

How Catholics Worship: What we do and why we do it.

Liturgical Norms within the Archdiocese of Anchorage



Office of
Evangelization and Worship

The Church celebrates sacraments not as God intervening from the outside, but as a divine outpouring into what already exists in our world. As presiders of Eucharist and sacraments, therefore, we must consistently demonstrate the power of signs and symbols in order to enrich the faith of the gathered assembly.

Therefore, Archbishop Schwietz has promulgated the following which are to be considered the norm within the Archdiocese of Anchorage beginning with the Solemnity of Pentecost, 2005.

The Profession of Faith

At the words... “by the power of the Holy Spirit...and became man” all make a profound bow (*that is, from the waist*).

The Preparation of the Gifts

We must be careful to insure that the sign and symbol of the “One Cup” which is blessed and the “One Bread” which is blessed and broken are conveyed to the assembly. The fundamental Eucharistic symbolism of many sharing in the one bread and one cup is more clearly expressed when **all the bread is contained in a single vessel and all the wine is contained in one container** at the Offertory procession. Therefore, it is appropriate to use a large host from which the priest and at least some of the assembly receives communion. A large corporal or two should be used so that the **one vessel** for hosts which includes the large host and the main Chalice may be placed in the center of the altar table, along with sufficient cups (filled at the offertory from the one container) to be placed one behind the other on the side, thus giving the main Chalice greater prominence. The use of glass cups should gradually be phased out. Additional Sacred Vessels may be necessary for the distribution of Holy Communion and may be brought to the altar at the breaking of the bread (*BCL Pastoral, 34-35*).

The assembly remains seated throughout as the priest prepares and offers the gifts of bread and wine. When finished, he gestures for the assembly to stand while saying: “Pray, brethren, that our sacrifice may be acceptable to God . . .” People respond: “May the Lord accept this sacrifice at your hands... .”

The Eucharistic Prayer

In the United States, permission has been granted to **kneel** during the Eucharistic Prayer (# 43). Therefore, if kneelers are available and the people are not prevented from kneeling “by reason of health, lack of space, the large number of people present or some other good reason”, they should **kneel** from after the “Holy, Holy” until after the “Great Amen” at the end of the Eucharistic prayer at which time the assembly **stands** once again.



We must consistently demonstrate the power of signs and symbols in our celebrations.

The Communion Rite

The very nature of sacramental symbolism demands that the elements for the Eucharist be recognizable in themselves and without explanation. It is most desirable that the faithful, just as the priest himself is bound to do, may receive the Lord's body from **hosts consecrated at the same Mass** and that in instances where it is permitted, they share in the chalice. Thus even through these signs communion will stand out more clearly as a sharing in the sacrifice actually being offered. The use of hosts from the tabernacle is **strongly** discouraged. Priests should always use large a large host (at least 5") in celebration so as not to minimize the sacramental sign.

To facilitate the orderly distribution of communion and to assure that sufficient hosts are available for the faithful, a deacon or extraordinary minister of Holy Communion should go to the tabernacle **only after all** Eucharistic Ministers are at their stations. The deacon or extraordinary minister may refill individual ciboria from the ciborium that was taken from the tabernacle.

The faithful of the Archdiocese of Anchorage are to stand from the beginning of the Lord's Prayer until the distribution of Communion is complete, unless prevented by reasons of health or lack of space. This is not to regulate posture rigidly in such a way that those who wish to kneel or sit would no longer be free.

Purification of Sacred Vessels

This is a dignified but minor rite in the liturgy. The altar table should be cleared of all vessels by the assisting deacon or lay minister after all the faithful have received communion. Although performed with reverence, the purification should be done briefly and inconspicuously; especially if several Sacred Vessels must be purified, they may be covered, placed on a corporal at a side table, and purified as soon as possible after Mass. Purification is carried out at the side table. However, if necessary it may be done at the altar—and if so, at the side of the altar rather than at the center. This will provide a time of quiet, undisturbed reflection for the faithful after communion (GIRM #163, 279).

Period of Silence or Song of Praise

After the distribution of Holy Communion, all may observe a period of silence. Silence and true stillness can be achieved if all take part—assembly and liturgical ministers alike. This period of silence is not to be interrupted by the taking of a second collection (the second collection should be taken during the offertory) or by parish announcements.

The Use of the Book of the Gospels

It is recommended that each parish community initiate the use of the Book of the Gospels. This implies that the Lectionary or Children's Lectionary will not be carried in the gathering procession but will be in place in the ambo (pulpit) for the first two readings. The Book of the Gospels will be brought forward during the procession and placed on the altar by the Deacon or Lay Reader (lector) until it is solemnly carried to the ambo for the proclamation of the Gospel by the deacon or priest. *The deacon should first receive a blessing from the presider, after which he proceeds to the altar for the Book of the Gospels, and then to the Ambo.*

It is also recommended that the Book of the Gospels be used at Liturgies celebrated in the absence of a priest. After a suitable sending forth by the presider, a catechist carrying the Lectionary should lead the procession of Catechumens for their own breaking open the Word or for children if they are dismissed for a children's Liturgy of the Word.

SOURCES for LARGE 5-3/4 inch wheat hosts:

Dominican Nuns 1-650-322-1801, ext 34 www.opwest.org/Archive/2003/200311/200311_bread.htm

MeyerVogelpohl 1-800-543-0264 www.mychurchgoods.com

Nuns of Santa Rita Abbey 1-888-878-1622 www.santaritabbey.org/altar_breads.htm