



TO: The Clergy, Religious and Lay Faithful of the Diocese of Reno

DATE: May 20, 2024

RE: Communion Services

For many years it has been the practice in our parishes to hold “Communion Services” on those weekdays (or Sundays) on which Mass is not offered. While I understand completely the desire of many of the faithful to receive Holy Communion every day, the regular practice of Communion Services is not in accord with recommended Church practice.

The reception of Holy Communion should always be within the action of the Eucharistic Sacrifice – the Mass. The sacrifice and the meal are two parts of a unified whole and should not be separated, except for a grave reason. For example, the Church has always recognized the importance of bringing Holy Communion to those who are ill, homebound or imprisoned, thus rendering them unable to attend Mass for some significant amount of time. Viaticum would be another exception to the general rule.

The 2004 Instruction on the Eucharist (*Redemptionis Sacramentum*) of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, referring to services that are held in lieu of Mass says: “Likewise, especially if Holy Communion is distributed during such celebrations, the diocesan bishop, to whose exclusive competence this matter pertains, **must not easily grant permission for such celebrations to be held on weekdays, especially in places where it is possible or would be possible to have the celebration of Mass on the preceding or the following Sunday.** Priests are therefore earnestly requested to celebrate Mass daily for the people in one of the churches entrusted to their care” (#166, emphasis added).

Ordinarily, Mass is available in all of our parish churches every Sunday and Holyday of Obligation, thus rendering weekday Communion Services unnecessary.

For these reasons, I am asking that weekday Communion Services no longer be celebrated in the churches and missions of the diocese, beginning on the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of the Lord, June 2, 2024. When weekday Mass is unavailable, the faithful are urged to attend Mass at another parish, or to gather for some form of common prayer, e.g., The Liturgy of the Hours, the Rosary, *Lectio Divina*, etc.

Sunday celebration of the Eucharist is even of greater importance than weekday celebrations. Therefore, I am asking that Sunday Communion Services no longer be scheduled or celebrated in parishes or missions of the diocese without explicit permission from my office and only in extraordinary situations of unexpected grave need.

Finally, I urge our priests to make themselves available for weekday and Sunday Mass whenever possible.