



Office of the Bishop

Decree on purification of Sacred Vessels

My Dear Brother Priests and Deacons:

In conformity with the letter received from the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments (Prot. No. 468/05/L), **it is not permissible** for extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion to purify the Sacred Vessels at Mass.

When the General Instruction was first issued, the Bishops of the United States sought and received from the Holy See special permission, by way of an indult, to permit the priest to receive the help of extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion in purifying the Sacred Vessels. The indult granted to the dioceses of the United States on March 22, 2002, was originally granted for three years, and at the direction of the Holy Father, it will not be extended. This change in practice regarding purification of Sacred Vessels reflects a movement to bring the practices in the United States more in line with the practices of the Catholic Church around the world.

As Bishop of Tyler, I therefore abrogate the faculty I extended under the indult on June 18, 2002 which has also been included in the Priest's Faculties for the Diocese of Tyler. I hereby decree that the following liturgical norms and practices are to be observed by all parishes and missions in the Diocese of Tyler during the celebration of Holy Mass.

- 1) The Sacred Vessels are to be purified only by a priest, deacon or an instituted acolyte. The priest who celebrates the Mass is responsible to see to the purification of the Sacred Vessels. (GIRM 163, 183, 192, 279)
- 2) The Sacred Vessels are to be purified at the altar or at the credence table (GIRM 183)
- 3) If the Sacred Vessels are so numerous as to unduly lengthen the celebration of Holy Mass, they may be purified after Mass. In this case, the Sacred Vessels will rest on a corporal on the credence table, and should be covered with a purificator. Immediately after Mass the Sacred Vessels are purified by a priest, deacon or an instituted acolyte. (GIRM 163)
- 4) After the Sacred Vessels are purified (GIRM 279), and the ablution is consumed, the Vessels should be washed appropriately. The washing of the Sacred Vessels may be done by a lay person.

These norms come into effect immediately. By the First Sunday of Advent, December 3, 2006 all parishes and missions are to be in compliance. This decree is to be communicated to extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion and a copy posted in every Sacristy, along with my Eucharistic Instruction of December 2002.

Let us pray that we may continue to fall in love with Our Lord Jesus present in His Body and Blood in the Holy Eucharist and through our liturgical catechesis lead all our people to a deeper encounter with the Blessed Trinity.

Given this day, the Feast of the Dedication of St. John Lateran, November 10, 2006.

Alvaro Corrada, S.J.
Bishop of Tyler

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