

*And, after he had given thanks, broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you.
Do this in remembrance of me."*

1 CORINTHIANS 11: 24

EUCHARIST

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EUCCHARIST

I. INTRODUCTION

The Eucharist is the source and summit of the Christian life. Every Sunday, as though celebrating a weekly Easter, the Church gathers in faithfulness to the Lord's command "Do this in memory of me." In the celebration of the Mass, Christ's paschal mystery is made present. We encounter his presence in the gathered assembly, the Word proclaimed, the person of the minister and most especially in the eucharistic elements (*SC*, 10).

In the Eucharist, Christ nourishes the believer with the essential food, which is the sign of faith and bread of life. The celebration of Mass, today, in union with the Archbishop, forms our local Church, connects us with the apostolic faith, and links us with the Church universal. All parish life revolves around the Sunday celebration of the Lord's paschal mystery in the Eucharist. The reverence with which we offer this sacrifice of praise is an outward manifestation of the holiness of God who has taken on our flesh. The celebration of Mass must therefore be of the highest priority in our parishes. Just as the disciples who encountered Jesus on the road to Emmaus were eager to return to Jerusalem when they recognized Jesus in the breaking of the bread, so too must we be eager to proclaim the Good News, share the joy of Christ's presence and invite others to join our company.

The Eucharist is holy manna, food for the whole of the Christian journey. In our devout participation in the Mass we are given a foretaste of the banquet of heaven and given a hunger for the invitation to join the Lord, the angels and the saints around His heavenly table.

II. CELEBRATION OF THE EUCCHARIST IN PARISHES OF THE ARCHDIOCESE

EU 1. Mass is to be celebrated with care and reverence in every parish of the Archdiocese according to the current liturgical books, canons, apostolic letters and instructions from the Holy See as well as norms set out by the Universal Church and the Archbishop in his role as moderator for the liturgy of the local Church.

- 1.a. Care must be taken to ensure that Mass is well prepared, is given adequate financial and human resources, and is designed to empower participants in living Christ's mission in the world.

- 1.b. In those things not specified by liturgical law or particular law, the operative norm of the celebration of the Eucharist is to ensure unity within the local Church. In presiding at Mass, pastors are in communion with the Archbishop as the Ordinary of the archdiocese.
- 1.c. In the dioceses of the United States of America the faithful “should kneel beginning after the singing or recitation of the *Sanctus* until after the *Amen* of the Eucharistic Prayer, except when prevented on occasion by reasons of health, lack of space, the large number of people present, or some other good reason.” (*GIRM*, 43)

EU 2. The following adaptations to the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM)* and as found in the Apostolic letter *Redemptionis Sacramentum* (117–119) are to be observed everywhere throughout the Archdiocese of Seattle:

- 2.a. The faithful remain standing after the “Lamb of God” until the end of the Communion Procession unless prevented by age, infirmity or some personal situation (e.g. small children, etc.).
- 2.b. In parishes or during Mass outside of parish churches where there are significant numbers of communicants, and the duration of the Communion Rite make standing a hardship for the people, the pastor may allow communicants to sit or kneel upon returning to their place in the assembly after receiving communion.
- 2.c. Communicants are to bow their heads as a gesture of reverence when receiving the Body and Blood of the Lord (see *GIRM*, 160).

“However, the pouring of the Blood of Christ after the consecration from one vessel to another is completely to be avoided, lest anything should happen that would be to the detriment of so great a mystery...” (*Redemptionis Sacramentum*, 106)

- 2.d. To best implement this instruction, one of two options may be selected by the Pastor:
 - Before Mass, the wine is to be poured into Communion Cups and placed on the credence table. A server brings the pre-poured wine to the altar at the presentation of gifts. A sacred vessel with sufficient wine for the chalice may be

brought forward with the hosts. After the wine is poured into the chalice, the vessel is removed from the altar; or

- Vessels of wine, as needed, may be brought forward with the hosts. The wine is poured from these vessels into the Communion Cups. These vessels are then removed from the altar.

Priest Celebrant

EU 3. Only a validly ordained priest who is not impeded by some canonical reason and those whose status has been verified, by the Office of Vicar for Clergy, may celebrate or concelebrate the Eucharist.

Frequency of Celebration

EU 4. All priests are encouraged to celebrate Mass daily.

