

# RECEPTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

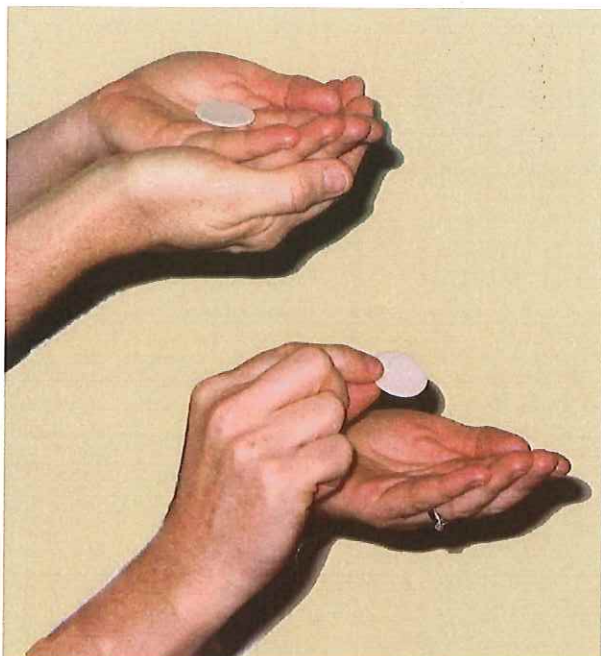
The norm established for the dioceses of the U.S. is that Communion is to be **received standing**, unless an individual member wishes to receive Communion while kneeling (GIRM 160). When receiving holy Communion, the person approaches the minister and **bows his or her head before the sacrament as a gesture of reverence**. While the sign of reverence used to be a genuflection, for the sake of unity, the U.S. bishops asked that the faithful bow their head instead.

When the Communion minister says, ***“The Body of Christ,”*** we respond ***“Amen”*** as a sign of our belief in the true presence – the body, blood, soul and divinity of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. By our ***“Amen,”*** we are saying, ***“I believe.”***

The consecrated host may be received either on the tongue or in the hand, at the discretion of each communicant.

## Reception by hand

If we receive Communion in the hand, we **extend** our hands to the priest (or Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion) with one hand placed on top of the other. If one is right handed the left hand should rest upon the right. The host will then be laid in the palm of the left hand and then taken by the right hand to the mouth. If one is left-handed this is reversed. It is not appropriate to reach out with the fingers and take the host from the person distributing. Then place it in your mouth to consume the host immediately.



## Reception by tongue

If you are receiving on your tongue, make your choice of this clear to the priest or minister by opening your mouth and extending your tongue. In this way the Body of Christ can easily be placed on the tongue. **It is important to stick your tongue out far enough for the minister to place the host on your tongue.**



## Approaching for a blessing

If people are unable to receive Holy Communion—because they have not been initiated into the Church, they are in a state of sin, due to a medical issue or for some other reason—they may join the Communion procession. On reaching the priest they indicate they would like a blessing by crossing their arms across the chest.