

HOLY COMMUNION
AND WORSHIP OF
THE EUCHARISTIC MYSTERY
OUTSIDE MASS

THE ROMAN RITUAL

RENEWED BY DECREE OF
THE MOST HOLY SECOND ECUMENICAL COUNCIL OF THE VATICAN
AND PROMULGATED BY AUTHORITY OF POPE PAUL VI

HOLY COMMUNION
AND WORSHIP OF
THE EUCHARISTIC MYSTERY
OUTSIDE MASS

ENGLISH TRANSLATION ACCORDING
TO THE TYPICAL EDITION

For Use in the Dioceses of the United States of America

Approved by the
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
and Confirmed by the Apostolic See

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SACRED CONGREGATION FOR DIVINE WORSHIP

Prot. n. 900/73

DECREE

As spiritual nourishment for the faithful and as a pledge of eternal life, Christ entrusted the Sacrament of the Eucharist to the Church, his beloved bride, which she always receives with faith and love.

The celebration of the Eucharist in the Sacrifice of the Mass is truly the origin and purpose of the worship that is shown to the Eucharist outside Mass. The sacred species are reserved after Mass, particularly so that the faithful, especially the sick and the aged who are not able to be present at Mass, may be united with Christ and his Sacrifice that is offered in the Mass through sacramental Communion.

The reservation of the sacred species, which became customary in order to permit the reception of Communion, led to the custom of adoring this Sacrament and offering to it the worship that is due to God. This cult of adoration is based upon valid and solid principles. Moreover, some of its public and communal forms were instituted by the Church herself.

Therefore, with the revision of the Rite of the Mass and through the Instruction *Eucharisticum mysterium*, published on May 25, 1967, which laid down norms "on the practical arrangements for the worship due to this Sacrament even after Mass and its relationship to the proper ordering of the Sacrifice of the Mass in light of the instructions of the Second Vatican Council and of other documents of the Apostolic See on this matter,"¹ the Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship has revised the rites entitled, *De sacra communione et de cultu mysterii eucharistici extra Missam*.

These rites, approved by Pope PAUL VI, are now published in this edition, which is declared to be the *editio typica*, to take the place of the rites that at present appear in the Roman Ritual. They may be used immediately in the Latin language and in the vernacular language, from the day which the Conferences of Bishops shall decree, after they have prepared a vernacular version and obtained the confirmation of the Apostolic See.

All things to the contrary notwithstanding.

From the offices of the Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship, June 21, 1973, on the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ.

ARTURO Cardinal TABERA

Prefect

✠ A. BUGNINI
Titular Archbishop of Diocletiana
Secretary

¹ Sacred Congregation of Rites, Instruction *Eucharisticum mysterium*, no. 3g: *Acta Apostolicæ Sedis* 59 (1967), p. 543.



DICASTERIUM DE CULTU DIVINO ET DISCIPLINA SACRAMENTORUM

Prot. n. 99/22

CIVITATUM FŒDERATARUM AMERICÆ SEPTENTRIONALIS

Instante Excellentissimo Domino Iosepho Horatio Gomez, Archiepiscopo Angelorum in California, tunc Conferentiæ Episcoporum Civitatum Fœderatarum Americæ Septentrionalis Præsidi, litteris die 31 mensis ianuarii 2022 datis, vigore facultatum huic Dicasterio a Summo Pontifice FRANCISCO tributarum, textum translationis *anglicæ*, cum legitimis aptationibus recognitis, partis Ritualis Romani cui titulus est *De sacra communione et de cultu mysterii eucharistici extra Missam*, ab eadem Conferentia Episcoporum ad normam iuris die 17 mensis novembris anno 2021 approbatum, prout in adiecto exstat exemplari, perlibenter probamus et confirmamus.

In textu imprimendo inseratur ex integro hoc Decretum, quo ab Apostolica Sede petiti confirmatio et recognitio conceduntur.

Eiusdem insuper textus impressi duo exemplaria ad hanc Dicasterium transmittantur. Contrariis quibuslibet minime obstantibus.

Ex ædibus Dicasterii de Cultu Divino et Disciplina Sacramentorum, die 7 mensis martii 2023, in memoria Ss. Perpetuæ et Felicitatis, martyrum.

