

# DIOCESE OF DAVENPORT



## Resource: Recipes for Eucharistic Bread

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Memorial of St. Pius X, pope

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## §IV-245 RESOURCE: RECIPES FOR EUCHARISTIC BREAD

### Introduction

The practice has arisen in a number of parishes of using “home-made” bread rather than traditional hosts for the eucharist. On the one hand, this is a laudable practice. By using bread that has a familiar appearance, the faithful are helped in making the connection between liturgy and life. In addition, the ministry of baking bread for the liturgy highlights the connection between “what earth has given and human hands have made” and the Eucharist offered on the altar. As is seen in the GIRM:

321. The meaning of the sign demands that the material for the Eucharistic celebration truly have the appearance of food. It is therefore expedient that the eucharistic bread, even though unleavened and baked in the traditional shape, be made in such a way that the priest at Mass with a congregation is able in practice to break it into parts for distribution to at least some of the faithful. Small hosts are, however, in no way ruled out when the number of those receiving Holy Communion or other pastoral needs require it. The action of the fraction or breaking of bread, which gave its name to the Eucharist in apostolic times, will bring out more clearly the force and importance of the sign of unity of all in the one bread, and of the sign of charity by the fact that the one bread is distributed among the brothers and sisters.

On the other hand, proper attention has not always been paid to questions of “validity” and “liceity.” As the GIRM states (see also CIC c.924 and c.926):

320. The bread for celebrating the Eucharist must be made only from wheat, must be recently baked, and, according to the ancient tradition of the Latin Church, must be unleavened.

“Validity refers to legal efficacy. An invalid act...is not recognized in canon law as achieving its effects, whether these effects be juridic or spiritual” (Huels, 73). Validity depends on such issues as the identity of the minister and recipient, the “form” (words) used, and the “matter” (materials) used for the sacrament. These are the essentials of a sacrament, and if any are missing then the sacrament does not take place.

For example, in the case of the Eucharist:

Only a priest (presbyter or bishop) is the valid minister; a deacon or lay person is not.

Only a baptized individual is the valid recipient of eucharist; it has no effect if received by one who is not baptized.

“The valid form consists of the words of consecration said over the bread and wine” (Huels, 199).

For validity, the bread must be made of wheat flour and water. “Additives to the wheat flour and water may affect validity if they substantially alter the nature of the bread such that, in the common estimation of persons, it cannot be considered wheat bread” (Huels, 197). Leavening alone makes the bread “illicit” but not invalid.

“Liceity” refers to whether or not the laws of the Church are being followed. “An act that is valid but illicit is one whose effects have been realized although the agent failed to fulfill one or more requirements of the law or acted contrary to the law in one or more respects” (Huels, 73). The purposeful breaking of laws damages the unity—the communion—of the Church. As Pope John Paul II wrote in his Encyclical Letter, *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* #52:

I consider it my duty, therefore to appeal urgently that the liturgical norms for the celebration of the Eucharist be observed with great fidelity. These norms are a concrete expression of the authentically ecclesial nature of the Eucharist; this is their deepest meaning. Liturgy is never anyone’s private property, be it of the celebrant or of the community in which the mysteries are celebrated ....Our time, too, calls for a renewed awareness and appreciation of liturgical norms as a reflection of, and a witness to, the one universal Church made present in every celebration of the Eucharist (see 1 Cor 11:17-34).

Therefore, while the use of home-made (“substantial”) bread for the Eucharist is in keeping with the law and tradition of the Church, the addition of ingredients (such as salt, baking soda/powder, yeast, sugar, honey, eggs, oil, butter, etc.) clearly makes the bread illicit—and, depending on both the amount of liquid used and the resulting product (if it is more cake-like than bread-like) may make the bread invalid. Therefore, it is incumbent on pastors to ensure that any bread used in the Diocese of Davenport is both valid and licit.

Some practical considerations:

- Homemade (“substantial”) bread tends to make more particles as the bread is fractioned (broken) than hosts do; it is important to remember that in purifying the vessels that these fragments are appropriately consumed.
- This type of bread does not contain preservatives; therefore it will grow moldy very quickly—especially in the warm and dark environment of a tabernacle. Consequently, substantial bread should not be reserved but consumed after Mass. It will be important to consecrate only enough bread as is needed at Mass to avoid having to consume large amounts of the Blessed Sacrament after the liturgy.
- Finally, when communities begin using substantial bread, there might be a bulletin announcement to address this matter to explain that the recipe being used is in conformity to the norms established by the Congregation for Doctrine of the Faith.

Abbreviations used:

CIC	<i>Code of Canon Law (Latin Church)</i>
GIRM	<i>General Instruction of the Roman Missal</i>
Huels	<i>Liturgy and Law: Liturgical Law in the System of Roman Catholic Canon Law</i> (John Huels, 2007)

**§IV-245.1 Recipe from *CHURCH* (volume 13, number 3, Fall 1997; page 34)**

Preheat oven to 375 degrees.

