

Communion in the Hand: Why Not?

"Wherever I go in the whole world, the thing that makes me the saddest is watching people receive Communion in the hand." (Mother Theresa)

- ✦ Introduction of Communion in the Hand
- ✦ Top Reasons **Not** To Take Communion in the Hand
- ✦ Don't Be Fooled...

Note: Of course, the following refers to the reception of Holy Communion in the hand by the laity (not priests).

Introduction of Communion in the Hand

Introduction of Communion in the hand for lay persons in the 20th century began as a result of disobedience to the Pope. It has contributed to irreverence, loss of faith, desecration and sacrilege. Many Catholics mistakenly believe this practice is the norm in the Church, however, the truth is that Communion in the hand may only be allowed conditionally, under an "Indult" (special permission). And, even this limited toleration was extracted from the Holy See due to widespread *disobedience* on the part of certain of the faithful [many of which were influenced to adopt this practice by *deceitful* measures ("a campaign of deliberate deception and misleading propaganda"), while others simply - and without thinking - "followed the crowd"].

Top Reasons **Not** To Take Communion in the Hand

There are numerous and important reasons why faithful Catholics should *never* receive Communion in the hand, such as...

- Communion in the hand lessens respect for the Holy Eucharist.
- Communion in the hand contributes to sacrilege & desecration.
- Communion in the hand leads to loss of faith in the Real Presence.
- Communion in the hand goes against the expressed wishes of recent popes (one recent pope warned that "the innovation could lead to irreverence, profanation, and the adulteration of sacred doctrine") and was introduced in the 20th century in defiance of their wishes. No known pope recommends this practice.
- Communion in the hand often results in sacred particles - *Christ's true Flesh and Blood* - being dropped on the floor and trampled on by parishioners. In fact, since most people fail to examine their hands for sacred particles after receiving Holy Communion in the hand, there could be dozens or more sacred particles on the floor in any parish where this practice is tolerated. This means that many people at each parish may literally be stepping on Christ's body - even those parishioners who don't take Communion in the hand. It is useful to remember the Church's constant teaching regarding the fact that even the tiniest particle of the Eucharist contains Christ's Body, whole and entire:

"Yes, the same Jesus Christ is just as much in a particle of a host as in a whole host." (Catechism of St. Pius X)

"Jesus Christ is present whole and entire in the smallest portion of the Holy Eucharist under the form of either bread or wine; for His body in the Eucharist is in a glorified state, and as it partakes of the character of a spiritual substance, it requires no definite size or shape." (Baltimore Catechism)

"Nor should it be forgotten that Christ, whole and entire, is contained not only under either species, but also in each

particle of either species. Each, says St. Augustine, receives Christ the Lord, and He is entire in each portion. He is not diminished by being given to many, but gives Himself whole and entire to each." (Catechism of the Council of Trent)

"Christ's Flesh is food, and His Blood is drink; yet is He whole under each Species. He is not cut by the receiver, nor broken, nor divided: He is taken whole. He is received by one, He is received by a thousand; the one receives as much as all; nor is He consumed, who is received. And when the Sacrament is broken, waver not, but remember that there is as much under each fragment as is hidden under the whole. Of the substance there is no division; it is but the sign that is broken; and He who is the Signified, is not thereby diminished, either as to state or stature." (Sequence)

"[O]ur Lord is not in the Sacrament as in a place. Place regards things only inasmuch as they have magnitude. Now we do not say that Christ is in the Sacrament inasmuch as He is great or small, terms which belong to quantity, but inasmuch as He is a substance. The substance of the bread is changed into the substance of Christ, not into magnitude or quantity; and substance, it will be acknowledged by all, is contained in a small as well as in a large space. The substance of air, for instance, and its entire nature must be present under a small as well as a large quantity, and likewise the entire nature of water must be present no less in a glass than in a river. Since, then, the body of our Lord succeeds to the substance of the bread, we must confess it to be in the Sacrament after the same manner as the substance of the bread was before consecration; whether the substance of the bread was present in greater or less quantity is a matter of entire indifference." (Catechism of the Council of Trent)

