

L III C

DIRECTIVE ON PREPARING AND CONSECRATING SUFFICIENT HOSTS FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE EUCHARIST

April 27, 1998

To: All parishes in the Diocese of London

Dear Father:

In consultation with me and the Council of Priests, our Liturgical Commission is in the process of creating a resource package to help us move to the practice of celebrating Morning or Evening Prayer, or a Liturgy of the Word without a Communion Service when weekday Mass cannot be celebrated because of the absence of a priest.

The resource package will contain materials outlining the difference between a Communion Service and the celebration of Eucharist. Over the past decade, Communion Services have increased without much teaching about the unique differences. As well, our parishioners have become accustomed to receiving Communion from the tabernacle even at the celebration of Eucharist. This practice obscures the integrity of the celebration of the Eucharist at the one Table, with the community sharing in the one Bread and one Cup, the one Sacrifice.

In order to maintain the integrity of the eucharistic sacrifice, we ask that whenever I or Bishop Grecco preside at Mass, sufficient hosts for all the assembly be presented at the Preparation Rite. During the Communion Rite, consecrated hosts should not be brought from the tabernacle unless there is utmost necessity. I want this to model appropriate practice for all celebrations.

The General instruction of the Roman Missal, article no. 56h, strongly reminds us that: **A**It is most desirable that all the faithful receive the Lord=s body from hosts consecrated at the same Mass...@.

Eucharistic ministers will need to be advised on two matters:

1. the procedure when necessity warrants ministering Communion from the tabernacle;
 2. how to reverently consume the remaining elements when too many hosts have been consecrated.
-

L III C

Time and practice will help us assess an adequate amount of eucharistic bread.

Please assist us in beginning to put this ritual practice into place.

The community should also be encouraged to appreciate the tremendous gift that the reserved Sacrament is for us, as food for the sick who cannot attend the celebration of Eucharist, and as a Presence reserved in a welcoming place for individuals and the community to gather in devotional prayer. I urge you to encourage your parishioners to participate in adoring Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, praying for vocations and evangelization. Although this occurs in a special way wherever Perpetual Adoration Chapels are available, prayerful visits may be encouraged in all our parishes.

Yours in Christ,

Most Rev. John Michael Sherlock
Bishop of London
