Celiac Disease and Obtaining Low-Gluten Hosts

Celiac disease is an immune reaction to eating gluten, a protein found in wheat, barley, and rye. For those with the disease, eating gluten triggers an immune response in the small intestine. Over time, this immune reaction damages the small intestine's lining and hinders absorption of some nutrients. The intestinal damage often causes stomach pain, diarrhea, and weight loss, and can lead to serious complications.

Given the serious health risk for those suffering gluten intolerance, it is important for pastors and other Church leaders not only to be aware of this reality, but also to be prepared to address the situation of Catholics with celiac disease who come to parishes and seek to receive Holy Communion in a safe, sensitive, and compassionate manner.

In the dioceses of the United States, there are four approved distributors of low-gluten hosts. Please note the gluten content for each distributor:

1. Benedictine Sisters of Perpetual Adoration
   Altar Breads Department
   31970 State Highway P
   Clyde, MO 64432-8100
   Phone: (800) 223-2772
   Web: www.BenedictineSisters.org
   Gluten Content: 0.01%

2. Parish Crossroads
   P.O. Box 64
   Zionsville, IN 46077-0084
   Phone: (800) 510-8842
   Web: www.ParishCrossroads.com
   Gluten Content: 0.0016%

   100 Buckley Road
   Liverpool, NY 13088
   Phone: (800) 668-7324 ext. 1
   Web: www.GlutenFreeHosts.com
   Gluten Content: 0.002%

4. Cavanagh Company
   610 Putnam Pike
   Greenville, RI 02828
   Phone: (800) 635-0568
   Web: www.CavanaghCo.com
   Gluten Content: 0.00046%