

## **Why can I not wear gloves or use disposable containers to receive Communion "in the hand"?**

Recently you may have seen how other non-Catholic churches have been distributing communion in baggies or other containers. The question has also been asked, "Why can't I wear my gloves when I receive communion?" The absolute and most important factor on this topic is to recall that we, as Catholics, believe that the Eucharist is truly the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity, of our Lord, Jesus Christ; this is not the belief of many of our non-Catholic Christian brethren. Because of this basic tenet, we must give our utmost reverence to Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament, and the General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM), instructs us on how the Body of Christ is to be distributed and received. Even the vessel to hold the consecrated Hosts (usually a paten or ciboria) must be made from precious metal, indicating the respect and dignity due to our Lord, Whom we are consuming. There are specific instructions for the communicant who is receiving, and for the careful care of each tiny fragment of the Host: each particle – no matter how minute – contains our very God! Receiving the Lord while wearing gloves or asking that the consecrated Host be placed in a bag or disposable item would be disrespectful of the Lord. Further, there is an almost certainty that tiny fragments of the Host would linger on these disposable items; this cannot be permitted. At each and every Mass, the priest takes great care when he purifies the sacred vessels, ensuring that not the tiniest broken piece of a consecrated Host remains unconsumed. The awesome mystery of our God becoming present to us, really and substantially, in the Eucharist is beyond comprehension; can our response to this Gift be anything but our utmost reverence and love?