



Allocutio



Presentata Curia 23rd February 2012

Allocutio: Some regulations regarding the celebration of Mass and reservation of the Blessed Sacrament.

In March 2004 the document *Redemptionis Sacramentum* was issued. It was authorised by the late Pope John Paul II. It is attempting to deal with abuses which have arisen in the Church, particularly in regard to the celebration of the Eucharist and the reservation and adoration of the Blessed Eucharist. A few words on that tonight.

The document emphasises that responsibility for the Eucharist lies with the authority of the Church, namely with the Pope and bishops. No one else, not even a holy priest, has authority to change the rules around the Eucharist. So the priest doesn't have the right to alter the words at Mass unless the instructions say "in these or similar words". The Mass should only use the prescribed biblical readings. Extra-biblical readings are not to be introduced, which some want to do on the occasions, say, of a wedding. Only an ordained minister can give the homily. If there is any value in a lay person addressing the congregation this should be done after the Post Communion Prayer.

Because the focus is on the Eucharistic celebration in which all should participate Confessions should not be heard during Mass. That is problematic in practice. Just think of Clarendon Street on Saturdays. If they followed that they would be continually disrupting confessions. But one time I was there recently, the Confessor did stop hearing during the Consecration.

Ideally everyone should receive hosts consecrated at the Mass. The minimal but sufficient number of hosts should be retained in a pyx or ciborium in the Tabernacle for adoration or for the sick. This is a real problem i.e. to find several ciboria in a tabernacle with hundreds of hosts only creating crumbs. If you are a sacristan in a local Church keep only a few hosts reserved, enough to deal with the sick in the parish. And even that can vary in need depending on whether first Friday calls are about to happen.

The only person who may administer Holy Communion to the faithful is the priest or deacon or eucharistic minister. Spouses at weddings may not administer communion to each other. It is not allowed to receive communion in the hand and then take it away even if for the purpose of intincting it in the chalice, which happens in some places. Once you receive communion in the hand you should put it on your tongue immediately and then go and take the chalice in your hands from the priest or minister. If there is a risk of profanation communion in the hand is to be stopped until the danger ceases. Eucharistic ministers should not come forward to give out communion if there are plenty of priests to do it.

Other guidelines of the Church in respect of the Blessed Sacrament

The Most Blessed Sacrament should be reserved in the Tabernacle in a part of the Church that is truly noble, prominent, readily visible, beautifully decorated and suitable for prayer.

The one tabernacle should be immovable, be made of solid and inviolable material that is not transparent, and be locked in such a way that the danger of profanation is prevented to the greatest possible extent.



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It is more in keeping with the meaning of the sign that the tabernacle in which the Most Holy Eucharist is reserved not be on an altar on which Mass is celebrated.

The Blessed Sacrament can be kept in some appropriate place in the sanctuary or in some chapel aside attached organically to the main church suitable for the faithful's private prayer and adoration.

A lighted candle to be kept near the tabernacle "to indicate and honour the Lord's presence".

The Blessed Sacrament should be kept in the Cathedral Church, in parish churches and in the church or oratory attached to the house of a religious institute or society of apostolic life.

In any other place the permission of the bishop is required to reserve the Blessed Sacrament.

Wherever the Blessed Sacrament is reserved someone must be responsible for its safety.

It is not lawful for anyone to carry around the Blessed Sacrament with them nor to keep in their personal custody unless there is an urgent pastoral need and the prescriptions of the local bishop are observed.

The Blessed Sacrament is not to be exposed in a place where Mass is being celebrated.

The minister of exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and of the Eucharistic blessing is the priest or deacon. In special circumstances the acolyte and extraordinary minister of the sacrament may expose and depose the Blessed Sacrament but may never give the blessing. Any other person will need the bishop's permission to expose or depose the Blessed Sacrament.

Amen.

Fr Paul Churchill