

The Blood of Christ

Beginning 2 December 2023, St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church will once again be able to offer the Precious Blood at selected Masses. It has been a while since the Precious Blood has been offered at Mass, so here are some reminders and new procedures that will be implemented at St. Thomas Aquinas.

- The Precious Blood will be offered at the **5.00p Saturday Vigil Mass** and on **Sunday at the 10.30a Mass**. The Blood will be offered at these Mass times so long as the number of Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (EMHC) present will allow this to occur. The number of Masses at which the Precious Blood is available is limited due to the number and availability of EMHC.
- In accordance with the new procedures for distribution of the Holy Eucharist, distribution of the Precious Blood will follow a similar pattern in that it will only be distributed at the base of the sanctuary. Persons wishing to receive the Blood may do so either after receiving and consuming the Host or solely by receiving from the Chalice. Remember, receiving under one species (either the Body *or* Blood) is receiving both in the Eucharist.
- If possible, there will be four chalices available at Mass: two will be at the left corner of the sanctuary, and two will be at the right corner. Persons who desire to receive from the chalice will need to go to these locations.
- Persons who receive only the Precious Blood due to dietary considerations should sit closer to the sanctuary (raised area in which the altar and ambo exist) in order to ensure the Precious Blood will be available.
- Remember to treat the Chalice with utmost care; be gentle when taking it from the EMHC and returning it, and hold it firmly so as not to spill the Blood; consume only enough to participate as a communicant and being mindful that it is not a “drink to wash down the Host.”
- Reception of the Precious Blood is optional; those who choose to receive from the chalice do so of their own accord. Intinction (dipping the Host in the Blood) is not an option in the Roman Rite in Diocese of Phoenix. The Host must be consumed prior to leaving the vicinity of the ordinary minister or EMHC before receiving from the Chalice.
- Hygiene is of utmost importance: *do not receive from the Chalice if symptomatic, feeling ill, or after exposure to infectious disease.*
- Once the Blood has been completely consumed in a chalice, the minister or EMHC will cover the chalice with a purificator to signify the chalice is empty and s/he will return to the altar.

It is a privilege to receive the Precious Blood and it must be treated with the same reverence as the Body of Christ. As indicated in the *General Instructions of the Roman Missal*, when approaching the minister for Holy Communion, the communicant is asked to display a *sign of reverence* toward the Eucharist *if physically able to do so*. This “sign” can be a simple bow of the head, a profound bow, or genuflection. Additionally, the only proper response to “Blood of Christ” from the minister of Communion is “Amen.” It is not appropriate to add or say any other words (refer to “Part 1: A Review of the Practice of Reception of the Source and Summit of our Faith” published in the 18 November parish bulletin for more information).

Thank you for your assistance in maintaining the reverence and respect that is due the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ.