

Receiving Holy Communion on the tongue

Make your choice of this clear to the priest or minister by opening your mouth and extending your tongue. In this way the Body of Christ can easily be placed on the tongue.



If a person is not fully initiated into the Church and therefore not able to receive Holy Communion, he or she may join the Communion procession. On reaching the priest this person indicates by crossing arms across the chest that they are not able to participate in receiving Holy Communion but would like a short blessing.

Receiving Holy Communion from the Chalice

The Church encourages us to receive Communion "under both kinds," that is, by receiving Christ in the consecrated bread and the consecrated wine.

Although we are encouraged to receive under both kinds, naturally we would refrain from taking the chalice when we have a cold, cold sore or any other infectious disease. The Church teaches very clearly that Christ, whole and entire, is received under either species and that those who receive under only one species are not deprived of any of the grace that is necessary for salvation. (GIRM, 282)

To receive Communion from the chalice, we approach the minister who will raise the chalice a little and say, "The Blood of Christ" to which we respond, "Amen."

We then take the chalice in both hands, take a small sip of the Blood of Christ, hand the chalice back to the minister and return to our seat.

We do not administer Holy Communion to ourselves. That is the serving role of the minister. For this reason, and for reasons of hygiene, communicants are not permitted to dip the sacred Host into the chalice (intinction).

Intinction may be administered only by the priest. This is rarely done as it deprives the Communicant of the choice of receiving Holy Communion in the hand. (Australian Bishops, 1986)



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Reception of Holy Communion



Catholic Diocese of Wollongong

Introduction

From ancient times the Church has taught that the Mass is the source and summit of the Christian life. As the Church we gather to:

- hear the Word of God in Scripture,
- celebrate the sacrament of Christ's sacrifice
- be nourished by the Body and Blood of the Lord as we eat the Bread of Life and drink the Cup of Salvation
- be sent forth as witnesses to love and serve the Lord in daily life.

The Reception of Holy Communion

Through receiving Holy Communion properly disposed, we take part more fully in the celebration of the Mass.

The Communion Procession

While we are familiar with the Entrance Procession, the procession of the gifts and the Gospel Procession, we are not always conscious of the significance of the Communion Procession.

The Communion Procession is not simply about getting up out of one's seat, walking to the minister, receiving Communion and walking back to one's seat and sitting down again.

The Communion Procession is:

- a procession accompanied by song which is to express unity in spirit by means of unity in song and to show joy of heart (*General Instruction of the Roman Missal* [GIRM], 86)
- a communal action and not simply a private, individual action (GIRM, 86)

- a visible sign of reverence. It is through the action of walking solemnly in procession that we show reverence for what we are about to receive.

When we come forward to receive Holy Communion we are not lining up as isolated individuals ... we come forward together as the Body of Christ to receive the Body of Christ. We receive the Body of Christ so that we together may be more truly the Body of Christ in the world.

If then you are the Body of Christ and its members, it is your own mystery that you receive... you say Amen to what you are and in saying Amen you subscribe to it. Be a member of Christ's Body then, so that your Amen may ring true!

St Augustine, Sermon 272

Ways of receiving Holy Communion

"Holy Communion has a fuller form as a sign when it is distributed under both kinds." (GIRM, 281) The symbolism of Holy Communion is more evident when it is received under both species. We are more clearly following Jesus' command to take and eat and to take and drink. (Mt 26:26-27)

a. Posture

The Bishops of Australia have retained the ancient custom of **standing** as the normal posture to receive Holy Communion. (GIRM, 160) They have also determined that the sign of reverence prior to receiving the Body of Christ will be a bow. "When approaching to receive Holy Communion the faithful bow in reverence of the Mystery that they are to receive." (GIRM, 160) The bow should not interrupt the distribution of Holy Communion.

b. Reception of the Body of Christ

We may receive the sacred Host either in the hand or on the tongue.

Receiving Holy Communion in the hand

Receiving Holy Communion in the hand goes back to the early Church. By the 4th century, St Cyril of Jerusalem urged his faithful to make their hands "a throne for their King."

If we receive Communion in the hand, we extend our hands to the priest (or Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion) with one hand placed on top of the other.



The minister raises the Host a little and says, "The Body of Christ." We answer, "Amen."

The minister places the sacred Host on our uppermost hand; we step aside and then immediately take the Host with the other hand and place it in our mouth.

