Abuses Against the Sanctity of the Eucharistic Discipline

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Introduction

The eucharistic sacrifice is the source and summit of the entire Christian life.¹ For this very reason, the Eucharist stands at the centre of the Church’s life.² Moreover, to participate in the eucharistic sacrifice is the chief duty and supreme dignity of the Christian faithful.³ The Church discovers the full manifestation of His boundless love in the Eucharist (EdE, n. 1) in which the author himself of sanctity is present⁴ and from which the Church constantly draws its life (EdE, n. 12). Therefore, the Church is very vigilant on its eucharistic doctrine and discipline.

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³ Pius XII, Mediator Dei, 20 November 1947, AAS 39 (1947) 552.
⁴ Trent Council, Session XIII, Chapter 13; translation in J. Waterworth, ed. & trans., The Canons and Decrees of the Sacred and Oecumenical Council of Trent (London: Dolman, 1848) 77-78.
There was once a eucharistic celebration of an Eastern Church *sui iuris* in which several priests from other Churches *sui iuris* concelebrated. Among the participants, there were other Christian faithful, including the religious. Some hosts were consecrated in the eucharistic celebration. At the time of holy communion, the celebrant kept the hosts consecrated in the previous eucharistic celebration for the concelebrants to receive, and distributed the hosts consecrated in the same eucharistic celebration to the other faithful. How to call such a practice? This act cannot be called a delict because there is no violation of a penal law or penal precept. At the same time, is it a right practice according to the prescripts of liturgical texts?

The Latin code sees trafficking of the intentions for the eucharistic celebrations as a delict (CIC c. 1385). However, the penal section of the Eastern code is silent on the issue. There are Eastern Churches *sui iuris* that accept intentions for the eucharistic celebration as in the Latin Church. If such an aberration happens in an Eastern Church *sui iuris*, will it be considered a delict or a mere violation of an ecclesiastical law? The Eastern code sees the non-commemoration of the legitimate hierarch in the Divine Liturgy as a delict (CCEO c. 1438), while the Latin code is silent on this. Though the prescripts of the Latin liturgical texts oblige the commemoration, what is the nature of its violation? Such considerations were the reasons that led to a comparative study in this article on the abuses against the sanctity of the eucharistic discipline.

Pope John Paul II expressed his concerns on abuses that have led to confusion about the sound doctrine and discipline of the Eucharist. He was also anxious about the ecumenical initiatives that were contrary to the eucharistic discipline of the Church. He affirmed that the Eucharist is too great a gift to tolerate ambiguity and depreciation (*EdE*, n. 10). This is to be read along with the directives given by Pope Pius X in connection with the restoration of the sacred music. He reminded every pastoral office of the Church to be diligent in maintaining and promoting the decorum of the House of God, where the holy mysteries of religion
were celebrated. He instructed the faithful, especially the ministers, not to allow anything that disturbed or even diminished the piety and devotion of the faithful and that directly offended the decorum and the sanctity of the sacred functions.\textsuperscript{5}

It might be true that “we are constantly tempted to reduce the Eucharist to our own dimensions, while in reality it is we who must open ourselves up to the dimensions of the Mystery.”\textsuperscript{6} When the faithful, especially those who administer the Eucharist, try to “reduce the Eucharist to their own dimensions,” there occur abuses or aberrations. Therefore, keeping in mind these official teachings, this article is also an attempt to evaluate abuses that have crept into the eucharistic discipline of the Church. However, this article does not deal with all the possible abuses against the sanctity of the eucharistic discipline, but only those abuses that might happen due to the violations of the laws in the codes of canon law and of prescripts of the liturgical texts connected with those laws.

1. Notion of abuse and eucharistic discipline

The term abuse has different connotations that vary according to the context. Popular usage of the word abuse is often understood as sexual misbehaviour. When abuse is analysed in the legal context and in the ecclesiastical context, it has other implications too. Therefore, before evaluating abuses against the sanctity of the eucharistic discipline, it is needed to have clarity of the term abuse in the context of the eucharistic discipline of the Church.

The word abuse means misuse or wrong use.\textsuperscript{7} When it is used in a legal context, the meaning of the term abuse is broader. Abuse is

\textsuperscript{5} Pio X, \textit{Tra le Sollecitudini}, ASS 36 (1903-4) 329-330.
\textsuperscript{7} \textit{Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary}, New 8\textsuperscript{th} Edition, s.v. “abuse”.

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described as the illicit or irrational use of a thing or law.\(^8\) The abuse of law is the using of a law to accomplish an unlawful purpose or to accomplish some purposes not intended by the law. The abuse of legal process is defined as “the use of legal process to accomplish an unlawful purpose; causing a summons, writ, warrant, mandate, or any other process to issue from a court in order to accomplish some purpose not intended by the law.”\(^9\) All these explanations make it clear that an abuse, in legal terms, can be understood as an action against a law contrary to its purpose for which it is destined.

1.1. **Abusus in CCEO and CIC**

Without defining or describing what an abuse is, both CCEO and CIC use the term in different contexts. There are eight canons in CCEO\(^10\) and eleven canons in CIC\(^11\) that mention abuses.\(^12\) A closer
analysis of these canons reveals that some of them specify in what situations abuses occur. At the same time, all of these canons are intended to prevent either an action that contradicts the true goal and spirit of the law or an omission of the law that does not fulfil the true spirit of the law.

1.2. Abuse and Eucharistic Discipline

Meaning of abuse in the context of the ecclesiastical discipline, especially of the Eucharist, can be better understood through analysing CCEO c. 1464 and CIC c. 1389. Both these canons deal with the abuse of ecclesiastical power or function and prescribe penalties to those who abuse ecclesiastical power. The abuse of ecclesiastical power or function may be defined as “deliberately exercising the power of orders or jurisdiction or some other ecclesiastical function in a fashion contrary to its basic ecclesiastical purpose.” Here, in the context of abuse of ecclesiastical power or function, an action against the desired ecclesiastical purpose is seen as an abuse. Deducing from this explanation, the meaning of an abuse of ecclesiastical law can be understood as an action against the desired purpose of a law. Besides, these canons specify that abuses occur as a result of both action and omission. Therefore, an abuse of ecclesiastical law, in this sense, can be understood as an action in a fashion contrary to its basic ecclesiastical purpose or an omission that does not fulfil its basic ecclesiastical purpose. Thus, it can be concluded that an action against or an omission of a non-penal law or a non-penal prescript in a fashion contrary to its basic ecclesiastical purpose becomes an abuse.

Pontiff of abuses that occur in any of the suffragan dioceses. CIC c. 528 §2 entrusts the pastor with the duty of supervising the parish so that abuses may not creep in. The directive to avoid abuses while confessing through an interpreter is given in CIC c. 990. The power of a judge to punish a person more severely than a law or a precept has stated is affirmed in CIC c. 1326 §1, 2° when that person abuses his authority or office in order to commit the offense.

The term *abuse* is used here to denote such actions or omissions because this is the term Pope John Paul II uses in his encyclical *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* to denote such occurrences. He writes: “In various parts of the Church abuses have occurred, leading to confusion with regard to sound faith and Catholic doctrine concerning this wonderful sacrament [of the Eucharist]” (*EdE*, n. 10). He also admits that there have been a number of abuses as a result of a misguided sense of creativity and adaptation which have been a source of suffering for many (*EdE*, n. 52). Besides, *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, a document on certain matters to be observed or to be avoided regarding the most holy Eucharist issued by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacrament, also uses the term *abuse* to denote such occurrences. *Redemptionis Sacramentum* distinguishes abuses from the violation of penal laws or precepts by using the phrase “a delict or an abuse concerning the Most Holy Eucharist” (*RS*, n. 181).

The eucharistic discipline is regulated by the laws given in the common law and the particular law of a Church *sui iuris*, and by the prescripts given in the liturgical books. And the Church insists all to follow them (CCEO c. 3; CIC c. 2). The authorities competent to approve liturgical texts are: a) Apostolic See; b) patriarch/major archbishop with the consent of the synod of bishops or the metropolitan of a metropolitan Church *sui iuris* with the consent of the council of hierarchs, after prior review of the Apostolic See; c) bishops and their legitimately constituted assemblies in other Churches *sui iuris*, within the limits set by the Apostolic See (CCEO c. 657 §1). Except the Apostolic See and competent bodies of bishops, “no other person, even if he be a priest, may add, remove, or change anything in the liturgy on his own authority.” That might be the reason that Pope Joh

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15 See *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, nn. 4, 6, 7, 9, 17, 24, 30, 32, 48, 52, 55, 73, 79, 83, 94, 115, 126, 169, 170, 171, 174, 177, 178, 181, 183, 184.
Paul II denounced such actions or omissions, even well-intentioned. He expressed his profound grief on all such actions or omissions contrary to the eucharistic discipline by which the Church expresses its faith (EdE, n. 10). Therefore, considering all these magisterium and expert explanations, the term *abuse*, in this study, denotes an action against (or a violation of) or an omission of a non-penal law or a non-penal precept or a prescript regulating the eucharistic discipline, in a fashion contrary to its basic ecclesiastical purpose.

2. **Abuses prohibited by ancient canons**

The ancient canons of the Eastern Churches are the key parameter to evaluate many of the present norms of CCEO.\(^{17}\) And those ancient laws can also be a source of supplementary law, expected to fill the *lacuna* in the normative system.\(^{18}\) Therefore, ancient canons, specially the canons from the Pre-Nicene and Nicene periods, are so important in understanding and evaluating the present canon law.

Modern legislations differentiate penal laws from other laws and consider violation of penal laws or penal precepts as delict. In ancient times, ecclesiastical laws were not differentiated as penal laws or procedural laws, but were enacted and given together. Many laws of ancient times were having the form of penal laws in modern sense, because penalties were attached to many canons. At the same time, aberrations they dealt with were not as grave as delicts that are mentioned in modern legislations. For example, Apostolic Canons c. 9 states: “All the faithful who come in and hear the Scriptures, but do not stay for the prayers and holy communion, are to be excommunicated, as causing disorder in the Church.”\(^{19}\) When this

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canon is assessed using modern parameters, it is a penal sanction. However, non-reception of holy communion is no more considered as a delict, though all are most strongly recommended to receive holy communion in the course of a eucharistic celebration (CIC c. 918). The Council of Basel-Ferrara-Florence-Rome (1431-1445) prohibited causing disturbances at the time of the eucharistic celebration\(^2\) and penalties were attached to this prohibition. But such actions are not seen as delicts by modern canonical legislations. Thus, all ancient canons, to which penalties were attached, cannot be considered as delicts in the modern sense; at the same time, they were unacceptable or illicit actions that were against the dignity of the eucharistic celebration. There were also prohibitions to which penalties were not attached. For example, prohibition of the eucharistic celebration in private houses and of reading of uncanonical books during the eucharistic celebration (Laodicea cc. 58, 59) did not carry penalties.