- 4.a. “Priests are earnestly invited to offer the eucharistic sacrifice daily.” (*CIC*, c. 276 §2, 2^o)
- 4.b. “A pastor, is obliged to apply a Mass for the people entrusted to him on each Sunday and holy day of obligation in his diocese.” (*CIC*, c. 534 §1)
- 4.c. “A pastor who has the care of several parishes is bound to apply only one Mass for the entire people entrusted to him on the days mentioned in §1.” (*CIC*, c. 534 §2)
- 4.d. “A priest is not permitted to celebrate the Eucharist more than once a day except in cases where the law permits him to celebrate or concelebrate more than once on the same day.” (*CIC*, c. 905 §1)
- 4.e. The Archbishop “can allow priests to celebrate twice a day for a just cause, or if pastoral necessity requires it, even three times on Sundays and holy days of obligation.” (*CIC*, c. 905 §2)
- 4.f. Vigil Masses on Saturday evening for Sunday or for holy days of obligation are separately counted from Sundays and holy days of obligation.

EU 5. Celebrating more than three Masses on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation on a regular basis requires permission of the Archbishop.

- 5.a. Priests from neighboring parishes and senior priests should be willing to assist in parishes requiring a priest to celebrate more than three Masses on Sundays and holy days of obligation on an ongoing basis. Deans need to be attentive to this reality and assist the priests of the deanery to plan accordingly.
- 5.b. Parishes within a deanery should cooperate particularly when scheduling Masses within a given neighborhood or area of the deanery.
- 5.c. The use of Sunday celebration in the absence of the priest is not authorized as a substitute for Mass on Sunday without the permission of the Archbishop unless there is an unforeseen emergency (e.g. priest does not show up). See VI, Distribution of Communion outside of Mass

III. MINISTERIAL ROLES

- EU 6. Appropriate ministerial roles are to be filled by the faithful at each celebration of Mass (SC, 28; Liturgical Ministry: LM, I, “Introduction”).**
- EU 7. Music, including assembly singing, is normative for Mass for Sunday and holy days of obligation (see GIRM, 39-41; see Pastoral Music Ministry: MU, I, “Introduction” and II, “Planning”).**

Ministers of Holy Communion

“The ordinary minister of Holy Communion is a bishop, presbyter, or deacon.” (CIC, c. 910 §1)

- EU 8. Where pastoral need requires, trained and commissioned laypersons may serve as extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion (CIC, c. 230 §3).**
- EU 9. The deacon is the ordinary minister of the Precious Blood. If communion is only being distributed in the form of the Body of Christ, the deacon could serve as a minister of the Body of Christ (RM, 61; GIRM, 162).**

IV. RECEPTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

EU 11. Eligible baptized persons must be admitted to the Eucharist.

“Any baptized person not prohibited by law can and must be admitted to Holy Communion.” (*CIC*, c. 912)

EU 12. In cases of doubt whether a person is properly disposed to receive communion, the case should be referred to the pastor or to the Archbishop; this referral should not happen during the celebration of the Eucharist but at a more appropriate time.

Administering the Eucharist to Those Who Are not Catholic

EU 13. It is permissible under certain circumstances for Catholic ministers to distribute communion to those who are not Catholic according to the following guidelines:

13.a. “Catholic ministers administer the sacraments of penance, Eucharist, and anointing of the sick licitly to members of the Eastern Churches which do have full communion with the Catholic Church if they seek such on their own accord and are properly disposed.” (*CIC*, c. 844 §3)

13.b. “If the danger of death is present or if, in the judgment of the diocesan bishop or conference of bishops, some other grave necessity urges it, Catholic ministers may administer these same sacraments licitly also to other Christians not having full communion with the Catholic Church, who cannot approach a minister of their own community and who seek such, on their own accord, provided that they manifest Catholic faith in respect to these sacraments and are properly disposed.” (*CIC*, c. 844 §4)

V. CARE OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST

EU 14. The practice of intinction by the dipping of the consecrated host into the precious blood by the communicant himself is not allowed.

The *General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM)* makes no allowance for either extraordinary ministers of Holy Eucharist, nor members of the worshipping assembly to intinct. However the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* does allow priests and

installed acolytes to perform this practice (see *GIRM*, 287). Given the practice of large numbers of extraordinary ministers assisting the clergy in so many parishes of the Archdiocese of Seattle it is not practical for intinction to be practiced. This is because the *General Instruction* requires a cleric or installed acolyte to physically intinct the consecrated host into the precious blood and does not allow communicants to do this themselves.

EU 15. After communion has been distributed, all remaining consecrated hosts are to be consumed if not reserved in the tabernacle. They are not to be disposed in any other way. The Precious Blood is reserved only when deemed necessary for the care of the sick; the Precious Blood can only be reserved for one day.

EU 16. Anyone aware of the desecration of the Sacred Species is to notify the proper pastor immediately. The pastor is to notify the Archbishop, who will indicate what must be done in reparation.

EU 17. In cases when the Sacred Species is corrupted by accident, it is to be diluted. Then what remains is to be poured down the sacrarium.

EU 18. Sacred vessels should be properly and reverently purified and cleansed after communion has been distributed.

