

# **The Reception of Holy Communion at Mass**

## The Return of Receiving the Precious Blood of the Risen Lord from the Chalice

On June 10, 2022, Bishop Robert Gruss granted permission for all the parishes and Catholic institutions throughout the Diocese of Saginaw to return the normative practice of receiving the Precious Blood of the Risen Lord from the Chalice at Mass (after a two-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 Pandemic). "While the heart of the celebration of the Eucharist is the Eucharistic Prayer, the consummation of the Mass is found in Holy Communion" (*General Instruction of the Roman Missal, #5*). To the best of their ability, parishes should return to offering both the Body and Blood of Christ (both species) at celebrations of the Eucharist on Sundays, Holy Days, and week days when it is appropriate and can be accomplished with reverence and dignity.

### **Six Frequently Asked Questions**

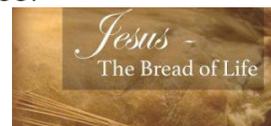
#### **about Receiving the Precious Blood from the Chalice**

*References: General Instruction of the Roman Missal = GIRM ~ Norms for the Distribution of Holy Communion Under Both Kinds = NDHC- from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, DC*

1. Is receiving from the Chalice a common practice? From the first days of the Church's celebration of the Eucharist, Holy Communion consisted of the reception of both species in fulfillment of the Lord's command to "take and eat ... take and drink." The practice continued until the late 11<sup>th</sup> century when the custom of only receiving the bread began to grow. In 1415, it was decreed that Holy Communion under the form of bread alone would be distributed only. The Fathers of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vatican Council restored Holy Communion under

both kinds and became allowed in 1970. (*NDHC #17-18*).

2. Is it safe to receive from the Chalice? The risk for infectious disease transmission by a common Communion chalice is considered low when appropriate safeguards – that is wiping the interior and exterior rim and rotating the cup – are maintained. As always, if a person is not feeling well, they should refrain from receiving from the chalice.



3. Do I have to receive from the Chalice? The opportunity to receive the Precious Blood from the chalice always remains the choice of the communicant as an option and is not a requirement. (*GIRM #284 – NDHC #46*).

4. If I receive the Consecrated Host only and not from the Chalice is my reception of Holy Communion full and complete? "The real presence of Christ in the eucharistic elements – whole and entire – is in each element of consecrated bread and wine" (*NDHC, #25*). The doctrine of concomitance states that since Christ is indivisible, no part of Christ's substance can be divided. Thus, Christ's body cannot be separated from his blood, which means that Christ's full presence is in each element fully.

5. Can't I just "dip" the Consecrated Host into the Precious Blood? The normative way to receive the Precious Blood of the Lord is by taking a sip from the Chalice. The practice of "Intinction" (*dipping the Body of Christ into the Blood of Christ*) is not the ordinary way of receiving. Likewise, individuals are not permitted to intinct on their own. It must always be done by a minister. Furthermore, to receive in this way also eliminates the option to receive in the hand. (*GIRM #287 – NDHC #49-50*).

6. Why can't we use individual cups? The Lord himself gave us the Eucharist at the Last Supper and it is

directed toward the intimate union of the faithful with Christ through "Communion". The practice of sharing a chalice mirrors and remains more faithful to the command and action of the Lord at the Last Supper. (*NDHC #6*).



***May the receiving of your Body and Blood, Lord Jesus Christ, not bring me to judgement and condemnation, but through your loving mercy be for me protection of mind and body and a healing remedy.***

[Priest's prayer before reception of Holy Communion – *Roman Missal III*]

Provided by the Office of Liturgy  
Diocese of Saginaw

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