



"There are many rooms in my Father's house" John 14:2

New Norms set for the distribution, reception of Holy Communion under both bread and wine

WASHINGTON — Newly revised norms for the distribution and reception of Holy Communion under the outward signs of both bread and wine by Catholics in the United States have been authorized by the Vatican and decreed by the President of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The new norms, published by Bishop Wilton D. Gregory of Belleville last month, were approved by the members of the USCCB on June 15, 2001, and confirmed by the Holy See on March 22, 2002.

The General Instruction of the recently revised Roman Missal permits conferences of Bishops to provide norms for the distribution of Holy Communion under both kinds, meaning under the outward signs of both bread and wine. The newly approved norms replace the

U.S. bishops' 1984 directory on the matters titled, This Holy and Living Sacrifice.

The first section of the new norms provides a theological summary of the Church's teaching on Holy Communion under both kinds, while the following section describes the authorized procedures by which such distribution can be accomplished at Mass. Specific directives are given regarding liturgical roles, sacred vessels and the rites to be followed in distributing Holy Communion under both kinds.

Included among the norms is an indult from the Vatican's Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments providing for the cleansing of sacred vessels by Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. The indult was promulgated as "particular

law" for the dioceses of the United States at the same times as the norms and it became effective on April 7, 2002. The Congregation declined, however, to approve an indult authorizing extraordinary ministers to assist with the distribution of the Precious Blood to other chalices during the singing of the Lamb of God.

In the letter confirming the norms for distribution of Holy Communion under both kinds, the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments also made clear that Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, or indeed any communicant, might assist in the consumption of what remains of the Precious Blood after distribution of Holy Communion has been completed.

Committee on the Home Missions gives \$10.5 million in grants

WASHINGTON — This year the Bishops' Committee on the Home Missions will award \$10.5 million in grants to more than 100 dioceses, including the Diocese of Lake Charles, along with organizations and religious orders. This is more than double the \$4.5 million disbursed four years ago, a year after the U.S. Bishops established the first Catholic Home Missions Appeal.

Many of the recipients do not have the monetary means to provide basic pastoral ministry without assistance from the grants, which are made possible by the annual Catholic Home Missions Appeal, which here in the Diocese of Lake Charles, will be this weekend April 27-28. The theme is "Strengthening the Church at Home."

The new grants will be distributed July 1.

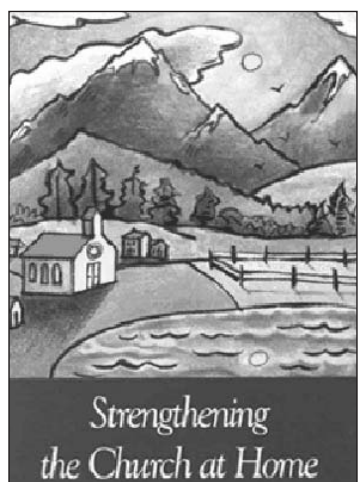
About 37 percent of the grants go to Hispanic ministries of various sorts. About 15 percent go to Eastern-rite churches, while 6 percent each are awarded to African-American and American Indian ministries, and another 4 percent to Asian initiatives.

The majority of the grant provided to the Church in Southwest Louisiana goes to aid those most in need of financial assistance in the diocese. Other funds provide aid to the offices of Religious Education and Youth Ministry, Evangelization and Vocations.

When Father Jim Kelley's plane went down last month on his way to celebrate Palm Sunday Mass in a remote outpost of southwest Alaska, the staff at the Bish-

ops' Committee experienced a personal as well as professional loss. Not only did they know the priest, but one staff member had once flown with Father Kelley in the same Piper Cherokee that crashed into a mountain in blizzard conditions March 24.

Father Kelley, 73, was one



of two priests who pilot themselves to parishes and missions in the 160,000 square mile Archdiocese of Anchorage. At the time of his death he had been pastor of Holy Rosary Church in Dillingham. The parish serves 600 people in 23 communities spread out over more than 33,000 square miles on Alaska's mainland and stretching out to the Aleutian Islands.

Helping Father Kelley's apostolate and others like it serve the spiritual needs of Catholics in the most remote areas of the country is typical of the Catholic Home Missions.

"The great success of the Catholic Home Missions Appeal is a reflection of the strong links among the dioceses of the United States

and its dependencies in a spirit of communion," said the Chairman of the Catholic Home Missions, Bishop Paul A. Zipfel of Bismarck, North Dakota. "It's a great example of the Church taking care of its own." The grants for 2002-2003 were finalized at a recent meeting of the Committee on the Home Missions in Laredo, Texas.

