

# From the Desk of Fr. Jerry

February 16, 2024

Dear Friends,

During the Advent/Christmas Season we reinstated the option of receiving the Precious Blood for communicants at some Masses. Many folks expressed appreciation that this option was once again made available. Unfortunately, we lacked sufficient Ministers of Communion to continue the practice until more ministers can be recruited and trained.

There may be several reasons why we lack more Ministers of Communion. One reason may be a feeling of unworthiness to handle the Eucharist. The human response of humility to heavenly reality is normal, but it should not block the offering of oneself in service. I am reminded that Jesus chose fishermen to be apostles. In first century Palestine, handling fish was considered unclean. None the less, Jesus got into Peter's boat. Peter responded to the call to leave all else behind.

Another reason for reluctance to volunteer these days is that some prefer not to commit to a schedule, especially on the weekend. The parish has implemented scheduling software that accommodates scheduling preferences and also makes it possible to request a substitute. If you make the commitment to participate every effort will be made to accommodate scheduling.

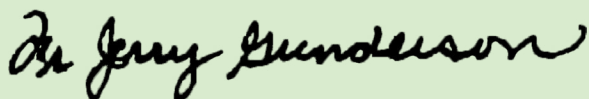
The fear of mishandling or fumbling the chalice in the exchange between the minister and the recipient is another concern of some. With practice, greater confidence can be built. Were we to have more ministers of the Sacred Body more experienced ministers of communion could be freed to give the Chalice.

Fuller participation in sharing communion under both kinds remains the desire of this worshipping community, but we will have to delay its implementation, limit its availability, or drop it completely if we do not find more Ministers of Communion at Mass. Please, please consider whether God is calling you to this ministry. Talk to me, Marianne Seiler, or one of the current ministers to find out more.

Last Sunday's first reading told of Isaiah's response. When the Lord asked, "Who will go for me?" Isaiah responded, "Here I am, Lord. Send me"

## **Communal Anointing of the Sick**

We plan to celebrate the Communal Anointing of the Sick at the 10 AM Mass on Sunday, March 2nd. Catholics who are baptized, have reached the age of reason, and who are seriously ill physically or mentally, dealing with chronic or terminal illness, elderly facing surgery can receive the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. Also Catholics who are seriously ill, including those who are at risk of death. I'll write more about this in next week's bulletin, but circle the date on your calendar and plan to attend Sunday, March 2nd, 10 AM Mass. It is the last Sunday before Lent begins.



Fr. Jerry Gunderson