That is why, canons that dealt with unacceptable practises against the sanctity and dignity of the eucharistic discipline are treated here, though penalties were attached to some of them. The intention of listing such ancient canons here is to show how seriously the ecumenical councils and the regional synods approached such practices against authentic eucharistic discipline. Abuses mentioned in the pre-Tridentine canons are: Offerings unsuitable for the eucharistic celebration (Apostolic Canons c. 3); Abstaining from holy communion without proper reason (Apostolic Canons cc. 8, 9; Synod of Antioch c. 2); Offering the eucharistic sacrifice separating from bishop/metropolitan/patriarch (Apostolic Canons c. 31/2, Synod of Gangra c. 6; of the Synod of Antioch c. 5; Constantinople IV c. 10); Contempt of the Eucharist celebrated by married presbyter (Council of Gangra cc. 4

& 5); Offering the eucharistic sacrifice after offering sacrifices to pagan
gods (Council of Ancyra cc. 1 & 2); Not following precedence while
celebrating eucharistic sacrifice (Council of Neocaesarea c. 13);
Communicating - sharing the Eucharist - with the excommunicated
(Synod of Antioch cc. 2 & 4); Sending the Consecrated Bread to
another place (Synod of Laodicea c. 14); Doing ministries and wearing
liturgical vestments proper to higher order during the eucharistic
celebration (Synod of Laodicea cc. 21, 22 & 23; Nicaea II c. 14);
eucharistic celebration outside the Church building (Synod of Laodicea
c. 58); Use of the non-canonical books in the eucharistic celebrations
(Synod of Laodicea c. 59); Deacons’ excesses in the eucharistic
celebration: giving holy communion to the presbyters, touching the
sacred gifts before the bishop, receiving holy communion before the
presbyters, and taking a place among the presbyters at the time of the
sacrifice (Nicea I c. 18); Selling the Immaculate Communion (Council
in Trullo c. 23) and denial of the sacrament of the Eucharist for favour
or gift (Nicea II c. 4; Council of Basel-Ferrara-Florence-Rome,
Session XXI); Profanation of the house of God (Lateran Council IV,
Constitution 19; Council of Basel-Ferrara-Florence-Rome, Session
XXI; CIC c. 1210); Disturbances during the eucharistic celebration
(Council of Basel-Ferrara-Florence-Rome, Session XXI); Non-
completion or non-recitation of prayers of the eucharistic celebration
(Council of Basel-Ferrara-Florence-Rome, Session XXI)

These were abuses warned and prohibited by the ecumenical
councils and those regional synods which got the universal acceptance
through the decrees of the subsequent ecumenical councils. Later
ecumenical councils of the Catholic Church also were vigilant to
safeguard the dignity of Sacrament of the Eucharist. Therefore, those
prohibitions on such deviant practices have greater relevance even at
present.

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3. **Abuses and modern legislations**

In modern times also, there are instances of eucharistic celebrations that are awash with abuses. This might happen due to ignorance of or negligence by those who celebrate or participate. When ignorance or negligence is from the ministers who are obliged to protect the dignity and sanctity of the Eucharist, its seriousness and culpability become graver. It is because the ministers are more bound to protect this greatest mystery without diluting its doctrinal basis and disciplinary modes. The following is an attempt based on the laws governing the Sacrament of the Eucharist within the Catholic Church, to evaluate abuses and errors that have been crept and continue to creep into the eucharistic discipline.

3.1. **Place of Eucharistic Celebration**

CCEO c. 705 §1 stipulates that “a Catholic priest can celebrate the Divine Liturgy on the altar of any Catholic Church.” The most suitable place for the Catholics to celebrate the Eucharist is the altar of any Catholic Church where the proper decorum is kept so that the dignity of the celebration might not be violated. To celebrate the Divine Liturgy in other places, permission of the concerned authority is required.

There are priests who celebrate the Eucharist in non-sacred places that do not meet the adequate conditions of decorum and dignity. The Sacred Congregation for the Divine Worship prohibited celebrating the eucharistic sacrifice in bedrooms as well as in dining rooms or on dining tables. The celebration of the Eucharist on the sacred places of non-Christian religions for the sake of promoting inter-religious harmony or tolerance also is unlawful (RS, n. 109).

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3.2. Celebrants, Ministers and Participants

The eucharistic celebration is an action of the entire Church. Each one who is a part of the celebration according to his status and condition has got a specific role during the celebration of the eucharistic sacrifice.

3.2.1. Celebrants

“Only bishops and presbyters have the power to celebrate the Divine Liturgy” (CCEO c. 699 §1; CIC c. 900 §1). Even if validly ordained priests validly celebrate the Eucharist, they lawfully do so by observing the provisions of the canons and when not debarred by canon law (CIC c. 900 §2). When a priest is forbidden from legitimate celebration of the Eucharist either by provisions of law or through the intervention of a legitimate authority, he illicitly celebrates the eucharistic sacrifice. This happens due to ecclesiastical penalties, irregularities or other impediments, loss of clerical state, prohibition by a legitimate authority, etc. Hence, if a priest, who is debarred by law or authority, celebrates the Eucharist, it becomes an illicit celebration, though valid.

The obligation of priests to be in the state of grace to celebrate the Eucharist flows from the very nature of the Eucharist.23 CCEO c. 711 and CIC c. 916 explicitly state that a person who is conscious of grave sin is not to celebrate the Divine Liturgy. When such a priest celebrates the Eucharist, it becomes an illicit celebration, “unless a grave reason is present and there is no opportunity of confessing; in this case the person is to be mindful of the obligation to make an act of perfect contrition, including the intention of confessing as soon as possible” (CIC c. 916). Such celebration of or concelebration in the eucharistic sacrifice is an abuse against the sanctity of the eucharistic discipline.

There is another relevant norm given by *Redemptionis Sacramentum* that is applicable to concelebrating priests when belonging to two or more linguistic groups. When several priests concelebrate in the Eucharist, a language known both to all the concelebrating priests and to the gathered people should be used, especially in the recitation of the Eucharist Prayer. Where it happens that some of the priests who are present do not know the language of the celebration and, therefore, are not capable of pronouncing the parts of the eucharistic prayer proper to them, they should not concelebrate, but instead should attend the celebration in choral dress in accordance with the norms (*RS*, n. 113). The instruction strictly prohibits priests from the eucharistic concelebration if the language of the celebration is unknown. Because he is not able to actively join the celebration by consciously reciting the prayers. Therefore, such concelebration is not in tune with the mind of the Church.

It is also opportune to note a prohibition by the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (GIRM)\(^{24}\) that “no one is ever to enter into a concelebration or to be admitted as a concelebrant once the Mass has already begun” (n. 206). There are priests who join the eucharistic celebration as concelebrants after the eucharistic celebration has been begun. This sets a wrong example before the faithful, diminishing the dignity of the eucharistic celebration.

Though these norms bind only priests of the Latin Church, these are unacceptable practices to be carefully avoided by all priests because they are the ones who are more responsible to safeguard the dignity and integrity of the eucharistic celebration.

3.2.2. Deacons and Other Ministers

Deacons, “upon whom hands are imposed not for the priesthood but for the ministry,” are in a particular and permanent rank of the hierarchy. They are “empowered to serve the People of God in the ministries of the liturgy, the word and charity.” CCEO c. 699 §2 explains role of deacons in the eucharistic celebration as follows: “Along with bishops and presbyters deacons have a very close share in the celebration of the Divine Liturgy and have a ministry proper to them according to the prescriptions of the liturgical books.” GIRM (n. 94) also states that the role of the deacon is after the priest in the eucharistic celebration. Therefore, they are to render their service to the eucharistic liturgy and do their part so that the sacred liturgy will be celebrated according to the norms of the duly approved liturgical books (RS, n. 35).

There are incidents in which deacons are vested in priestly vestments and stand near the celebrant during eucharistic celebration. This is done probably to substitute the absent concelebrant. Here, though deacons are not performing any priestly function, it creates confusion in the minds of the faithful. If he does this in a community in which he is unknown, then he appears to be a priest. When the deacons breach their limits such as this as stated in the sacred canons by vesting themselves with the priestly attire, it is an abuse. But if a deacon, as if a concelebrant, assists the celebrant and recites prayers assigned to the concelebrating priests, then it can amount up to a delict of attempting the eucharistic celebration.

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25 Lumen Gentium, n. 29, AAS 57 (1965) 36.
29 Nicea I c. 18; Laodicea cc. 21-23.
Other instituted ministers also have specific roles in the celebration of the Eucharist. But in no way they substitute a priest who is the only competent minister to celebrate validly the Eucharist or a deacon who is ordained to serve the Eucharist.

3.2.3. Participants

The Christian faithful, by reason of their baptism, have the right and duty to full, conscious, and active participation in the liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy.\(^3\) CCEO c. 699 §3 (CIC c. 898) urges the Christian faithful to actively participate in the eucharistic celebration in the manner determined by the liturgical books and to receive the Eucharist as an expression of a more meaningful participation. Therefore, awareness must be formed in the faithful on this regard. Necessary method and space must be arranged in order that this participation is complete and thus active, full, devout, intelligent and fruitful. However, this active participation does not include performance of the role of priests or deacons by the faithful. In the offering of the eucharistic sacrifice, each one joins according to his/her state and condition.

Here, abuses occur mainly related to the recitation of the prayers. CIC c. 907 forbids priestly prayers pronounced by others: “In the celebration of the Eucharist it is not licit for deacons and lay persons to say prayers, in particular the Eucharistic prayer, or to perform actions which are proper to the celebrating priest.” The Congregation for the Oriental Churches also instructs to avoid giving to the people those parts that are specifically the competencies of the holy ministries.\(^3\)

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\(^3\) Sacrosanctum Concilium, nn. 14 & 48, AAS 56 (1964) 104 & 113; Lumen Gentium, n. 10, AAS 57 (1965) 14-16.

