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Reverend and Dear Monsignors and Fathers,

At the request of the Presbyteral Council, which recently met, I am writing at this time to be sure that the following norms are being followed in our Eparchy.

1. **Syriac:** Regardless of which language the Divine Liturgy is being celebrated in, it is ideal that the following be chanted in Syriac: the Entrance Dialogue, *Qadeeshat*, the Access to the Altar, the Words of Institution, and the Epiclesis. At the very least, the *Qadeeshat* and the Words of Institution must always be chanted in Syriac without exception.
2. **Vestments:** The principal celebrant of the Divine Liturgy is always to be fully vested, including for weekday celebrations, in Maronite vestments, that is: alb, amice, stole, cincture, belt, and cope.
3. **Concelebrants:** Besides the principal celebrant, all concelebrants, normally, should be fully vested in Maronite vestments, including when concelebrating at a Latin Rite Mass. The use of only the *jibbee* and stole for concelebration should be used only as a rare exception.
4. **Wheat Allergies:** Some of the faithful suffer from a severe allergic reaction to gluten, which is present in all hosts, as all hosts must be made of wheat. There are some “low-gluten” hosts available and acceptable, but even these can cause reactions to those who have a chronic allergy to gluten, and also, these hosts must not come into contact in any way with the regular hosts in order for them to remain low gluten.

A few months ago the Holy See issued an instruction to all bishops reminding them that a host which is completely gluten free does not have enough wheat in it to constitute valid matter for the celebration of the Eucharist. Thus, in our Eparchy, the practice will be as follows:

The priest is to be informed before celebrating the Divine Liturgy that one of the faithful suffers from this allergy. Then, the priest is to take a small cup (like the ones used in our intinction sets) and places some wine, mixed with water, in it. This cup is consecrated during the celebration of the Divine Liturgy along with the chalice. The priest must be sure never to pour from the main chalice into this small cup in order to avoid any hint of gluten. When the faithful receive Holy Communion the person suffering from this allergy is permitted to refrain from

receiving the host and to drink the precious Blood directly from this cup. It would be best if that person would come to receive either first or last in order to avoid confusion. The faithful who have this sickness should never be turned away from Holy Communion.

5. Alcohol Problems: Priests who cannot drink any alcohol whatsoever may use *Mustum* for the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. The Holy See has approved this as valid matter. For the faithful who cannot tolerate any alcohol, they may receive the host alone, but always on the tongue.

Hopefully these reminders will be of some assistance to you.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ Gregory

+Gregory John Mansour