faithful and the appropriate training for deacons and extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion.

By following this new procedure it is hoped that this consistent approach will be reassuring to the faithful who do not receive Holy Communion and eliminate any confusion experienced by the ministers of Holy Communion.