



NewsLetter

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Purification of Sacred Vessels by Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

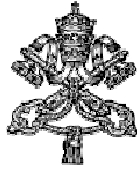
On October 13, 2006 Bishop William Skylstad, President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, informed all Bishop members of the conference that he had received a response to his request for an extension of an indult permitting extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion to assist with the purification of sacred vessels at Mass.

In a recent letter to the Conference President, Cardinal Francis Arinze, Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments (Prot. no. 468/05/L), reported that he had brought the matter to the attention of our Holy Father on June 9, 2006 and received a response in the negative.

In this letter to all Bishop members of the USCCB, Bishop Skylstad noted that “as a result, it will be necessary to inform all pastors that Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion may no longer assist with the purification of sacred vessels at Mass.” Cardinal Arinze’s letter is provided here for the benefit of our readers, as is a resource entitled “Seven Questions on Distribution of Holy Communion Under Both Kinds” to assist Bishops, pastors, diocesan and parish liturgists in the implementation of the Holy Father’s decision.

In public comments on the decision of the Holy Father, Bishop Donald Trautman, Chairman of the Committee on the Liturgy, recalled the conciliar mandate for more frequent reception of Holy Communion under both kinds as a fuller sign of the Eucharistic Banquet. While urging that the Holy Father’s decision be followed, he expressed his hope that each diocesan Bishop will continue to make full use of the authority granted him by the *Missale Romanum, editio typical tertia*, to foster the distribution of Holy Communion under both kinds. Finally, he recalled the responsibility of each pastor to provide for the training of extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion in Eucharistic theology, spirituality and liturgical practice and to instruct the faithful on the ecclesial nature of the Eucharist, the Eucharist as sacrifice and sacred banquet, the real presence of Christ in the eucharistic elements, the kinds of reverence due at all times to the sacrament, and the roles proper to ordinary and extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion.¹

¹ Cf. *Norms for the Distribution and Reception of Holy Communion under both Kinds*, no. 25.



CONGREGATIO CULTO DIVINO ET DISCIPLINA SACRAMENTORUM

Prot. n. 468/05/L

Rome, 12 October 2006

Your Excellency,

I refer to your letters of 9 March 2005 and 7 March 2006, in which, in the name of the Conference of Bishops of which you are President, you requested a renewal of the indult for extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion to purify the sacred vessels after Mass, where there are not enough priests or deacons to purify a large number of chalices that might be used at Mass.

I have put the whole matter before the Holy Father in an audience which he granted me on 9 June 2006, and received instructions to reply as follows:

1. There is no doubt that "the sign of Communion is more complete when given under both kinds, since in that form the sign of the Eucharistic meal appears more clearly" (*General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, no. 240; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 390).
2. Sometimes, however, the high number of communicants may render it inadvisable for everyone to drink from the chalice (cf. *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, no. 102). intinction with reception on the tongue always and everywhere remains a legitimate option, by virtue of the general liturgical law of the Roman Rite.
3. Catechesis of the people is important regarding the teaching of the Council of Trent that Christ is fully present under each of the species. Communion under the species of the bread alone, as a consequence, makes it possible to receive all the fruit of Eucharistic grace (cf. *Denzinger-Schönmetzer*, no. 1729; *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, nos. 11, 282). "For pastoral reasons", therefore, "this manner of receiving Communion has been legitimately established as the most common form in the Latin rite" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 390).
4. Paragraph 279 of the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* directs that the sacred vessels are to be purified by the priest, the deacon or an instituted acolyte. The status of this text as legislation has recently been clarified by the Pontifical Council for Legislative Texts. It does not seem feasible, therefore, for the Congregation to grant the requested indult from this directive in the general law of the Latin Church.
5. This letter is therefore a request to the members of the Bishops' Conference of the United States of America to prepare the necessary explanations and catechetical materials for your clergy and people so that henceforth the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, no. 279, as found in the *editio typicatia* of the *Roman Missal*, will be observed throughout its territories.