\(^3\) “Care must be taken to ensure that those who are entrusted with a ministry (priests, deacons, lectors, cantors, commentators, the choir, etc.) should not, in fact substitute but rather guide the whole assembly in such a way that it can also externally express its participation as it should. However, giving to the people parts which are specifically the competencies of the holy ministries is to be avoided.” Congregation for the Oriental Churches, Instruction, Instruction for Applying the Liturgical Prescriptions of the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches, n. 33.
The lay faithful as well as ministers other than the priest have no power of sacred ordination. Following previous instructions by the Apostolic See,\textsuperscript{32} 
*Redemptionis Sacramentum* (n. 52) also prohibits such recitation of the eucharistic prayer by any member of the faithful other than the priests. Therefore, it is illicit and an abuse to recite along with the celebrant those prayers that are reserved to priests alone. Such a recitation by the faithful other than the priest could be a delict of attempting the eucharistic celebration, especially when it substitutes the recitation by the priest.

### 3.3. Matter of the Eucharist

The matter of the eucharistic sacrifice is wheat bread and natural grape wine (CCEO c. 706; CIC c. 924). This is in keeping with the last supper narratives that the Church has always regarded bread and wine as the only matter essential for the Eucharist.\textsuperscript{33} Since it is by divine institution that bread and wine became the indispensable material for the eucharistic sacrifice,\textsuperscript{34} there is no possibility from any departure from the Church’s practice concerning this.\textsuperscript{35}

#### 3.3.1. Eucharistic Bread

When the eucharistic bread is considered, one is reminded of that unleavened wheat bread which Jesus used at the Last Supper following the tradition of the Jewish Passover meal.\textsuperscript{36} Sticking to the

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\textsuperscript{36} See Ex. 15: 15-20; Lev. 23: 5-6; Mk. 14: 22.
use of wheat bread as the valid matter for the Eucharist, the Church followed different traditions regarding the use of leavened or unleavened bread. While the Eastern code leaves the manner of preparing the eucharistic bread to the particular law of each Church sui iuris (CCEO c. 707 §1), the Latin Code insists the use of unleavened bread for the celebration of the Eucharist in accord with the ancient tradition of the Latin Church (CIC c. 926).

The Church is very vigilant in preparing the bread for the eucharistic celebration. Yet, unlawful practices had crept into the preparation of the bread for the Eucharist. There are testimonies of the missionaries and indications of the Synod of Diamper that mention regarding the use of bread made of rice flour among the St. Thomas Christians of India, because the Malabar did not grow wheat. Some schismatics used cheese with the bread of the Eucharist and they were

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40 But the 1917 code allowed use of both leavened and unleavened bread according to his rite. CIC/1917 c. 816: “In Missae celebratione sacerdos, secundum proprium ritum, debet panem azymum vel fermentatum adhibere ubicumque sacrum litet.”


42 Paul Pallath, The Eucharistic Liturgy of the St Thomas Christians and the Synod of Diamper (Vadavathoor: Oriental Institute of Religious Studies in India, 2008) 156; also see A. M. Mundadan, History of Christianity in India: Volume 1-From the Beginning up to the Middle of the Sixteenth Century (Bangalore: Theological Publications in India, 1989) 200-203.

justly condemned as heretics for their wilful and profane innovation.44 “In Africa, some bishops of Chad and Cameroon tried using millet bread to celebrate the Eucharist, but were ordered by Rome to end the practice.”45 The instruction *Dominus Salvator Noster* enlisted the precautions to be observed in the preparation of the matter for the Sacrament of the Eucharist46 and the Church warns against such abuses.47

An exception to use low-gluten bread given to those who suffer from celiac diseases is worth to be noted here. They, after obtaining the permission of the ordinaries, are permitted to receive Holy Communion in the form of bread which is low in glutton content.48 The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith wrote a letter49 on 19

46 Sacred Congregation for the Discipline of the Sacraments, *Dominus Salvator Noster*, n. I §1, AAS 21 (1929) 632.
47 “The bread used in the celebration of the Most Holy Eucharistic Sacrifice must be unleavened, purely of wheat, and recently made so that there is no danger of decomposition. It follows therefore that bread made from another substance, even if it is grain, or if it is mixed with another substance different from wheat to such an extent that it would not commonly be considered wheat bread, does not constitute valid matter for confecting the Sacrifice and the Eucharistic Sacrament. It is a grave abuse to introduce other substances, such as fruit or sugar or honey, into the bread for confecting the Eucharist. Hosts should obviously be made by those who are not only distinguished by their integrity, but also skilled in making them and furnished with suitable tools.” *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, n. 48, AAS 96 (2004) 566.
June 1995 to the presidents of the conferences of bishops regarding this.\footnote{Concerning permission to use low-gluten altar breads: A. This may be granted by ordinaries to priests and lay persons affected by celiac disease, after presentation of a medical certificate. B. Conditions for the validity of the matter: 1) Special hosts ‘quibus glatinum ablatum est’ [that are gluten-free] are invalid matter for the celebration of the Eucharist. 2) Low-gluten hosts are valid matter, provided that they contain the amount of gluten sufficient to obtain the confection of bread, that there is no addition of foreign materials and that the procedure for making such hosts is not such as to alter the nature of the substance of the bread.” See William H. Woestman, \textit{Sacraments: Initiation, Penance, Anointing of the Sick} (Bangalore: Theological Publications in India, 2005) 161.} Later, the Congregation for Doctrine of the Faith in its letter\footnote{Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, “Circular Letter to all Presidents of the Episcopal Conferences concerning the use of low-gluten altar breads and mustum as matter for the celebration of the Eucharist,” 24 July 2003, \texttt{<http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20030724_pane-senza-glutine_en.html>}} on 24 July 2003 (Prot. 89/78-17498)\footnote{“Hosts that are completely gluten-free are invalid matter for the celebration of the Eucharist. Low-gluten hosts (partially gluten-free) are valid matter, provided they contain a sufficient amount of gluten to obtain the confection of bread without the addition of foreign materials and without the use of procedures that would alter the nature of bread.” See William H. Woestman, \textit{Sacraments: Initiation, Penance, Anointing of the Sick}, 161-162.} further clarifies ambiguities on this issue.\footnote{See Arthur J. Espelage, ed., \textit{CLSA Advisory Opinions: 1994-2000} (Washington: Canon Law Society of America, 2002) 274-278.}

\subsection*{3.3.2. Wine}

Along with the wheat bread, natural grape wine also constitutes the valid matter for the eucharistic celebration. GIRM (n. 322) indicates that “the wine for the Eucharistic celebration must be from the fruit of the grapevine (cf. Luke 22: 18), natural, and unadulterated, that is, without admixture of extraneous substances.” The Apostolic See has established specific regulations governing wine-making process, alcoholic content, and use of additives.\footnote{John P. Beal, James A. Coriden, and Thomas J. Green, eds., \textit{New Commentary on the Code of Canon Law}, 1117; see also Eduardo Fernández Regatillo, \textit{Ius sacramentarium}, 3\textsuperscript{rd} ed. (Santander: Sal Terrae, 1960) 110-112.} It was permitted to add a
small quantity of spirits of wine (grape brandy or alcohol) to conserve weak and feeble wines, and in order to keep them from souring or spoiling during transportation under the following conditions: “(1) The added spirit (alcohol) must have been distilled from the grape (ex genimime vitis); (2) the quantity of alcohol added, together with that which the wine contained naturally after fermentation, must not exceed eighteen per cent of the whole; (3) the addition must be made during the process of fermentation.” 55 There is a special faculty given to Indian Church to add certain amount of sugar into the must for fermentation process. 56

Considering all these previous directives, the Church asks to be vigilant regarding the use of wine for the eucharistic celebration:

The wine that is used in the most sacred celebration of the Eucharistic Sacrifice must be natural, from the fruit of the grape, pure and incorrupt, not mixed with other substances… It is altogether forbidden to use wine of doubtful authenticity or provenance, for the Church requires certainty regarding the conditions necessary for the validity of the sacraments. Nor are other drinks of any kind to be admitted for any reason, as they do not constitute valid matter (RS, n. 181).


56 “Preces - At times the grapes are poor of natural sugar so that fermentation may produce a wine with alcohol content of only 5 or 7 per cent, insufficient for the stability of the wine in our (India) climate. Is it allowed to add sugar to the must? An addition of 70 grams per litre of grape juice would raise the alcohol content for the wine by 4 percent, which seems sufficient for the stability of the wine. Rescr. – This Sacred Congregation grants the permission asked for, on condition that the quantity of sugar added to the must does not exceed 10 or 12 percent. The sugar must be added before or during the fermentation.” Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Facultas datur addendi certam succheri quantitatem ad vinum pro Sacrificio Missae firmis reddendum, 31 May 1967, in *The Clergy Monthly* 31 (1967) 309.
The GIRM (n. 323) also asks to ensure that the wine intended for the Eucharist be “kept in a perfect state of conservation: that is, that the wine does not turn to vinegar…” If the wine changed into vinegar, or became putrid or corrupted, if it was pressed from grapes that were not fully ripe, or if it was mixed with such a quality of water that it can hardly be called wine, its use was forbidden.57

There are some references of using wines made out of other substances than grapes. For example, use of products like wine of palms or coconut sap in India.58 The argument shown is the absence of vineyards in India.59 There was also a discussion in Africa to use palm wine, millet beer or wine brewed from indigenous grains produced locally for the eucharistic celebration, so that it is really what the earth has given and human hands have made.60 All such initiatives, though well-intentioned, are contrary to the authentic tradition of the Church.