**Ingredients:**

4 cups whole-wheat flour (unsifted)

2 cups white flour (unsifted)

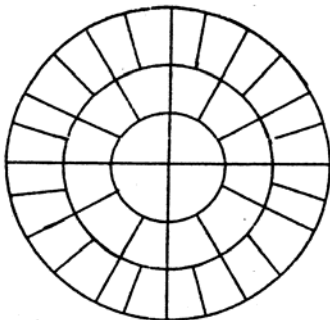
2 ½ to 2 ¾ cups warm water

¼ cup flour for flouring kneading surface and/or hands

Mix together the 6 cups of flour. Add the warm water, all at once. Stir until dough “cleans” side of bowl. Turn onto a surface dusted with whole-wheat flour. Knead dough for 5 minutes until smooth. Shape dough into a ball. Cover with damp cloth and let rest for 5 minutes.

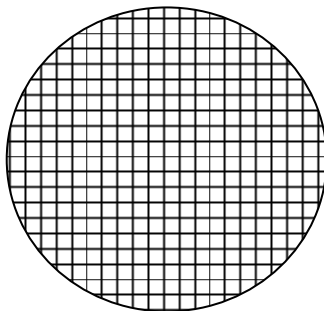
Divide dough into eight equal parts. (You may use a tiny bit of cooking oil on the palms of your hands and the cookie sheet.) Using your hands, shape each piece of dough into a circle. A one-pound coffee can is a good mold until you get the feel of it and can do it freehand. The dough should be between 3/8 and ½ an inch thick. Try not to handle the dough too much.

Place the dough on the cookie sheet and score into 40 pieces (as shown). Be sure to cut all the way through each loaf. (The top of an oil bottle, a saltshaker lid, or an aspirin bottle lid is good for the center circle. If you have a biscuit cutter, this will make two circles at one time. You may want to use a glass or jar lid for the second circle.)



Bake 18-20 minutes. (Check after 15 minutes until you know how the bread responds to your oven.) Break open one loaf of bread to be sure it is done. Also, taste it. The center should be firm, not soggy. The bread will be pale. If it is done, remove from oven and cool on baking racks to room temperature. Stack the bread—with a paper towel between loaves—and wrap in aluminum foil. If you plan to freeze the bread, wrap the loaves in foil, place in plastic bag, and freeze. Frozen bread takes about an hour to thaw.

Alternatively, the bread can be scored in a “cross-hatch” fashion.



**§IV-245.2 Recipe from St. Joseph Parish (Rock Island, IL); used also at Sacred Heart Cathedral**

(Please prepare as close to Mass time as possible.)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

2 ½ C. Hodgson Mills whole wheat flour

½ C. Gold Medal unbleached white flour

1 ¼ C. lukewarm water (110 degrees)

Mix all ingredients together in a bowl until the flour is gathered together. Place on lightly floured surface and knead for 5-6 minutes. The dough is on the stiff side, so there is not a great need for much extra flour to facilitate kneading. Kneading is most important to prevent puffing or ballooning.

When the dough is smooth and pliable, form into a ball and let rest for 5 minutes, covered with a dampened cloth to prevent a crust from forming.

Divide dough into 4 equal balls, and roll each into 5-inch rounds. Score into small squares by pressing a large knife into but not through dough; 10 evenly spaced lines in each direction will yield approximately 100 portions; double score one quadrant of each loaf for those who have difficulty with larger pieces.

Place on lightly greased insulated cookie sheet and bake (immediately after rolling out) for 13 minutes. The bread should not brown, so the color will remain pretty much the same, but will lighten somewhat. It must not be over baked, as some moisture is needed to retain the proper texture.

Cool and wrap in plastic or foil. Refrigerate until used.

### **§IV-245.3 Recipe from the Diocese of Great Falls-Billings**

For each loaf use:

- ½ cup whole-wheat flour
- ½ cup unbleached white flour
- ½ cup water

Combine and knead until well mixed (Keep a mixture of both flours handy to use if more flour is needed).

Knead for at least 5-8 minutes, let dough rest for 5-10 minutes, and knead again. (The kneading and rest periods are very important in preparing this unleavened dough).

Roll out dough and cut or form into a loaf 6-7 inches round (size of a 3-lb. coffee can) by ½ inch thick. Score loaves with a scoring mold.

Place loaves on ungreased baking sheet (a very light coating of non-stick spray may be used if they want to stick to the pan). Bake at 375 to 425 degrees for approximately twenty to thirty minutes (depends on each oven, size of loaf and type of baking sheet - a cast iron skillet bakes more evenly and in less time than a cookie sheet).