With the expression of my esteem and fraternal greetings, I remain, Your Excellency,

Devotedly yours in Christ,

+Francis Cardinal Arinze
Prefect

Monsignor Mario Marini
Under-Secretary

Seven Questions on the Distribution of Holy Communion Under Both Kinds

1. Why did the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council recommend the distribution of Holy Communion under Both Kinds?

“The Council's decision [in 1963] to restore Holy Communion under both kinds at the bishop's discretion took expression in the first edition of the *Missale Romanum* and enjoys an 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.’”²

“ From the first days of the Church's celebration of the Eucharist, Holy Communion consisted of the reception of both species in fulfillment of the Lord's command to ‘take and eat . . . take and drink.’ The distribution of Holy Communion to the faithful under both kinds was thus the norm for more than a millennium of Catholic liturgical practice.”³ “The practice of Holy Communion under both kinds at Mass continued until the late eleventh century, when the custom of distributing the Eucharist to the faithful under the form of bread alone began to grow. By the twelfth century theologians such as Peter Cantor speak of Communion under one kind as a “custom” of the Church. This practice spread until the Council of Constance in 1415 decreed that Holy Communion under the form of bread alone would be distributed to the faithful.”⁴

2. What preparation of the faithful is required before the distribution of Holy Communion under both kinds?

“For the faithful who take part in the rite or are present at it, pastors should take care to call to mind as appropriately as possible Catholic teaching according to the Council of Trent on the manner of Communion. Above all they should instruct the Christian faithful that, according to Catholic faith, Christ, whole and entire, as well as the true Sacrament are received under one kind only; that, therefore, as far as the effects are concerned, those who receive in this manner are not deprived of any grace necessary for salvation.”⁵

3. What resources can assist in this preparation?

Norms for the *Distribution of Holy Communion under Both Kinds in the Dioceses of the United States of America*⁶ were approved by the Bishops of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and confirmed by the Holy See in 2002. Part I of these Norms (*Holy Communion: The Body and Blood of the Lord Jesus*) provides a summary of the Church's teaching on Holy Communion which can aid in the preparation of ministers and faithful in preparing to receive Holy Communion under Both Kinds. Likewise, the USCCB pamphlet “Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Sacrament of the Eucharist”⁷ may be helpful in such formation. Both texts are available online in English and Spanish or from USCCB Publications.⁸

4. When Holy Communion is distributed under both kinds, what happens to what remains of the Precious Blood?

“When more of the Precious Blood remains than was necessary for Communion, and if not consumed by the bishop or priest celebrant, the deacon immediately and reverently consumes at the altar all of the Blood of Christ which remains; he may be assisted, if needs dictate, by other deacons and priests. When there are extraordinary

² *Norms for the Distribution and Reception of Holy Communion Under Both Kinds for the Dioceses of the United States of America* (Norms), no. 20, citing *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (GIRM), no. 281.

³ *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (SC), no. 55, Cf. Norms, no. 17.

⁴ Norms, no. 18.

⁵ *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (GIRM), no. 281, cf. *Redemptionis Sacramentum* (RS), no. 100.

⁶ http://www.usccb.org/liturgy/current/norms.shtml#N_30_#N_30_

⁷ <http://www.usccbpublishing.org/productdetails.cfm?PC=596>

⁸ www.usccbpublishing.com

ministers of Holy Communion, they may consume what remains of the Precious Blood from their chalice of distribution with permission of the diocesan bishop.”⁹

5. Who then purifies the sacred vessels?

As ordinary ministers of Holy Communion, the Priest and the Deacon purify the sacred vessels. The instituted acolyte, by reason of his office, “helps the priest or deacon to purify and arrange the sacred vessels.”¹⁰ In the Dioceses of the United States of America, the ministry of instituted acolyte, which is open only to men, is primarily made up of those preparing to receive Holy Orders.¹¹

