

**DIOCESE OF GALLUP
SACRAMENTAL GUIDELINES
EUCHARIST**

A. THEOLOGICAL AND CANONICAL MEANING



The Eucharist is the most august sacrament, in which Christ himself is contained, offered and received and by which the Church constantly lives and grows. The Eucharistic Sacrifice, the memorial of the death and resurrection of the Lord, in which the sacrifice of the cross is perpetuated over the centuries, is the summit and source of all Christian life and worship,. it signifies and effects the unity of the people of God and achieves the building up of the Body of Christ. The other sacraments and all ecclesial apostolic works are closely related to the Eucharist and are directed to it (Vatican II Sacrosanctum concilium, no.10, 47 and Lumen Gentium, n. 11: Christian Initiation, General Introduction, n.2; c897).

B. CENTRALITY OF EUCHARIST

Since the celebration of the Mass is for the universal and the local Church as well as for each person, the center of the whole Christian life (General Instruction of the Roman Missal, # 1), care must be taken that the Eucharist remain a primary focus in the life of the community. This can be accomplished through careful preparation for the celebration of the Eucharist, adequate formation and training of all who participate as well as the scheduling of Masses at times appropriate to the needs of the community.

Priests and all who exercise a liturgical role should be familiar with the rites and documents that pertain to their role. The parish liturgy committee should work in collaboration with the pastoral leadership of the parish/institution, including priests, musicians and liturgy directors, to assure effective preparation for the celebration of Eucharist and the feasts and seasons of the Church Year.

Appropriate formation of the worshipping assembly should take place on a regular basis. Opportunities for enrichment can be scheduled so that the assembly's understanding and appreciation of liturgy may be updated and deepened.

At every Mass, the full complement of liturgical ministers should be present so that the needs of the assembly can be fulfilled. The effectiveness of worship is greatly dependent upon the prayerfulness and the skill which these ministers bring to their particular role.

Those who serve as liturgical ministers are to be trained in an understanding of the Eucharist, the nature of ministry as well as the practical aspects of the specific ministry .

C. THE MINISTER OF THE EUCHARIST

The ordinary minister of the Eucharist is a bishop, priest or deacon. When such ministers are not sufficient, lay persons may be designated to distribute Communion to the faithful (cc. 910,230.3).

D. RECEPTION OF THE FIRST EUCHARIST

As children reach the use of reason, generally around age seven, the Church extends to them an invitation to celebrate the Sacrament of Eucharist, the Bread of Life and Cup of Salvation. The initiation into the Christian community that took place at baptism now is further extended by inviting children to enter fully into the heart of Christian faith through participation in the Eucharist. It is often the responsibility of the Director of Religious Education and/or Principal to set up programs for parents and children preparing for First Eucharist.

While it is the domain of the pastor to properly prepare his parishioners for the reception of the sacraments, he may ask the Catholic School attended by his parishioners, to assist him in the catechetical preparation of candidates for the sacraments. In the event that the Catholic School provides the catechesis for the sacrament to the candidate, the spiritual formation designed to enhance the candidate's readiness for the sacrament and the catechesis formation of the parents remains the responsibility of the parish, not the Catholic School. The proper place for candidates to receive sacraments is in the parish to which they and their family are registered. For some reason, if a candidate wishes to be initiated into a sacrament in a parish other than his proper parish, the written permission of his pastor is necessary .

Canonical Considerations

Children who have sufficient understanding and careful preparation to appreciate the nature of the sacrament and to receive it with faith and devotion, may receive the sacrament of the Eucharist. In cases of danger of death only the minimal requirements of ability to distinguish the Eucharist from ordinary food and to receive it reverently are required. Parents or guardians share with pastors the responsibility to see that upon reaching the age of reason, children are properly prepared and receive the sacrament of the Eucharist as early as possible. Preparation will include proper catechesis regarding and preparation for the sacrament of reconciliation which normally precedes the celebration of Eucharist (c. 914). Anyone who is conscious of serious sin is not to receive the Eucharist without first celebrating the sacrament of reconciliation unless a grave reason stands in the way of such sacramental reconciliation (c. 916). Once admitted to Eucharist, the faithful are obliged to receive Communion at least once a year(c.920.1).

