

## **Diocese of Saint Augustine Special Needs In The Reception of Holy Communion**

For centuries the normative reception of Holy Communion by the laity was under both species. But by the end of the 13th century significant changes in religious piety, liturgical practice and doctrinal definition had taken place and reception of the Precious Blood had all but ceased.

The reforms of Second Vatican Council encouraged reception of Holy Communion under both kinds and there has been an increased practice of reception by the faithful under both forms of consecrated Bread and Wine.

However, recently numerous questions have arisen about the reception of Holy Communion from Catholics suffering with Celiac Sprue disease, or alcohol intolerance. Many gluten intolerant (celiac sprue) sufferers are unable to ingest wheat flour commonly used in the preparation of hosts. Likewise, those who suffer from some form of alcohol intolerance are likewise restricted from receiving the Precious Blood.

Because of the seriousness of these illnesses and growing number of person with the diseases the Liturgical Commission has prepared these pastoral notes to assist in a sensitive and appropriate pastoral response to these concerns about the reception of Holy Communion.

### **Introduction**

In providing pastoral sacramental care for persons with celiac disease or those dealing with health issues involving alcohol, the faithful should be reminded of the teaching of the Church that Christ, whole and entire, as well as true Sacrament is always received under one kind. So when people communicate under only one species their communion is a sacramental sharing in the Eucharistic banquet and Sacrifice. Further, the reason for restoring the practice of Holy Communion under both kinds is to more fully express the complete sign of the sacrament. The issue of receiving only one species, either of bread or wine, is therefore not a theological one but one of liturgical practice and pastoral care.

Parishioners should also be informed that issues involving the matter of the sacrament are strictly regulated and therefore require certain permissions.

### **Reception of the Precious Blood Only by Celiac Patients**

1. Persons with celiac-sprue disease who cannot receive Communion under the form of Bread may receive the Precious Blood alone.
2. Reception under both kinds is the norm for reception of Holy Communion at Masses in the dioceses of the United States. But, if for some reason this norm is not observed, the Precious Blood must be made available to those with celiac disease who request it, even if it is not offered to the rest of the assembly. This is in accord with the norm of law (Canons 843 and 925), which states that the sacraments cannot be refused to those in good standing who ask for them and permits the reception of Holy Communion under the form of wine alone in cases of necessity. In such cases the priest's chalice should not be used when offering the Precious Blood, since a portion of the Host has been placed in it. A separate chalice may be needed.
3. No special permission is needed for those who wish to receive the Precious Blood with other communicants.

### **The use of Low-Gluten Hosts or Mustum**

4. The ordinary is competent to give permission for an individual priest or layperson to use low-gluten hosts or mustum for the celebration of the Eucharist. Permission can be granted habitually, or for as long as the situation continues which occasioned the granting of permission.
5. The authority to permit the lay faithful to use mustum and low-gluten hosts may be delegated to pastors under Canon 137.1. Medical certification of the condition justifying their use is not required. And such permission, once granted stands for as long as the condition persists.
6. Low-gluten hosts and mustum must conform to the norms established by law. Non-gluten or hosts made of others substances or grape juice are may not be used. A list of suppliers who provide these approved items is provided.
7. Low gluten hosts should only be used with medical consultation and approval since even low gluten may not be suitable for every person. If it is determined that their use is appropriate these hosts should not be stored or placed with other altar breads.

### **Pastoral Oversight**

8. It is important for all pastors to recognize that there are people in their care who are medically advised against the reception of Eucharistic Bread. This is an issue that often surfaces as when young children are preparing for First Communion.
9. Pastors should make known to parishioners who suffer from celiac-sprue or have alcohol intolerance to inform him if this is a matter of concern or reason for not receiving Holy Communion. The determination of an appropriate response needs to be discussed privately and accommodations made. For the sake of privacy and confidentiality care should be taken that this does not call undue attention to the person with illness,
10. Generally intinction in the distribution of the sacred species does not prove to be a viable method for the reception of Holy Communion. It denies the communicant the option for reception in the hand. It also prevents recovering alcoholics from receiving Communion.
11. An attached chart offers a guide for the use of mustum, low-gluten hosts or wine alone by priests, deacons and the lay faithful.