As in the case of wheat bread, there is an exception given to some priests affected by alcoholism to use mustum61 instead of grape wine as the valid matter for the eucharistic celebration. This dispensation is given by the ordinary/hierarch based on the two above mentioned letters to the presidents of the conferences of bishops by

58 Paul Pallath writes on sporadic references to the use of products like wine of palms or coconut sap in India, based on the general opinion of the missionaries and warnings of the Synod of Diamper. Paul Pallath, The Eucharistic Liturgy of the St Thomas Christians and the Synod of Diamper, 156.
60 José Antunes da Silva, “Bread and wine for the Eucharist: Are they negotiable?,” 264; Anthony Igbokwe Amadi, Inculturating the Eucharist in the Catholic Diocese of Mutare, Zimbabwe, 51.
61 Mustum is fresh juice from grapes or juice preserved by suspending its fermentation by means of freezing or other methods which do not alter its nature.
Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, issued on 19 June 1995\textsuperscript{62} and on 24 July 2003 (Prot. 89/78-17498).\textsuperscript{63}

Related to the matter of the Eucharist, there can be abuses of using corrupted bread or wine. While describing the use of the bread for the Eucharist, both the codes use similar prescription that it must be recently made so that there is no danger of corruption (CCEO c. 706; CIC c. 924 §2). Use of old bread or wine for the eucharistic celebration may be avoided because it may put at risk the quality of the bread or wine for the eucharistic celebration, even amounting up to the use of invalid matter that results in a delict.

\section{3.4. Liturgical Vestments}

“By liturgical vestments are meant the vestments that, according to the rules of the Church or from ecclesiastical usage, are to be worn by the clergy in performing the ceremonies of the services of the Church, consequently, above all, at the celebration of the Mass, then in the

\textsuperscript{62} “Concerning permission to use mustum: A. The preferred solution continues to be communion \textit{per intinctionem} [Communion by intinction], or in concelebration under the species of bread alone. B. Nevertheless, the permission to use mustum can be granted by ordinaries to priests affected by alcoholism or other conditions which prevent the ingestion of even the smallest quantity of alcohol, after presentation of a medical certificate. C. By ‘mustum’ is understood fresh juice from grapes or juice preserved by suspending its fermentation (by means of freezing or other methods which do not alter its nature). D. In general, those who have received permission to use mustum are prohibited from presiding at concelebrated Masses. There may be some exceptions however: in the case of a bishop or superior general; or, with prior approval of the ordinary, at the celebration of the anniversary of priestly ordination or other similar occasions. In these cases the one who presides is to communicate under both the species of bread and that of mustum, while for the other concelebrants a chalice shall be provided in which normal wine is to be consecrated. E. In the very rare instances of lay persons requesting this permission, recourse must be made to the Holy See.” William H. Woestman, \textit{Sacraments: Initiation, Penance, Anointing of the Sick}, 161.

\textsuperscript{63} “Mustum, which is grape juice that is either fresh or preserved by methods that suspend its fermentation without altering its nature (for example, freezing), is valid matter for the celebration of the Eucharist.” William H. Woestman, \textit{Sacraments: Initiation, Penance, Anointing of the Sick}, 161-162.
administration of the sacraments, etc.\textsuperscript{64} The concern here is only of those vestments that are worn by celebrants at the eucharistic celebration. The Council of Trent affirmed that the use of liturgical vestments was from the apostolic discipline and tradition.\textsuperscript{65} Observance of the liturgical requirements concerning the celebration of the eucharistic sacrifice is the subordination of the celebrant to the Mystery of the Eucharist which has been entrusted to him by the Church for the good of the whole people of God and these refer, for example, to dress, and in particular to the vestments worn by the celebrant.\textsuperscript{66}

3.4.1. One Celebrant

The Eastern code insists the ministers to follow liturgical prescripts of one’s own Church \textit{sui iuris} while celebrating the sacraments (CCEO c. 674), leaving much space to the particular law of each Church \textit{sui iuris} for deciding the liturgical vestments.\textsuperscript{67} CIC c. 929 also instructs that priests and deacons are to wear the liturgical vestments prescribed by the rubrics while celebrating and administering the Eucharist. The requirement is to wear the liturgical vestments of one’s own Church \textit{sui iuris} which express the theological and cultural uniqueness of each


\textsuperscript{65} Trent Council, Session XXII, Chapter 5; translation in J. Waterworth, ed. & trans., \textit{The Council of Trent: The Canons and Decrees of the Sacred and Oecumenical Council of Trent}, 156.


\textsuperscript{67} “Indication for the liturgical vestments to be worn in the celebration must be specified by the particular law, and is usually found codified in the liturgical books or in other instructions of liturgical character which come from the competent authorities. Also in this area, the traditional usage should be preserved, maintaining all the value of the particular liturgical language and abstaining from the imitation of other Churches’ usage. Only very grave reasons or exceptional circumstances can authorize different practice. If undue changes in the liturgical vestments have been introduced, the traditional rules should be reinstated.” Congregation for the Oriental Churches, \textit{Instruction for Applying the Liturgical Prescriptions of the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches}, n. 66.
Church sui iuris. Although the code permits to use the liturgical vestments of other Church sui iuris under certain conditions (CCEO c. 707 §2), the mind of the Church is not to make that a regular practice.

Proper vestments of a celebrant of the Latin Church at the eucharistic celebration are the chasuble, worn over the alb and stole (GIRM, n. 337), and of a deacon are the dalmatic, worn over the alb and stole (GIRM, n. 338). The alb may not be replaced by a surplice, not even over a cassock, on occasions when a chasuble or dalmatic is to be worn or when, according to the norms, only a stole is worn without a chasuble or dalmatic (GIRM, n. 336). The particular law of the Syro-Malabar Church\(^68\) prescribes that the vestments of a celebrant of the eucharistic celebration are *Kothina, Sunara, Urara, Sande* and *Paina*.\(^69\)

### 3.4.2. Concelebrants

There are occasions in which many priests concelebrate in the eucharistic sacrifice. In such situations, the ideal is that the celebrant and concelebrants wear the sacred vestments they customarily wear while celebrating the Eucharist individually. However, there can be exceptions to this whenever there arises a good reason such as large number of concelebrants or lack of vestments. In such situation, the celebrant wears the customary vestments and concelebrants may omit the chasuble and simply wear the stole over the alb (GIRM, n. 209). The synod of bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church has approved similar regulations regarding the vestments for the concelebrants in the Holy Eucharist.\(^70\)

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\(^{69}\) *General Instructions Regarding the Order for the Qurbana of the Syro-Malabar Church*, n. 10 in *The Order of the Syro-Malabar Qurbana* (Kakkanad: Secretariat of the Commission for Liturgy, 2005) 4-7.

\(^{70}\) “On solemn occasions, it is desirable that all the concelebrants should wear the full set of the vestments. On other occasions, the proper vestments of the concelebrants are at least *Kothina, Urara* and *Sunara*. But on certain occasions,
3.4.3. Concelebrating with Ministers of Other Churches *Sui iuris*

There can be another situation in which ministers belonging to other Churches *sui iuris* concelebrate. This is unique to the Eastern code.\(^{71}\) In a country like India, where three Churches *sui iuris* co-exist, such situations are common. With regard to this, the Code Commission for CCEO decided to follow the ancient practice of mutual respect and mutual collaboration that was existing among the various Churches *sui iuris*.\(^{72}\) Foreseeing such situations, CCEO (c. 701)\(^{73}\) directs all to wear liturgical vestments and insignia of their own Church *sui iuris*.

There are abuses happening in the actual context with regard to liturgical vestments. The priests are to wear proper vestments and all the vestments with an exception of certain occasions in which priests wear a stole alone over alb.\(^{74}\) But there are certain priests who wear only the chasuble omitting the stole. *Redemptionis Sacramentum* cautions them not to omit the stole (RS, n. 123) which is considered to be the priestly insignia. The bishops are asked to be vigilant over this.

There can be another situation in which the celebrant wears the liturgical vestments of another Church *sui iuris* even when the liturgical vestments of his own Church *sui iuris* are available. This is done for

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\(^{73}\) CCEO c. 707 §2 was reformulated to avoid such liturgical experiment, syncretism and abuses (*sperimentazioni liturgiche, sincretismo ed anche abuso*). See Nuntia 28 (1989) 90-91; see Jobe Abbass, “The Legislative History of Eastern Canons 698-717 on the Eucharist,” 33.

\(^{74}\) GIRM, nn. 209, 336.
easiness or comfort. Though CCEO allows one to use the liturgical vestments of another Church *sui iuris* causing no shock to Christ’s faithful if liturgical vestments of one’s own Church *sui iuris* are not available (CCEO c. 707 §2), this exception is seen as an ordinary rule and many celebrants use the liturgical vestments of another Church *sui iuris*. The code envisages that even when bishops and presbyters of different Churches *sui iuris* concelebrate, all celebrants wear the liturgical vestments and insignia of their own Church *sui iuris* (CCEO c. 701).

The Church warns against another abuse whereby priests celebrate the Eucharist without sacred vestments or with only a stole over the monastic cowl or the common habit of religious or ordinary clothes. This is contrary to the prescripts of the liturgical books that prescribe proper vestment for the eucharistic celebration, even when there is only one minister participating.75 The ordinaries are asked to correct such abuses by supplying adequate liturgical vestments.76 The abuse repudiated here is of celebrating or concelebrating the Eucharist only with stole over the monastic cowl or over the ordinary clerical garb. The synod of bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church has also forbidden the priests celebrating the Holy *Qurbana* with the *Urara* put on the casual dress.77

*Redemptionis Sacramentum* warns against innovations by which forms and colours are adopted according to the inclination of private

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75 “The abuse is reprobated whereby the sacred ministers celebrate Holy Mass or other rites without sacred vestments or with only a stole over the monastic cowl or the common habit of religious or ordinary clothes, contrary to the prescriptions of the liturgical books, even when there is only one minister participating. In order that such abuses be corrected as quickly as possible, Ordinaries should take care that in all churches and oratories subject to their jurisdiction there is present an adequate supply of liturgical vestments made in accordance with the norms.” *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, n. 126, AAS 96 (2004) 584.


individuals with disregard for traditional practice, while the real sense of this norm is lost to the detriment of the tradition (RS, n. 127).

3.5. Sacred Vessels

“Among the requisites for the celebration of Mass, the sacred vessels are held in special honour, especially the chalice and paten, in which the bread and wine are offered and consecrated, and from which they are consumed” (GIRM, n. 327). Therefore, the Church is very attentive in this regard. In the Eastern Churches sui iuris, it is for the particular law of each Church sui iuris to establish norms regarding the sacred vessels (CCEO c. 707 §1). In the Latin Church sui iuris, it is for the Bishops’ Conferences of each region to decide appropriateness of the sacred vessels.  

