



**The congregation does some things differently at the Sunday 9 am Rite I Eucharist – such as kneeling at the end of the liturgy after the Priest leaves – than at the 10.45 Rite II Eucharist. What are these differences?**

Rite I and Rite II come from two different periods in Church History. Rite II is the liturgy as it was celebrated in the Early Christian Church. Dramatically it represents the Incarnation: “Christ coming into this world in the midst of His people” (“horizontal”; Christ’s immanence).

Rite I is the liturgy as it was celebrated in the Western Church in the Middle Ages. Dramatically it represents the people of God “leaving this world and entering Christ’s presence in the heavenly throne room” (“vertical”; Christ’s transcendence).

There are differences because iconographically these two liturgies are different. In Rite I:

– It is traditional that the Nicene Creed and the Our Father – in addition to the Gloria in excelsis as in Rite II - are precented (i.e. the Priest says or sings the opening words alone):

- Gloria in excelsis: Priest. “Glory be to God on high” *All.* “and on earth peace....”
- Nicene Creed: Priest. “I believe in one God” *All.* “the Father Almighty, maker....”
- Our Father: Priest. “Our Father” *All.* “who art in heaven, hallowed be....”

– At the Communion as the Priest begins to receive the Blessed Sacrament himself, the congregation comes to the altar rail immediately after the bell is rung by the Server.

– The communicant does not respond with “Amen” as the Priest says the words of administration of the Host and the Chalice.

– In order to prevent an accident with the Chalice, it is very important that each person kneeling at the altar rail remain in place until the person to his/her left has finished receiving the Chalice and the Priest has moved on.

– In the past it was traditional – especially in medieval (Rite I) liturgy – that people spend a few minutes after the Eucharist in private prayer giving thanks for Christ’s gift of Himself to us in the Blessed Sacrament. After Vatican II most liturgical scholars taught that as the Eucharist is the Great Thanksgiving, further personal prayer at this point breaks the action of the liturgy (particularly in Rite II), is an anticlimax, and thus is inappropriate and undesirable.

Ultimately, at both Rite I and Rite II private prayer after Mass is a matter of individual choice. However, this does not have – nor ever has had – any connection with the extinguishing of altar candles, which is not a liturgical act and has no bearing on when anyone in the congregation leaves the church.

(It has been noted by more than one liturgical scholar that if one is watching to see when the candles are extinguished he/she isn’t able to do much praying!) In any event, as long as there are persons still praying or meditating after the liturgy, it is important that talking be done either in the narthex (vestibule of the church) or in the Guild Room.

## Customs at All Liturgies

- It is the universal rule among all Catholic Christians that a consecrated church or chapel, especially one where the Blessed Sacrament is Reserved, is treated with reverence and respect at all times. It is particularly important that complete silence be kept in a church before the liturgy begins (at St Paul's our practice is to maintain total silence for the preceding 15 minutes) so that those who are praying or making meditations may be free to do so without distraction. There should never be any casual or unnecessary talking whatsoever during the liturgy itself.
- It is important that each member of the congregation be in place in the church in ample time before the liturgy begins to prepare prayerfully for the celebration of the Eucharist.
- It is traditional that no one sits (unless it is physically necessary) while the Blessed Sacrament is present on the Altar – i.e. from the Consecration until the ablutions (washing of the sacred vessels) after Communion. In medieval liturgy (Rite I) it is customary to kneel during this part of the Mass. In Early Christian liturgy (Rite II) some people stand – except during the Eucharistic Prayer – as a mark of respect.
- If the communicant wishes to receive the sacred Host in the hand, the right hand is placed over the left and is held out flat (the hand is not cupped nor the thumb placed on the Host). Both hands are used when receiving the Host in the hand. If this is not possible (e.g. one is holding an infant or assisting an infirm person) the Host should be received on the tongue. If the communicant wishes to receive the sacred Host directly on the tongue, the hands are held together at waist level (not held up or placed over the chest).
- When receiving the Precious Blood the communicant guides the base of the chalice with the thumb and index finger of one hand only.
- Intinction (i.e. receiving the Body and Blood of Christ together by dipping the Host in the Chalice) has a history of controversy in the Episcopal Church. Many Bishops and Priests strongly oppose it, and the Prayer Book rubrics specifically designate the Ordinary (diocesan bishop) of each diocese as the final authority in this matter and, under him, the Rector of each parish.

In the Diocese of Chicago intinction was absolutely forbidden in 1941 by Bishop Conkling. In 1954 Bishop Burrill restated that total prohibition. In 1971 Bishop Montgomery forbade intinction except on single occasions in extraordinary situations but never as a normal or on-going practice. The most recent and thus the now-binding directive from the Bishop requires the clergy of this diocese “to do everything possible to discourage it.” (Under no circumstances whatsoever is a communicant ever permitted to dip a Host in the Chalice him/herself.)

Theologically and liturgically intinction makes no sense. The reason for receiving Holy Communion under both Species is to drink from the Chalice. As the eminent liturgical scholar, theologian, and C.T.U. professor Father Edward Foley, OFM.Cap. has said, “Christ commanded that we ‘drink this’ not dip it. ‘Are you able to drink the cup that I drink’ is the commitment Jesus asks of us. That is why we receive the Chalice: to drink from it. You don’t get any more Jesus by receiving the Precious Blood!” No one must receive the Chalice except the celebrating Priest or Bishop. If a communicant does not wish to receive the Chalice, Holy Communion may always be received under one Species, and when one receives the sacred Host one receives full Holy Communion: the full Body and Blood, soul and divinity of Jesus Christ (Doctrine of Concomitance).