

Notes from the Liturgist...

Receiving Holy Communion

The Divine Worship Newsletter from the Archdiocese of Portland for the month of June issued an article in regards to the importance of the Holy Eucharist we received and showed us also how to receive the Holy Communion reverently. I am happy to share this article with you and please be ready to share it also to others.

The most Holy Eucharist, "stands at the center of the Church's life," since it truly "contains the Church's entire spiritual wealth: Christ himself, our Passover and Living Bread."

"The Church has received the Eucharist from Christ her Lord not as one gift – however precious – among so many others, but as the gift par excellence, for it is the gift of himself, of person in his sacred humanity, as well as the gift of his saving work."

Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that we show the greatest of respect to and reverence for Our Lord truly present in the Holy Eucharist. The reverence with which we receive Holy Communion should be a sign of our inward disposition and belief.

It is important for us to occasionally -review our practice and if necessary adapt to receive Holy Communion as the Church expects and to do so as reverently as possible so as to please God and to edify our brothers and sisters.

The Archdiocese of Portland has produced a short, informative and entertaining video to help us review our own reception of the Holy Communion. We can see the video in the website of the Archdiocese Portland under the office of the Divine Worship Newsletter Issue 9 – June 2018 and it is also shared at St. Mary's Facebook page.

Many of us received our First Communion many years ago and since then perhaps we have not been as attentive as we could have to a prayerful and reverent reception of Holy Communion.

Take a moment to see some things to consider when receiving Holy Communion and some things to avoid. Share the video with your family and friends as we pursue a more reverent and more prayerful reception of Holy Communion.

The surpassing gift of the Eucharist is where the Church draws her life, the dynamic force of all her activity and her whole sense of purpose and direction. As the Second Vatican council proclaimed, the Eucharistic sacrifice is "source and summit of the Christian life."

Those who receive Communion may receive either in the hand or on the tongue, and the decision should be that of the individual receiving, not of the person distributing Communion. If Communion is received in the hand, the hands should first of all be clean. If one is right handed the left hand should rest upon the right. The host will then be laid in the palm of the left hand and then taken by the right hand to the mouth. If one is left-handed this is reversed. It is not appropriate to reach out with the fingers and take the host from the person distributing.

The person distributing Communion says audibly to each person approaching, "The Body of Christ." This formula should not be altered, as it is a proclamation which calls for a response of faith on the part of the one who receives. The communicant should audibly respond, "Amen," indicating by that response his or her belief that this small wafer of bread, the wine in this chalice are in reality the body and blood of Christ the Lord.

When one receives from the chalice, the same proclamation is made by the person distributing Communion and the Communicant again responds, "Amen." It should be noted that it is never permissible for a person to dip the host he or she has received into the chalice. If, for some reason, the communicant is not able or willing to drink from the cup then that person should receive only under the form of bread.