



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

Bishops' Committee for Liturgy

NORMS FOR THE DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION UNDER BOTH KINDS

1. From ancient times the Church has taught that the Eucharist is the source and summit of the Christian life. At every Assembly that celebrates the Paschal Mystery of Christ, the culmination of that celebration is the reception of Holy Communion.
2. Through sacramental Holy Communion, the faithful take part more fully in the celebration of the Eucharist. "It is desirable that the faithful receive the Lord's Body from hosts consecrated at the same Mass... and that they participate in the chalice, so that even by means of the signs, Communion will stand out more clearly as a participation in the Sacrifice actually being celebrated."(GIRM 85)
3. The meaning of the sign demands that the material for the Eucharistic celebration truly have the appearance of food. It is desirable that the Eucharistic bread be made in such a way that the priest is able to actually to break it into parts. This action will more clearly bring out the force and importance of the sign of unity of all in the one bread and of the sign of charity, in that the one bread is distributed among brothers and sisters.
4. The sign of the Eucharistic banquet appears more perfectly when Holy Communion is received under both kinds. This shows how the new and eternal covenant is ratified in the Blood of the Lord, and exemplifies better the relationship of the Eucharistic banquet with the eschatological banquet in the Kingdom of the Father. (Cf. Matt 26:27-29)
5. The restoration of the distribution of the chalice to the faithful came as a result of the deliberation at the Second Vatican Council that desired "a more perfect form of participation in the Mass" (SC 55) so that the people might follow more closely the action of Christ and the apostles at the Last Supper.
6. For the consecration of bread one large paten may be used. (GIRM 331) The wine should be brought to the altar in a vessel and then poured into the chalice at the Preparation of the Gifts. Where additional vessels for the consecrated elements are needed, these are brought to the altar during the breaking of the bread when the Blood of Christ is poured into other chalices and the hosts are placed on other patens or suitable receptacles.
7. The distribution of Holy Communion under both kinds is regulated in the General Instruction of the Roman Missal (2002) 281-287. It is the responsibility of the diocesan bishop to establish norms in his own diocese as to when Holy Communion under both kinds may be permitted. The manner in which Holy Communion is to be distributed falls within the responsibility of the conference of Bishops.

May 2003 Minute 87