

St. Williams Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

Guidelines for all Sunday and Holy Day Masses

All Communion Ministers are required to be in attendance at Mass 20 minutes before Mass begins. If you are unable to attend, **YOU MUST FIND A REPLACEMENT**. If you are the first Communion Minister on the list for that mass be sure your replacement is aware that they have the responsibilities that go with the first Minister. If there is a last minute emergency and you cannot find a replacement, you must call another Communion Minister scheduled to serve at the mass with you so that they know to find a replacement from the Assembly.

Notes specific to the first Communion Minister on the list are at the end of these guidelines.

BEFORE MASS

All of our Liturgical Ministries evolve from our role as members of the Assembly; therefore, if we are to be effective, committed Communion Ministers, we must first be effective members of the Assembly. As such, we must sing, pray, respond, listen and be, as we are challenged in the Liturgy Documents – “fully active, conscious participants of the Sunday Liturgy, which is both the source and the summit of our Catholic faith”. Therefore, it is beneficial for Communion Ministers to be familiar with the readings and Gospel of the day and the season in which that liturgy is being celebrated.

Since the first role of all ministry is to be a Minister of hospitality, Communion Ministers are called to be Ministers of hospitality, to be part of the welcoming spirit that the church wishes to share with all who come to our Sunday worship. Therefore, all Communion Ministers are required to be at Mass 20 minutes early to serve as greeters to those who are gathering for Mass.

Arrive at Mass 20 minutes early, check off your name on the assignment list and then go directly to the church entrance to serve as a greeter.

PROCESSIONAL

Communion Ministers sit in the Assembly during Mass but may participate in the entrance procession before going to their seats. Communion Ministers follow all the Altar Servers and come just before the Lector(s) and/or the Deacon with the Book of Gospels in the Procession.

When you reach the Sanctuary steps, step to each side below the first step of the sanctuary; wait there until the Presider reverences the altar with his bow. All Communion Ministers bow together with the Presider; immediately after your bow, go to your seat.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

To be an example for the Assembly, listen attentively and respond in song as prompted.

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Communion Ministers should approach the sanctuary *immediately* after extending a brief Sign of Peace to those beside them. Communion Ministers should stop in front of the altar, below the steps, and bow together before proceeding behind the altar. Ministers of the Body line up on “Joseph’s side” and Ministers of the Blood on “Mary’s” side. It may not be necessary to go to the Tabernacle before coming to stand behind the altar to receive Communion, this is determined by the number of Consecrated Hosts in the Tabernacle and how many will be consecrated at Mass.

Father will serve you the Body of Christ, then, if there is a Deacon present, the Deacon will bring you the Blood of Christ. If a Deacon is not present, Father will go back to the altar to serve the Precious Blood and bring you cups and Ciboria to distribute Communion. Communion Ministers do not take or replace things on the altar.

Father usually gives the Body of Christ to the Blood Ministers first. The first Minister to receive the Precious Blood should consume and then immediately go to the Ministers of the Body to share the cup with them. The second Minister to receive the Precious Blood should consume and then immediately go and take the cup to the Altar Servers. After all Ministers in the Sanctuary have received both Species then go to your places to distribute Communion to the Assembly.

When serving Communion to the Assembly, distribute the Host saying, “the Body of Christ” and the Cup saying, “the Blood of Christ”. In both cases, make eye contact with the Communicant and be deliberate in your actions. As in all aspects of Liturgy, never be in a hurry or do anything hastily.

If you are running low on Hosts when giving the Body of Christ you may go to another Minister or Father to get more Communion to distribute. If you can see that you are going to be just a few Hosts short then you can break a Host in half before giving the Body of Christ. If it is clear that not enough Hosts have been consecrated for that Mass it may be necessary to go to the Tabernacle to get more of the Blessed Sacrament that is reserved for the sick and homebound. If that is necessary, and Hosts need to be transferred from the large Ciborium into smaller Ciboria, that must be done at the altar on top of the Corporal.

If the Minister or the Communicant drops a Host, it should be picked up by the Communion Minister and consumed by her/him immediately (or held in your hand until after Communion is distributed and then either consumed or disposed of properly – if it cannot be consumed, see Father or Deacon to properly dispose of the Body of Christ).

Ministers of the Precious Blood & Body should go to their spots (check for the colored dots by the altar steps for the appropriate spots) on the ground level. Open your Purificator so that it can be easily used on a new spot for each wipe. Hold the cup out away from your Body by its stem, with the Purificator underneath, so that the cup may be seen and the Communicant will be encouraged to approach.

Make eye contact with the Communicant saying, “the Blood of Christ”. Let the Communicant hold and take the cup themselves to consume the Precious Blood, this includes small children who have made their first Communion. When they hand the cup back to you, wipe the spot where they drank from the cup and turn the cup a quarter turn. Note that some women may leave a lipstick mark on the cup that may require more aggressive wiping. After each “wipe” find a clean, unused spot on the Purificator. *When your cup becomes empty return the cup immediately to the credence table, put your Purificator on top of your cup* and stand with the Altar Servers while distribution of Communion is completed.

