

# Since You

## Answers to recent questions regarding **RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION AT MASS**

Every important occasion carries with it clear expectations about how things are to be done and how people are to conduct themselves on those occasions. Consider what would be expected if you were meeting the Pope, or the President; or attending a wedding or funeral. The same is especially true for what we Catholics consider to be one of the most important occasions of all: *receiving our Lord in Holy Communion*. There are things to be said and done in certain prescribed ways *for the sake of good order and reverence*, and to express *our unity* as we receive this great *Sacrament of Unity*.

### **SIGN OF REVERENCE**

Each communicant is to make a sign of reverence before receiving the Host and/or Precious Blood. In the United States, that gesture is a reverent bow. For the sake of keeping the communion line flowing smoothly, you should make your bow just as the person in front of you is receiving.



### **A REMINDER FOR ALL COMMUNICANTS**

As you are about to receive the Host and/or Precious Blood, the Minister of Communion will say, "*The Body of Christ*" or "*The Blood of Christ*."

**The correct response is simply, "Amen."** The word *Amen* is prescribed because it expresses many layers of theological meaning within this brief ritual dialogue. No other response should be used. (It is particularly inappropriate to respond with "*Thank you*," or some other form of secular or seasonal greeting.)

### **RECEIVING THE HOST IN THE HAND**

The proper way to receive the Host in the hand is to place one hand flat on top of the other, so that the open palm is facing up. St. John Chrysostom described this beautiful gesture "... *as making of your hands a throne for the King of Kings*."

In order to indicate clearly that you intend to receive in your hands, you should already have your hands in this position when you approach the Minister of Communion, and not wait until after the dialogue "*The Body of Christ*" / "*Amen*." It is not appropriate to receive the Host by taking it with your fingers (as if *plucking* or *pinching*) from the Minister of Communion.

Once the Minister of Communion has placed the Host onto your palm, **step to the side and consume it immediately** by taking it with the fingers of the lower hand and placing the Host into your mouth.



### RECEIVING THE HOST ON THE TONGUE

Your mouth should be open; your tongue should extend out over your bottom teeth and lower lip, so the Minister of Communion has enough exposed area to place the Host on your tongue.



### RECEIVING FROM THE CUP

The procedure is similar to that of receiving the Host: as you approach the Minister of the Cup, bow as a sign of reverence. The Minister will say "*The Blood of Christ,*" and you answer, "*Amen.*" Take the cup in your own hands; take **a small sip of the Precious Blood**, and then slowly and carefully return the cup to the Minister. *Be sure to avoid any quick, sudden movements with the cup so as not to spill any of the Precious Blood.*

### ADDITIONAL REMINDERS

#### Reserved Pews For The Handicapped\*

=== At Our Lady of Lourdes Church ===

The first and last pews in the center section of the church (on both sides of the Main Aisle), and the four benches against the back wall are reserved for the handicapped and their families. Holy Communion will be brought to those areas by one of the Ministers of Communion.

=== At Our Lady Queen of Peace Church ===

The cushioned front pews are reserved for the handicapped and their families. Communion will be brought to those areas by one of the Ministers of Communion.

#### Gluten-free Hosts Are Available

for anyone unable to tolerate the regular Host. Be sure to let the Priest or Deacon know of your need **BEFORE Mass begins**. He will advise you which Communion line to use.

\* These areas are clearly marked with the *International Handicapped Symbol*.

## MARY, MOTHER OF MERCY PARISH

The Churches of *Our Lady of Lourdes*, and *Our Lady Queen of Peace*