6. May an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion assist in the purification of sacred vessels?

In accord with the Holy Father’s recent decision, as reported in Cardinal Arinze’s letter of October 12, 2006 (Prot. no. 468/05/L), an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion may not assist in the purification of sacred vessels. This extraordinary ministry was created exclusively for those instances where there are not enough ordinary ministers to distribute Holy Communion, due to the consummate importance of assuring that the faithful have the opportunity to receive Holy Communion at Mass, even when it is distributed under both species. (cf. RS, no. 102)

7. What about those instances where there are many chalices and only one Priest to purify them?

When there are insufficient Priests, Deacons, or instituted acolytes to purify the additional chalices during Mass, the purification may take place immediately after the Mass has concluded. If such purification by ordinary ministers proves pastorally problematic, consideration should be given to distribution of Holy Communion by intinction or to the distribution of Holy Communion under the form of consecrated bread alone.¹² Priests should also keep in mind potential health risks associated with intinction, especially in the coming flu season.

Address of Bishop Trautman to the National Meeting of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions

Delegates from ninety-seven dioceses gathered in Omaha, Nebraska from October 10-13, 2006 for the annual National Meeting of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions. The meeting, jointly sponsored by the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions (FDLC) and the Bishops’ Committee on the Liturgy (BCL), focused its theme on Music and the Art of Celebration. Major addresses were offered by Rev. Anthony Ruff, O.S.B. Dr. Marie Rubis Bauer, and Dr. J. Michael McMahon. The text of these presentations will be posted to the FDLC website (www.fdlc.org) by November 1. In the course of the meeting the Federation presented its annual Frederick R. McManus Award for pastoral liturgy to Dr. Nathan D. Mitchell.

During the meeting the diocesan delegates passed seven position statements that had been formulated during FDLC regional meetings earlier this year and one Executive Committee Resolution. Five of the seven position statements deal with ministerial formation, one with translation of liturgical texts, and the other with education in the utilization of technology in liturgical catechesis. The resolution focused on the revision of Music in Catholic Worship.

On the first evening of the meeting, Bishop Donald Trautman, Chairman of the Committee on the Liturgy, addressed the delegates. Bishop Trautman’s address is included here for the information of our readers.

Thirty-two two years ago, the Bishops’ Committee on the Liturgy gave birth to the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions. We are bonded to each other. Let us always cherish that relationship and work together to give God’s people the very best in the rich liturgical and sacramental life of our Church. Ten years ago, I addressed you at your National Meeting in Minneapolis and expressed sentiments which are as true today as they were then:

9 Norms, no. 52.

10 GIRM, no. 192.

11 Cf. GIRM, nos. 98, and 187-193.

12 cf. RS, no. 102.

In the name of the BCL and in the name of the Conference of Bishops, I wish to express gratitude to all of you who are engaged in the liturgical ministry of the Church. We want to affirm you and commend you for all that you have done to produce full, conscious, active participation in the worship life of the Church. You have taken the renewal and reforms of Vatican II to the liturgical assemblies with great success, but there is still much to do. Liturgical renewal is still wanting in many faith communities.

That was ten years ago. I express those same sentiments today with new emphasis and esteem for all of you and the work you do.

In a special way, I want to thank the Chairperson of your Board of Directors, Monsignor John Burton, as well as your capable office staff, headed by Ms. Lisa Tarker, your Executive Director. As Monsignor Moroney frequently reports, the intimate, and often behind the scenes collaboration with the Federation and its members is an invaluable asset to the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy and its Secretariat.

The presence of Monsignor Moroney, along with Monsignor Sherman and Sister Doris, testifies to the commitment of the BCL to the Federation and our continuing desire to find new and effective ways to foster the collaboration that has marked the relationship of the BCL and the FDLC more than three decades.

