

## **SOME REGULATIONS REGARDING HYGIENE OF CHURCH PREMISES, THE EUCHARIST AND OTHER SACRAMENTS**

By order of Bishop Joseph ZEN, SDB, the following regulations regarding the hygiene of church premises, the Eucharist and other sacraments are announced again by way of reminder, for observance by the faithful and clerics:

### 1. Hygiene within the Church Premises

- 1.1 Doors and windows should be kept open for the maintenance of good ventilation.
- 1.2 The altar, church floor, furniture such as prie dieux, the reconciliation room (especially the screen of the confessional) and the toilets should be regularly cleansed and disinfected, by using, for example, diluted household bleach.

### 2. The Eucharist

- 2.1 For their own safety and that of others, those faithful who feel unwell or show respiratory symptoms, such as coughing, difficulty in breathing, or fever, need not attend Sunday Mass. However, in this case, they are still required to practise other forms of piety for their spiritual benefit, such as reading Scripture, saying the rosary or other prayers, or offering their sufferings as a spiritual sacrifice.
- 2.2 The Holy water provided at the Church entrance should be changed weekly.
- 2.3 If a church adopts the practice of individual faithful placing small bread into the ciborium before Mass, chopsticks or another instrument should be used, to avoid direct contact of the hand with the bread.
- 2.4 Liturgy booklets and hymnals used in the church should be kept clean as far as possible. It is recommended that the microphone equipment in all its forms be cleansed with alcohol after each Sunday.
- 2.5 To keep the hands of the faithful hygienic, Sunday collections may, at the discretion of the parish priest, be taken up from them after the “Postcommunion”.
- 2.6 The “Sign of Peace” may be expressed by bowing heads or shaking hands.
- 2.7 Regulations for the distribution and reception of Holy Communion

As in the past, the faithful may freely choose between Communion on the tongue

or in the hand, and between Communion under the species of bread only or under the species of bread and wine.

#### 2.7.1 *Communion under the species of Bread only*

a. Traditional Way:

The communicant approaches the minister of Communion with *joined hands* and receives Communion on the tongue.

b. Communion in the Hand:

The communicant approaches the minister of Communion with *outstretched hands*, the left hand resting on the right hand, palms up, sufficiently extended outward and upward. The minister says, “the Body of Christ”, to which the communicant responds, “Amen”. The minister then places the Host in the hand of the communicant. The communicant steps aside and immediately consumes the Host before returning to his/her seat.

#### 2.7.2 *Communion under both Species*

A chalice of suitable size should be used, containing a sufficient amount of consecrated wine. Priests, deacons or other ministers of Communion, in pairs, one holding the ciborium and the other the chalice, help in the distribution of Communion in one of the following ways:

##### Option I

The communicant, having received the Host as described in 2.7.1b., approaches the minister holding the chalice and dips the Host into the consecrated wine, with the minister saying “the Blood of Christ” and the communicant responding “Amen”. The communicant consumes the Body and Blood of Christ immediately before returning to his/her seat.

##### Option II

[*Note:* A parish priest may, at his discretion (as in the case of adult parishioners with disabilities or certain kids), adopt the following option as being a “safer way”.]

The minister holding the chalice takes a Host from the minister holding the ciborium, dips the Host into the consecrated wine, then says, “the Body and Blood of Christ”. The communicant responds, “Amen”, and receives the

Body and Blood of Christ on the tongue.

- 2.7.3 Whichever method is adopted, care must be taken not to allow one's fingers to touch the consecrated wine, nor to allow any fragment of the Host or any drop of the consecrated wine to fall onto the floor. Parish priests should from time to time remind the ministers of Communion and the faithful how to distribute and receive Communion, whether under one species or both species, in a proper and reverent manner. Parish priests must see to it that any form of abuse be corrected.
- 2.8 All priests, deacons and other ministers of Communion should individually cleanse their hands with water or disinfectant before giving Holy Communion.
- 2.9 If by chance a consecrated Host drops onto the floor, it should be picked up by the liturgical minister concerned, to be disposed of properly afterwards, without being given to any faithful.
- 2.10 Due attention should be given to hygiene in cleansing chalices –
  - a. The minister who consumes the Blood of Christ left over should personally, but not through someone else, cleanse the chalice with water and drink it.
  - b. The chalice should then be washed with tap water before reuse.
  - c. Purificators should be changed after each Mass and washed before reuse.
- 2.11 Blessing of children should take place after giving Holy Communion. Laying of hands may be used for blessing.
- 2.12 All liturgical ministers are recommended to wash their hands before and after the Liturgy. Their liturgical vestments and other uniforms should be washed regularly.
3. Visitation, Anointing and Giving Holy Communion to the Sick and the Elderly
  - 3.1 Priests, deacons, ministers of Communion and visitors should follow the instructions of the authorities of hospitals or homes for the aged when visiting the sick and the elderly or anointing them or giving them Holy Communion.
  - 3.2 After home visits and giving Holy Communion to the sick or the elderly at home, priests, deacons and ministers of Communion should immediately wash their hands.
4. Sacrament of Reconciliation

- 4.1 Confessionals and reconciliation rooms should always be kept clean and well ventilated.
- 4.2 A confessor or penitent who has flu or shows respiratory symptoms should put on a mask.

\* \* \* \* \*

*Note: The foregoing regulations take into consideration our local customs as well as environmental and climatic conditions. Liturgists and members of the Liturgy Commissions of Asian countries and regions (including Taiwan, Macau and Hong Kong) will meet in Taipei from 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> November to study the Instruction “Redemptionis Sacramentum”, issued by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments on 23 April 2004. Recommendations for adapting the regulations contained therein, taking due account of the customs and environmental and climatic factors specific to Asia, will be submitted to the Bishops concerned and to the above-named Congregation for consideration.*

Given at the Chancery Office,

20 September 2004.

Rev. Lawrence Lee  
Chancellor