"If any one denieth that in the venerable sacrament of the Eucharist the whole Christ is contained under each species, and under every part of each species, when separated; let him be anathema." (Council of Trent)

- Communion in the hand requires that one 'self-communicate' - even though Holy Communion should *not* be handled by lay persons ["*To touch the sacred species...is a privilege of the ordained*" (Pope John Paul II)] *Note: For more information on this topic, see filer: "Lay Eucharistic Ministers": Why Not?"*
- Communion in the hand tends to treat the holiest of all things not sacredly, but rather treats it like some common object.
- Communion in the hand resembles how one eats fast food.
- Communion in the hand (self-communicating) detracts from priestly dignity and places lay persons on the same level as priests.
- Communion in the hand may display a lack of humility.
- Communion in the hand leaves no way for priests to "ensure proper reverence and decorum" with regard to the Blessed Sacrament.
- Those who take Communion in the hand risk dropping the Sacred Host onto the floor.
- Communion in the hand engenders an "unbecoming familiarity".
- Communion in the hand "discourages reverence for the mystery".
- Communion in the hand "precludes awe" and "all but extinguishes a sense of sacredness".
- Communion in the hand has been used as a tool by liberals and feminists who want to change the Church. They want the practice to be *imposed* on everyone.

- Communion in the hand may physically sully the Holy Eucharist and lead to illness since those who receive Communion in the hand do not wash their hands before handling the Eucharist. [*Note: Those who receive Communion in the hand may have, only minutes previously, touched filthy dollar bills (e.g. for the collection), touched contaminated collection baskets, touched the unwashed hands of multiple strangers (e.g. 'sign of peace'), sneezed or coughed into their hands, lifted dirty kneelers, etc.]*
- Communion in the hand was inspired by Protestants - *it was purposely introduced by Protestant 'Reformers' in the 16th century to destroy belief in the Real Presence.* In fact, the practice itself has been considered "symbolic of the Protestants' rejection of Catholic Eucharistic teaching".
- Communion in the hand has aided those who steal the Holy Eucharist for use in satanic rituals.
- Communion in the hand is only reluctantly tolerated by the Church by way of an Indult (and may not be universally licit - it may be "strictly forbidden in Rome and throughout Italy").
- *There is no benefit to Communion in the hand, only danger.*

Catholics Should Receive Communion in the Traditional Manner

Faithful Catholics should reject Communion in the hand and receive Holy Communion in the traditional manner - on the tongue - as is their *indisputable* right. Regardless of what others may be doing, we must remember that we are responsible only for our own behavior. One must NEVER feel compelled to take Communion in the hand, even if he must act alone. Should a priest seem hesitant or confused, remember that one's right to receive Holy Communion in the traditional manner *cannot be disputed*. Be patient, but firm. Keep in mind the many reasons why one should receive Holy Communion in the traditional manner (such as those indicated above) and pray that others will soon follow.

Don't Be Fooled

With regard to the issue of Communion in the hand, faithful Catholics should be aware that liberals have promoted a misleading and deceptive "propaganda campaign" designed to equate the reception of Holy Communion in the hand by lay persons with the "dignity of man". They also attempt to mislead the faithful to consider the practice of Communion in the hand as being the "true" traditional practice of the Church. Modernists - "*the worst enemies of the Church*" (Bl. Pope Pius IX) and "*the most pernicious of all the adversaries of the Church*" (Pope St. Pius X) - also attempt to make Catholics feel that communion in hand is preferable. Don't be fooled!

The liberal's desire of placing the Holy Eucharist - God - in our unconsecrated hands seems more like an attempt to "control God" rather than to emphasize "human dignity". Considering that our blessed Lord humbles Himself under the appearance of bread and wine, should we not consider our smallness and unworthiness of such a great Gift? Should we not follow the Biblical admonitions, such as...