ARTURUS Card. ROCHE

Præfectus

✠ VICTORIUS FRANCISCUS VIOLA, O.F.M.
Archiepiscopus a Secretis



UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS

DECREE OF PROMULGATION

In accord with the norms established by the Holy See, this edition of *Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharistic Mystery outside Mass* is declared to be the definitive approved English translation of *De sacra communione et de cultu mysterii eucharistici extra Missam, editio typica* (1973), and is hereby promulgated by authority of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharistic Mystery outside Mass was canonically approved for use by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops on November 17, 2021, and was subsequently confirmed by the Apostolic See by decree of the Dicastery for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments on March 7, 2023 (Prot. n. 99/22).

This rite may be used in the Liturgy as of September 14, 2024, the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, and its use is obligatory as of the First Sunday of Advent, December 1, 2024. From that date forward, no other English translation of the rite may be used in the dioceses of the United States of America.

Given at the General Secretariat of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, DC, on January 25, 2024, the Feast of the Conversion of Saint Paul the Apostle.

✠ TIMOTHY P. BROGLIO

Archbishop for the Military Services, USA
President, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

Rev. MICHAEL J.K. FULLER
General Secretary

HOLY COMMUNION AND WORSHIP OF THE EUCHARISTIC MYSTERY OUTSIDE MASS

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

I. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EUCHARISTIC WORSHIP OUTSIDE MASS AND THE EUCHARISTIC CELEBRATION

1. The celebration of the Eucharist is the center of the whole Christian life, both for the universal Church and for local congregations of the same Church. For “the other Sacraments, as also all the ministries of the Church, and the works of the apostolate, are united with the Holy Eucharist and are directed toward it. For in the Most Holy Eucharist is contained all the spiritual wealth of the Church, that is, Christ himself, our Passover and living bread, through his flesh, made living and life-giving by the Holy Spirit, offering life to all, who are thus invited and led to offer themselves, their works, and all created things in union with him.”¹
2. Moreover, “the celebration of the Eucharist in the Sacrifice of the Mass is truly the origin and purpose of the worship that is shown to the Eucharist outside Mass.”² For Christ the Lord “is offered in the Sacrifice of the Mass itself when he begins to be present sacramentally as spiritual food for the faithful under the species of bread and wine,” and furthermore “after the Sacrifice has been offered, and when the Eucharist is reserved in churches or oratories, it is truly Emmanuel, that is, ‘God with us.’ For he is in our midst day and night and dwells in us, full of grace and truth.”³
3. Let no one therefore doubt “that all the Christian faithful should show the worship and adoration that is truly due to God, in veneration of this Most Holy Sacrament, as has always been the custom in the Catholic Church. Nor should it be less adored, because it was instituted by Christ the Lord to be received as food.”⁴
4. In order to direct and encourage devotion to the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist correctly, the Eucharistic mystery must be considered in all its fullness, both in the celebration of the Mass and in the worship of the sacred species, which are reserved after Mass to extend the grace of the Sacrifice.⁵

¹ Second Vatican Council, Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests, *Presbyterorum ordinis*, no. 5.

² Sacred Congregation of Rites, Instruction *Eucharisticum mysterium*, no. 3e: *Acta Apostolicæ Sedis* 59 (1967), p. 542.

³ *Ibidem*, no. 3b: *loc. cit.*, p. 541; Paul VI, Encyclical Letter *Mysterium fidei*, near the end: *Acta Apostolicæ Sedis* 57 (1965), p. 771.

⁴ Sacred Congregation of Rites, Instruction *Eucharisticum mysterium*, no. 3f: *Acta Apostolicæ Sedis* 59 (1967), p. 543.

⁵ Cf. *ibidem*, no. 3g: *loc. cit.*, p. 543.

II. THE PURPOSE OF RESERVING THE EUCHARIST

5. The principal and original purpose of reserving the Eucharist outside Mass is the administration of Viaticum; the secondary purposes are the distribution of Communion and the adoration of our Lord Jesus Christ, present in the Sacrament. And indeed the reservation of the sacred species for the sick led to the praiseworthy custom of the adoration of this heavenly banquet which is kept in places of worship. And this cult of adoration is based on firm and solid reasoning, above all, because faith in the Real Presence of the Lord leads naturally to the external and public expression of that faith.⁶

