

How to Purify the Sacred Vessels after Communion

Communion vessels should be purified by a priest or deacon; however, when a sufficient number of priests or deacons are not available, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion may purify the vessels (special US Indult from the Holy See)

Before purification proper begins, it is necessary to gather any remaining fragments and consume any remaining Precious Blood.

The term "fragment" would seem to refer to larger parts easily taken up by the fingers and not to the tiny particles that remain upon the paten and in the ciborium.

Then, standing at the credence table, purify the paten or ciborium over the chalice then purify the chalice. This is usually done by placing the paten over the chalice at an angle so that the tiny fragments fall into it. If necessary, this process may be helped by moving the particles with the corner of a folded purificator or with the thumb, which in turn is rubbed over the chalice to loosen any particles that may have adhered. If necessary, especially in hot and humid climates, the fingers may also be purified with water.

The ciborium may be purified by hand in the same manner. But because of the large number of small particles in this vessel, it is often necessary to purify it directly with water. In this case, water is placed in the ciborium, gently swished to absorb all the particles and this water is then poured directly into the chalice. Extra chalices are likewise purified with water.

The minister then consumes the water containing the particles and **should not pour it into the sacrarium (special sink in the sacristy that empties into the ground and not septic/sewer system).**

The minister then dries the ciboria and the chalice or chalices with a purificator.

All used purificators are then placed in the proper bag in the sacristy for washing. If there are stains from the Precious Blood, these should be rinsed out in the sacrarium before being placed in the laundry bag. Chalices are left on the credence table and placed upside down to prevent dust from accumulating.