
MEMORANDUM FROM THE OFFICE OF WORSHIP

TO: PARISH MUSIC AND LITURGY CONTACTS
FROM: PATRICK GORMAN
SUBJECT: OFFICE OF WORSHIP UPDATE
DATE: 13 OCTOBER 2011
CC: BISHOP MORLINO; MSGR. BARTYLLA; ALL DIOCESAN PRIESTS & DEACONS; DIOCESAN OFFICE DIRECTORS; OFFICE OF WORSHIP WEBPAGE

I hope that you are well and that all of your Roman Missal preparations are going well.

Quite obviously, there has been some big liturgical news this week, and I wanted to be in touch regarding this and some other matters.

1. First, this past Tuesday was the forty-ninth anniversary of the convening of the Second Vatican Council (referred to by Blessed Pope John Paul II as “the great grace bestowed on the Church in the Twentieth Century [*Novo Millennio Ineunte*, 57]). If you have a chance, read Blessed Pope John XXIII’s opening address: <http://www.holyspiritinteractive.net/features/vatican2/openingspeech.asp> What a monumental event it was and continues to be and how graced we are to experience it as workers in the Church. Yes, our days sometimes seem filled with more grief and anxiety rather than joy and hope (to quote from the Constitution on the Church), but daily our ministry produces good fruits beyond what we see. I am so very encouraged by the enthusiastic reports I hear from many of you regarding the use of new musical settings of the Mass. Overall, this seems to have gone well, and it is a testament to your own hard work and preparation. While we all need to remain humble (because God’s grace is doing the work), I hope that you can find true satisfaction in the confidence that you have given so freely of your heart and talents.
2. Blessed Pope John Paul II reflected on the fortieth anniversary of the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* in his Apostolic Letter *Spiritus Sponsa* (available online at http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_letters/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_20031204_spiritus-et-sponsa_en.html). In it, he echoed a previous call that he had made for “some sort of examination of conscience concerning the reception given to the Second Vatican Council” (6). His longer letter marking the Constitution’s 25th anniversary, *Vicesimus Quintus Annus*, offers a fuller examination of both positive results and difficulties (full text at

Diocese of Madison
PO Box 44983
Madison, WI 53744-4983
www.madisondiocese.org/worship

Office of Worship
Tel. (608) 821-3080
Fax (608) 821-3013
worship@straphael.org

http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_letters/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_04121988_vicesimus-quintus-annus_en.html). I think that we can all agree that this type of serious and soul-searching examination is vital to the ongoing reform.

1. Communion under both kinds...this is the issue on everyone's mind! I have a number of things to say regarding this, and I hope that they are somewhat helpful to you. First, I will admit that I have not recently spoken with Bishop Morlino about this, so these are my thoughts based on very open and thorough discussions we have had in the past. I want to say for the record that Bishop Morlino has always been very gracious with me regarding questions and clarifications that I have had of him. I am sure that I have given him reason to be frustrated in the past (just as I have done for many of you, I am sure), but he always has been patient with me. I say this because it is easy to become cynical when we read news reports some times, and cynicism is a great danger for us in the Church. I encourage you to pray for him and all bishops daily as they shepherd us through challenging times.

My thoughts:

- a. Don't stop ordering sacramental wine or sell your common chalices! Bishop Morlino has not "outlawed" Communion under both kinds and he has stated that he never will. Currently there is no diocesan plan or timetable regarding the Communion Rite.
- b. The reports from the Phoenix Diocese concerning the expiration of an indult regarding Communion under both kinds seem to have been mistaken. I have contacted the USCCB Secretariat for Divine Worship regarding this. While there was permission granted to the US Bishops for Communion under both kinds on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation (October 13, 1984), there was no time limit noted in the decree on file in the USCCB. My assumption is that this somehow was confused with another indult (regarding the purification of sacred vessels by EMHC) that expired and was not renewed around that same time. Unfortunately the internet has perpetuated this to the point that it is considered to be true, even though there is evidence to the contrary.
- c. The current law (GIRM no. 283) is clear. The pertinent part says:

The Diocesan Bishop may establish norms for Communion under both kinds for his own diocese, which are also to be observed in churches of religious and at celebrations with small groups. The Diocesan Bishop is also given the faculty to permit Communion under both kinds whenever it may seem appropriate to the Priest to whom a community has been entrusted as its own shepherd,

provided that the faithful have been well instructed and that there is no danger of profanation of the Sacrament or of the rite's becoming difficult because of the large number of participants or for some other cause.

We tend to focus on the faculty “to permit whenever appropriate” and pass over “provided that the faithful have been well instructed and that there is no danger of profanation of the Sacrament...” The U. S. Norms (no. 24), which are the particular law for our nation, further state that the excessive use of EMHC, if it obscures the role of priest/deacon as ordinary minister of Holy Communion, may be a reason to limit Communion under both kinds.

- d. The General Instruction of the Roman Missal is available online at <http://usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/roman-missal/general-instruction-of-the-roman-missal/> . The Norms for the United States are online at <http://nccbuscc.org/liturgy/current/norms.shtml> . Both also are published in the front matter of the Roman Missal, third edition.
- e. I am hoping to outline some questions for reflection for pastors and liturgical leaders to reflect and evaluate on some of the “conditions” mentioned above (as well as some other items). This won’t be done immediately, but will be a priority. In the meantime, you are free to move on this as you wish. If you are not prepared to give a serious catechesis on this, my suggestion would be to hold off a bit until this first becomes clearer in your mind (through study and prayer). I am certain that the Bishop wishes to move in this direction. I am equally certain that he is desirous that it is done well so that it deepens, rather than harms, the faith of your people and the unity of the Church.

I hope that this is somewhat helpful to you. As I said at the beginning of this email, God has graced us by allowing us to serve him at this time in the Church. We now have a golden opportunity to address the core of our faith—the Eucharistic Mystery—with our parishioners. It also allows us all to pray more fully for the Church’s unity and for Christ’s love to abide deeply within our hearts.