

# NOTES ON THE LITURGY

Office of Divine Worship    Archdiocese of Newark

## Sacred Vessels for use in the Liturgy

*The following quotes from the 2002 General Instruction of the Roman Missal and Redemptionis Sacramentum (2004) give specific information regarding the styles and materials of sacred vessels permissible for use in Mass.*

### General Instruction of the Roman Missal 327 - 332

327. Among the requisites for the celebration of Mass, the sacred vessels are held in special honor, especially the chalice and paten, in which the bread and wine are offered and consecrated, and from which they are consumed.

328. Sacred vessels are to be made from precious metal. If they are made from metal that rusts or from a metal less precious than gold, then ordinarily they should be gilded on the inside.

329. In the Dioceses of the United States of America, sacred vessels may also be made from other solid materials that, according to the common estimation in each region, are precious, for example, ebony or other hard woods, provided that such materials are suited to sacred use and do not easily break or deteriorate. This applies to all vessels which hold the hosts, such as the paten, the ciborium, the pyx, the monstrance, and other things of this kind.

330. As regards chalices and other vessels that are intended to serve as receptacles for the Blood of the Lord, they are to have bowls of nonabsorbent material. The base, on the other hand, may be made of other solid and worthy materials.

331. For the consecration of hosts, a large paten may appropriately be used; on it is placed the bread for the priest and the deacon as well as for the other ministers and for the faithful.

332. As to the form of the sacred vessels, the artist may fashion them in a manner that is more in keeping with the customs of each region, provided each vessel is suited to the intended liturgical use and is clearly distinguishable from those intended for everyday use.

### Redemptionis Sacramentum, 117

117. Sacred vessels for containing the Body and Blood of the Lord must be made in strict conformity with the norms of tradition and of the liturgical books. The Bishops' Conferences have the faculty to decide whether it is appropriate, once their decisions have been given the recognition by the Apostolic See, for sacred vessels to be made of other solid materials as well.

It is strictly required, however, that such materials be truly noble in the common estimation within a given region, so that honour will be given to the Lord by their use, and all risk of diminishing the doctrine of the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharistic species in the eyes of the faithful will be avoided.

**Reprobated, therefore, is any practice of using for the celebration of Mass common vessels, or others lacking in quality, or devoid of all artistic merit or which are mere containers, as also other vessels made from glass, earthenware, clay, or other materials that break easily. This norm is to be applied even as regards metals and other materials that easily rust or deteriorate.**