#### **OTHER BAKING AND PREPARATION TIPS**

- To score loaves, (be sure to spray the mold with non-stick spray and sprinkle with flour to prevent sticking to the dough when pulled back out of loaf (press mold firmly into, but not all the way through the dough. This will help facilitate the breaking during the Eucharistic Liturgy).
- If possible, bake bread on Friday afternoon or Saturday morning for maximum weekend freshness. Cool loaves and store in plastic bag in the refrigerator (mark date baked on the bag).
- Each 6 - 7 inch loaf should yield approximately 85 pieces.
- Use a combination of whole-wheat flour, unbleached white flour and bottled water (refrigerate flour and use the coldest water possible).

**§IV-245.4 Recipe by Fr. Dennis Krouse. (Liturgy 80, July 1987, page 5)**

The following “Bread Recipe” is unleavened and contains no additives. When baked according to instructions given, it is soft, easy to break and easily consumed.

1. FOR SEVENTY COMMUNICANTS, use 1/3 cup whole-wheat flour to 2/3 cup unbleached white flour. The mixture of flour should be kept in an airtight container in the freezer and used while cold. (The cold flour helps prevent a separate crust from forming.)
2. Use one cup of the flour mixture to approximately ½ cup of spring water (Perrier is good). The water should be refrigerator cold.
3. Quickly mix the flour and water together with a fork until all the flour is moist. Form dough into a smooth ball. Usually more flour needs to be sprinkled on the surface of the dough to prevent stickiness.
4. Gently flatten the ball of dough into a circular loaf about ½ to ¾ inch thick. If necessary, turn any uneven edges underneath.
5. Place the unscored loaf on a lightly oiled baking sheet (suggest using Pam; wipe off any excess).
6. Place in a preheated oven at 425 degrees.
7. After approximately twelve to fifteen minutes the top crust should have raised slightly. Prick the crust with a toothpick in several places, turn the loaf over and continue to bake about five minutes. (This gives evenness to the top of the loaf.)
8. Turn loaf right side up again and continue to bake until the crust is very lightly browned, about ten to fifteen minutes more for a total of twenty-five to thirty minutes. Baking time when using more than 1 ½ cups of flour needs to be extended.
9. Place the loaf on a rack for cooling. (It is helpful to slice the bottom crust off to check for any rawness.)
10. Bread is best when made fresh the day of the liturgy. However, after cooling it can be tightly wrapped and frozen for later use.

#### **§IV-245.5 Recipes from the Archdiocese of Los Angeles**

The following recipes fulfill the requirements of the Church for eucharistic bread. These breads are easily broken with very few crumbs. Nine inch round breads are recommended for Sunday Mass.

##### **Recipe #1**

- 2 ½ cups whole wheat flour
- ½ cup unbleached white flour
- 1 ¼ cups warm water.

Mix all the ingredients in a bowl. Knead very well for about 6 to 8 minutes, or until the dough is smooth and pliable.

Roll the dough out into the desired size and shape, to about ¼ inch thick. Prick around the edge to help prevent the formation of air bubbles. No need to score.

Bake on a not-stick-baking sheet in a 350-degree oven for about 16-17 minutes depending on the size of the breads. Two 9-inch rounds can be obtained from this recipe. Cool and wrap in plastic or foil, or put in a baggie. The bread may then be frozen or refrigerated until needed.

##### **Recipe #2**

- 2 ½ cups wheat flour
- ½ cup unbleached white flour (put flour in freezer ahead of time)
- 1 ¼ cups cold Perrier water

Mixed all the ingredients in a bowl. Knead very well for about 6 to 8 minutes, or until the dough is smooth and pliable. (May use small amounts of oil on hands to keep from sticking.)

Roll the dough out into the desired size and shape, to about ¼ inch thick. Prick around the edge to help prevent the formation of air bubbles.

Score bread into ¾ -inch pieces before baking. Bake on a non-stick baking sheet in a 350-degree oven for about 16-17 minutes, depending on the size of each bread. Two 9-inch rounds can be obtained from this recipe. (Cardinal Mahony prefers 7 ½ inch breads for the archdiocesan stational liturgies). Cool the bread and wrap in foil, or put in a baggie. The bread may then be frozen or refrigerated until needed.

**APPENDIX:**

**BREAD BAKER'S PRAYER**  
(FROM ST. JOSEPH'S PARISH)

Host of the Eternal Feast  
bless me now  
as I prepare the bread  
for our eucharistic celebration,  
your most precious gift to us.

As I combine  
wheat and water,  
fruits of your creation,  
keep me mindful  
of your sacrifice that redeemed all.  
Knead me to your will  
as I work the dough;  
shape me  
into a more perfect Christian;  
temper me with the fire of your love.  
Keep me hungry for your word  
as I assist our community  
to unite in this special way  
as the living Body of Christ.

Thank you for the honor of serving you and \_\_\_\_\_ Parish  
through this sacred ministry.