Translation of the Roman Missal

Since I last spoke with you, much has happened to mark this stage in the post-conciliar renewal of the Liturgy. Most notable was the recent approved of a new vernacular translation of the Order of Mass by the Bishops of the USCCB at our last plenary meeting. Just before the Bishops approved the texts as amended by the BCL, I recalled the words I had spoken at the beginning of my present term as BCL Chair. I told the Bishops:

The challenge we face together is to find a balance between tradition and inculturation, a balance between preservation and change, a balance that calls for both transcendence and immanence, a balance between theological concerns and pastoral concerns, a balance between faithfulness to the received text and intelligibility and proclaimability. Seeking balance in liturgical matters is often difficult.

We want to be faithful to the norms and principles from the Holy See, but as pastors of the Church we must apply them with prudence and insight, given pastoral realities in our midst. Going from liturgical principle to pastoral practice calls again for balance and sensitivity.

As Chair of the BCL, I have tried to live by those words.

As a Bishops' Conference we have struggled to achieve this balance, thus far, in our consideration of ICEL's proposed translation of the *Missale Romanum, editio typica tertia*. Many significant challenges remain, however. As you read recently in the *BCL Newsletter*, the Committee on the Liturgy and the Bishops whom they serve continue to have significant concerns --- serious questions --- with some of the new Green Book translations from ICEL. The mixed commission has effectively responded to some of these concerns, but others remain. I strongly urge you to continue to study the texts, discuss them and provide the best possible advice to your Bishops as they respond to the frequent consultations on the constant flow of ICEL Green Books throughout the coming months.

Directory for Music and the Liturgy

The BCL has approved two action items for consideration by the upcoming plenary meeting of the USCCB in November. The first is approval of a "Directory for Music and the Liturgy" for use in the Dioceses of the United States. As you will recall, the instruction *Liturgiam authenticam* called for the preparation and approval of "a directory or repertory of texts intended for liturgical singing." (*Liturgiam authenticam*, no. 108)

In the mind of the BCL this directory does not aim at the establishment of a "black list" or "white list" of liturgical songs. Rather it is intended to provide guidance to Bishops of those places where liturgical songs are published in authorizing individual collections with the support and coordination of the USCCB Secretariat for the Liturgy.

I might also note that the Directory goes out of its way to emphasize the fact that "the Catholic Church in the United States of America has been greatly blessed both by a hymnody drawn from a number of great traditions and by the contributions of composers and lyricists of liturgical songs over the past forty years of the liturgical reform. The Church owes a debt of gratitude to the scores of men and women whose musical compositions have led people to Christ, nourished their faith in him, and deepened the participation of the people of God in the Sacred Liturgy in wonderful ways." Recall those words in

the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* that speak of Jesus' presence whenever the "Church prays or sings". These are words that give motivation to all in the music ministry of the Church.

Revision of the Lectionary for Mass

The second action item which will be considered by your Bishops is a Revision of the *Lectionary for Mass* for selected days in the Season of Advent. You will recall how, in 2003, with the collaboration of the FDLC and others, the BCL conducted a wide-ranging survey of the Bishops regarding concrete ways in which the *Lectionary for Mass* might be revised. This survey indicated dissatisfaction with our present Lectionary. The survey demonstrated a negative critique of the Lectionary and made suggestions concerning suitability for liturgical proclamation, poetic expression, grammar and vocabulary in the texts of the *Lectionary for Mass*.

Subsequently, the BCL engaged the services of a working group consisting of Bishops, scripture scholars, specialists in proclamation and drama, pastors, liturgists, and others to propose modifications to the present Lectionary for Mass. The final set of modifications is fairly modest, but makes a significant difference in the proclaimability and comprehensibility of the text.

For example, we currently hear Saint Paul's Letter to the Corinthians in this Second Reading on an Advent Sunday:

I give thanks to my God always
for the grace of God bestowed on you in Christ Jesus,
that in him you were enriched in every way,
with all discourse and all knowledge,
as the testimony to Christ was confirmed among you,
so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift
as you wait for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

This text presents seven lines in one sentence making it difficult to proclaim and understand. The adverb in the first line is placed four words away from the verb. We have changed this text to two sentences, and we have moved the adverb next to the modifying word. We believe these two changes make the text more proclaimable and intelligible. Here is the text that we would now propose.