E. TIME AND PLACE OF CELEBRATION FOR FIRST EUCHARIST

Since Eucharist is one of the three sacraments of Christian Initiation, the Easter season is the most appropriate liturgical time for celebrating First Eucharist.

A child's celebration of First Eucharist is to take place at Sunday Liturgy in the parish church which provides the context of the worshipping community. The celebration is to involve the parish community. First Eucharist celebrations should be avoided during the season of Lent.

F. HOW TO CELEBRATE FIRST EUCHARIST

Within the community setting, a variety of options can be provided by each parish. Common options include:

- 1) family centered celebrations at a Sunday liturgy which help emphasize that it is in the family that children find nourishment in Christian Life;
- 2) parish group celebrations at a Sunday liturgy which witness to the communal nature of the Eucharist

First Eucharist celebrations should be prayerful and simple. The focus is welcoming children to the Lord's table. Excessive attention to external elements such as clothes, decorations and material gifts is to be de-emphasized.

At the time of the first reception of Eucharist, ordinary communion under both species is to be provided. This represents a fuller sign of the sacrament. The choice of the reverent reception of the Eucharistic bread alone or bread and wine are to be provided.

G. READINESS FOR THE CELEBRATION OF FIRST EUCHARIST

Adequate spiritual and catechetical formation is to be provided so that children, according to their age and capacity, have sufficient knowledge and appreciation of the sacrament they are to receive. Readiness is evidenced by the child's desire to receive the Eucharist, the ability to distinguish ordinary bread and wine from the Eucharist, an understanding of the mystery of Christ, and an ability to receive Communion with faith and devotion (c. 913). It is also important that the child have a familiarity with and basic understanding of the Eucharistic Liturgy and recognize the communal nature of the sacrament.

It is such readiness, rather than whether a child should receive Eucharist at a specific age, which appears to be the crucial factor in determining readiness. This readiness is reflected by the children's relationship with Christ, understanding of the mystery of the Eucharist,

and an appreciation of their personal involvement in the life and ministry of the Church, insofar as that is possible. It is to be expected that children will respond to these aspects in away that is appropriate to their stage of development.

The principle of individual readiness must be respected. Theological tradition in the Catholic Church emphasizes that the reception of any sacrament may be neither forced upon nor refused to those suitably prepared for it. In practice, this means that not all children may be ready for a sacrament at the same time.

The responsibility to determine an individual child's readiness to receive the Sacrament of Eucharist for the first time belongs to the parents, catechists and parish priest.

It is appropriate for the parish priests or pastoral staff members to conduct a brief interview with each child and his or her parent(s), prior to reception of First Eucharist.

Such an opportunity can provide the parish priests or staff member with time to speak with the child and the family about the special presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. It also provides an opportunity to observe the child's use of reason, readiness and disposition to receive Eucharist.

Children who have not reached the use of reason and/or are judged to be insufficiently disposed, are not to receive Eucharist (c. 914).

An explicit invitation is to be made annually to celebrate First Eucharist for anyone who may decide to delay the first reception of Eucharist beyond the usual age and readiness. Suitable preparation is to be provided.

H. PREPARATION FOR FIRST EUCHARIST

A child in the process of Christian Initiation is led gradually, according to personal capacity, to participate fully in the Eucharist. This continuing formation takes place within family and parish community.

Children commonly participate in either a Catholic elementary day-school or a Parish Religious Education Program for at least one year prior to entrance into immediate preparation. This on-going catechesis, provided through the Catholic school or Religious Education Program, together with the formation parents are providing in the home, forms the foundation for the immediate catechesis for First Eucharist.

