

Dear Padre,

Can the Eucharist be celebrated outside of a church—for example, inside my home?

What an interesting question. The earliest celebrations of the Eucharist were held in the homes of the early Christians. As centuries evolved and the Christian population grew, larger rooms were rented and later built to house the community gathering. The word *church* is what we now call a building in which people worship. If we were to be completely accurate, we would call the building the house or shelter for the Church because the Church is understood primarily as the baptized community living in faith and charity.

Unfortunately, because of changing demographics and priest shortages, many communities are consolidating and church buildings are being shut down and even destroyed. As a result, communities and places for liturgy grow larger. Large communities can easily become impersonal and pastoral leadership increasingly difficult.

Recently, some large parishes have developed neighborhood communities in an attempt to subdivide into smaller faith-sharing units—not unlike the original house churches. These smaller communities gather for regular prayer and catechesis. The parish priest occasionally attends their meetings and celebrates the Eucharist with them. This is one example of celebrating the Eucharist outside of a church building.

So, although there can be exceptions for pastoral necessity, canon law indicates that celebrating Mass in a sacred place is the norm. The bishop may clarify this law for his own diocese to best meet the needs of his people while respecting the dignity of the Eucharist.

*From The Eucharist: 50 Questions from the Pews, © 2009 Liguori Publications
Sundaybulletin@Liguori.org*



CNS PHOTO/BOB ROLLER

A WORD FROM *Pope Francis*

Jesus does not want disciples who are merely able to repeat memorized formulas. He wants witnesses: people who spread hope, with their way of welcoming, smiling, and loving; above all loving because the power of the resurrection makes Christians capable of loving even when love seems to have lost its motivation.

GENERAL AUDIENCE, OCTOBER 4, 2017



Calendar

Monday

JANUARY 18

Weekday

Heb 5:1-10

Mk 2:18-22

Tuesday

JANUARY 19

Weekday

Heb 6:10-20

Mk 2:23-28

Wednesday

JANUARY 20

Weekday

Heb 7:1-3, 15-17

Mk 3:1-6

Thursday

JANUARY 21

St. Agnes,
Virgin and Martyr

Heb 7:25—8:6

Mk 3:7-12

Friday

JANUARY 22

Day of Prayer for the

Legal Protection of

Unborn Children

Heb 8:6-13

Mk 3:13-19

Saturday

JANUARY 23

Weekday

Heb 9:2-3, 11-14

Mk 3:20-21

Sunday

JANUARY 24

Third Sunday

in Ordinary Time

Jon 3:1-5, 10

1 Cor 7:29-31

Mk 1:14-20