I always give thanks to my God on your account
that in him you were enriched in every way,
with all discourse and all knowledge.
Thus was the testimony to Christ confirmed among you,
so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift
as you wait for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Consider another example. In a reading from the First Letter of St. Paul to the Thessalonians we read in our present Lectionary:

May the Lord make you increase and abound in love
for one another and for all,
just as we have for you,
so as to strengthen your hearts,
to be blameless in holiness before our God and Father
at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his holy ones. Amen

Here are six lines constituting one sentence. We have made this passage into two sentences:

May the Lord make you increase and abound in love
for one another and for all,
just as we have for you.
Thus may the Lord strengthen your hearts,
to be blameless in holiness before our God and Father
at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his holy ones. Amen.

These are relatively small grammatical changes which, in effect, improve our ability to hear the authentic scriptural text.

There are, of course, many other tasks before the BCL and its Secretariat. You will read about some of them in the information report and discuss others with Monsignor Moroney and his staff later this week.

Do you know that the term "people of God" occurs 140 times in the 16 documents of Vatican II? This term reflects a new theological outlook in the Church. The term "people of God" is a concept and expression as old as the Bible. It refers to the assembly of Yahweh and the liturgical assembly of the New Testament. For the Council Fathers of Vatican II this is a rich term, pregnant in theological meaning. We are the people of God, and to a great extent you are the liturgical voice of God's people. Please be an informed voice, a courageous voice, a prophetic voice, a renewed voice calling for implementation and faithfulness to the foundational document of all liturgical renewal --- the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*.

Conclusion

Allow me to conclude with some brief reflections on "Music and the Art of Celebration", the topic of this year's national meeting.

I am sure you will recall the sixth paragraph of *Music in Catholic Worship*, which has defined this aspect of the liturgical reform in the postconciliar period perhaps more than any other single sentence. "Faith," the Bishops of the BCL wrote in 1983, "grows when it is well expressed in celebration. Good celebrations foster and nourish faith. Poor celebrations may weaken and destroy it" (*Music in Catholic Worship*, no. 6). That is a quotable quote for all liturgists.

I would suggest that this seminal insight explains the great concern of the Church in recent years for authentic translations and celebrations of the Sacred Liturgy. In an entirely new chapter, the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* explains the motivation for assuring that texts are both accurate and proclaimable, and that celebrations of the liturgy are understandable and authentic. We seek authentic celebrations of the Sacred Liturgy "so that the faith may be passed on in its integrity, since the Church's rule of prayer (*lex orandi*) corresponds to her rule of belief (*lex credendi*)" (*General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, no. 397). Good and faithful and passionate celebrations of the Sacred Liturgy build up the faith. And sloppy or poorly prepared or lifeless celebrations can, and often do, destroy the faith of the People of God. You have given your professional lives in ministry to produce liturgical celebrations that increase faith. The Church is ever grateful to you.

The Committee on the Liturgy, through its Subcommittee on Music and the Liturgy, is presently engaged in a revision of *Music in Catholic Worship* and *Liturgical Music Today*. Yesterday in Chicago the sub-committee of the BCL on Music met with 60 experts in the music field and found there are many ways in which this foundational statement of the Committee on the Liturgy can be improved to meet the needs of the Church at this moment in the liturgical renewal. At the same time, the heart of the document, so well expressed in its recognition of the intimate and dynamic relationship of liturgy and faith, will perdure as our fundamental guide for many years to come.