Children require adequate spiritual and catechetical formation in their preparation for the reception of First Eucharist. However, the approach is not limited to teaching things about the sacrament, but also includes initiating the children into a Christian way of living and worshipping in a community. Catechesis leads children to discover the joy of living in communion with God and others. A child's family and the Christian community's day-by-day living of the Christian life becomes the first step in the child's preparation to receive this sacrament.

Children under the age of seven tend to think concretely. They grasp concepts like "unity" and "belonging" from experiences such as sharing, listening, eating, forgiving, conversing, thanking and celebrating.

This means in effect, that much of their preparation for First Eucharist is to be derived from daily life experiences (NCD #122). Such life experiences are to be coupled with explanations of Eucharist adapted to children's intellectual capacity and accompanied by further efforts to acquaint them with the main events of Jesus' life.

Children are to be taught that Eucharist (Holy Communion) is the real body and blood of Christ. What appears to be bread and wine is actually the living and life-giving body and blood of Christ. Catechists are to teach the Eucharist as the sign of the Lord's abiding presence, which assists in the development of a true Eucharistic devotion.

Appropriate instruction on the Eucharistic fast is to be provided for children.

Children are to be helped to participate more meaningfully in the celebration of the Eucharistic liturgy. Catechists need to include instruction about the meaning of the ritual, symbols and parts of the Mass. Children benefit by being appropriately involved in Eucharistic liturgies.

I. PREPARATION OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Children who are developmentally disabled, who have severe learning disabilities, or who have other handicaps are to feel welcome in the parish preparation program. Whenever possible they are to participate in regular preparatory activities and be included in parish sacramental celebrations with adaptation provided for their needs. In catechesis for children who are developmentally disabled, emphasis should be placed on their desire to

receive Eucharist. While people are generally accustomed to communicating verbally, there are other modes of communication often used in catechesis for persons with developmental disabilities when verbal communication is limited. Desire to be in communion with God and others is what is most important. It is helpful to remember that a person's receptive language is generally much greater than their expressive language. In some cases it is difficult to determine the readiness of an individual to receive the Eucharist even after catechesis has been offered. In such situations the faith of the community suffices and the individual is welcomed at the Lord's table.

J. PREPARATION OF THE PARENTS

Parents have a right and a responsibility to be intimately involved in preparing their children for First Eucharist (NCD # 122).

Parent programs are to be offered by all parishes to assist parents in carrying out this right and responsibility. Such programs help parents grow in their own understanding and appreciation of the Eucharist, as well as enable them to participate readily in catechizing their children. Effective parent programs include:

- an adult understanding of the theology and experience of Eucharist in their lives; -an appreciation for Sunday as the day of the Lord;
- an explanation of how to assist in the preparation of their children for Eucharist; -assistance in understanding that Christian family living is part of the catechetical preparation of children for First Eucharist.

Special sensitivity is to be shown to single parents, those in interdenominational or interfaith marriages, those who have participated in similar programs recently, those parents of children with special needs and those who exercise the role of legal guardian.

In order to adequately assist parents in preparing their children sufficiently for the reception of First Eucharist, it is recommended that parishes offer three parent meetings in the course of the preparation period and no less than one.

K. PREPARING THE PARISH COMMUNITY

The parish as the welcoming community is to be involved in the preparation of children for First Eucharist as prayer sponsors or through other supportive ways. Introducing the children to the parish at a Eucharistic liturgy assists in giving the candidates for First Eucharist visibility in the parish and increases awareness on the part of the parish community who serve as witness-

..L. ONGOING CATECHESIS

Since the Eucharist is the foundation of the Christian life, catechesis begun in the early years is to be continued and developed throughout childhood and adolescence, so that a deepening awareness of the sacrament of Jesus' presence develops. Since the life of faith is dynamic and a growing reality in the life of the maturing Christian, so the understanding

" I and appreciation of the sacrament of Eucharist is never complete at any given age. A developing catechesis appropriate to the age, ability and faith level of the person is a lifelong process.

M. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. What are the requirements for valid Eucharistic bread and wine? Canon law requires that the bread be wheat bread, recently made so that there is no danger of its having spoiled. Bread made of other than wheat flour or with other additives of such quantity

that according to common estimation it cannot be said to be wheat bread would not be valid for the celebration of Eucharist. Additives other than wheat flour and water are illicit. Ancient tradition requires that the bread be unleavened. The wine must be natural wine of the grape and not corrupt. Wine made from other fruit or chemically composed is not valid for the Eucharist.

Likewise it cannot have additives such that it would be substantially altered, nor may water in equal or greater quantities than the wine be added. The addition of sulfites as a purifying agent does not render the wine corrupt.

2. May a priest substitute grape juice for wine?

If there is a serious need which would not allow a priest to consume even a small portion of wine, he must contact the Chancery office where he will be assisted in the use of a "mustum" as a substitute for wine. This permission for the use of "mustum" cannot be extended to reception of Eucharist under both species by the congregation.

3. When may Communion be distributed to the congregation under both species?

In the Diocese of Gallup there are no restrictions placed on the reception of Eucharist under both species as long as it is done in a respectful and appropriate manner .

4. When Communion is to be distributed under both species are there any requirements regarding the manner in which this is done?

Communion under both species may be distributed by having the communicant drink from the chalice.

5. If someone is allergic to one or the other of the Eucharistic species may a L substitute be given?

~ A communicant may receive Communion under either form, even under :vine alone? 1 Hence, in cases of wheat allergy, Communion may be given under the species of Wine .J alone; a substitute form of bread may not be used. The same is also true regarding the species of wine.

v 6. What kinds of requirements are there for using special ministers of the Eucharist?

The ordinary minister of the Eucharist is a bishop, priest or deacon. When there are not sufficient ordinary ministers present at a given celebration to meet the needs of the community, an acolyte or other properly deputed lay person may serve as a special minister of the Eucharist. Acolytes are those who have been installed in that ministry or on a permanent basis. Other special ministers of the Eucharist are commissioned for that ministry for a set period of time by the pastor. In exceptional cases when there is an immediate and serious need and no special minister is present, a priest may depute an individual for this ministry on that single occasion.

7. What is to be done with the Eucharistic species that remain after the distribution of Communion?

After the distribution of Communion, hosts are to be gathered into an appropriate vessel and placed in the tabernacle. Care should be taken that an excessive amount of extra hosts are not consecrated at Mass—since liturgical guidelines recommend that the congregation receive Eucharist that has been consecrated at the given Mass they are attending. The Eucharist is reserved in the tabernacle for the purposes of administration of Viaticum and devotion to Christ present in the sacrament. Care should be taken that an excessive amount of wine is not consecrated at Mass. It is preferred that less rather than too great an amount of wine be consecrated. In the event that a significant amount of consecrated wine remains following the distribution of the Eucharist, the celebrant will give the direction regarding the manner in which the consecrated wine will be disposed of. Normally, any remaining consecrated wine is to be consumed by the ministers of communion either at a side table or in the sacristy as local conditions warrant. The sacred species is never to be retained in the tabernacle.

8. What are the requirements for the Eucharistic fast?

Prior to reception of the Eucharist one is to fast from food and drink, with the exception of water and medicine, for at least one hour. The elderly and sick, as well as those who care for them, are not required to maintain an hour's fast. If a priest is celebrating more than one Mass in a given day, he need not fast prior to the second or third celebration regardless of the time of the subsequent celebrations.

9. Is reception of Communion more than once a day permitted?

If a person has received Communion, he or she may receive it a second time on the same day if it is in the course of a celebration of the Eucharist itself. Viaticum may always be given regardless of whether or not a person has received Communion that day.

10. Is a priest permitted to allow a mentally handicapped or developmentally disabled person to receive communion at Mass?

