



## Diocese of Springfield in Illinois

Catholic Pastoral Center ♦ 1615 West Washington Street ♦ PO Box 3187 ♦ Springfield IL 62708-3187  
(217) 698-8500 ♦ FAX (217) 698-0802 ♦ WEB [www.dio.org](http://www.dio.org)

---

### **Purification of sacred vessels after Holy Communion during Mass in the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois**

– Issued 07 December 2006 for implementation by 01 January 2007 –

---

#### **Distribution and Reception of Holy Communion under both kinds – a key value for Church life**

1. Both the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* [GIRM] and the *Norms for the Distribution and Reception of Holy Communion Under Both Kinds for the Dioceses of the United States of America* [NHC/USA] uphold the value of receiving Holy Communion under both kinds by priest and people.
2. These norms for the United States read in part, “The Council’s decision to restore Holy Communion under both kinds at the bishop’s discretion took expression in the first edition of the *Missale Romanum* and enjoys even more generous application in the third typical edition of the *Missale Romanum*:  
Holy Communion has a more complete form as a sign when it is received under both kinds. For in this manner of reception a fuller sign of the Eucharistic banquet shines forth. Moreover there is a clearer expression of that will by which the new and everlasting covenant is ratified in the blood of the Lord and of the relationship of the Eucharistic banquet to the eschatological banquet in the Father’s kingdom.  
“The *General Instruction* further states that ‘at the same time the faithful should be guided toward a desire to take part more intensely in a sacred rite in which the sign of the Eucharistic meal stands out more explicitly’” [NHC/USA, no. 20 citing GIRM, nos. 281-282; see GIRM, nos. 85 and 283].
3. Distribution and reception of Holy Communion under both kinds has been the practice in the parishes and institutions of the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois for over 20 years to the benefit of the faithful and the whole Church.
4. There should be no change to this laudable practice. Communion from the Blood of Christ should continue, have greater participation, and be encouraged for all the faithful.

#### **Purification of vessels after Holy Communion – changes in particular law**

5. In March 2002, the bishops of the United States received an indult (that is, a change in universal law) from the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments allowing extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion to purify vessels after the distribution of Holy Communion at the discretion of the local bishop.
6. In November 2002, Bishop George Lucas issued as particular law *Norms for Ordinary and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion* for the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois that included this permission at any Mass when appropriate [see page 21 of these diocesan norms].
7. In 2006, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops sought an extension of the indult but was denied by the Holy See.
8. Thus the universal law now remains in force: “sacred vessels are purified by the priest, the deacon, or an instituted acolyte after Communion or after Mass, insofar as possible at the credence table” [GIRM, no. 279].
9. These sections of the GIRM, nos. 163, 183, 192, and 249, address the different forms of celebrating Mass naming where and when vessels may be purified and by whom.

## **How the purification of vessels after Holy Communion may take place**

### In general

10. Ordinary and extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion continue to consume as needed what remains of the Body and Blood of Christ. See NHC/USA, nos. 51-52 and page 21 of diocesan norms for a fuller explanation and options that remain in force.
11. “Purifying” means: wiping the ciboria with a purificator and pouring either water or water and wine into the vessel, swirling it around in the customary manner to assure no particle of consecrated species remains, pouring it into the remaining vessels in succession, and drinking the ablution from the last vessel. The steps of preparing for the next Mass or storing the vessels, usually washing with soap and drying, may be completed in the sacristy by the sacristan or other ministers.
12. For two or three vessels, if there is no undue interruption to some time for silent prayer or a song of praise before the prayer after Communion, (a) the priest may purify them at the altar or the credence table, although the latter is preferred, or (b) the deacon or instituted acolyte may purify them at the credence table. In these instances, the prayer, “Lord, may I receive” is said inaudibly. They may also be purified and washed after Mass without saying the prayer.
13. For a larger number of vessels, or if time constraints warrant it, it is permissible to wait until Mass has ended [GIRM, no. 183 and page 21 of diocesan norms]. When the Communion procession is complete, the vessels are set on a corporal on the credence table and suitably covered. After Mass, they are purified and washed.
14. As part of the ongoing formation of ministers and sacristans, these directives should be explained at an opportune time prior to implementation in the diocese.

### In parishes and institutions where there is a deacon or instituted acolyte assigned

15. At Masses where a deacon or instituted acolyte is scheduled, it is most appropriate that, after Mass, he should purify the vessels before they are washed.

## **Distribution and Reception of Holy Communion outside Mass not affected**

16. Holy Communion outside Mass is not affected by what takes place during Mass as described above. These proper ritual books remain in force and are to be used:
  - Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist outside Mass* [HCWEOM]
    - Weekday Celebrations of the Word of God with Communion
      - i. this rite may be used when Mass is not celebrated on the same day in the church
      - ii. the minister of the rite is a deacon, instituted acolyte, or extraordinary minister
    - Communion and Viaticum to the Sick by an Extraordinary Minister
  - Pastoral Care of the Sick: Rites of Anointing and Viaticum* [PCS]
    - Communion of the Sick by an Ordinary Minister
    - Viaticum outside Mass by an Ordinary Minister