Purification of the sacred vessels is done by the “priest, deacon or an instituted acolyte.” (*GIRM*, 279) “If vessels are purified at the altar, they are carried to the credence table by a minister. Nevertheless, it is also permitted, especially if there are several vessels to be purified, to leave them suitably covered on a corporal, either at the altar or at the credence table, and to purify them immediately after Mass following the dismissal of the people.” (*GIRM*, 163)

EU 19. Sacred Vessels

“Sacred vessels for containing the Body and Blood of the Lord must be made in strict conformity with the norms of tradition and of the liturgical books...Reprobated, therefore, is any practice of using for the celebration of Mass common vessels, or others lacking in quality, or devoid of all artistic merit or which are mere containers . . .” (*Redemptionis Sacramentum*, 117)

EU 20. It is the pastor's obligation to provide for the security of the Blessed Sacrament.

“The Tabernacle in which the Most Holy Eucharist is reserved habitually is to be immovable, made of solid and opaque material, and locked in such a way that the danger of profanation is avoided as much as possible.” (*GIRM*, 314)

20.a. The keys to the tabernacle are to be kept in a secured place known only to the priest and if need be a sacristan.

EU 21. No one is permitted to keep the Eucharist on one's person or to carry it around unless pastoral necessity urges it and the prescripts of the diocesan Bishop are observed (CIC, 935). Pastors are to set procedures on Holy Communion to the sick.

21.a. It is the obligation of the Pastor that the Blessed Sacrament taken to the sick is placed in a pyx blest for this purpose.

21.b. In anticipation of a future visit to the sick or home bound, the Blessed Sacrament may not be reserved in cars or homes. (CIC, 935).

21.c. An extraordinary minister of Holy Communion is not permitted to place consecrated hosts into a pyx presented by an individual in the Communion procession.

21.d. Laudatory is the practice where extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion to the sick are gathered for a Blessing and are commissioned to go forth to the sick and homebound after Mass in the name of the parish.

VI. OBLIGATION TO PARTICIPATE IN EUCHARIST ON SUNDAY AND HOLY DAYS OF OBLIGATION

EU 22. It is a serious obligation and joyful duty for the faithful to participate in Mass at the Vigil or each Sunday and holy day unless prevented by serious or excusing causes such as illness, travel or weather. This obligation is to take precedence over all other parish, school and archdiocesan activities.

VII. TIME OF CELEBRATION

EU 23. Where circumstances require it, a Vigil Mass may be offered on the evening prior to Sunday or a holy day of obligation. Vigil Masses may not be scheduled prior to five in the afternoon without permission of the Archbishop.

When Wedding Masses occur after the usual time for a Vigil Mass, the Mass of the day is used with the nuptial blessing and the special final blessing according to the circumstances. On the Sundays of the Christmas season and in Ordinary Time, the entire wedding Mass may be used in Masses that are not parish Masses (RM, 11)

EU 24. Masses of conferences and other such gatherings are not to occur outside of a parish church or after 5 pm on Saturday or on Sunday without permission of the Archbishop.

VIII. DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION OUTSIDE OF MASS

EU 25. The regular use of Sunday Celebration in the Absence of a Priest is not authorized as a substitute for Mass on Sundays or weekdays in the Archdiocese of Seattle.

If a priest will not be available for a regularly scheduled Mass, the parish will seek help in finding a priest from the Office of the Vicar for Clergy.

EU 26. On a Sunday when no priest is available in the parish to celebrate Mass because of an emergency, the Rite for Sunday Celebration in the Absence of a Priest will be used.

EU 27. On Sunday when a priest was not available because of an emergency (e.g.: hazardous weather, accident, etc.), and the Sunday Celebration in the Absence of a Priest was celebrated, the Archbishop or one of the auxiliary bishops/vicars general is to be immediately notified.

EU 28. If no priest is available in the parish to celebrate a Mass during the week, the Rite of Distributing Holy Communion Outside Mass is to be used. This also should be seen as a rare exception.

EU 29. If Mass is celebrated in a parish, a Sunday Celebration in the Absence of a Priest or the Rite of Distributing Holy Communion Outside Mass may not be celebrated in that parish on the same day.

