

Appendix 19: Eucharistic Sharing

Canon 844 allows Catholic ministers to administer the sacraments only to Catholics and allows Catholics to receive them only from Catholic ministers. But because other baptized Christians do, in varying degrees, share a common faith with the Catholic Church and because of spiritual needs, a degree of sharing the sacraments is allowable according to the norms of this canon.

Provision is made for the diocesan bishop or the Bishops' Conference to issue general norms governing sacramental sharing. Neither the National Conference of Catholic Bishops nor I have issued any general norms. I ask that the norms stated in Canon 844 be observed within the Diocese of Bismarck. There is to be no general sacramental sharing with baptized Christians of other denominations.

In danger of death, the appropriate Catholic minister may administer the sacraments of the Eucharist, of penance and the anointing of the sick to a baptized person who is unable to have recourse for the sacrament desired to a minister of her/his own initiative, manifest Catholic faith in this sacrament and be properly disposed.

The spouses in a marriage of mixed religion share the sacraments of baptism and marriage, but Eucharistic sharing can only be exceptional and in each case the norms state in Canon 844 must be observed concerning the admission of a non-Catholic Christian to Eucharistic communion, as well as those concerning participation of a Catholic in Eucharistic communion in another church. Any particular case that merits a ruling is to be referred to me.

First approved July 1, 1998.