“Sacred vessels are to be made from precious metal. If they are made from metal that rusts or from a metal less precious than gold, then ordinarily they should be gilded on the inside” (GIRM, n. 328). The Bishops’ Conferences decide whether the “sacred vessels are to be made of other solid materials as well. It is strictly required, however, that such materials be truly noble in the common estimation within a given region…” (RS, n. 117).

The Church asks to avoid the use of those vessels that may violate the sanctity of the eucharistic celebration or the honour given to the Lord who is really present in the eucharistic species. So it reprobates any practice of using for the eucharistic celebration “common vessels, or others lacking in quality, or devoid of all artistic merit or which are mere containers, as also other vessels made from glass, earthenware, clay, or other materials that break easily. This norm is to be applied even as regards metals and other materials that easily rust or deteriorate” (RS, n. 117)

3.6. Scriptural Reading

“The Eucharist is inseparable from the Word of God (CCC 1346),” and eucharistic celebration is the nourishment from the table of the Word of God and the table of the Bread. In every eucharistic celebration, the entire mystery of Christ is truly made present anew and, thus, the Sacred Scripture is fulfilled. As the life of the Church is strengthened through more frequent celebration of the eucharistic mystery, similarly the word of God may be a new stimulus for the life of the Spirit.80

3.6.1. Text of Reading

While reading the sacred scripture in the liturgy, certain matters are to be kept in mind, especially with regard to the use of translations of the Bible. CCEO c. 655 §3 stipulates that “for liturgical and catechetical purposes only those editions of the sacred scripture which have ecclesiastical approval may be used; other editions must have at least ecclesiastical permission.” In response to a question (dubium) from an English-speaking bishop, the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments affirmed the indispensable role of the competent ecclesiastical authority in defining the canon of Sacred Scripture and in prescribing biblical texts for liturgical proclamation and prayer.81

Pope John Paul II expressed his concern on certain abuses related to the scriptural readings during the eucharistic celebration such as illicit omissions or additions, and substituting profane readings for texts from Sacred Scripture.82 On the pretext of inculturation, readings from the sacred books of other religions such as Bhagavad-Gita or...
Quran were incorporated during the eucharistic celebration, ignoring that the eucharistic celebration is nourishment from the Word of God, and from the Body and Blood of Christ. They in fact denied the right of the faithful “to assistance by the pastors of the Church from the spiritual goods of the Church, especially the word of God…” (CCEO c. 16). The instruction Redemptionis Sacramentum prohibits abuses stating that it is illicit to omit or to substitute the prescribed biblical readings on one’s own initiative, and especially “to substitute other, non-biblical texts for the readings and responsorial Psalm, which contain the word of God” (RS, n. 62).

3.6.2. Minister of Reading

Here, only the minister for the reading of the gospel is dealt with. In the absence of other ministers who are instituted for the reading from the Sacred Scripture other than from the gospels, any faithful can fulfil their role. However, only an ordained minister can do the gospel reading during the eucharistic celebration. Therefore, the concern here is only with the minister of the gospel reading.

“Within the celebration of the Sacred Liturgy, the reading of the Gospel, which is ‘the high point of the Liturgy of the Word,’ is reserved by the Church’s tradition to an ordained minister” (RS, n. 63). The ideal is that the celebrant of the eucharistic celebration does the proclamation of the gospel. It is the custom at least in the Latin Church that an ordained minister other than the celebrant proclaims the gospel, because “by tradition, the function of proclaiming the readings is ministerial, not presidential. The readings, therefore, should be proclaimed by a lector, and the Gospel by a deacon or, in his absence, a priest other than the celebrant. If, however, a deacon or another priest is not present, the priest celebrant himself should read the Gospel” (GIRM, n. 59). However, it is strictly prohibited that a layperson, even a religious, proclaims the gospel in the celebration of the Eucharist, nor in other cases in which the norms do not explicitly permit it (RS, n. 63).
3.6.3. Minister of Homily

“Homily is a form of a religious discourse based on the sacred scriptures within the liturgy by a cleric.”83 “A homily on the sacred text means an explanation, pertinent to the mystery celebrated and the special needs of the listeners, of some point in either the readings from Sacred Scripture or in another text from the Ordinary or Proper of the day’s Mass.”84 Therefore, pastors and rectors of the churches are asked not to omit it on Sundays and days of obligation (CCEO c. 614 §2; CIC c. 767 §2), and are bound to preach habitually during the Divine Liturgy. Because it is the most important form of preaching (CIC c. 767 §1).

Both the codes reserve the homily to a priest or deacon (CCEO c. 614 §4; CIC c. 767 §1). Ecclesiae de Mysterio86 reiterates this same notion with a clear exclusion of non-ordained faithful,87 even if having responsibilities as pastoral assistants or catechists. It is because, the homily forms part of liturgy.88 This reiteration is based on a response given by Pontifical Commission for Interpreting the Decrees of the Second Vatican Council.89 Exclusion of non-ordained ministers is

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84 Sacred Congregation of Rites, *Inter Oecumenici*, n. 54, AAS 56 (1964) 890.
85 *Nuntia* 31 (1990) 41.
86 It is an inter-dicasterial instruction on certain questions regarding the collaboration of the non-ordained faithful in the sacred ministry of the priest. Congregation for the Clergy, et al., *Ecclesiae de Mysterio*, AAS 89 (1997) 852-877.
87 There was a private rescript by the Congregation for the Clergy issued for the use of West Germany which was valid until 21 November 1981. This rescript, under certain conditions, allowed lay faithful to preach during the time reserved for homily in the Eucharistic celebration. Sacred Congregation for the Clergy, *Preaching by Lay Persons* [Private], 20 November 1973, in *Canon Law Digest* 8 (1988) 941-944; also see John Chrysostom Kozlowski, “The Laity and Liturgical Preaching: What are the Necessary Theological and Canonical Requirements?,” in *The Jurist* 72/1 (2012) 250-252.
88 *Ecclesiae de Mysterio*, art. 3 §1, AAS 89 (1997) 864.
“neither based on the preaching ability of sacred ministers nor their theological preparation, but on that function which is reserved to them in virtue of having received the Sacrament of Holy Orders.”90 “It is because the homily is an integral part of the Church’s worship that it is to be delivered only by bishops, priests, or deacons.”91 The diocesan bishop cannot validly dispense from this canonical norm,92 since this is not merely a disciplinary law but the one that touches upon the teaching and sanctifying functions of the Church.

Here, homily is to be distinguished from preaching. This preaching of Christian doctrine can also be done by non-ordained Christian faithful. “The lay members of Christ’s faithful, by reason of their baptism and confirmation, are witnesses to the good news of the Gospel, by their words and by the example of their Christian life. They can also be called upon to cooperate with Bishops and priests in the exercise of the ministry of the word” (CIC c. 759). The non-ordained Christian faithful share in the function of teaching in the name of the Church when they preach after having received a special mandate to teach (CCEO c. 596). However, homily, which is given in the course of the celebration of Holy Eucharist, “should ordinarily be given by the priest celebrant himself. He may entrust it to a concelebrating Priest or occasionally, according to circumstances, to a deacon, but never to a layperson. In particular cases and for a just cause, the homily may even be given by a bishop or a priest who is present at the celebration but cannot concelebrate” (RS, n. 64).

The inter-dicasterial instruction *Ecclesiae de Mysterio* does not permit the practice of entrusting preaching of homily to seminarians or theology students who are not clerics.93 For, the homily is not a training

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90 *Ecclesiae de Mysterio*, AAS 89 (1997) 865.
93 It is useful to see the letter from Dario Cardinal Castrillon Hoynos, the prefect of the Congregation for the Clergy, as a clarification regarding this issue. Dario
for some future ministry. This instruction makes it clear that all previous norms which might have admitted non-ordained faithful to preach homily during the holy Eucharist are to be considered abrogated by canon CIC c. 767 §1.94

3.7. Prayers of eucharistic celebration

The prayers in the eucharistic celebration, especially the eucharistic prayers, express the divine mysteries and enable the participants to involve actively in the celebration. Therefore, the council Fathers have given clear indication that except the Apostolic See and a competent body of bishops, “no other person, even if he be a priest, may add, remove, or change anything in the liturgy on his own authority.”95 Pope John Paul II warns against certain abuses noted on certain occasions such as illicit omissions or additions, rites invented outside the framework of established norms, etc. When he speaks of the abuses related to the eucharistic prayers, he uses severe terms and asks bishops to regulate such deviations.96

Only those eucharistic prayers approved by the competent authority are to be used for the eucharistic celebration.97 Modification


94 Ecclesiae de Mysterio, AAS 89 (1997) 865.
95 Sacrosanctum Concilium, n. 22, 3, AAS 56 (1964) 106.
96 “It cannot be tolerated that certain priests should take upon themselves the right to compose Eucharistic Prayers or to substitute profane readings for texts from Sacred Scripture. Initiatives of this sort, far from being linked with the liturgical reform as such, or with the books which have issued from it, are in direct contradiction to it, disfigure it and deprive the Christian people of the genuine treasures of the Liturgy of the Church. It is for the bishops to root out such abuses, because the regulation of the Liturgy depends on the bishop within the limits of the law and because ‘the life in Christ of his faithful people in some sense is derived from and depends on him’.” Vicesimus Quintus Annus, n. 13, AAS 81(1989) 910.

97 Sunny Kokkaravalayil, “The Competence of the Eparchial Bishop in Regulating the Eucharistic Celebration in the Church of a Clerical Religious House of Pontifical Right: An Interpretation of CCEO c. 415 §1,” in Georges-Henri Abuses Against The Sanctity Of The Eucharistic Discipline
of the already approved eucharistic prayers and adoption of other prayers privately composed are seen as most serious abuses. “It is not to be tolerated that some priests take upon themselves the right to compose their own Eucharistic Prayers” or to change the same texts approved by the Church, or to introduce others composed by private individuals (RS, n. 51). Redemptionis Sacramentum puts an end to the already reprobated practice of priests, deacons and the faithful altering or varying at their will the texts of the sacred liturgy that they are bound to pronounce. When the priests or others do so, they render the celebration of the sacred liturgy unstable and distort the authentic meaning of the Liturgy.

