

Hosts OK for celiac sufferers

Jerry Filteau/CNS

WASHINGTON — A magazine devoted to people with celiac disease has endorsed a low-gluten Communion host made by Catholic nuns in Missouri as "perfectly safe" for celiac sufferers.

The magazine, *Gluten-Free Living*, came out shortly before a public controversy emerged over a New Jersey mother's fight to change the Catholic rules for such hosts. The church requires bread made from wheat, containing at least some gluten, for the celebration of the Eucharist.

Gluten is a protein in wheat, rye, barley and oats that binds the baked bread. In people who have the genetic disorder known as celiac disease or celiac sprue, gluten causes an immune reaction that can lead to severe damage of the intestinal lining and a number of other health problems ranging from chronic diarrhea and anemia to osteoporosis.

In the magazine, a nun-pharmacist, Sister Jeanne Patricia Crowe of the Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, wrote that she analyzed the low-gluten hosts produced by the Benedictine Sisters of Perpetual Adoration in Clyde, Mo. Her

conclusion: "On average, a whole host could contain no more than 37 micrograms of gluten."

Two experts from the University of Maryland's Center for Celiac Research told the magazine that a celiac sufferer could consume that much gluten daily with no ill effects.

A microgram is a millionth of a gram, or about 35 billionths of an ounce, so 37 micrograms would be about 1.3 millionths of an ounce.

Maria Gangarossa, a parishioner at Irondequoit's St. Margaret Mary Church, was diagnosed with celiac disease a year ago. She stopped taking Communion when she learned the hosts contain gluten, but feels awkward that she can't participate in the Eucharist with her family.

"It would mean a world of difference for me," Gangarossa said of being able to take Communion using low-gluten hosts. "Communion takes place in more than just Sunday Mass," she added, citing her inability to take Communion at her uncle's funeral or at her daughter's baptism.

Patty Smith, a parishioner of St. Christopher Church in North Chili, was diagnosed with celiac disease almost two years ago. She continued to take Communion after her diagnosis, but noticed she would be ill the

day following Mass. She said she finally realized the gluten in the hosts was the cause of her illness and recently stopped taking Communion.

Smith said she is happy to hear of the availability of low-gluten hosts and the prospect of them being used here.

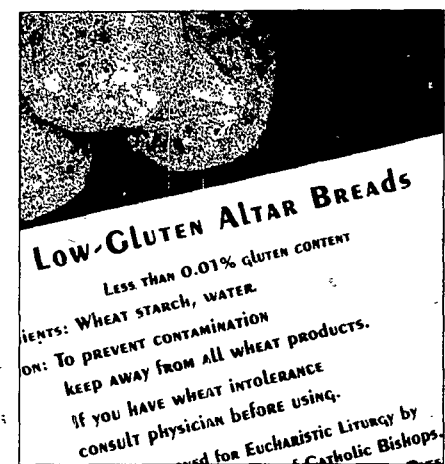
"This is good. It's something I can go back to, taking Communion. It bothered me that I couldn't go to Communion," she said.

Both Gangarossa and Smith say they will approach their pastors about using the low-gluten hosts in their respective parishes.

Father Daniel Condon, chancellor of the Diocese of Rochester, said the low-gluten hosts made by the Benedictine Sisters have been available in some diocesan parishes for the past year, and it is up to the parishes to procure such hosts for parishioners who request them.

Father Condon noted there is another option that would enable those with celiac disease to take Communion.

"During the celebration of the sacrament of the Eucharist, both the bread and wine are consecrated and become the Real Presence of Christ," he said. "Individuals with medical conditions that preclude



LOW-GLUTEN ALTAR BREADS
 LESS THAN 0.01% GLUTEN CONTENT
 INGREDIENTS: WHEAT STARCH, WATER
 DIRECTIONS: TO PREVENT CONTAMINATION
 KEEP AWAY FROM ALL WHEAT PRODUCTS.
 IF YOU HAVE WHEAT INTOLERANCE
 CONSULT PHYSICIAN BEFORE USING.
 Approved for Eucharistic Liturgy by
 the Catholic Bishops

Nancy Wiechez/CNS

Low-gluten hosts approved for Mass are handmade at the Benedictine Convent of Perpetual Adoration in Clyde, Mo.

them from taking the host normally used can drink from the cup and be confident that they are receiving the sacrament."

The Benedictine convent's hosts are the only ones the U.S. bishops' Secretariat for Liturgy has approved as a true low-gluten wheat bread suitable for liturgical use.

For information or to order the low-gluten hosts, call 800/223-2772; e-mail: altarbread@benedictinesisters.org; or write: Benedictine Sisters Altar Bread Department, 31970 State Highway P, Clyde, MO 64432.

CEMETERIES

OF THE ROCHESTER CATHOLIC DIOCESE

1. **CALVARY CEMETERY**
Parish Cemetery of St. Mary's, Clark St., Canandaigua 14424
585-394-1220
2. **HOLY SEPULCHRE CEMETERY & MAUSOLEUM**
2461 Lake Avenue, Rochester, NY 14612
585-458-4110
3. **MOUNT OLIVET CEMETERY**
East Canal Road, Office: 152 Main St., Brockport, NY 14420
585-637-4500
4. **ST. ANN'S PALMYRA**
136 Church St., Palmyra, NY 14522
315-597-4571
5. **ST. JAMES**
503 Clark St., Waverly, NY 14892
607-565-2014
6. **ST. JOSEPH'S CEMETERY**
6020 Lake Ave. Ext., Auburn, NY 13021
315-252-5197
7. **ST. MARY OUR MOTHER**
816 West Broad St., Horseheads, NY 14845
607-739-3817
8. **ST. PATRICK'S**
300 Main St., Owego, NY 13827
607-687-1068
9. **ST. COLUMBKILLE CEMETERY**
CEMETERY OF ST. PATRICK PARISH
97 W. Bayard St., Seneca Falls, NY 13148
315-568-5203
10. **SS. PETER & PAUL'S**
623 Franklin St., Elmira, NY 14904
607-732-6431

The cemeteries listed paid a nominal fee to be listed on this page. A number of other Catholic cemeteries chose not to be listed, primarily because they are no longer selling burial plots.