



June 15, 2023

Dear Monsignor or Father:

Since the beginning of the pandemic, we have refrained from distributing the Precious Blood to the faithful and from receiving from the common cup during concelebration. Though we have steadily resumed the celebration of our sacred liturgies to the point where we are able to gather without the anxiety of spreading the virus, the decision to restrict the distribution of the Precious Blood has remained as a precaution. Given the declaration of the end of the COVID-19 public health emergency May 11, 2023, and after consulting presbyteral council, I have made the decision that, effective with the celebration of the Transfiguration of the Lord the weekend of August 5-6, 2023, all parishes may once again offer the Precious Blood to the faithful at the discretion of the pastor.

I know that there is still concern for some people regarding the reception of the Precious Blood. It is important to note that each person must make their own decision when it comes to receiving one or both species. If one is immunocompromised, has respiratory symptoms, or believes they may have been exposed to COVID or flu, it may be best to receive only the Precious Body. It is important to understand that the theology of the Church allows for reception under one species, the Body, or Blood of Christ. At the same time, the Church recognizes the spiritual benefit of communing with our Lord under both species. "So that the fullness of the sign may be made more clearly evident to the faithful in the course of the Eucharistic banquet, lay members of Christ's faithful, too, are admitted to Communion under both kinds, in the cases set forth in the liturgical books..." (Redemptionis Sacramentum, 100). Whether one receives the Body only or the Blood only, or both the Body and the Blood together, he or she receives the fullness of Christ.

I expect pastors to use the month of July to make adequate preparations to return to the distribution of the Precious Blood, and to provide catechesis to the people on the wonderful gift of the Eucharist. Please see the attached memo from the Office for Divine Worship with points for consideration.

If you have any questions, please contact the Office for Divine Worship at 814-824-1271.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+Lawrence T. Persico

The Most Reverend Lawrence T. Persico, JCL
Bishop of Erie