6. In the celebration of the Mass, the principal ways in which Christ is present in the Church gradually become clear. First, he is present in the assembly of the faithful itself, gathered in his name; then in his word, when the Scriptures are read and expounded in church; also in the person of the minister; finally and above all, in the Eucharistic species. Indeed, in the Sacrament of the Eucharist, in an altogether unique way, the whole and entire Christ, God and man, is substantially and permanently present. This presence of Christ in the species “is called real, not by way of exclusion, as if other kinds of presence were not real, but because it is real *par excellence*.”⁷

Therefore, for the sake of the sign, it is more in keeping with the nature of the sacred celebration that, as far as possible, already from the beginning of the Mass, the sacred species should not be reserved in a tabernacle on the altar where the Mass is being celebrated, since the Eucharistic Presence of Christ is the fruit of the Consecration and should appear as such.⁸

7. The consecrated hosts, sufficient in number for the Communion of the sick and other faithful, should be frequently renewed and reserved in a pyx or other vessel.⁹

8. Pastors should see that, unless a grave reason stands in the way, churches where, in conformity with the law, the Most Holy Eucharist is reserved, are open every day for at least several hours at a convenient time, so that the faithful may easily pray in the presence of the Most Blessed Sacrament.¹⁰

III. THE PLACE FOR THE RESERVATION OF THE EUCHARIST

9. The Most Holy Eucharist should be reserved in a truly prominent place. It is strongly recommended that it also be suitable for private adoration and prayer, so that the faithful may never cease to honor the Lord present in the Sacrament, easily and fruitfully, in private worship.

⁶ Cf. *ibidem*, no. 49: *loc. cit.*, pp. 566–567.

⁷ Paul VI, Encyclical Letter *Mysterium fidei: Acta Apostolicæ Sedis* 57 (1965), p. 764; cf. Sacred Congregation of Rites, Instruction *Eucharisticum mysterium*, no. 9: *Acta Apostolicæ Sedis* 59 (1967), p. 547.

⁸ Cf. Sacred Congregation of Rites, Instruction *Eucharisticum mysterium*, no. 55: *Acta Apostolicæ Sedis* 59 (1967), pp. 568–569.

⁹ Cf. *Missale Romanum, editio typica tertia emendata* (2008), *Institutio generalis*, nos. 323 and 329.

¹⁰ Cf. Sacred Congregation of Rites, Instruction *Eucharisticum mysterium*, no. 51: *Acta Apostolicæ Sedis* 59 (1967), p. 567; *Code of Canon Law*, can. 937.

This will be more easily achieved if the chapel is separate from the main body of the church, especially in those churches where weddings and funerals take place more frequently, and in those that are visited by many on account of pilgrimages or of artistic or historical treasures.

10. The Most Holy Eucharist should be reserved in a tabernacle that is irremovable, solid, not transparent, and locked in such a way that the danger of profanation is prevented to the greatest extent possible. Ordinarily there should be a single tabernacle in individual churches and oratories. The tabernacle is to be placed in a prominent and conspicuous part of the church that is worthily decorated and suitable for prayer.

The one in charge of the church or oratory should see to it that the key to the tabernacle where the Most Holy Eucharist is reserved is safeguarded most carefully.¹¹

11. The presence of the Most Holy Eucharist in the tabernacle is indicated by a veil or in some other suitable way determined by the competent authority.

Near the tabernacle, in which the Most Holy Eucharist is reserved, a special lamp should shine continuously to indicate the presence of Christ and to honor it.

In accordance with traditional custom, the lamp should be fueled by oil or wax.¹²

IV. THOSE THINGS WITHIN THE COMPETENCE OF THE CONFERENCES OF BISHOPS

12. It is within the competence of the Conferences of Bishops, in preparing particular Rituals in accordance with the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (no. 63b), to adapt this portion of the Roman Ritual to the needs of individual regions, so that, when their decisions have been accorded the *recognitio* of the Apostolic See, it may be used in the relevant regions.

In this matter it will be for the Conferences of Bishops:

- a) to consider carefully and prudently which elements, if any, of popular traditions should be retained or admitted, provided that they can be reconciled with the spirit of the Sacred Liturgy; and then to propose to the Apostolic See the adaptations that they judge to be useful or necessary, and, after they have been accorded the *recognitio*, to introduce them.
- b) to prepare translations of texts, so that they may be truly adapted to the character of the different languages and to the character of the cultures, and also to approve them, once their decisions have been accorded the *confirmatio* of the Apostolic See; to prepare and approve other texts according to the norm of law, especially for singing.

N.B. The liturgical texts which refer to males may be adapted to females, changing the gender, or to several people, changing the number.

