

# THE SACRAMENT OF EUCHARIST

## A VERY Brief Overview of the Sacrament of Eucharist

(Excerpts from the Diocese of Green Bay's 1997 Eucharist Guidelines)

### Theology of the Eucharist:

- Source, Summit of Ecclesial Life
- Economy of Salvation
- Institution of the Eucharist
- Real Presence
- The Sacrifice
- The Meal
- Eucharist and Healing
- Eucharistic Formation

### History of the Eucharist:

- Emerging Christianity: The First Century: Disciples gather to share Scripture stories, a meal, and to serve the common good.
- The Domestic Church: 100 to 313: Christians gather in house-churches to celebrate the Eucharist.
- The Rise of the Roman Church: 313 to 750: Christianity grows moving the Eucharistic celebration to the basilica.
- Frankish Domination: 750 to 1073: Eucharistic rituals are composed and the Mass takes a definite shape.
- The Prelude to Reform: 1073 to 1517: Variety in prayers is centralized.
- Reform and Uniformity: 1517 to 1903: The Lord's Supper and the Modern Mass
- The Return of Change: 1903 to 1962: The beginning of liturgical reform including the Eucharist.
- Catholic Reformation and Renewal: 1962 and Beyond: The people are invited to active participation in the Eucharistic liturgy.

### FORMAT OF THE FIRST COMMUNION GUIDELINES

The format chosen for the Green Bay Diocesan sacramental guidelines is based on the three categories of competency, components and experiences. (Imagine creating a cake: the competency is the expectation that you can bake a cake; the components are that you gather the recipe and necessary ingredients; the experience is that you actually create a cake by measuring, mixing, and baking the ingredients guided by the recipe.)

For First Communion preparation, we have created specific competencies, components and experiences for the candidate, the family and the faith community.

In turn, we have created competencies, components and experiences in six categories:

Prayer	Doctrine
Scripture	Morality
Eucharistic liturgy	Service/witness/ evangelization

(Continued on reverse)

## **CANON LAW REGARDING FIRST EUCHARIST**

Specific canons in the *Code of Canon Law* (1984) help parents and parish leadership to determine a candidate's readiness. Appropriate canons for First Communion formation are Canons 912, 913 and 914.

**Canon 912** notes that through Baptism we come to Eucharist. Therefore, any baptized person in good standing with the Church can participate in the Eucharist and receive Holy Communion.

**Canon 913** addresses the issue of Eucharist to children. It is required that candidates have sufficient knowledge and careful preparation so as to understand the mystery of Christ according to their capacity. Candidates need to be willing to receive the Body and Blood of the Lord with faith and devotion.

**Canon 914** focuses on Eucharistic formation and the responsibility of parents and those who take the place of parents, together with the pastor as catechetical leader, to see that children who have reached the age of reason are appropriately prepared.

*Can. 914 It is primarily the duty of parents and those who take the place of parents, as well as the duty of pastors, to take care that children who have reached the use of reason are prepared properly and, after they have made sacramental confession, are refreshed with this divine food as soon as possible. It is for the pastor to exercise vigilance so that children who have not attained the use of reason or whom he judges are not sufficiently disposed do not approach holy communion.*

*[These are excerpts from the 1997 Diocesan Sacrament of Eucharist Guidelines, which contains much more information about the Sacrament, the preparation and celebration.]*