The Committee on the Home Missions awarded grants totaling \$4.5 million in 1998-1999, \$6.0 million in 1999-2000, \$7.7 million in 2000-2001, and nearly \$9 million in 2001-2002. The new grants consist of \$10.5 million to 85 dioceses and 21 organizations and religious orders.

The Catholic Home Missions Appeal supports the work of the Church wherever Catholics are few and the Church is fragile: in the Deep South, in the Rocky Mountain states, in the dusty Southwest, in the Rust Belt of eastern Ohio, in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, and in Pacific territories like American Samoa and the Marshall Islands.

A recent report gives some indication of places where funds are most needed to help the work of the Church, the Diocese of Jackson, Mississippi, the Diocese of Salt Lake City, the Diocese of San Bernardino, California, the Diocese of Beaumont, Texas, the Diocese of Baker, Oregon, the Diocese of Gallup, New Mexico, the Prefecture Apostolic of the Marshall Islands, the Diocese of Boise, and the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA.

Conversion and Faith in the Christian Life

(Editor's Note: First of three installments)
Happy Easter!

In our Catholic tradition Easter is not simply one Sunday. It is an entire Liturgical Season. This is why we celebrate seven Sundays of Easter between now and Pentecost Sunday, the Feast of the Holy Spirit on May 19th. Thus, it is completely appropriate for us to keep saying "Happy Easter". Our long Easter Season provides us with the opportunity to explore our Easter faith at a deeper level as we support the newly baptized members of the Church during their Mystagogia (growth in faith). Easter Faith is much more than believing that Jesus Christ was raised to glorified life by God the Father. It is really the whole vital reality of our daily lives as members of the body of Christ, the Church. Easter Faith is a matter of ongoing Conversion.

The Dynamic Nature of Faith

What really do we mean by faith? We often hear such expressions as "Keep the faith," "Practice the faith," "Don't lose your faith," "They have fallen away from the faith." What precisely are we talking about when we say this?

Is faith essentially the intellectual acceptance of a body of teachings about the existence of God; Father, Son and Spirit; the content of revelation; the truth of the scripture; the purpose of the Catholic church; the essence of the priesthood; the importance of the sacraments; the limits of ecumenism; the extent of the role of women in the church; the reality of sin and grace; the nature of hell, purgatory and heaven?

Does one automatically have faith by intellectually affirming propositions about these matters? Some would answer "yes" without hesitation. Not only do they consider these propositions to be the contents of faith, but also they would go so far as to take certain historical expressions of these propositions and even the rather simple question and answer format of The Baltimore Catechism to be the ageless and exclusive expression of "the faith." Thus, from this perspective becoming a

Catholic, or Christian initiation, is the rather simple matter of accepting "the faith."

There is a sense in which this is particularly true. Clearly the careful elaboration of beliefs about these perennial Christian concerns is closely related to the faith. Through them faith is expressed, specified and even embodied. However, the example and teaching of Christ, the evidence of scripture and tradition, the witness of holy women and holy men, and the best of Catholic spirituality and theology strongly attest to the fact that faith, in its most basic form is not simply from the eyebrows up, it is not exclusively intellectual. It is a far more vital and personal reality than what is conveyed by somewhat static theoretical ideas about church doctrines or Catholic beliefs.



Bishop Edward K. Braxton

The fundamental reality of faith is the radical personal and communal response to the gift of love that the Creator has for each of us that we can never merit. It is this gracious movement of God's life in us that is expressed by the words and symbols of faith. But this spiritual reality is prior to and deeper than our religious words and symbols. Thus, "the faith" can never be adequately verbalized in everyday language. This is why the church has not only creeds, doctrines and, hopefully, challenging homilies, but also stained glass windows, deeply moving ceremonies, a rich musical heritage, powerful religious art, the rhapsodic expressions of mystics, and a radical social commitment. This makes faith a response of the whole person - mind and heart. Faith is the on-going and lifelong response to the call to conversion that is now whispered and now shouted in the depths of a person's very being, and in the unraveling history of a family, a community, a nation and the

whole church. When potential new Christians sign the Book of the Elect, they are not signing a contract for membership in a "church." Rather, it is a commitment to struggling to take up the Way of Life given to us by Christ at Easter.