In order for developmentally disabled or mentally retarded persons to be admitted to Eucharist it is required that they be appropriately disposed to receive the sacrament, be adequately prepared so that they are able to distinguish the Eucharist from ordinary food, and be able to receive communion reverently. Parents or guardians and the pastor share responsibility for seeing to the preparation for and the participation in the Eucharist by such individuals.

11. What "liturgical postures" are required of a congregation in church and during the celebration of the Eucharist?

Since cultural and ethnic differences play a large part in determining respectful posture in given situations, a uniform and universal set of guidelines is not always possible in this regard. Tradition and respect have generally dictated that a gesture of homage, such as genuflecting or bowing, be made toward the tabernacle or altar upon entrance to a church.

An attitude of worship and prayer reflected by bodily posture is more significant than the individual stance that is taken during various parts of the Eucharistic celebration. Hence, kneeling, standing or sitting is not generally mandated but is a matter of communal tradition within a given setting.

12. Is it still required that a priest obtain special faculties for preaching? Are deacons permitted to preach and give a homily?

By reason of ordination, priests and deacons have the faculty to preach everywhere unless that faculty has been restricted or taken away by a competent authority or unless a special requirement is established within particular law. Priests who have the faculty to preach through their diocese of incardination or religious order do not need a special faculty to preach in the Diocese of Gallup. Deacons are granted the faculty to preach upon diaconal ordination. Once the faculty to preach has been granted it applies to all forms of preaching including the homily.

13. When must a homily be preached? A homily is to be preached at all Sunday and holy day Masses at which a congregation is gathered; it may not be omitted unless there is a serious reason to do so. It is also strongly recommended that a homily be given at weekday Masses if there is a sufficient number of people present. This is especially so during the seasons of Advent and Lent or on a feast day. Using the scriptural or liturgical year, the priest or deacon is to deliver the homily in order to expound on the mysteries of faith and the norms of Christian living.

14. What norms must be followed regarding Mass offerings?

A priest who celebrates a Mass is permitted to accept an offering to apply the Mass for a given intention. A priest must celebrate or concelebrate a separate Mass for each intention for which an individual offering has been made and accepted. In those instances in which a priest binates or tricates, he may offer the second or third Mass for the stated intention but he may not retain the offering(s); in accord with particular law of the diocese, bination/trination offerings are to be forwarded to the Chancery Office. In the Diocese of Gallup the Mass offering has been established as \$10.00. It is not permitted for a priest to accept more stipends for Masses than he can satisfy in a year. Likewise, if a parish priest has more Mass intentions than can be satisfied in the year; the excess offerings along with the stated intentions are to be sent to the Chancery for use by retired priests or priests on

~ study leave or to the Missions office for transmission to missionaries. Priests and parishes are obligated to keep accurate records of the number of Masses to be celebrated, the stated intentions, the stipend given and their celebration. Pastors and administrators are obligated to celebrate a "pro populo" Mass on Sundays and holy days; no stipend may be taken for the fulfillment of this obligation.

15. What norms must be followed regarding Masses of Obligation?

A vigil Mass, liturgy that is attended to fulfill the Sunday obligation, may not begin prior to 4:00 p.m. on Saturday. Faithful who attend such Masses as for weddings and funerals

on Saturday before 4:00 p.m. may not count their participation in those liturgies as fulfilling the Sunday obligation.

Masses, in order to fulfill the Sunday obligation, must use the assigned lectionary readings and sacramentary prayers of the day. In the event that such special Masses as one in which Confirmation is celebrated are scheduled at the time when the regular Sunday obligation Masses are scheduled, neither the readings nor the prayers assigned for that Sunday may be changed.

16. What office should be contacted with questions about Eucharist?

If it is a matter concerning catechesis for or celebration of First Eucharist, contact the Department of Education. For liturgical matters and for general canonical matters or questions of Eucharistic discipline, contact the Chancery Office.