The one to proclaim the eucharistic prayer is the priest by virtue of his ordination. It is, therefore, an abuse that some parts of the eucharistic prayer are recited by a deacon, or by a lesser minister, or the assembly, or any individual.


“The reprobated practice by which Priests, Deacons or the faithful here and there alter or vary at will the texts of the Sacred Liturgy that they are charged to pronounce, must cease. For in doing thus, they render the celebration of the Sacred Liturgy unstable, and not infrequently distort the authentic meaning of the Liturgy.” Redemptionis Sacramentum, n. 59, AAS 96 (2004) 569.

“It is reserved to the priest, by virtue of his ordination, to proclaim the Eucharist Prayer, which of its nature is the high point of the whole celebration. It is therefore an abuse to have some parts of the Eucharist Prayer said by the deacon, by a lower minister, or by the faithful. On the other hand the assembly does not remain passive and inert; it unites itself to the priest in faith and silence and shows its concurrence by the various interventions provided for in the course of the Eucharist Prayer: the responses to the Preface dialogue, the Sanctus, the acclamation after the Consecration, and the final Amen after the Per Ipsum. The Per Ipsum itself is reserved to the priest. This Amen especially should be emphasized by being sung, since it is the most important in the whole Mass.” Inaestimabile Donum, n. 4, AAS 72 (1980) 334-335.

“The eucharistic prayer more than any other part of the Mass is, by reason of
3.8. Holy Communion

The Christian faithful are incorporated into the person of Christ through baptism (CCEO c. 7 §1). This incorporation into Christ is constantly renewed and consolidated by sharing in the eucharistic sacrifice, especially by the full sharing that takes place in sacramental communion. The celebration of the Eucharist is the sacred banquet of communion with the Lord’s body and blood and is wholly directed toward the intimate union of the faithful with Christ through communion (CCC, n. 1382). Therefore, the Church is watchful in protecting its sanctity and dignity.

3.8.1. Reception of Holy Communion

Reception of holy communion is a more perfect form of participation in the eucharistic celebration. Therefore, the Church urges all those who celebrate and participate in the eucharistic celebration to receive the sacrament of the Eucharist, provided that they are properly disposed (RS, n. 83). “The sacred ministers may not deny the sacraments to those who opportunely ask for them at appropriate times, are properly disposed and are not prohibited by law from receiving them” (CIC c. 843 §1). Besides, CIC c. 916 stipulates two basic canonical prerequisites to receive the

his office, the prayer of the priest alone. Recitation of any part by a lesser minister the assembly, or any individual is forbidden. Such a course conflicts with the hierarchic character of the liturgy in which all are to do all but only those parts belonging to them. The priest alone, therefore, is to recite the entire eucharistic prayer.” Liturgicae Instaurationes, n. 4, AAS 62 (1970) 698.

103 “Incorporation into Christ, which is brought about by Baptism, is constantly renewed and consolidated by sharing in the Eucharistic Sacrifice, especially by that full sharing which takes place in sacramental communion. We can say not only that each of us receives Christ, but also that Christ receives each of us. He enters into friendship with us: ‘You are my friends’ (Jn 15:14). Indeed, it is because of him that we have life: ‘He who eats me will live because of me’ (Jn 6:57). Eucharistic communion brings about in a sublime way the mutual “abiding” of Christ and each of his followers: ‘Abide in me, and I in you’ (Jn 15:4).” Ecclesia de Eucharistia, n. 22, AAS 95 (2003) 448.

104 Sacrosanctum Concilium, n. 55, AAS 56 (1964) 115.
Eucharist: baptism and the second one is the absence of any legal prohibition.

There are some occasions when the ecclesiastical authorities restrict (CCEO c. 26 §2) the right of a Christian faithful to the sacraments of the Church (CCEO c. 16). The law prohibits those, who are punished with the penalty of minor excommunication (CCEO cc. 1431 §1) or indult (CIC cc. 1332) and major excommunication (CCEO cc. 1434 §1; CIC c. 1331 §1, 2º) and who obstinately persist in manifest grave sin, from receiving the Eucharist (CIC c. 915). The present law prohibits also those who are in grave sin from receiving holy communion (CCEO c. 711; CIC c. 916).

While CCEO c. 711 and CIC c. 916 ask a sinner to refrain from receiving holy communion, these canons, under certain conditions, also provide an exception in which a person in a grave sin can receive holy communion. Those conditions are: a) there must be a serious reason, b) there is no opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Penance, and c) he/she must make an act of contrition and have the intention of confessing as soon as possible. The Church leaves this to the conscience of a person by asking a sinner to refrain from holy communion.\textsuperscript{105} “The Church’s custom shows that it is necessary for each person to examine himself at depth, and that anyone who is conscious of grave sin should not celebrate or receive the Body of the Lord without prior sacramental confession…” (RS, n. 81).

\textsuperscript{105} It will be helpful to note the answer given by St. Thomas Aquinas on the question “whether the priest ought to deny the body of Christ to the sinner seeking it?” He answers: “A distinction must be made among sinners: some are secret; others are notorious, either from evidence of the fact, as public usurers, or public robbers, or from being denounced as evil men by some ecclesiastical or civil tribunal. Therefore Holy Communion ought not to be given to open sinners when they ask for it… But if they be not open sinners, but occult, the Holy Communion should not be denied them if they ask for it. For since every Christian, from the fact that he is baptized, is admitted to the Lord’s table, he may not be robbed of his right, except from some open cause.” Summa Theologiae, III, q. 80, art. 6.
4.8.1.1. Reception by Celebrants

GIRM (n. 85) stipulates that celebrants are bound to receive the Lord’s Body from hosts consecrated at the same Mass and partake of the chalice. *Redemptionis Sacramentum* (n. 98) also repeats this notion and states that “the Communion of Priest concelebrants should proceed according to the norms prescribed in the liturgical books, always using hosts consecrated at the same Mass and always with Communion under both kinds being received by all of the concelebrants”. The Church, without specifying the effects of its violation, emphasises the obligation of all priests who are celebrating or concelebrating the Holy Eucharist to receive Holy Communion under both kinds (*RS*, n. 105) always using hosts consecrated at the same eucharistic celebration.

There are occasions when priests do not consecrate the hosts needed at least for concelebrating priests. In the Eastern Churches (both Catholic and Orthodox Churches), the celebrant consecrates hosts needed for the entire community. When daily celebration of the Eucharist became a custom in the Latin Church, there came practice of consecrating more hosts and preserving them for the following eucharistic celebrations. When this custom is extended to the concelebrants, the Church sees it as a serious abuse to be corrected. That is why modern directives on the eucharistic discipline of the Latin Church see it very seriously and prohibit such practice of celebrants receiving the hosts consecrated in the previous eucharistic celebration.

*Redemptionis Sacramentum* instructs that a priest must communicate at the altar each time he celebrates the Holy Eucharist, and concelebrants must communicate before they proceed with the distribution of Holy Communion. The priest celebrant or a concelebrant is never to wait until the people’s Communion is concluded before receiving Communion himself (*RS*, n. 97).
4.8.1.2. Reception by Other Faithful

More perfect form of participation in the eucharistic celebration is whereby the faithful receive the Lord’s body from the same sacrifice (CCEO c. 699 §3). Recalling the previous papal teachings in *Certiores Effecti* and *Mediator Dei*, the Congregation for the Oriental Churches explains the significance of receiving the Eucharist consecrated in the same eucharistic celebration as follows:

The Eucharist distributed is to be that which was consecrated during the same celebration. The rubrics of all liturgical books presuppose that the heavenly Bread distributed to the faithful is that which was consecrated during the same celebration, without recourse to the reserved Eucharist, except for cases of absolute necessity. The Supreme Pontiffs Benedict XIV and Pius XII emphatically reiterated such a prescription, which is in full harmony with the Eastern tradition. It is obvious that participants in a meal receive the food from the table at which they are present and not from another. Any usage to the contrary clouds the meaning of the Eucharist, which not only signifies the private communion of the individual with the Lord Jesus, but also the mutual communion in the mystical Body of Christ on the part of all the communicants, participating in the same eucharistic Body of Christ. The correct usage corresponds in particular with the meaning of the rites of the breaking of the Bread, existing ever since the institution of Eucharist and so important as to become the technical expression indicating the eucharistic celebration already in the apostolic and sub-apostolic period: it is a question of the one, holy Bread broken and distributed, and the Blood of the one Cup, poured out for all and offered to all for salvation.

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106 *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, n. 55, AAS 56 (1964) 115.
“Holy Communion has a fuller form as a sign when it is distributed under both kinds” (GIRM n. 337). When the faithful receive the Lord’s Body from hosts consecrated at the same Mass and partake of the chalice, even by means of the signs, Communion will stand out more clearly as a participation in the sacrifice actually being celebrated (GIRM, n. 85). The celebrant is exhorted to distribute at least some parts of the eucharistic bread coming from the fraction to at least some of the faithful in Communion (RS, n. 49). This is to indicate that all eat the same bread and drink from the same cup.

Along with the exhortation to the faithful to receive the Eucharist and to be nourished by the Eucharist, CCEO c. 708 and CIC cc. 920 & 921 remind the obligation of the faithful to receive the Divine Eucharist at least on prescribed times.\textsuperscript{110}

Both codes state that one must be well disposed to receive Holy Communion. CCEO c. 711 and CIC c. 916 ask a person who is conscious of grave sin not to receive the Divine Eucharist. Besides, CCEO c. 712 forbids those who are publicly unworthy from receiving the Divine Eucharist. CIC c. 915 has used different words to denote the same notion of\textit{ publicly unworthy to receive Holy Communion}:\textsuperscript{111}

“Those upon whom the penalty of excommunication or interdict are imposed or declared and others who obstinately persist in manifest grave sin are not to be admitted to Holy Communion.”\textsuperscript{112}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[110] \textit{Nuntia} 10 (1980) 7-8.
\item[112] Pontifical Council for Legislative Texts has explained this phrase \textit{obstinately persist in manifest grave sin} as follows: “The three required conditions are: a) grave sin, understood objectively, being that the minister of Communion would not be able to judge from subjective imputability; b) obstinate persistence, which means the existence of an objective situation of sin that endures in time and which the will of the individual member of the faithful does not bring to an end, no other requirements (attitude of defiance, prior warning, etc.) being necessary to establish the fundamental gravity of the situation in the Church. c) the manifest character of the situation of grave habitual sin.” Pontifical Council
\end{footnotes}
Communion is denied to only those who have committed an objectively grave sin and is obstinately persevering in this sinful state, which is manifest.

