



# NORMS FOR THE DISTRIBUTION AND RECEPTION OF HOLY COMMUNION UNDER BOTH SPECIES IN THE DIOCESE OF MADISON

Diocese of Madison

June 10, 2007

The Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ

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It is most desirable that the faithful, just as the priest himself is bound to do, receive the Lord's Body from hosts consecrated at the same Mass and that, in the instances when it is permitted, they partake of the chalice, so that even by means of the signs Communion will stand out more clearly as a participation in the sacrifice actually being celebrated (*General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, 85).

The Diocesan Bishop may establish norms for Communion under both kinds for his own diocese, which are also to be observed in churches of religious and at celebrations with small groups. The Diocesan Bishop is also given the faculty to permit Communion under both kinds whenever it may seem appropriate to the priest to whom, as its own shepherd, a community has been entrusted, provided that the faithful have been well instructed and there is no danger of profanation of the Sacrament or of the rite's becoming difficult because of the large number of participants or some other reason (*General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, 85).

Christ is fully and completely present in both the consecrated host and the consecrated wine at Mass. Still, there is a clear desire on the part of the Church for the Catholic faithful to receive Communion under both forms to more clearly show the intimate link between the Eucharistic sacrifice and Eucharistic meal and to more closely follow the Lord's command to "take and eat, take and drink." These norms for the Diocese of Madison have been developed in conformity with *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, *Sacramentum Caritatis*, and the *Norms for the Distribution and Reception of Holy Communion in the Dioceses of the United States of America*. They are intended to ensure that the distribution of Holy Communion take place in a reverent manner.

## **When may Communion be given under both forms?**

If the pastor determines that the distribution and reception of Holy Communion under both species can take place in a reverent manner and that there is absolutely no danger of profanation, he has the authority to permit it at parish Masses, including (but not limited to) the following:

- Sunday, weekday and holy day Masses
- Weddings and funerals
- Other Ritual Masses (for example, Confirmation)
- School and religious education Masses

The pastor is not obligated to distribute Communion under both forms.

## **When may Communion not be given under both forms?**

Communion under both forms may not be given without the expressed permission of the Bishop or Vicar General in the following circumstances:

- When Mass is celebrated outdoors
- When Mass is celebrated in a hotel ballroom, convention center, gymnasium, or some other public building
- In other places where it may be difficult to ensure the reverent reception of the Precious Blood

## **What is the proper posture for receiving Communion?**

“The norm for reception of Holy Communion in the dioceses of the United States is standing. Communicants should not be denied Holy Communion because they kneel. Rather, such instances should be addressed pastorally, by providing the faithful with proper catechesis on the reasons for this norm...The consecrated host may be received either on the tongue or in the hand, at the discretion of each communicant” (*General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, 160).

## **The Gesture of Reverence (Bowing)**

“When receiving Holy Communion, the communicant bows his or her head before the Sacrament as a gesture of reverence and receives the Body of the Lord from the minister...When Holy Communion is received under both kinds, the sign of reverence is also made before receiving the Precious Blood” (*General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, 160).

There is no need for this gesture to be rushed. Communicants should be encouraged to bow as they are standing before the Sacrament, rather than at an earlier time (for example, when the person in front of them is receiving Communion).

## **Who may assist the priest in the distribution of Holy Communion?**

“The priest may be assisted in the distribution of Communion by other priests [and deacons] who happen to be present. If such priests are not present and there is a very large number of communicants, the priest may call upon extraordinary ministers to assist him, e.g., duly instituted acolytes or even other faithful who have been deputed for this purpose. In case of necessity, the priest may depute suitable faithful for this single occasion” (*General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, 162).

When using Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, the Norms issued by the Diocese of Madison are to be followed.