¹¹ Cf. *ibidem*, nos. 52–53: *loc. cit.*, pp. 567–568; *Code of Canon Law*, can. 938.

¹² Cf. *ibidem*, no. 57: *loc. cit.*, p. 569; *Code of Canon Law*, can. 940.

CHAPTER I

HOLY COMMUNION OUTSIDE MASS

INTRODUCTION

I. THE RELATIONSHIPS THAT EXIST BETWEEN COMMUNION OUTSIDE MASS AND THE SACRIFICE

13. Sacramental Communion received within Mass is the more perfect participation in the Eucharistic Celebration. The Eucharistic sign is expressed more clearly, when the faithful receive the Body of the Lord after the Communion of the Priest, from the same Sacrifice.¹ Therefore recently made bread should be consecrated in every Eucharistic Celebration for the Communion of the faithful.

14. The faithful should be encouraged to receive Communion during the Eucharistic Celebration itself.

Priests, however, should not refuse to give Holy Communion to the faithful who for a just cause seek it, even outside Mass.²

In fact, it is fitting that those who are prevented from being present in the Eucharistic community should be diligently refreshed by the Eucharist, and in this way they may feel themselves united, not only with the Sacrifice of the Lord but also with the community itself, and supported by the love of their brothers and sisters.

Pastors of souls should take care that the sick and aged, even if not gravely sick or in imminent danger of death, should be given the opportunity to receive the Eucharist frequently, even, insofar as possible, daily, especially during Easter Time. Furthermore, it is permitted to administer the Eucharist under the species of wine alone, to those who are unable to receive under the species of bread.³

15. The faithful are to be carefully taught that, even when they receive Communion outside the celebration of Mass, they are intimately united with the Sacrifice which perpetuates the Sacrifice of the Cross, and they are participants in that sacred banquet in which, “by Communion in the Body and Blood of the Lord, the People of God participates in the blessings of the Paschal Sacrifice, renews the New Covenant made once by God with men in the Blood of Christ, and in faith and hope prefigures and anticipates the eschatological banquet in the Kingdom of the Father, proclaiming the Death of the Lord until he comes.”⁴

¹ Cf. Second Vatican Council, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, no. 55: *Acta Apostolicæ Sedis* 56 (1964), p. 115.

² Cf. Sacred Congregation of Rites, Instruction *Eucharisticum mysterium*, no. 33a: *Acta Apostolicæ Sedis* 59 (1967), pp. 559–560.

³ Cf. *ibidem*, nos. 40–41: *loc. cit.*, pp. 562–563.

⁴ *Ibidem*, no. 3a: *loc. cit.*, pp. 541–542.

II. THE TIME FOR ADMINISTERING HOLY COMMUNION OUTSIDE MASS

16. Holy Communion may be given outside Mass on any day and at any time of the day. It is proper, however, to determine times for the distribution of Holy Communion, bearing in mind the convenience of the faithful, so that the sacred celebration may be enacted in a fuller form, for the greater spiritual benefit of the faithful.

Nevertheless:

- a) on Thursday of Holy Week, Holy Communion may be distributed only during Mass; it may, however, be brought to the sick at any time of the day;
- b) on Good Friday of the Passion of the Lord, Holy Communion is distributed only during the celebration of the Passion of the Lord; but it may, however, be brought to the sick, who cannot take part in the celebration, at any time of the day;
- c) on Holy Saturday, Holy Communion may be given only as Viaticum.⁵

III. THE MINISTER OF HOLY COMMUNION

17. It is first of all for the Priest or Deacon to administer Holy Communion to the faithful who ask for it.⁶ It is in every way proper, therefore, that they should give part of their time to the performance of this ministry, according to the needs of the faithful.

Moreover, it is for a duly instituted acolyte, as an extraordinary minister, to give Holy Communion whenever there is no Priest or Deacon, either because of sickness, old age, or because they are prevented by pastoral duties or the number of faithful coming to the holy table is so great that the celebration of the Mass or other sacred celebration may be greatly prolonged.⁷

The local Ordinary may give the faculty of distributing Holy Communion to other extraordinary ministers, whenever it may seem necessary for the pastoral benefit of the faithful, and a Priest or Deacon or acolyte is not available.⁸

IV. THE PLACE FOR DISTRIBUTING COMMUNION OUTSIDE MASS

18. The place in which Holy Communion is normally given outside Mass is a church or oratory in which the Eucharist is regularly celebrated or reserved, or a church or oratory or other place in which the local community habitually comes together for the

⁵ Cf. *Missale Romanum, editio typica tertia emendata* (2008), *Ad Missam vespertinam*, no. 4; *Celebratio Passionis Domini*, no. 2; *Sabbato sancto*, no. 3.