The mind of the Church is clear from all these norms that those who are in a state of grave sin are not to receive the Eucharist without receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation and those who are publically unworthy are not to be admitted to the Eucharist. When they do so, they violate the sanctity and dignity of the Eucharist.

3.8.2. Distribution of Holy Communion

Pope Benedict XVI urges everyone, especially ordained ministers and those who, after adequate preparation and in cases of genuine need, are authorized to exercise the ministry of distributing the Eucharist, to make every effort to ensure its importance. Though all the faithful share in the common priesthood of Christ the High Priest, the priests are sharing it in a special way through the sacrament of holy orders (CCEO c. 323; CIC c. 1008) and they are the competent ministers to serve the Eucharist. That is why the Church restricts the ministry of distributing holy communion by reserving the ministry to certain authorized ministers.

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113 “Another moment of the celebration needing to be mentioned is the distribution and reception of Holy Communion. I ask everyone, especially ordained ministers and those who, after adequate preparation and in cases of genuine need, are authorized to exercise the ministry of distributing the Eucharist, to make every effort to ensure that this simple act preserves its importance as a personal encounter with the Lord Jesus in the sacrament.” Benedict XVI, Sacramentum Caritatis, n. 50, AAS 99 (2007)143.

114 “Although all the faithful indeed share in the one and the same priesthood of Christ and participate in the offering of the Eucharist, it is only the ministerial priest who, in virtue of the sacrament of holy Orders, can confect the Eucharistic Sacrifice in the person of Christ and offer it in the name of all Christian people.” Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Sacerdotium Ministeriale, n. 1, AAS 75 (1983) 1001-1009.
3.8.2.1. Ordinary Ministers

According to CCEO (c. 709 §1), the ordinary ministers of Holy Communion are priests and, if the particular law of his Church *sui iuris* provides for it, the deacons.\(^{115}\) CIC (c. 910 §1) also states that the ordinary minister of Holy Communion is a bishop, a presbyter or a deacon. “Reserving the distribution of the Eucharist normally to the priests has the scope of manifesting its highest sacredness.”\(^{116}\) The priests and deacons, who are present at the eucharistic celebration, even when they are not celebrating or participating in the eucharistic celebration, are bound to give their assistance to those ministers who distribute holy communion when real necessity exists, i.e. presence of a large number of the faithful to receive holy communion.

3.8.2.2. Extraordinary Ministers

The codes of canon law states that when sacred ministers are lacking and if the necessity of the Church or genuine advantage so recommend, certain functions of the sacred ministers may be committed to lay persons according to the norms of law (CCEO c. 403 §2; CIC c. 230 §3). As a practical application, both CCEO and CIC give provisions to admit extraordinary ministers for distributing Holy Communion. While CIC (c. 910 §2) specifies an acolyte or another Christian faithful deputed as extraordinary ministers, CCEO (c. 709 §2) leaves the task of admitting extraordinary ministers to distribute the Divine Eucharist to the synod of bishops of the patriarchal Church or the council of hierarchs and asks them to establish suitable norms in this regard. The Congregation for the Oriental Churches instructs that the faculty of distributing the Eucharist by those other than the Bishop or the presbyter or the deacon be exercised only in the case of true

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\(^{115}\) According to the *Code of Particular Law of the Syro-Malabar Church* (art. 143), deacons also are the ordinary ministers of distributing the Holy Eucharist.

emergency. Accordingly, the *Code of Particular Law of the Syro-Malabar Church* allows extraordinary ministers to distribute Holy Communion. They are: “1º Major seminarians who have received at least the order of *Karoyusa*; 2º Any perpetually professed member of a non-clerical religious institute; 3º Lay people of good standing, generally acceptable to the parish priest and to the people.” These ministers are to be called only extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion, and not special ministers of Holy Communion or extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist or special ministers of the Eucharist, by which names the meaning of this function is unnecessarily and improperly broadened (*RS*, n. 156).

To distribute Holy Communion is not a right of an extraordinary minister but a special privilege given. Therefore, when ordinary ministers are present, even the already appointed extraordinary ministers are not supposed to distribute Holy Communion (*RS*, n. 157). The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith describes the practice of distributing Holy Communion by the extraordinary ministers while sufficient ordinary ministers are present as abuse. Besides,

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118 *Code of Particular Law of the Syro-Malabar Church*, art. 144 §3.


120 In this regard, there was a doubt placed before the Pontifical Commission for the Authentic Interpretation of the Code of Canon Law regarding the right of an extraordinary minister to distribute Holy Communion while an ordinary minister is present. The Pontifical Commission answered that the right of an extraordinary minister to distribute communion does not exist when an ordinary minister is present. Pontifical Commission for the Authentic Interpretation of the Code of Canon Law, *Responsio ad propositum dubium*, 1 June 1988, AAS 80 (1988) 1373; see also John M. Huels, “Canons 230 and 910: Eucharistic Ministers in the Presence of Ordained Ministers,” in *Roman Replies and CLSA Advisory Opinions* (1994) 81-83.

the practice of abstaining from distributing Holy Communion and handing this function over to lay persons by ordinary ministers who are present at the celebration, is seen as reprehensible\textsuperscript{122} and is also prohibited (\textit{RS}, n. 157). Moreover, an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion is not allowed to delegate to anyone else the function of distributing the Eucharist.\textsuperscript{123}

Excessive prolongation of the eucharistic celebration is a reason to appoint an extraordinary minister of holy communion.\textsuperscript{124} However, this should not be understood as a brief prolongation, considering the circumstances and culture of the place, which is not at all a sufficient reason for deputing extraordinary ministers (\textit{RS}, n. 158). Since extraordinary ministers need a special mandate to exercise their ministry, some dioceses/eparchies introduced certain practices that created confusion. They seemed to receive some sort of ordination or special status (as sharing the cup, while this is not the case for the other faithful). The Church asks to avoid and eliminate such practices.\textsuperscript{125}

Among the norms regarding the extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion given in the \textit{Code of Particular Law of the Syro-Malabar Church}, art. 144 §6 is noteworthy. It states: “During the distribution of the Divine Eucharist, all extraordinary ministers shall wear special but simple vestments approved by the eparchial bishop.”

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext[122]{\textit{Inaestimabile Donum}, n. 10, AAS 72 (1980) 336.}
\footnotetext[123]{“It is never allowed for the extraordinary minister of Holy Communion to delegate anyone else to administer the Eucharist, as for example a parent or spouse or child of the sick person who is the communicant.” \textit{Redemptionis Sacramentum}, n. 159, AAS 96 (2004) 593.}
\footnotetext[124]{\textit{Immensae Caritatis}, n. 1, AAS 65 (1973) 266.}
\footnotetext[125]{“i) Extraordinary ministers receiving Holy Communion apart from the other faithful as though concelebrants; ii) Association with the renewal of promises made by priests at the Chrism Mass on Holy Thursday, as well as other categories of faithful who renew religious vows or receive a mandate as extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion; iii) The habitual use of extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion at Mass thus arbitrarily extending the concept of ‘a great number of the faithful’.” \textit{Ecclesiae de Mysterio}, art. 8 §2, AAS 89 (1997) 872.}
\end{footnotes}
While the Latin code leaves to the diocesan bishop the duty of issuing particular norms concerning extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion and the manner in which this function is to be carried out, the synod of bishops of the Syro-Malabar Church has decided that extraordinary ministers wear special vestments. It is very appropriate to have special vestments to show reverence to the Eucharist which they carry and to ensure that the dignity is protected. Such outward expressions of reverence seem to be lacking when an extraordinary minister distributes Holy Communion without special vestments. It can give an impression that the Eucharist is something that can be handled by anyone and thus can violate the dignity of the Eucharist.

3.9. Reservation of the Eucharist

The original and primary purpose of reserving the Eucharist in churches is to give viaticum to the dying. However, CCEO sees adoration as another purpose of the reservation of the Divine Eucharist, and entrusts the reservation of the Divine Eucharist to the vigilance and regulation of the local hierarch (CCEO c. 714 §2).

3.9.1. Place of Reservation

The ideal place to reserve the Eucharist is the tabernacle in a church where there is frequent celebration of the Eucharist (CIC c. 934 §1). “The reservation of the Eucharist demands that the Eucharist be celebrated in the same place at least twice a month: the very presence and adoration of Jesus Christ in the sacramental species require this, as well as the need to provide for the renewal of the sacred species

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128 Though an exact parallel canon is not seen in the Latin Code, it describes the manner of reservation of the Eucharist and the adoration of the Eucharist in a detailed manner (CIC c. 934-944).
within a reasonable length of time\(^{129}\) (CIC cc. 934 §2; 939).\(^{130}\) There must always be someone responsible for the sacred places where the most holy Eucharist is reserved (CIC c. 934 §2).

The Lateran Council IV decreed that the Eucharist was to be safe, avoiding the risk of profanation or disrespect.\(^{131}\) CIC/1917 c. 1269 §2 also stipulated that the tabernacle was to be guarded with sufficient diligence so that any sort of sacrilege or profanation was excluded.\(^{132}\) Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship also instructed: “The holy Eucharist is to be reserved in a solid tabernacle. It must be opaque and unbreakable.”\(^{133}\) CIC c. 938 §3 repeats the same objective norms in clearer terms as follows: “The tabernacle in which the blessed Eucharist is habitually reserved is to be immovable, made of solid and non-transparent material, and so locked as to give the greatest security against any danger of profanation.”

*Redemptionis Sacramentum* (n. 131) prohibits reserving the holy Eucharist in a place that is not subject in a secure way to the

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\(^{130}\) Ernest Caparros, Michél Thériault and Jean Thorn, eds., *Code of Canon Law Annotated*, 723.