- EU 30. Only a deacon or trained and qualified lay person, recommended by the pastor/pastoral coordinator and accepted by the Archbishop, may preside at Sunday Celebration in the Absence of a Priest or Rite of Distributing Holy Communion Outside Mass.**
- EU 31. Hospitals and health care institutions will follow the ritual from the Pastoral Care of the Sick, which includes the distribution of Holy Communion for individuals and group settings. Only trained and commissioned ministers should be distributing Communion in hospitals and health care institutions (see Health Care Ministry: HC, II, “Essential Requirements of Chaplains/Religious/Lay Ecclesial/Pastoral Care Ministers” and Liturgical Ministry: LL, VI “Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion”).**
- EU 32. Chaplains at State prisons should follow the same procedure as in EU 1, 1.a-1.c and EU 2, 2.a-2.c. Readings of the day should be used. In certain situations the Sunday readings may be used with the permission of the Archbishop (see Criminal Justice Ministry: CJ, IX, “Pastoral Care: Eucharist in an Ecumenical Setting”).**

IX. PREACHING

Preaching is essential for the liturgical life of the church. Preaching “should draw its content mainly from scriptural and liturgical sources, for it is the proclamation of God’s wonderful works in the history of salvation, which is the mystery of Christ ever present and active within us, especially in the celebration of the liturgy.” (*SC*, 35.2)

- EU 33. Those who preach are to be mindful to keep communion with the Archbishop so that the local church may be built together in unity.**

“In the exercise of preaching . . . all are to observe the norms issued by the diocesan bishop.” (*CIC*, c. 772 §1)

- EU 34. Priests are consecrated in order to preach the Gospel and shepherd the faithful. Through the sacrament of Holy Orders, priests are especially entrusted to proclaim the Word of God and should consider the proclamation of the Word of God through preaching to be their first duty.**
- EU 35. Priests are to make every effort to grow in their skill as homilists by frequent study of sacred scripture, attendance at workshops and pursuit of other educational opportunities.**

- EU 36. Deacons must have faculties to preach from the Archbishop (see Diaconal Ministry: DM, II, “Assignments”). Visiting deacons must acquire faculties from the Archbishop of Seattle (see DM, XXIV, “Requesting Faculties and Assignment”).**
- EU 37. Deacons are to maintain and grow in skill as preachers by taking advantage of continuing education opportunities (see Diaconal Ministry: DM, XIV, “Continuing Formation”).**

The Homily

- EU 38. The Liturgical Homily holds primacy of place within the preaching activity of the Church.**
- 38.a. *The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* teaches: “Among the forms of preaching, the homily, which is part of the liturgy itself and is reserved to a priest or a deacon, is preeminent.” (*CIC*, c. 767 §1)
- 38.b. “There is to be a homily on Sundays and holy days of obligation at all Masses that are celebrated with the participation of a congregation; it may not be omitted without a serious reason.” (*GIRM*, 66)
- 38.c. “By means of the homily the mysteries of the faith and the guiding principles of the Christian life are expounded from the sacred text during the course of the liturgical year.” (*SC*, 52)
- 38.d. “The homily should ordinarily be given by the priest celebrant himself: He may entrust it to a concelebrating priest or occasionally, according to circumstances, to the deacon.” (*GIRM*, 66)
- EU 39. Since the homily is given by a bishop, priest, or deacon, the prohibition of the admission of laypersons to preach the homily within the Mass applies also to seminarians, students of theological disciplines, and those who have assumed the function of those known as pastoral assistants; nor is there to be any exception for any other kind of layperson, or group, or community, or association.**

Preaching Other than the Liturgical Homily Given at Mass

- EU 40. On occasion, a pastor may ask a layperson to offer a reflection on the Word of God during the Mass; however, this may never take the place of the homily. In this case the priest celebrant is to offer a brief introductory homily after the Gospel, introduce**

the person offering the reflection and give suitable concluding remarks.

**X. EXTRAORDINARY FORM OF THE MASS APPROVED BY
POPE BENEDIXT XVI**

**EU41. “In parishes, where there is a stable and significant group of faithful who adhere to the earlier liturgical tradition, the pastor should willingly accept their requests to celebrate the Mass according to the rite of the Roman Missal published in 1962, and ensure that the welfare of these faithful harmonizes with the ordinary pastoral care of the parish, under the guidance of the bishop in accordance with canon 392, avoiding discord and favouring the unity of the whole Church.”
(*Summorum Pontificum Art. 5. § 1*)**

41.a. The pastor must already be able to recognize the pastoral needs of those requesting this Mass and inform both the dean and the Ordinary.

41.b. The pastor is to seek the guidance of the Ordinary prior to any public celebrations of this Mass. In this consultation, the pastor and the bishop discuss together the stability of the particular community requesting the Mass as well as a suitable location.

41.c. The pastor is to follow the parallel policies found under EU 5 with regard to the scheduling of Masses within the deanery.

41.d. The extraordinary form for the celebration of the Mass may not supersede or replace the ordinary form without prior permission of Ordinary.

EU 42. The Extraordinary Form of the Mass is to be celebrated only in a place designated by the Archbishop. Only a priest specifically authorized by the Archbishop may celebrate this liturgy.