"Serve the LORD with fear; with trembling bow down in homage" (Ps. 2:11)

"Give to the LORD the glory due God's name. Bow down before the LORD'S holy splendor!" (Ps. 29:2)

Continued on reverse...

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; prudent are all who live by it." (Ps. 111:10)

"My hand made all these things when all of them came to be, says the LORD. This is the one whom I approve: the lowly and afflicted man who trembles at my word." (Isa. 66:2)

Instead, they would rather have us stand and stick out our hand as if we were handling fast food.

Never willing to discard their agenda, the modernists have even adopted misleading campaigns to convince faithful Catholics that Communion in the hand is a "truly" traditional practice. They may point to the biblical account of the Last Supper or to an early writing which discusses the practice. Conscientious Catholics, however, should realize that such arguments are misleading or false. For example, even if those at the Last Supper took Holy Communion in the hand, we must remember that they were the apostles - the first bishops of the Church, ordained by Christ. Therefore, they were invested with the priestly dignity. No lay persons received (or distributed) Holy Communion in the hand at the Last Supper.

Also, one must remember that in the earliest days of Christianity, there was much persecution. The fact that some early Christians (Catholics) may have 'self-communicated' in times of persecution (or when there were no priests), does not mean this was the desired practice of the Church. Despite this, modernists may continue point to early documents in an attempt to 'prove' this practice as being "truly" traditional. The fact is that at least one favored document of the modernists may be of doubtful authenticity. This same document is often selectively quoted to skip past the "troublesome" parts that they would not like to mention (e.g. touching one's sensory organs with Christ's blood). Also skipped by modernists are the parts of early writings which emphasize the great reverence owed to the Blessed Sacrament (e.g. using one's hands to make a "throne" for the Eucharist, women being prohibited from receiving the Holy Eucharist in their bare hands, etc.). It is always interesting to notice how liberals selectively quote a handful of old documents when they feel it suits their agenda, but will deny a 'mountain' of old documents which contradict them. (If they are *really* trying to restore 'tradition', ask them why they are not seeking to restore *all* the traditional practices - e.g. penances lasting for years, public penances, sinners being required to remain outside the church begging for prayers, etc. - but are instead seeking to restore just the 'traditions' that suit their fancy.)

In any case, we know for certain that the practice of receiving Communion in the hand may be considered a "serious offense" by the Early Church Fathers, *except* in special cases (e.g. times of persecution, absence of a priest):

"It were needless to point out that for anyone in times of persecution to be obliged, in the absence of a priest or deacon, to receive communion by his own hand is certainly not a serious offence, because long custom sanctions this practice in such cases. Indeed, all the solitaries in the desert, where there is no priest, reserving Communion at home, receive it from their own hands." (St. Basil the Great, Doctor of the Church, c. 369 A.D.)

We may be certain that the Holy Spirit has guided the Church in prohibiting this practice for so many centuries. And certainly, the Church does not now need to follow the lead of 16th century heretics - heretics who hated the Mass and adopted this practice specifically to *destroy* Catholics' faith in the Real Presence.

One only has to look at the fruits of this practice to see that its introduction has caused great harm. As a direct result of this practice, great sacrilege has been committed, profanation has become frequent, belief in the Real Presence has plummeted, the priestly roles are confused, reverence and respect for the Holy Eucharist are down sharply, etc.

When one discusses the practice of Communion in the hand with a liberal, he should ask the liberal for 'bottom line' facts - e.g.

How, exactly, does this practice better honor Christ? How does it benefit the individual? How does it benefit the Church? How is it more reverent? How does it better prevent against sacrilege and profanation? How does it safeguard the doctrine of the Real Presence? Clearly no satisfactory answers may be given to such questions. Frankly it does not matter whether the practice was tolerated under certain conditions in the earliest days of the Church if its reintroduction today is harmful, which it has clearly proven itself to be. Catholics must also be careful of false statements made by liberals (including false statements that a certain pope 'recommended' the practice - when the truth is that he recommended the opposite), published articles containing unproven statements simply asserted as true without any proof, and errors in logic.

