

INSTRUCTION ON THE CUSTOM OF BLESSINGS DURING COMMUNION

Bishop Paprocki has issued instructions on blessings during Communion at all Masses beginning on Jan. 1, 2021. Please read below to familiarize yourselves.

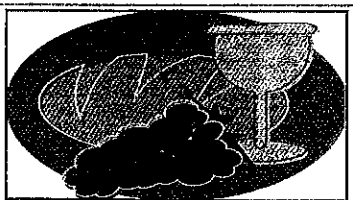
What changes will need to be made in the Communion procession at Masses celebrated within the diocese?

The Instruction itself provides the following.

First. Normally those who will not receive Holy Communion at a given Mass should not come up in the Communion procession.

- Just as the entrance procession, the Gospel procession, and the gifts procession do not include everyone in the assembly, nor does the Communion procession.
- This procession is for those who will eat and drink the Body and Blood of Christ.
- However, infants may be carried by their parents and children who have not yet received First Eucharist may accompany their parents in the Communion procession.

Second. Should some who will not receive Holy Communion choose to join in the Communion procession, they present themselves with their arms crossed over their chests and make the same reverence as those who will receive Communion make, that is, they stop and make a slight bow of the head both to the Body of Christ and to the Blood of Christ while passing in procession.



- Catechumens are dismissed from Mass following the homily and so are not present for the Liturgy of the Eucharist and the Communion Rite. On the rare occasions when they are present, they should not be taught or encouraged to take part in the Communion procession. The same is true for baptized candidates seeking to either complete the Sacraments of Initiation or to be received into full communion.
- If the person pauses in expectation of some response, as a matter of courtesy, he or she should not be ignored or summarily dismissed, but should be assisted in making a spiritual communion.
- To do so, the Priest, Deacon or extraordinary minister of Holy Communion makes a slight head bow towards the person and says, "Receive Christ in your heart." Since this is not a blessing, but an invitation to worship, no other gesture accompanies these words and no verbal response is given.
 - Care is taken not to create other words, statements, or other invitations.
- No blessing is to be given at this time whether by the Priest, Deacon, or extraordinary minister of Holy Communion. The entire congregation is blessed by the Priest at the end of Mass just prior to the dismissal.

Third. No ordinary minister (Bishop, Priest, or Deacon) or extraordinary minister (lay person) of Holy Communion shall extend a hand or touch the head or make a sign of the cross on or over someone in the Communion procession. Some reasons are:

- a) These signs may easily convey a blessing is given.
- b) It may confuse the faithful about who may and may not confer blessings within Mass.
- c) The touching of foreheads and then continuing to minister the Host raises a hygiene concern.
- d) Particles of the Host on the finger or thumb of the Communion minister may be transferred to the body of the person being touched on the head.

