

# NOTES ON THE LITURGY

## Office of Divine Worship - Archdiocese of Newark

### The Easter Triduum and the Eucharist

The Easter Triduum stands as the high point of the liturgical year. In preparation for the Triduum the church is emptied of all sacramental signs: water, oil and the very Eucharist, so as to create that distance and emptiness so necessary to be able to start anew.

#### The Eucharist During the Easter Triduum

On Holy Thursday, holy water is removed from the fonts and “the tabernacle should be entirely empty; but a sufficient amount of bread should be consecrated in this Mass for the Communion of the clergy and the people on this and the following day.” “Holy Communion may only be distributed to the faithful during Mass; but it may be brought to the sick at any hour of the day.” (*Roman Missal*, RM, ‘Thursday of the Lord’s Supper’).

*When the tabernacle is emptied for Holy Thursday, the hosts should be removed from the church and placed in a safe place. Good Friday is the only day on which the Church endorses distributing Communion to the assembly from the tabernacle. Consecrated wine is never to be reserved for distribution.*

At the end of the Evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper, the Eucharist is “carried through the church to a place of repose prepared in a part of the church or in a chapel suitably decorated.” “The faithful are invited to continue adoration before the Blessed Sacrament for a suitable length of time during the night...but after midnight the adoration should take place without solemnity.” (RM) “The Blessed Sacrament should be reserved in a closed tabernacle or pyx. **Under no circumstances may it be exposed in a monstrance.**” (*Circular Letter Concerning the Preparation and Celebration of the Paschal Feasts*, 55) The place of reposition may be a place that has been prepared as indicated above or the tabernacle itself, but it is never reposed on the main altar (See GIRM, 315).

*The Eucharist remains in the place of reservation until it is retrieved at the appropriate time during the Good Friday celebration of the Lord’s Passion. It is not removed from the repository after midnight.*

#### Good Friday

On Good Friday, “in accordance with ancient tradition, the Church does not celebrate the Eucharist: Holy Communion is distributed to the faithful during the celebration of the Lord’s Passion alone, though it may be brought at any time of the day to the sick who cannot take part in the celebration.” (*Circular Letter*, 59)

Once the altar table is set after the Adoration of the Holy Cross, “the Deacon or, if there is no Deacon, the Priest himself, putting on a humeral veil, brings the Blessed Sacrament **back from the place of repose to the altar** by a shorter route, while all stand in silence. Two ministers with candles accompany the Blessed Sacrament.” (RM)

“When the distribution of Communion has been completed, the ciborium is taken by the Deacon or another suitable minister to a place prepared outside the church or, if circumstances so require, it is placed in the tabernacle.” (RM)

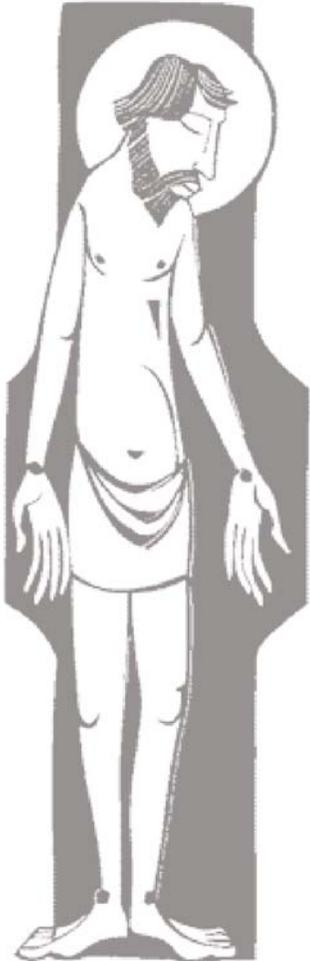
*In the Archdiocese of Newark, remaining hosts from Good Friday should be consumed or combined with the hosts that were removed before the Evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper and kept in a safe place outside of the church for the sick. The tabernacle (and the place of reservation) is ordinarily empty from the end of the Good Friday service until after Communion at the Easter Vigil.*

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## Holy Saturday

On Holy Saturday, “the church abstains strictly from the celebration of the sacrifice of the Mass. Holy Communion may only be given in the form of viaticum. The celebration of marriages is forbidden, as also the celebration of other sacraments, except those of penance and the anointing of the sick.” (*Circular Letter*, 75)

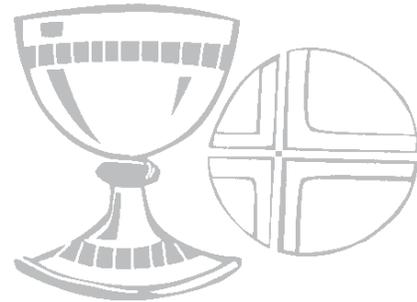
*At the beginning of the Easter Vigil, the tabernacle should be empty. Enough hosts should be consecrated for all those present at the Vigil. At the end of the Easter Vigil Mass, any remaining hosts are to be reserved in the tabernacle. Any hosts that were placed outside of the church on Holy Thursday or Good Friday may be reposed in the tabernacle after the Easter Vigil Mass is completed.*



## First Communion & Ministers of Communion

First Communion should not be celebrated on Holy Thursday. “It is not particularly appropriate for first Communion to be celebrated on Holy Thursday of the Lord’s Supper. Another day should be chosen instead, such as a Sunday between the Second and the Sixth Sunday of Easter, or the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ, or the Sundays of Ordinary Time, since Sunday is rightly regarded as the day of the Eucharist.” (*Redemptionis Sacramentum*, 87)

*In the Archdiocese of Newark, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion **are not** to be installed at any of the liturgies of the Easter Triduum, including the Evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper.*



## Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament is prohibited during the Easter Triduum, even in places where “perpetual adoration” is customary. “Under no circumstances may perpetual exposition take place during the Easter Triduum” (*Thirty-One Questions on Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament*, USCCB, 26)

*Therefore, the Eucharist is not to be exposed at any time on Holy Thursday through evening prayer of Easter Sunday.*

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