⁶ Cf. Sacred Congregation of Rites, Instruction *Eucharisticum mysterium*, no. 31: *Acta Apostolicæ Sedis* 59 (1967), pp. 557–558.

⁷ Cf. Paul VI, Apostolic Letter *Ministeria quædam*, August 15, 1972, no. VI: *Acta Apostolicæ Sedis* 64 (1972), p. 532.

⁸ Cf. Sacred Congregation for the Discipline of the Sacraments, Instruction *Immensæ caritatis*, January 29, 1973, I, 1 and II: *Acta Apostolicæ Sedis* 65 (1973), pp. 265–266.

liturgical assembly on Sundays or other days. However, Holy Communion may be given in other places, not excluding private houses, when the sick, prisoners, or others involved cannot leave the place without danger or grave difficulty.

V. NORMS GOVERNING THE DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

19. When Holy Communion is administered in a church or oratory, a corporal should be placed on the altar, which is already covered with a cloth; two candles should be lit, as a sign of veneration and of the festive banquet.⁹ A paten should be used.

But when Holy Communion is administered in other places, a suitable table is prepared, covered with a cloth; candles should also be provided.

20. The minister of Holy Communion, if he is a Priest or Deacon, should be vested in an alb, or a surplice over a cassock, and should wear a stole.

Other ministers should wear either the liturgical vesture traditional in their region or vesture which is not unsuitable for this ministry and is approved by the Ordinary.

The Eucharist for administering Communion outside the church should be carried in a pyx or other closed vessel, with such coverings and in such a manner as is appropriate to the place.

21. In distributing Holy Communion the custom of placing a particle of consecrated bread on the tongue of the communicant is to be observed, because it is based on a tradition of several centuries.

However, the Conferences of Bishops may determine, when their decisions have been confirmed by the Apostolic See, that in their jurisdiction, Holy Communion may be distributed by placing the consecrated bread in the hands of the faithful, provided that due care is taken that no lack of reverence or false opinions about the Most Holy Eucharist should insinuate themselves into the minds of the faithful.¹⁰

Moreover, the faithful should be taught that Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior and that, present in the sacramental species, he should be given the same worship or adoration that is due to God.¹¹

In either case, Communion should be given by the competent minister, who shows the particle of consecrated bread to the communicant and gives it to him (her), saying the words, **The Body of Christ**, to which the communicant replies, **Amen**.

With regard to what pertains to the distribution of Holy Communion under the species of wine, the liturgical norms should be observed exactly.¹²

⁹ Cf. *Missale Romanum, editio typica tertia emendata* (2008), *Institutio generalis*, no. 307.

¹⁰ Cf. Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship, Instruction *Memoriale Domini*, May 29, 1969: *Acta Apostolicæ Sedis* 61 (1969), pp. 541–555.

¹¹ Cf. Sacred Congregation for the Discipline of the Sacraments, Instruction *Immensæ caritatis*, January 29, 1973, no. 4: *Acta Apostolicæ Sedis* 65 (1973), p. 270.

¹² Cf. *Missale Romanum, editio typica tertia emendata* (2008), *Institutio generalis*, no. 283; cf. Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship, Instruction *Sacramentali Communione*, June 29, 1970, no. 6: *Acta Apostolicæ Sedis* 62 (1970), pp. 665–666.

22. Fragments that may remain after Communion should be reverently collected and placed in a pyx or put into a vessel with water.

Similarly, if Communion is administered under the species of wine, the chalice or other vessel used for this purpose should be washed with water.

The water used for the ablutions may be either drunk or poured out in an appropriate place.

VI. DISPOSITIONS FOR RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION

23. The Eucharist, which continuously represents the Paschal Mystery of Christ in the midst of humanity, is the fount of all grace and of the remission of sins. Nevertheless, those who intend to receive the Body of the Lord, should come to it with clean consciences and properly disposed souls, so that they may harvest the fruits of the paschal Sacrament.

The Church therefore teaches “that no one conscious of mortal sin in themselves, however contrite they feel themselves to be, should receive the Holy Eucharist without previous sacramental confession.”¹³ If there is a serious reason and no opportunity for confession, they should make an act of perfect contrition with the intention of confessing individually, as soon as possible, the mortal sins that they cannot confess at present.

It is desirable that those who are accustomed to communicate daily or quite often go to the Sacrament of Penance at regular intervals, depending on their circumstances.

Moreover, the faithful should look on the Eucharist as an antidote that frees them from daily faults and preserves them from mortal sins; in addition, they should understand the right way to use the penitential parts of the liturgy, especially of the Mass.¹⁴

24. Communicants should not receive the Sacrament unless they have fasted for at least one hour from food and drink, with the sole exceptions of water and medicine.

The elderly and those suffering from any kind of infirmity, as well as those who take care of such persons, may receive the Most Holy Eucharist even if they have consumed something within the hour before.¹⁵

25. Union with Christ, to which the Sacrament itself is directed, should be extended to the whole Christian life, so that the Christian faithful, continually contemplating the gift they have received, live their daily lives under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, as an act of thanksgiving, and bring forth more abundantly the fruits of charity.

In order that they may more easily continue the act of thanksgiving which is offered to God in a splendid way in the Mass, it is recommended that all who have been refreshed in Holy Communion should continue in prayer for a certain period of time.¹⁶

¹³ Cf. Council of Trent, Session XIII, *Decretum de ss. Eucharistiæ sacramento*, cap. 7: Denzinger-Schönmetzer 1646–1647; *ibidem*, Session XIV, *Canones de sacramento Pœnitentiæ*, can. 9: Denzinger-Schönmetzer 1709; Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Pastoral Norms for the Administration of General Sacramental Absolution*, June 16, 1972, Introduction and no. VI: *Acta Apostolicæ Sedis* 64 (1972), pp. 510 and 512.

¹⁴ Cf. Sacred Congregation of Rites, Instruction *Eucharisticum mysterium*, no. 35: *Acta Apostolicæ Sedis* 59 (1967), p. 561.

¹⁵ Cf. *Code of Canon Law*, can. 919 §§ 1 and 3.

¹⁶ Cf. Sacred Congregation of Rites, Instruction *Eucharisticum mysterium*, no. 38: *Acta Apostolicæ Sedis* 59 (1967), p. 562.

THE ORDER OF DISTRIBUTING HOLY COMMUNION OUTSIDE MASS

I. THE RITE WITH A FULLER CELEBRATION OF THE WORD OF GOD

26. This form is to be used especially when the celebration of Mass has not taken place or when Holy Communion is distributed at scheduled times, so that the faithful may also be nourished from the table of the word of God. For by hearing the word of God, the faithful themselves understand that God's wonders, which are being proclaimed, reach their preeminence in the Paschal Mystery, the memorial of which is celebrated sacramentally in the Mass, and in which they participate by Communion. Moreover, receiving the word of the Lord and being nourished by it, they are led on, in thanksgiving, to fruitful participation in the mysteries of salvation.

THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

27. When the faithful are gathered and everything has been arranged as noted above (nos. 19–20), the minister begins with the Sign of the Cross, then greets those present.

If he is a Priest or Deacon, he says:

**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit
be with you all.**

All reply:

And with your spirit.

Or:

The Lord be with you.

All reply:

And with your spirit.

If, however, the minister is not a Priest or Deacon, he (she) greets those present with these or similar words:

**Bless the Lord, brothers and sisters,
who in his goodness invites us (you)
to the table of the Body of Christ.**

All reply:

Blessed be God for ever.

Another optional formula of greeting, no. 189.

Other words from Sacred Scripture, with which the faithful are customarily greeted, may also be used.

28. The Penitential Act then occurs. The minister invites the communicants to repentance, saying:

**Brethren (Brothers and sisters), let us acknowledge our sins,
and so prepare ourselves to participate in this sacred
celebration.**

A brief pause for silence follows. Then all recite together the I confess:

I confess to almighty God
and to you, my brothers and sisters,
that I have greatly sinned,
in my thoughts and in my words,
in what I have done and in what I have failed to do,

And, striking their breast, they say:

through my fault, through my fault,
through my most grievous fault;

Then they continue:

therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin,
all the Angels and Saints,
and you, my brothers and sisters,
to pray for me to the Lord our God.

The minister concludes:

**May almighty God have mercy on us,
forgive us our sins,
and bring us to everlasting life.**