\(^{131}\) “We decree that the chrism and the Eucharist are to be kept locked away in a safe place in all churches, so that no audacious hand can reach them to do anything horrible or impious. If he who is responsible for their safe-keeping leaves them around carelessly, let him be suspended from office for three months; if anything unspeakable happens on account of his carelessness, let him be subject to graver punishment.” Lateran Council IV, Constitution XX: On Keeping the Chrism and the Eucharist under Lock and Key, in Norman P. Tanner, ed., *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, vol. I, 244.


authority of the diocesan bishop, or where there is a danger of profanation.\textsuperscript{134} When such occurrences happen, the Church had already given to the diocesan bishop the power to revoke immediately any permission for reservation of the Eucharist that had already been granted even by an apostolic indult.\textsuperscript{135}

3.9.2. Eucharistic Adoration

“The worship of the Eucharist outside of the Mass is of inestimable value for the life of the Church. This worship is strictly linked to the celebration of the Eucharistic Sacrifice” \textit{(EdE}, n. 25). Therefore, both public and private devotion to the most holy Eucharist even outside the eucharistic sacrifice should be promoted, for by means of it the faithful give adoration to Christ, who is truly and really present in the eucharistic species.\textsuperscript{136} The Sacred Congregation for the Sacraments and Divine Worship has given clear instructions concerning worship of the eucharistic mystery through its instruction \textit{Inaestimabile Donum}.\textsuperscript{137}

Though the adoration to the Eucharist outside the eucharistic celebration is praiseworthy, some give excessive importance to the adoration in such a way that they even neglect the eucharistic celebration. In fact, all other sacraments and pious activities are directed to the eucharistic celebration.\textsuperscript{138} “The celebration of the Eucharist in the Sacrifice of the Mass is the origin and consummation of the worship shown to the Eucharist outside Mass.”\textsuperscript{139} Consequently,

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{134} Charles M. Mangan, “Canon 608: Reservation of the Eucharist in an Oratory,” in \textit{Roman Replies and CLSA Advisory Opinions} (2014) 63-64.
  \item \textsuperscript{135} Sacred Congregation for the Discipline of the Sacraments, \textit{Nullo Unquam Tempore}, n. 10 d, AAS 30 (1938) 206.
  \item \textsuperscript{137} \textit{Inaestimabile Donum}, nn. 20-27, AAS 72 (1980) 339-34.
  \item \textsuperscript{138} Vatican Council II, \textit{Presbyterorum Ordinis}, n. 5, AAS 58 (1966) 997.
  \item \textsuperscript{139} \textit{Eucharisticum Mysterium}, n. 3e, AAS 59 (1967) 543.
\end{itemize}
it is a deviation from the authentic magisterium when more importance is attached to the eucharistic adoration than to the eucharistic celebration.

The time of the eucharistic adoration is not the same time of the eucharistic celebration (CIC c. 941 §2) and solemn exposition of the Eucharist is to be held only if a suitable gathering of the faithful is foreseen (CIC c. 942). The most holy Sacrament, when exposed, must never be left unattended even for the briefest space of time, and it should, therefore, be arranged that at least some of the faithful always be present at fixed times, even if they take alternating turns (RS, n. 138). The Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments warns the faithful not to do other devotional exercises during exposition of the most holy Eucharist other than the rosary. Irreverence of any kind is to be avoided when the most holy Eucharist is exposed publically.

3.10. Grave Matters Referred in *Redemptionis Sacramentum*

After enumerating the *graviora delicta* reserved to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, the instruction *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, in its concluding remarks, points out certain grave matters. It articulates: “Although the gravity of a matter is to be judged in accordance with the common teaching of the Church

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141 The *delicta graviora* reserved to the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith were as follows: Delicts against the sanctity of the Most Holy Sacrament and sacrifice of the Eucharist: 1. Throwing away, taking or retaining the consecrated species for a sacrilegious purpose, or profaning the consecrated species (CIC c. 1367; CCEO c. 1442); 2. Attempting the Liturgical action of the Eucharistic sacrifice or the simulation thereof (CIC cc. 1378 #2, n. 1, 1379; CCEO c. 1443); 3. Concelebrating the Eucharistic sacrifice together with ministers of ecclesial communities which do not have Apostolic Successors nor recognise the sacramental dignity of priestly ordination (CIC c. 908, 1365; CCEO c. 792, 1440); 4. Consecrating one matter without the other in a Eucharistic celebration (CIC c. 927); cf. *Motu Proprio* of John Paul II, 30 April 2001, *Sacramentorum Sanctitatis Tutela*, AAS 93 (2001) 737 – 739.
and the norms established by her, objectively to be considered among grave matters is anything that puts at risk the validity and dignity of the Most Holy Eucharist” (RS, n. 173). They are enlisted below avoiding a detailed description, since many of them are already discussed:

a) Use of invalid matter, i.e. bread made not out of wheat or mixed with other substance like sugar and fruits (48); wine either mixed with other substances or made not of grape, and which is impure, unnatural or corrupt (50).

b) Use of unapproved eucharistic prayers or change of the approved texts or introduction of other texts composed by private individuals (51).

c) The proclamation of the eucharistic prayer by anyone other than a priest (52).

d) Omission of mentioning the name of the Supreme Pontiff and the diocesan Bishop in the eucharistic prayer, which is a manifestation of ecclesial communion (56).

e) Uniting the Sacrament of Penance to the Mass in such a way that they become a single liturgical celebration (76).

f) Insertion of the celebration of Holy Mass into the setting of a common meal or banquet (77).

g) Introducing into the celebration of Holy Mass elements that are contrary to the prescriptions of the liturgical books and taken from the rites of other religions (79).

h) Denial of the holy communion to any of Christ’s faithful, who are rightly disposed and are not prohibited by law, solely on the grounds, for example, that the person wishes to receive the Eucharist kneeling or standing (91).

i) Administration of the holy communion in the hand to the faithful when there is a risk of profanation (92).

j) Administration of the holy communion by the faithful (not the extraordinary ministers) by themselves or to others (94).
k) Distribution of unconsecrated hosts or other edible or inedible things during the celebration of Holy Mass or beforehand after the manner of holy communion (96).

l) Intinction of the host in the chalice by the communicant himself or reception of the intincted host in the hand, and use non-consecrated bread or other matter for the intinction (104).

m) Use of flagons, bowls, or other vessels that are not fully in accord with the established norms for containing the Blood of the Lord (106).

n) Celebration of the Eucharist in a temple or sacred place of any non-Christian religion (109).

o) Suspension of the celebration of holy Mass for the people in an arbitrary manner contrary to the norms on the pretext of promoting a “fast from the Eucharist” (115).

p) Using for the celebration of Mass common vessels, or others lacking in quality that easily rust or deteriorate, or devoid of all artistic merit or which are mere containers, as also other vessels made from glass, earthenware, clay, or other materials that break easily (117).

q) Practice of the sacred ministers celebrating the holy Mass or other rites without sacred vestments or with only a stole over the monastic cowl or the common habit of religious or ordinary clothes, contrary to the prescriptions of the liturgical books (126).

r) Reservation of the Blessed Sacrament in a place that is not subject in a secure way to the authority of the diocesan bishop, or where there is a danger of profanation (131).

s) Carrying of the most holy Eucharist to his or her home, or to any other place contrary to the norm of law (132).

t) Doing any profane business causing danger of profanation or danger to the greatest reverence for the Body of Christ (133).
u) Leaving unattended the most holy sacrament when exposed even for the briefest space of time (138).

v) Assuming the role or the vesture of a Priest or a Deacon or other clothing similar to such vesture by laypersons (153)., 1365; CCEO c. 792, 1440)

w) Illegitimate celebration of the sacraments or ministries, or undertaking any office or duty in the celebration of the sacred Liturgy by dismissed or prohibited clerics (168).

These abuses either risk the validity of the eucharistic celebration or gravely violate the dignity of the Sacrament of the Eucharist.

CONCLUSION

This article was an attempt to see some abuses that have crept into the eucharistic discipline of the Church. These abuses do great harm to the sanctity of the most holy Eucharist. When abuses are perpetrated by priests, they become graver, for priests are the ministers specially deputed for the celebration and the custody of the Eucharist. It is the duty of the priests, in a special way of the bishops, to safeguard the sound doctrine and discipline regarding this most holy Sacrament of the Eucharist. The bishop, who has the duty of ordering, promoting and safeguarding the entire liturgical life of the eparchy/diocese, should “be vigilant that the norms established by legitimate authority are attentively observed. In particular, he should make sure that clergy and lay faithful carry out all those tasks and only those tasks which are proper to them, without changing the sacramental rites or liturgical celebrations according to personal taste or preference.”142 Being the

142 Congregation for Bishops, Apostolorum Successores, n. 145 (Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2004); Enchiridion Vaticanum 22 (2003-2004) 1047-1275; CCEO c. 199 #1. “As the moderator, promotor and guardian of the entire liturgical life in the eparchy entrusted to him, the eparchial bishop must be vigilant that it be fostered to the greatest extent possible and be ordered according to the prescriptions and legitimate customs of his own Church sui iuris”.

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collaborators of the bishops, priests have also the same duty. As all faithful have the right to participate in the eucharistic sacrifice celebrated according to the norms of the Church, all bishops and priests are obliged not to deny this right to them. Therefore, the liturgical norms for the celebration of the Eucharist are to be observed with great fidelity, because these norms are concrete expressions of the authentic ecclesial nature of the Eucharist.

At this point, it is opportune to note the concluding remark by Pope John Paul II in his last encyclical *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, which is like an ardent appeal resounding like a real testament:

By giving the Eucharist the prominence it deserves, and by being careful not to diminish any of its dimensions or demands, we show that we are truly conscious of the greatness of this gift. We are urged to do so by an uninterrupted tradition, which from the first centuries on has found the Christian community ever vigilant in guarding this “treasure”. Inspired by love, the Church is anxious to hand on to future generations of Christians, without loss, her faith and teaching with regard to the mystery of the Eucharist. There can be no danger of excess in our care for this mystery, for “in this sacrament is recapitulated the whole mystery of our salvation” (*EdE*, n. 61).

No one can undervalue the Eucharist and feel free to treat the Eucharist lightly or with disregard (*EdE*, n. 52). Because the eucharistic sacrifice is the source and summit of the entire Christian life.\footnote{\textit{Lumen Gentium}, n. 11, AAS 57 (1965) 15.}