The extraordinary interest of our Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI, in music and the liturgy is well-known as recently demonstrated in his blessing of the new organ in Regensburg's Alte Kapelle. In his homily at that celebration, he reflected on the unique qualities of the pipe organ as a means and expression of our active participation in worship. This instrument, he recalled "gives resonance to the fullness of human sentiments, from joy to sadness, from praise to lamentation," and is "capable of echoing and expressing all the experiences of human life." At the same time, he reminded us, the organ may sometimes go out of tune, such that "dissonance ensues and the result is unbearable." The Holy Father continues:

Also, the pipes of this organ are exposed to variations of temperature and subject to wear. Now, this is an image of our community in the church. Just as in an organ an expert and must constantly bring disharmony back to consonance, so in the Church, the variety of our gifts and charisms always need to find anew, through our communion in faith, harmony in the praise of God and in fraternal love. The more we allow ourselves, through the liturgy, to be transformed in Christ, the more we will be capable of transforming the world.

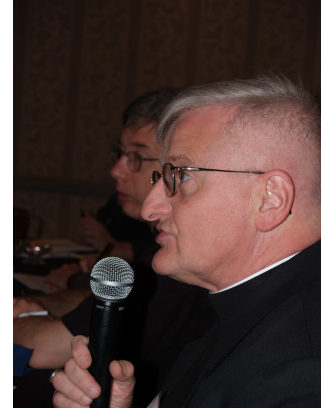
I believe we can press the Pope's analogy of the organ even further. Liturgists are faith-filled, professional, organ tuners. You work to eliminate disharmony and bring back consonance. You work to eliminate bad melodies that do not resonate with the great hymn of the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*. You work hard to tune all the pipes, so God's people can hear loudly and clearly all the sounds of the rich liturgical compositions of Vatican II. Through your passion, patience, perseverance and prayer you enable us to hear a liturgical score that calls for full, conscious and active participation. In the name of the Bishops and in the name of the BCL, I thank you for all these efforts. Together let us keep tuning the organ,

together let us keep God's people in harmony, together let us keep them on pitch, keep them focused and in tune with that great hymn of worship, the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*.

Consultation on a Revision of Music in Catholic Worship

On October 9, 2006, fifty-one representatives of a wide range of liturgical organizations participated in a consultation on a revision of *Music in Catholic Worship* in Chicago, Illinois.

In his opening comments, Bishop Edward Grosz, Auxiliary Bishop of Buffalo, and chairman of the Music and Liturgy Subcommittee, recalled the foundational teaching of the Council Fathers that "...Sacred music will be the more holy the more closely it is joined to the liturgical rites, whether by adding delight to prayer, fostering oneness of spirit, or investing the rites with greater solemnity." (SC, no. 115) He then reflected on the extensive efforts of the Bishops of the United States to bring life to this visionary challenge, including their publication of the statement *Music in Catholic Worship* in 1972. In the light of the recent publication of the third edition of the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* and the fifth instruction, *Liturgiam authenticam*, the Subcommittee seeks to renew and update this influential statement.



All present were then invited to make recommendations concerning the revision of *Music and Catholic Worship*. After two hours of individual statements, three questions were presented to the body for a more detailed discussion:

- What makes music and Liturgy sacred?
- How should we approach the question of heritage?
- To what extent should American cultures and musical styles have an effect on Music in the Liturgy?



The following organizations were represented at the consultation: Adoremus, American Catholic Press, Ave Maria University, CanticaNOVA Publications, Carmelite Monastery of Philadelphia, PA, Catholic Academy of Liturgy, Chicago Theological Union, Church Music Association of America, Liturgical Composers' Forum, Conference of Roman Catholic Cathedral Musicians, Discalced Carmelite Monastery of Philadelphia, PA, GIA Publications, Inc, Gonzaga University, Holy Apostles Seminary, Cromwell, CT, Institute for Liturgical Ministry, Latin Liturgy Association, Liturgical Press, Liturgy Training Publications, National organization for the Continuing Education of Clergy, National Association of Pastoral Musicians, Oregon Catholic Press, University of Notre Dame, Rensselaer Program of Church Music and Liturgy, Canons Regular of Saint John Cantius, We Believe, and World Library Publications. Also represented were the Office of Divine Worship of the Archdiocese of Chicago, the Offices for Worship of the Archdioceses of Cincinnati, Denver, and Seattle, and the Dioceses of Los Vegas and Rockville Centre.