

From the Desk of Fr. Jerry

November 24, 2024

Dear Friends,

The Church wants to ensure that the Eucharist is always handled with the utmost care and reverence. For that reason, our parish extraordinary ministers of communion at Mass and ministers of care to the homebound participated in a workshop on Saturday, November 9th. Anticipating some imminent changes, procedures were discussed and reviewed. Just as the ministers of communion show care and reverence for the Eucharist, so must each one approaching the altar for the Eucharist strive for care and reverence.

Some reminders:

We should arrive in time for Mass and not leave before the Mass is concluded.

It is proper to genuflect to the tabernacle upon entering church and bow to the altar.

We should fast from food or drink (except water and necessary medicine) for 1 hour before communion.

In the United States, the posture for holy communion is standing.

Communicants approaching the minister make a sight bow of reverence.

The minister elevates the host saying, "The Body of Christ." Your response is "Amen."

The host can be placed in the hand or on the tongue. That the preference of the communicant be clearly shown is critically important. This means extending the hand or tongue to make the preference obvious.

Usually, the left hand is placed on top of the right hand to create a "throne" onto which the minister places the host. A right-handed person then immediately places the host in his/her own mouth. The hands may be reversed if you are left-handed.

When a person receives on the tongue, care must be taken so that the fingers of the minister do not touch the tongue of the communicant. Please open your mouth widely and fully extend the tongue.

It is never appropriate to snatch the host from the minister using your thumb and forefinger. We receive the eucharist, we do not grab it.

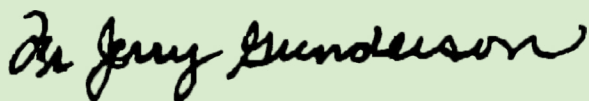
The Sacred Body should be immediately consumed while still facing the altar. It is not appropriate to take the consecrated host back to your place.

It is also not appropriate for a minister of care to ask the communion minister to place a host in a pyx for a homebound person. This interrupts one's own communion. Rather, the pyx can be placed on the altar and picked up after Mass, or the minister of care could approach the tabernacle to obtain the consecrated host after Mass.

Holy Communion has a fuller form as a sign when it takes place under both kinds. We will slowly reintroduce communion from the cup beginning December 1, the First Sunday of Advent. In the beginning, the Precious Blood will be offered to communicants only at the 5 PM and 10:00 AM Masses. More in coming weeks...

Low gluten hosts for those who have celiac disease are available in the vesting sacristy. The procedure is for the communicant to ask the priest for the low gluten host to be placed in a separate pyx and brought forward with the gifts.

In the spirit of the Eucharistic Revival, I will continue reviewing procedures for Holy Communion in the coming weeks.



Fr. Jerry Gunderson