

**RECOVERING THE FULL
CELEBRATION OF THE LITURGY
RECEIVING THE BLOOD OF CHRIST**

*Take and eat; this is my body...
Drink from it, all of you, for this is
my blood of the covenant, which will be shed
on behalf of many for the forgiveness of sins.*

—Matthew 26:26-28

In the Gospel of Matthew, at the Last Supper, Jesus specifically commanded his disciples to “eat” and “drink” his Body and Blood. This command is at the heart of all of our worship—the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Jesus gave his Body and Blood to be consumed. In the Gospel of John, Jesus taught: “Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you” (6:53).

Because of concerns about sharing the chalice during the pandemic, the Archdiocese of Newark, like many others, placed a moratorium on its distribution for the assembly. It was reserved to the clergy who are obligated (for validity) to receive the Blood of Christ at every Mass.

Communion from the chalice is being restored now, so that all may have the opportunity to participate more fully in the celebration of the Eucharist. The church rightly teaches that whoever receives Communion under only one kind receives the whole Christ, “Body and Blood, soul and divinity,” since the living Lord is totally and completely present in each of the species. However, it also states that “Holy Communion has a fuller form as a sign when it takes place under both kinds” (GIRM, 281).

Beginning as early as the Evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper on Holy Thursday, April 6, 2023, but no later than Pentecost Sunday, May 28, 2023, parishes across the Archdiocese of Newark will once again begin offering the Blood of Christ at Mass. This will allow all parishioners to respond to Jesus’ command to eat and drink at their own level of comfort.

Parishioners wishing to receive Holy Communion from the chalice should approach the minister and bow their head slightly in a sign of reverence. When the minister says “The Blood of Christ,” the communicant replies audibly, “Amen,” takes the chalice from the minister and drinks. The minister then takes it back and firmly wipes both sides of the rim while turning it slightly for the next communicant.

“The consecrated host may be received either on the tongue or in the hand, at the discretion of each communicant” (GIRM, 160).

Saint Paul wrote, “As often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes” (1 Cor 11:26). Eating and drinking the Body and Blood of the Lord fulfills his Last Supper command, commemorates his sacrifice on the Cross, and moves believers into a deeper participation in the Eucharist.