## **Resources Regarding Celiac Disease**

**The USCCB Committee on the Liturgy Website:** [www.usccb.org/liturgy/](http://www.usccb.org/liturgy/)

**For April-May 2000 Newsletter excerpts:** <http://www.nccbuscc.org/liturgy/innews/042000.htm>

**For November 2003 Newsletter:** <http://www.usccb.org/liturgy/innews/1103.htm>

**Celiac Sprue Association of the United States of America (CSA/USA):** [www.csaceliacs.org](http://www.csaceliacs.org)

### **Low-gluten Hosts Approved for Use at Mass**

Congregation of Benedictine Sisters of Perpetual Adoration  
Sister Rita, OSB, Manager  
Altar Breads Department  
31970 State Highway P  
Clyde, Missouri 64432  
Phone: 1-800-223-2772  
Email: [altarbreads@benedictinesisters.org](mailto:altarbreads@benedictinesisters.org)

### **Mustum Approved for Use at Mass For those with Alcohol Intolerance**

Ranelle Trading/Ojai Fresh Juice Corporation  
Contact: Mr. Mike Ranelle, president  
2501 Oak Hill Circle, Suite 2032  
Ft. Worth, TX 76109  
Phone: 877-211-7690 (toll free)  
Email: [mike@ojaifresh.com](mailto:mike@ojaifresh.com)

Mont La Salle Altar Wine Company  
Contact: Mr. James Cox, president  
385 A La Fata Street  
St. Helena, Ca. 94575  
Phone: 707-963-2521  
Toll Free: 800-447-8466

### **The Use of Mustum, Low-Gluten Hosts or Wine Alone at Mass by Priests, Deacons and the Lay Faithful**

The following chart, provides a ready reference for identifying the options for the reception of Holy Communion under the forms of mustum, low-gluten hosts or wine alone by priests, deacons and the lay faithful afflicted with gluten and/or alcohol intolerance. As indicated below, priests should note the ways in which a condition of gluten or alcohol intolerance may affect not only their reception of Holy Communion, but also their roles as celebrants and concelebrants.

Priests are reminded that the permission of their Ordinary is required for the alterations in their roles as celebrants or concelebrants described in the chart below. Deacons and the lay faithful must seek individual permissions, as noted above, for the use of low-gluten hosts or mustum.

	<b>Options for those who suffer from gluten intolerance</b>	<b>Options for those who suffer from alcohol intolerance</b>	<b>Options for those who suffer from both gluten and alcohol intolerance</b>
<b>Deacons and Lay Faithful</b>	–may receive a small amount of a regular host; or –may use a low-gluten host; or –may receive under the form of wine only.	–may receive a small amount under the form of wine; or –may receive under the form of bread only; or –may use mustum.	–may take a small amount of a regular host; or –may take a small amount under the form of wine; or –may use a low-gluten host and mustum
<b>Priest as Sole Celebrant</b>  *The priest celebrant must always receive Holy communion under both forms.	–may take a small amount or a regular host; or –may use a low-gluten host.  Otherwise, he may not celebrate Eucharist individually.	–may take a small amount under the form of wine; or –may use mustum.  *If the priest is able to take only a small amount of wine, then what remains may be consumed by a layperson.	–may take a small amount of a regular host; or –may take a small amount under the form of wine; or –may use a low-gluten host and mustum  Otherwise, he may not celebrate the Eucharist individually.
<b>Priest as Principal Celebrant at a Concelebrated Mass*</b>	–may take a small amount of a regular host; or –may use a low-gluten host for himself alone. Other concelebrants should consume regular hosts.  Otherwise, he may not preside at concelebration.	–may take a small amount under the form of wine; or –may use mustum for himself alone. Other concelebrants should use regular wine.	–may take a small amount of a regular host and may take a small amount under the form of wine; or –may use a low-gluten host and mustum for himself alone. Other concelebrants should use regular bread and wine.  Otherwise, he may not preside at concelebration.
<b>Priest as Concelebrant</b>	–may take a small amount of a regular host; or –may use a low-gluten host; or –if unable to use a low-gluten host, then may receive under the form of wine only.	–may take a small amount under the form of wine; or –may use mustum; or –if mustum is not available, then may receive under the form of bread only.	–may take a small amount of a regular host; or –may take a small amount under the form of wine; or –may use a low-gluten host and/or mustum.