

Synodically Authorized Ministers Confessional, Ecclesiological Explanations of the Eucharist

Use of the Means of Grace Application 39A

“Authorization for all celebrations of Communion in a parish setting where there is a called and ordained minister of Word and Sacrament is the responsibility of the pastor in consultation with the Congregation Council.”

The Use of the means of Grace Principle 40

In witness that this sacrament is a celebration of the Church, serving its unity, an ordained minister presides in the service of Holy Communion and proclaims the Great Thanksgiving. Where it is not possible for an extended period of time to provide ordained pastoral leadership, a synodical bishop may authorize a properly trained lay person to preside for a specified period of time and in a given location only.

The Use of the Means of Grace Background 40A

In the celebration of the Eucharist, Christ gathers, teaches and nourishes the church. It is Christ who invites to the meal and who presides at it. He is the shepherd who leads the people of God, the prophet who announces the Word of God, the priest who celebrates the mystery of God. In most churches, the presidency is signified by an ordained minister. The one who presides at the Eucharistic celebration in the name of Christ makes clear that the rite is not the assembly’s own creation or possession; the Eucharist is received as a gift from Christ living in his church. The minister of the Eucharist is the ambassador who represents the divine initiative and expresses the connection of the local community with other local communities in the universal Church.

In the case where the Bishop grants permission for a lay person to preside at Communion, the following paragraph will be used in the bulletin of the day – or otherwise spoken during announcements:

Bishop Thomas Aitken, Northeastern Minnesota Synod, has authorized _____ to preside at Holy Communion today (*OR*, from _____ to _____.) This is an extension of the bishop’s own ministry and is an exception to the normal sacramental practices of this church