If Precious Blood is spilled, cover it immediately with a Purificator and stand over it; if necessary, have an usher stand by it so that it is not walked on. Get the Purificator that was used with the Presider’s Chalice off of the altar or credence table to continue distributing from your cup. Tell the Presider or Deacon immediately after distribution of Communion is complete and he will instruct you in cleaning up the Precious Blood.

Intinction (dipping the Host in the Precious Blood) is not allowed. If someone approaches the cup with the Host in their hand ask them politely to, “Consume the Host before taking the Precious Blood.”

WHEEL CHAIR or DISABLED: If there are wheelchair bound or disabled people sitting in the front of the church, serve Communion to them first. Always take both Body and Blood to them. If they are blocking the exit of others in the pew with them, serve all people in that front pew. Check on your own, and with the assistance of the Ushers, to see if there are any people who were unable to come forward to receive. If there are people in the back of the church who need to receive, **BOTH** Body and Blood should be taken to them when you have finished with the regular Communion procession. Always take both Body & Blood even if you “know” the person you are taking Communion too will not want the Blood.

CHOIR: The choir receives Communion last.

After completing distribution of Communion the cups are returned to the credence table, any left over Precious Blood is consumed by the Ministers at the credence table. *The Communion Ministers with the Hosts* brings the Ciboria back to the altar and wait for the Priest or Deacon to take the Ciboria from them. One Minister can go to the Tabernacle to get the large Ciborium and bring it to the altar so that the Deacon or Priest can put all consecrated hosts into that Ciborium and then the Minister returns the large Ciborium to the Tabernacle bowing or genuflecting before closing the Tabernacle doors.

When distribution of Communion is complete the Ministers return to their seats, stopping together to bow in front of the altar.

SENDING

Immediately after the Final Blessing (“Go in peace...”), go to the front of the sanctuary and line up on each side as you did in the end of the Procession. Join in the sending procession just behind the Altar Servers.

AFTER MASS

Some Communion Ministers are required to stay after Mass to purify the Communion Vessels. Purification must take place immediately at the end of Mass; those responsible must come back to the credence table immediately after they process out. ***COMPLETE purification MUST take place at the credence table and then the sacred vessels can be moved to the sacristy for further cleaning. Two Ministers are the most that will fit at the credence table; others can do the secondary cleaning in the sacristy. Do not go into the Sanctuary and to the credence table for the purification until the final song is complete.***

FIRST COMMUNION MINISTER RESPONSIBILITIES

- Arrive 20 minutes before Mass to set up.
- *Weigh the hosts for the mass in accordance with the set-up instructions for each mass.*
- Fill the LARGE Communion plate with the appropriate number of hosts for that mass.
- Fill the LARGE wine flagon with the correct amount of wine for that mass.
- Place ONLY the wine flagon and plate of hosts on gift table in the back of church.
- Set up the credence table as designated for each mass.

Cups (empty)

One Purificator for each cup.

Ciboria (empty)

Hand washing bowl for Presider

Hand towel for Presider

Presider's chalice with Purificator over the top, Pall over Purificator and Corporal on top of Pall.

Water carafe (only one) filled full with regular (not Holy) water from the bottle in the Sacristy.

- Go to church entrance to serve as a greeter.
- Count Communion Ministers, find replacements from the Communion Minister Roster if someone is missing (a replacement MUST be a trained and commissioned Communion Minister).
- *AFTER MASS PURIFY VESSELS AT THE CREDENCE TABLE AND AFTER PURIFICATION, WASH THEM IN THE SACRISTY.*

PURIFICATION

COMPLETE Purification takes place BEFORE washing of the Sacred Vessels in the sacristy.

To purify a Ciborium, simply wipe any crumbs or fragments from the Ciboria or plate with a Purificator and into a cup or chalice.

To purify the cups and the wine flagon, place water in the flagon, the water is swirled around the flagon to collect remaining Precious Blood and then the water is poured from the flagon into a cup to gather any remaining crumbs of the Body of Christ or droplets of Precious Blood. After swirling the water it may be consumed or poured into the next cup to be swirled and consumed. This process is continued until water has been used in each cup and all of the remaining Body and Blood of the Lord have been consumed.

After all of the water from the cups has been consumed a Purificator is used to completely dry each cup. Each cup must be rinsed, the water with fragments and droplets of Body and Blood consumed, and then completely dried with a Purificator BEFORE they can be removed from the credence table and washed in the sacristy.

Once COMPLETELY purified (rinsed, consumed and dried with a Purificator) the cups can now be taken to the sacristy for further washing.