

Guidelines for Ministers of Holy Communion

General Information

Ministers are asked to arrive early and sign in near main entrance.

Please sit anywhere you like, but be sure it is near easy access to an aisle.

Proceed to the sanctuary after the Sign of Peace. (please see roles of **Sacristan** and ministers below). As you approach the sanctuary, bow in reverence to the Tabernacle, clean hands at the credence table, take your place behind the priest.

There are five Ministers of Eucharist at all weekend Liturgies: Sacristan, 2 Breads, 2 Cups

When you are not scheduled for a mass, **please come prepared and dressed to exercise your ministry.** If after a reasonable time following the Sign of Peace, you see there are not enough ministers assembled in the sanctuary, please come forward to fill in for a missing colleague.

After priest receives Communion, the priest will distribute Body of Christ to the ministers assembled in the sanctuary who will consume the host as soon as they receive it.

The priest will then offer the Cup of the Precious Blood to the minister **closest to the presider's chair.** This minister will then offer the Cup to the others.

The priest will offer the communion vessels to the ministers, who will come forward to accept their dish or cup.

After the priest-presider begins to descend the sanctuary stairs (to distribute Communion), you may proceed to your position to distribute Communion.

As you leave the sanctuary or credence table after distribution of communion, reverence **the tabernacle** and altar before you proceed down the aisle to your seat.

After mass, consider helping the scheduled sacristan. He or she may welcome help in carrying dishes from the credence table to the sacristy or in purifying vessels.

Please be mindful that there is limited space in the Sacristy and please do not socialize in the Sacristy.

Role of Sacristan During Liturgy

Prior to mass, the sacristan checks credence and offertory tables to make sure the set-up is correct. The tabernacle is kept locked at all times. The key is kept in the safe in the Sacristy.

After the Sign of Peace, the sacristan proceeds to the tabernacle, opens the doors of the tabernacle, genuflects, removes the ciborium and **closes the tabernacle door**. Places the ciborium on altar to the priest-presider's right. The priest will fill communion dishes with hosts. The sacristan then takes his or her place among other ministers in sanctuary to await Communion.

When distribution of Communion is complete, the sacristan helps gather remaining hosts into ciborium. The sacristan then returns the ciborium **(carry only the ciborium)** to the tabernacle, genuflects, and then closes the tabernacle doors.

The sacristan places the key on a small cloth next to the tabernacle. Return to your seat.

Role of the other Ministers during Liturgy

All ministers should bow in reverence as they approach the sanctuary before communion and as they return to their seats following the distribution of Communion.

When distributing the Eucharist, it is appropriate to make eye contact with the communicant as you say “The Body of Christ” and, according to the preference of the communicant, place the host in his or her hand or on the tongue.

When distribution of Communion bread is complete, return unconsumed hosts to ciborium and place dish on the credence table. Reverence the tabernacle before you take your seat.

When distributing the Cup to the right and left of the center aisle, mindful that parishioners will approach from the center and from the side aisles.

Hold the cup by the base or stem using both hands, one of which holds the purifying linen. Simply say “The Blood of Christ,” and allow the person to take the cup from your hands. Before offering it to the next person, wipe the rim of the cup with the linen and rotate the cup slightly. Occasionally, a communicant does not wish to drink from the cup, but expresses a desire to “dip” the host into the chalice. The appropriate rite for this is for the minister to take the host, dip it into the precious blood and place it on the tongue of the communicant, (never in the hand).

When distribution of the precious blood is completed (or the cup is empty), return the cup to the credence table. If consecrated wine remains in the cup, if comfortable, reverently consume it at the credence table and reverence the tabernacle before returning to your seat.

Role of Sacristan Following Liturgy

Purifying Vessels

After mass, the sacristan removes the purifying linens, priest's chalice, Communion dishes and cups from credence table and takes them to the sacrarium sink in the sacristy to purify them. Dishes and cups may not be stacked.

The small water pitcher and lavabo bowl may be left on the credence table. Check that pitcher has water in it and that the lavabo has a clean towel.

The sacrarium, which drains directly into the ground, is used to purify the vessels which have held consecrated bread and wine. Using the purificator and cup linens from mass, brush any crumbs remaining in dishes into the chalice. In the same way, pour any remaining wine into the chalice. **The contents of the chalice (consecrated bread and wine) should be consumed immediately and never disposed of in the sacrarium.** If you are not comfortable consuming the precious blood, please ask the priest, deacon or fellow ministers for help.

Purify the communion cups and dishes by washing them from the faucet in the sacrarium. Dry all vessels with the purificator and communion linens from mass. Place wet linens over the rim of the normal sink in the "work" sacristy.

Set Up for the next Mass

Set Up after 5:00pm, 7:30am, 9:30am, 11:30am Liturgies:

After all vessels are purified, return three small communion dishes to credence table. Behind them, place two communion cups you have half-filled with wine (wine bottles are to right of sacrarium); cover each cup with a linen cloth (found in drawer marked “cup linens” above altar cloths).

Place the presiding priest’s chalice on the credence table with a priest’s purificator on top. (Purificators are in drawer above altar cloths.)

Place the white bowl and pitcher for lavabo in right hand corner of credence table. Check that there is water in the pitcher and the bowl is dry. Place a clean towel over the pitcher.

Fill the large communion dish with the appropriate number of hosts for each liturgy. Hosts are in cabinet above sacrarium. (Each sleeve holds 100 hosts)

Place one large host for the priest on top of smaller ones in the large communion dish.

Pour wine into wine carafe until it is half full, and place it alongside large communion dish on offertory table.

After the 11:30 Liturgy: Purify (see purification instructions above) and store all vessels. Place communion dishes, cups and wine carafe in green cloth covers. Cups go on top shelf, dishes on first shelf in cabinet above altar linens.

Store chalices. Priest’s chalices and patens go in their case and placed in the safe.

Empty lavabo pitcher and dry with paper towel. Store in base cabinet to the right of sacrarium. Likewise, wash and dry crystal pitcher and store in cabinet with chalices.