



NORMS FOR THE PURIFICATION OF SACRED VESSELS AFTER HOLY COMMUNION IN THE DIOCESE OF MADISON

Diocese of Madison

June 10, 2007

The Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ

Purification of vessels after Holy Communion

1. In March of 2002 the bishops of the United States received an indult from the Congregation of Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments to allow extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion to purify vessels after the distribution of Holy Communion at the discretion of the local bishop.
2. In 2002 the Bishop William H. Bullock, Third Bishop of Madison, gave this permission to the parishes and institutions of the Diocese. This permission was reaffirmed by Bishop Robert C. Morlino, Fourth Bishop of Madison.
3. In 2006 the United States bishops sought an extension of that indult and it was denied.
4. Thus, purification of the vessels after Holy Communion is to be carried out by the priest or deacon, or in the absence of a deacon, by a duly instituted acolyte (*General Instruction of the Roman Missal* 182, 192).

Options to consider in the purification of vessels after Holy Communion

In General

1. Extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion are to consume what remains of the Precious Blood from their chalice of distribution.
2. For a large number of Communion vessels, it is permissible to wait until after Mass has ended, rather than to purify them at the altar or the credence table during Mass (see *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* 183).
3. In this case, the vessels are set on the credence table, suitably covered with an appropriately clean cloth. After Mass, they may be taken to the sacristy where they are purified either by the deacon or the priest after he has greeted the people. After they have been purified they can be washed by the sacristan or other minister as usual.
4. As part of the ongoing formation of extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion and sacristans, these directives should be made known and explained to them at an opportune time prior to implementation of this practice.

In Parishes and Institutions where there is a deacon assigned

1. At Masses where a deacon is scheduled, it is most appropriate that, after Mass, he should purify the vessels before they are washed as usual.

In Parishes and Institutions where there is no deacon assigned

1. The chalices and other Communion vessels may be taken to the sacristy after the completion of the celebration of Mass.
2. If there are a number of chalices to be purified, or if time constraints warrant it, the priest may purify by pouring water into the first chalice, swirling the water around in the customary manner, and then pouring it into the next chalice, and then into the next, etc. After he has done so with the last chalice to be purified, he consumes the ablution. The vessels may then be washed by the sacristan or other minister as usual.
3. The priest celebrant may be assisted by other priests of the parish in the purification of the sacred vessels after Mass.