


Diocese of the Eastern United States Anglican Province of America



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MEMORANDUM

TO: APA Clergy
FROM: The Most Rev.  Grundorf, D.D.
DATE: March 4, 2020
SUBJECT: Communicable Illnesses and receiving the Precious Blood from the Chalice

In light of the current concern regarding the Coronavirus COVID-19, I am sure that all of you are taking seriously the need for caution when we assemble together for Mass or other activities in the Church to prevent the spread of any communicable illnesses. We have even had the suggestion that we replace Holy Communion with Morning Prayer. This is not acceptable. Without going to extremes, I will recommend where there is concern about the Anglican Tradition of the Common Cup for the Eucharist that offering the sacrament by intinction would be a viable and acceptable alternative. The correct method of administering the sacrament is never to place the intincted host covered with the Precious Blood into the hands of a communicant. The traditional practice would be for the priest to take the host from the paten or ciborium, intinct, and then carefully place it directly into the mouth so that the communicant never touches it.

I have every confidence that each priest and deacon will use the utmost care in order that we do not upset or panic our people. Below is research from Bishop Chandler Jones concerning the Chalice and idea of contracting an illness by receiving the Precious Blood from the Eucharist Chalice.

From: The Rt. Rev. Chandler Jones, SSC
Subject: On the Chalice

Can one contract an illness from receiving the Precious Blood of Our Lord in the Eucharistic Chalice?

This question is being asked today with greater frequency and intensity in the light of the new pandemic: What are Traditional Anglicans to make of this situation? How should we react?

The Orthodox Catholic Faith clearly teaches us that What is contained in the Chalice after Eucharistic Consecration by the celebrating priest is the True Blood of Jesus Christ under the form of Wine. Because the Wine has been mystically converted and transformed into the totality of Our Lord's Person, very God and very Man, the Church has always held that the Blessed Sacrament is not capable of transmitting disease. Granted, the Eucharistic Change is not on the material level (for the Blessed Sacrament retains the physical and material properties of Bread and Wine, which are its necessary sacramental signs - if one were to examine the Most Holy Sacrament under an electron microscope one would see the molecular or atomic structure of Bread and Wine) but on the metaphysical, supra-material and supernatural level. However, the sacramental identification of the

Body and Blood of Christ with the outward signs of consecrated Bread and Wine is objectively Real, more real than our own experience of reality. The Bread and Wine contain and conceal the glorified, immortal, impassible, risen and exalted human nature of Christ. The Eucharist is Our Lord Himself.

'God was man in Palestine
And lives today in Bread and Wine.'
- John Betjeman

This is indeed a matter of belief in the Real Objective Presence of the Body and Blood of Christ in the Holy Eucharist. As Catholic Christians holding to the perspicuous teaching of Holy Scripture and primitive Tradition, we Anglicans reject the now centuries-old Roman ecclesiastical precedent of withholding the Chalice from the laity even under normal conditions - so that action should not be an alternative for us.

Anglicans, following the institution of Our Lord, should always administer *Communio sub utraque specie*, under the form of the Chalice. Here we agree with the Eastern Churches which invariably administer the Holy Mysteries in both forms. Article XXX strictly prohibits us from following the lead of the Latin Rite in this matter. *It is always permissible to administer the Precious Blood by intinction rather than having people receive directly from the Chalice.* In times of contagion, this would be the recommended manner of administering the Holy Eucharist. The priest or deacon with the Chalice reverently takes a Host from the ciborium or paten, intincts the Host into the Chalice, and carefully places the Host thus dipped into the Precious Blood onto the tongue of the communicant. Rightly done, this practice alleviates the concern some have of contact with the Chalice.

Even if contagion could be transmitted by the Most Holy Sacrament, which the Church has always taught it cannot, the precious metal of the Chalice itself is a natural antiseptic that kills microbes. The alcohol in the Chalice also prevents the survival of microbes. A demonstrable proof of the safety of the Chalice is that the clergy who receive after everyone else would be the first to be infected, but clergy are notoriously healthy and live in most cases to ripe old ages! The clergy would quickly fall ill were the Chalice to transmit disease, but in our experience, and that of a multitude of others over many centuries, we have never known a single priest or deacon to be sickened by the Chalice.