Faith, then, is our response to God's call to conversion. Conversion is one of those words that has an odd sound to some Catholics. We usually do not use the word when speaking about ourselves. We may associate the term with coming forward for Christ at an evangelical rally. Christians of other traditions experience conversion when they become Catholics! But I am using conversion in a sense that should apply to us as much as or more than anyone else.

Conversion is the transformation of the way we experience ourselves, others, the world and the universe. Those who undergo conversion shall never be the same again. They are turned inside out and upside down by God's Holy Spirit. They are like Abram - asked to sacrifice his only son Isaac - become Abraham; like Moses before the bush that burns but is not consumed; like Saul - knocked from the horse - become Paul; like the young Jewish peasant girl become Mary, the mother of Jesus, because of her startled "Let it be" to the angel's call. They are like Simon prancing in the waves of a stormy sea - become Peter; and perhaps even like Jesus of Nazareth triumphing over desert temptations - as the Father's Christ.

In every human person the reality of conversion is a complex of on-going, overlapping elements that may be thought of as several different but related forms of conversion. Conversion may be religious, Christian, ecclesial, moral, or intellectual. These distinctions between the different forms of conversion are logical distinctions that make the whole process easier to grasp. However, each "form" of conversion is not a separate reality in a person's life and not related to the next "form" of conversion.

(Next: Three "forms" of conversion)

Byzantine Liturgy for Peace in the Middle East set May 3

LAKE CHARLES - The Diocesan Chapter of the Knights and Ladies of the Holy Sepulchre, a Pontifical Order of Knighthood with ties to the Holy Land, will sponsor a special Byzantine Liturgy celebrated according to the Melkite tradition at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception on May 3, beginning at 7 p.m.

The Knights and Ladies of the Holy Sepulchre were founded in 1099 with the specific charge to safeguard the shrines of Christianity, particularly, the tomb of our Savior, thus, the name. Today, the Order of the Holy Sepulchre has as its mission to "preserve and spread the (Christian) faith in Palestine, support and further the mission of the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem and give assistance to its charitable, cultural and social undertakings." There are over 16,000 Knights and Ladies in some 23 countries and the Southern Lieutenancy in the United States, which includes six southern states including Louisiana, is made up of over 1,300 Knights and Ladies.

The Greek-Melkite Catholic Church has its origin in the ancient city of Antioch. Its current Patriarch, Gregory III, has official residences both in Beirut and in Cairo as he is also Patriarch of Alexandria (Egypt) and Jerusalem. The Melkite Church is one of the 20 Churches of Eastern origin in union with the Roman

Pontiff. The Melkite Church, like its sister Churches of the East, has its own Code of Law, Liturgical practice and law as well as customs, which differ markedly from the Western or Latin tradition and Church.

These differences of practice are a strong witness to the 'unity of faith' of the Catholic Churches despite the diversity of practice. The world "Melkite" is taken from malak, which means 'king' as the Church accepted the law enacted by the emperor rather than following the heretical practices and teachings of some of the other churches.

Rev. Herbert J. May, JCL, pastor of Our Lady of Seven Dolours Parish in Welsh will be the celebrant of the Byzantine Liturgy. Father May is a priest of the Latin/Roman Church and the Diocese of Lake Charles, who had been given a special privilege of being able to celebrate the Byzantine Liturgy according to the usage of the Melkite Church by the Congregation for the Oriental Churches at Vatican City, Italy.

In 1988, Fr. May was honored by the late head of the Melkite Church, Patriarch Maximos V Hakim with the honorary title of "Grand Archimandrite of Antioch," a title similar to that of abbot in the Roman Church and which allows him to wear a

pectoral cross and employ the hand-crossing during Liturgical services.

All who are interested in a peaceful resolution to the troubles of the Middle East are invited to join the Knights and Ladies of the Holy Sepulchre in praying this Liturgy from the Holy Land and imploring God to assist all those concerned with finding a just and peaceful solution for all peoples, Jewish, Muslim and Christian, who live there.

Archbishop Flynn to head expanded Bishops panel

WASHINGTON — The expansion of the The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Ad Hoc Committee on Sexual Abuse and a new chairman have been announced by the conference leadership.

Bishop Wilton D. Gregory, Bishop of Belleville, Ill., president of the conference made the announcement.

Archbishop Harry J. Flynn of St. Paul-Minneapolis will serve as the new chairman. Bishop Flynn is well regarded among the bishops for the work he did in Diocese of Lafayette in the 1980s in helping the diocese recover from the devastation left by two child-molesting priests. He was one of the original members of the Committee.