In Conclusion

In conclusion, conscientious Catholics should reject the practice of Communion in the hand. This practice:

- Was promoted by the Protestant 'Reformers' in the 16th century to destroy the faith of Catholics
- Was introduced by liberals in the 20th century to promote their agenda
- Was deceptively promoted
- Is not recommended by popes
- Was tolerated (under certain conditions) only *reluctantly* due to disobedience
- Leads to irreverence and profanation of the Blessed Eucharist
- Reduces belief in the Real Presence and is therefore harmful to souls - Remember St. Paul's warning in 1 Cor. 11:29: "*For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body, eats and drinks judgment on himself.*"
- Leads to the trampling of Hosts by many parishioners in each parish where this practice is tolerated (see above)

Remember that this practice is NOT required (and is, in fact, not recommended). Further, the rejection of this practice does *not* make one "reactionary, ignorant or disobedient". Rather, the rejection of this practice conforms to tradition and the expressed will of the popes. It shows greater respect for our Lord, greater respect for the priestly dignity, helps strengthen and protect one's faith, expresses one's belief in the Real Presence, and protects the Holy Eucharist from profanation and sacrilege. Remember that one should not blindly follow others - in fact, that's what the Protestant 'Reformers' counted on - and those who followed their ways lost their true Catholic faith and became Protestant! Instead, one should show the utmost respect and honor for the Holy Eucharist, receiving it on the tongue directly from the hands of a priest. Remember, you have the undeniable right to receive Holy Communion on the tongue and must not feel compelled to put the Blessed Eucharist in your hand and self-communicate. [Note: Occasionally, a priest may be confused if few parishioners take Holy Communion on the tongue - simply be patient with the priest and remember that your right to receive Holy Communion on the tongue cannot be disputed. Be firm, but patient.] Now is the time to take a stand for the Holy Eucharist. Why not educate others and challenge them to join you?

"To touch the sacred species and to distribute them with their own hands is a privilege of the ordained"
(Pope John Paul II, 1980 A.D.)

"[O]ut of reverence towards this sacrament, nothing touches it, but what is consecrated; hence the corporal and the chalice are consecrated, and likewise the priest's hands, for touching this sacrament. Hence it is not lawful for anyone else to touch it except from necessity, for instance, if it were to fall upon the ground, or else in some other case of urgency." (St. Thomas Aquinas, Doctor of the Church and "greatest theologian in the history of the Church")

"To safeguard in every possible way the dignity of so august a Sacrament, not only is the power of its administration entrusted exclusively to priests, but the Church has also prohibited by law any but consecrated persons, unless some case of great necessity intervene, to dare handle or touch the sacred vessels, the linen, or other instruments necessary to its completion [much less the Sacred Species]. Priests themselves and the rest of the faithful may hence understand how great should be the piety and holiness of those who approach to consecrate, administer or receive the Eucharist."
(Catechism of the Council of Trent)

Did You Know?

Abuses such as Communion in the hand are specific to the Novus Ordo (New Order) Mass - the Mass celebrated in most Catholic parishes since it was concocted by men after the Second Vatican Council in the 1960's. There are *numerous and significant* differences between the Traditional Latin Mass and the Novus Ordo Mass.

The Traditional Latin Mass, has specific rubrics which prevent abuses and novelties, such as the use of "Lay Ministers", Communion in the hand, etc.

Happily, you can still attend the Traditional Latin Mass - the highly reverent "Mass of the Saints" - the Mass in use for most of the life of the Church. This Traditional Latin ("Tridentine") Mass is still validly said in Catholic parishes today.

Contact your diocese for the nearest location of this incomparable Mass.

If this Mass is not available in your parish, petition your bishop!

For More Information on the Traditional Latin Mass, Try Visiting the Latin Mass / Catholic Tradition Section of MyCatholicSource.com

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