

A NOTE FROM FATHER EICKHOFF

Last week the lay men and women who are Eucharistic Ministers here at St. Anne Parish met in the church to practice for the upcoming introduction of the Precious Blood of Christ during Holy Communion which will begin on the First Sunday of Advent (December 2-3). I want to thank the Eucharistic Ministers who came in such large numbers to this meeting. It was great to see so many volunteers present, and it was also great to see them so engaged with the practice and asking so many questions. So many questions were asked about the Holy Eucharist and how Communion will be handled during the meeting that I thought I would share some of the questions and answers with you all.

The first question that I want to address: Is it necessary or required to receive both the Body and Blood of Christ during Holy Communion?

The answer to this question is no. Catholic teaching holds that the fullness of the body, blood, soul, and divinity of Christ is contained within both the Body of Christ and the Blood of Christ. So that if you receive one you receive the "complete package." If you are not comfortable consuming the Blood of Christ from the cup you do not have to; nor is the Holy Communion somehow "incomplete" if you do not consume the Blood of Christ.

The second question follows from the first: Why then have both the Body and Blood of Christ during Holy Communion?

While it is not necessary to receive both the Body and Blood of Christ; it is considered a more complete sign of participating in the Mass which in turn, is in part, a re-presentation of the Lord's Supper in which the Lord's disciples consumed both the Body and Blood of Christ.

The third question is: How will this work at St. Anne Parish?

Starting on the First Sunday of Advent there will be three ministers of the Cup in addition to the normal complement of ministers of the Body of Christ. These three ministers will be spaced out along the front of the sanctuary next to the other ministers. Once you consume the Body of Christ and you wish to receive the Blood of Christ simply go to the nearest minister of the Cup.

The fourth question is: Will intinction be allowed?

Intinction is the practice of dipping the Body of Christ into the Cup containing the Blood of Christ. It will not be allowed. This is for several reasons including: the likelihood of the Blood of Christ being dropped to the ground; it is a form of self-communicating the Holy Eucharist which is not done in the Catholic Church; and the introduction of gluten from the Eucharistic Host into the Blood of Christ which can be an issue for very gluten sensitive persons.

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Stephen Eickhoff
Pastor