GOOD SHEPHERD
Catholic Parish

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May 25, 2025
The Sixth Sunday of Easter

Dear Parishioners,

On this last Sunday as Administrator of Good Shepherd Parish, I offer you one final Pastoral Letter. This Sunday we have the great joy of celebrating the First Holy Communion of 28 children! This annual celebration is an occasion for all of us to reflect on our own First Holy Communion and the great gift of sharing in the Eucharist again and again as we journey together towards the eternal banquet of the heavenly Jerusalem.

On April 30, 2025, Archbishop Brian J. Dunn issued a letter concerning liturgical celebrations in the Archdiocese of Halifax-Yarmouth along with three separate documents containing policies and guidelines for particular liturgical celebrations. The focus of these letters is the Most Holy Eucharist, especially our celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, Exposition and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, and the bringing of Holy Communion to the Homebound. As a result of these documents, we will need to adjust some of our practices in Good Shepherd Parish.

To coincide with the celebration of the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ,
the following will come into effect on the weekend of June 22, 2025:

1. **Going to the Tabernacle**

Currently, it is our practice that during every Mass, an appointed minister goes to the tabernacle to bring the Body of Jesus already consecrated from a previous Mass to the altar. However, all the faithful, insofar as possible, are meant to receive Holy Communion consecrated within the same Mass at which they actively participate.

Consecrated hosts are primarily reserved in the tabernacle to be brought to those who are dying in emergency circumstances, to keep the real-presence of Jesus dwelling in the church building, and for other exceptional circumstances when Holy Communion may be given outside of Mass.

We will no longer retrieve the already Blessed Sacrament from the tabernacle during Mass. We will continue striving to consecrate the number of hosts needed for each Mass. Should we run out of consecrated hosts, the ministers may take additional consecrated hosts directly from the tabernacle. At the end of the distribution of Holy Communion, the remaining consecrated hosts may be consumed or reserved in the tabernacle.

2. Low-Gluten Hosts

For those who are gluten intolerant, "Low-gluten" hosts are available. These hosts do in fact contain gluten, as only "bread" can be validly consecrated as the Body of Christ, however, the amount is so minimal, that in almost all cases it has no adverse effects on those who are gluten intolerant.

Currently, we keep a vessel of consecrated low-gluten hosts in the tabernacle and at each Mass the priest distributes from this vessel to those who request a low-gluten host. Because of the importance of receiving Holy Communion consecrated within the Mass at which you actively participate, this practice will change.

Those who require a low-gluten host will need to advise a member of the Hospitality Team at the main entrance of the church, who will ensure the correct number of low-gluten hosts are consecrated at each Mass. The priest will continue to distribute the low-gluten hosts during the Mass.

3. Communion to the Homebound

Currently, those desiring to take Holy Communion to the homebound simply present themselves during the Communion Procession, and the priest or minister gives them Holy Communion and places a consecrated host in their pyx to take to the homebound. We will change this practice.

- All those who wish to participate in bringing Holy Communion to the Homebound are required to register with the parish office. Only those registered with Good Shepherd Parish may exercise this ministry. For those already engaged in this ministry, please contact Tracy at the parish office as soon as possible. [902-454-8200 or office@bellaliant.com]
- Anyone engaged in this ministry is considered an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion and must receive at least a brief formation for the exercise of this ministry.
- Holy Communion is only brought to those who are truly impeded from attending Mass in-person.
- When bringing Holy Communion to someone who is not a member of your family, the Responsible Ministry Guidelines in place within the archdiocese come into effect. As such, two unrelated people from our parish are required to make the visit.
    - Both parishioners must complete the Responsible Ministry Clearance.
    - Only one parishioner needs to be an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion.

Guidelines when at Mass:

- Before Mass, those taking Communion to the homebound, will place their pyx on a silver tray on the credence table in the sanctuary.
- Your pyx should have a piece of masking tape on the bottom with your name or initials and the number of hosts you require.
- Receive Holy Communion for yourself with the rest of the congregation and return to your seat.
- At the end of the distribution of Holy Communion, the priest or deacon will bring the pyxes to the entrance of the sanctuary, and those taking Communion to the Homebound will come forward to receive their pyx.
- They will then depart immediately (before the conclusion of the Mass) and go directly to the person to whom they are bringing Holy Communion.

While some of these changes may be felt as an inconvenience, they are truly ordered toward deepening our understanding of, and appreciation for the Most Holy Eucharist. Furthermore, the Archbishop's letter and the associated instructions come after many months of reflection and discussion with the Archdiocesan Liturgical Commission and the Priests of the archdiocese. I kindly request for all parishioners to be supportive of these changes and to assist our new pastor and our parish liturgy team in bringing these new practices into effect on the weekend of June 22, 2025.

In Christ.

Fr. Patrick Salah

Rev. Patrick J. Salah

Administrator, Good Shepherd Parish