



Diocese of Galway, Kilmacduagh and Kilfenora

Diocesan Policy in Relation to the Blessed Sacrament

1. Reservation of the Blessed Sacrament

- 1.1. The Blessed Sacrament should only be reserved in places approved by the Bishop and then in accordance with a written decree which will outline the conditions of reservation and those responsible.

2. Safe Keeping of the Blessed Sacrament

- 2.1. It is the responsibility of the Parish Priest or equivalent in Canon Law to ensure that the Blessed Sacrament is always reserved in a locked tabernacle secured to a solid base, with the tabernacle key kept in a safe place.

Can. 938 §1. The Most Holy Eucharist is to be reserved habitually in only one tabernacle of a church or oratory.

§2. The tabernacle in which the Most Holy Eucharist is reserved is to be situated in some part of the church or oratory which is distinguished, conspicuous, beautifully decorated, and suitable for prayer.

§3. The tabernacle in which the Most Holy Eucharist is reserved habitually is to be immovable, made of solid and opaque material, and locked in such a way that the danger of profanation is avoided as much as possible.

- 2.2. A tabernacle lamp should be in place and lit at all times.

Can. 940 A special lamp which indicates and honours the presence of Christ is to shine continuously before a tabernacle in which the Most Holy Eucharist is reserved.

3. Maintenance of the Hosts and Tabernacle Area

- 3.1. It is the responsibility of the Parish Priest or equivalent in Canon Law to ensure that hosts are changed regularly and the inside and outside of the tabernacle are maintained diligently.

The ciboria should be purified regularly, and care should be taken not to allow particles of the hosts to accumulate in the ciboria. This is especially pertinent to places where Mass is not celebrated on a regular basis.

Can. 939 Consecrated hosts in a quantity sufficient for the needs of the faithful are to be kept in a pyx or small vessel; they are to be renewed frequently and the older hosts consumed properly.

4. Access to the Tabernacle

- 4.1. Normally, only the priest should access the tabernacle outside of the liturgy.
- 4.2. During the liturgy, access to the tabernacle should be under the direction of the celebrant and always in accordance with the liturgical norms.

5. Distribution of Holy Communion

- 5.1. As a general rule, Holy Communion should be given from hosts consecrated at the same Mass and not from those reserved in the tabernacle.
- 5.2. Communion should be distributed either in the hand or on the tongue.
- 5.3. An opportunity to receive under both kinds should be available to the faithful.
- 5.4. The faithful should be periodically reminded of how to receive Communion in a reverent and liturgically appropriate manner.
- 5.5. The Host should never be taken from the ciborium by the communicant or passed between communicants. (See paragraph 160 of the General Instruction of the Roman Missal)
- 5.6. The Chalice should never be taken by the communicant or passed between communicants. (See paragraph 160 of the General Instruction of the Roman Missal)
- 5.7. Care should be taken to ensure that the host is consumed by the recipient soon after reception.

6. Coeliac Hosts

- 6.1. “Hosts that are completely gluten-free are invalid matter for the celebration of the Eucharist.” (Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments) Consequently, not all such hosts provided are approved as valid material for consecration. Hosts should be low gluten and not gluten-free. This should be checked with providers.
- 6.2. To avoid cross-contamination, coeliac hosts should not be stored or distributed with other hosts.
- 6.3. Alternatively, arrangements should be made to provide the Chalice for those with coeliac conditions. The Chalice should never be taken by the communicant or passed between communicants. (See paragraph 160 of the General Instruction of the Roman Missal)
- 6.4. The Host should never be taken from the ciborium by the communicant or passed between communicants. (See paragraph 160 of the General Instruction of the Roman Missal)

7. Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

- 7.1. Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are for their parish only. They should only exercise their ministry in another parish with the express permission of the Parish Priest or equivalent in Canon Law of that parish.
- 7.2. Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion should be appropriately trained. Training courses will be made available periodically at a diocesan level.
- 7.3. Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion should be commissioned at a special commissioning ceremony.

8. Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion bringing Communion to the sick

- 8.1. Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion who bring Communion to the sick must be specially designated by the Parish Priest or equivalent in Canon Law and may only do so within the said parish.
- 8.2. They must have received appropriate liturgical training.

8.3. They must comply with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons Policy and Procedures (2019):

- Receive appropriate training for bringing Eucharist to the sick.
- Be Garda Vetted.
- Have completed appropriate forms to comply with Vulnerable Persons Policy and Procedures (2019).
- Have completed appropriate accredited Vulnerable Persons training.

8.4. Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion should collect hosts for the sick

- (a) from the priest in the sacristy after Mass, or
- (b) after Communion during the liturgy by means of an entrustment and sending out ceremony only.

8.5 Only one host should be given for each sick person.

8.6 The storing of multiple hosts in homes for daily distribution is forbidden.

8.7 Hosts should never be given on the presentation of a pyx in the line for Holy Communion.

8.8 In each parish, a register should be kept detailing to whom Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are bringing Communion.

9 Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

9.5 Times for Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament should be facilitated in all parishes.

9.6 Provision should be made that the Blessed Sacrament is never left exposed with nobody present.

Can. 941 §1. In churches or oratories where it is permitted to reserve the Most Holy Eucharist, there can be expositions with the pyx or the monstrance; the norms prescribed in the liturgical books are to be observed.

§2. Exposition of the Most Blessed Sacrament is not to be held in the same area of the church or oratory during the celebration of Mass.

9.7 Other activities should not be scheduled in the Church during the time of Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament.

30th of May, 2024

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