



My dear friends in Christ,

I would like to take a moment to offer a refresher on the reception of Holy Communion. I will cover this in more detail in about five months when we get to Corpus Christi weekend, but there have been a few concerning practices that have presented themselves lately that makes it necessary to cover a few items now. How we handle objects says a lot about how we regard them. When looking at fine jewelry, for example, we are mindful to handle the gems carefully. When observing fine works of art, we don't even touch them at all. When we hold a baby or hug a loved one, we do so gently and with care. The things we handle carefully are usually the things we hold in high esteem.

When it comes to the Holy Eucharist, the living sacramental presence of Jesus Christ, this should be true all the more. Because we believe that Jesus Christ is truly present in the Eucharist—body, blood soul and divinity—we reserve the Eucharist in a secure tabernacle, constructed of the finest materials available. We situate the tabernacle in a place of honor in the Church, usually in the center of the sanctuary, and we genuflect before it.

To reverence our Lord's sacramental presence, we use chalices and patens for the celebration of the Eucharist, not ordinary dishes. We call these "sacred vessels." Made of precious metal, they are set aside for sacred use only. Priests and deacons wear beautiful vestments during the celebration of the Eucharist and most of us, out of respect for our Lord, put on our "Sunday best" when we head to Mass. When we receive our Lord in Holy Communion, we should receive him in the way we encounter a loved one: with reverence, care, gentleness and humility.

If you choose to receive on the Tongue: (during the pandemic, we ask you to come up at the end of the procession—this request will end when the pandemic ends). Open your mouth and extend your tongue so that the host does not fall. The host will be placed on your tongue. Close your mouth and consume the Eucharistic Host while thinking of the sacrifice made.

If you wish to have the host handed to you, hold out your hands, left on top of right. Do not take the host from the priest, but rather allow them to place it in your hand. When you approach the priest, he will proclaim "the Body of Christ." You proclaim your faith, both in word and in a gesture, as you say "Amen." (meaning I believe it!) You also bow as a way of showing your respect and faith.

You must consume the Body of Christ before leaving the Communion station. It is the duty of the priest to ensure that the Eucharist is properly respected. Only those who have been preauthorized to have a pyx may take the Eucharist from the communion station.

God bless,

Fr. Vince