

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION R.C. CHURCH

Our service is universally referred to as the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass or in brief “The Mass”.

The service is always led by a priest, he can be assisted by a Deacon and altar server but essentially only an ordained priest can celebrate Mass. A priest can only be validly ordained by a Bishop.

At communion, hosts (thin unleavened bread) and alcoholic wine are used. The priest, Deacon and Special Ministers (laity specially appointed) distribute communion under the form of bread & wine.

Only those in direct “communion” with the Catholic Church, in other words practising Catholics, are permitted to receive communion. There are rules that determine whether a catholic can be deemed “practising” or not.

Children over the age of 7 that have had some formal instruction are permitted to receive communion. In general they do not normally receive wine however there are no hard & fast rules governing this.

Non-Catholic visitors are encouraged to come forward and receive a blessing from either the Priest or Deacon. The sign to the priest or Deacon is for that person to place their hands across their chest, that is the universally adopted sign.

At some Masses a larger host is consecrated and held in “reserve” in the tabernacle along with other unused consecrated hosts. The larger host will be used at Benediction.

Towards the end of each Mass the sacred vessels are carefully cleaned and the surplus wine consumed. For purely practical purposed consecrated wine is not held in the tabernacle.

Catholics are encouraged to return during daylight hours to spend some time in prayer before the tabernacle. This is in response to two things. This helps strengthen the compulsory belief in the “Real Presence” and responds directly to Our Lords distressed cry in the Garden of Gethsemani “Will you not watch on hour with