

St. William's Parish

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

Guidelines for all Sunday and Holy Day Masses

Scheduling for Communion Ministers is done through "Ministry Scheduling Program" and the "MSP" app, and allows you to set your preferences and ask for a sub if you are unable to fulfill an assignment. Ministers listed as Body "A" will do all the set-up for Mass. Guidelines for this position are at the end of these instructions.

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 summit of our Catholic faith". It is beneficial for Communion Ministers to be familiar with the readings and Gospel of the day and the season in which the liturgy is being celebrated.

Since the first roll of all ministry is to be a minister of hospitality, Communion Ministers are called to be part of the welcoming spirit that the church wishes to share with all who come to our Sunday worship. All Communion Ministers are asked to arrive 20 minutes early to serve as greeters to those who are gathering for Mass. Arrive early, put on the cross designated for EMHC and then go directly to the church entrance to serve as a greeter.

PROCESSIONAL

Communion Ministers sit in the Assembly during the Mass but should participate in the entrance procession before going to their seats. Communion Ministers follow the Altar Servers and come in before the Lector who will be processing in with the Book of the Gospels.

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. Blood Ministers should stop in front of the altar below the steps on the side closest to the choir, and bow together before proceeding to the top step. Body Ministers should proceed to the “St. Joseph” side of the altar and do the same thing.

The #1 Blood Minister is responsible for pouring the Precious Blood into the cups at the Altar. Begin this process as soon as you bow and step up to the Altar; don’t delay.

Father will serve both the Body and Blood of Christ to all the Communion Ministers. He will bring cups and ciboria to Ministers to distribute Communion. Communion Ministers do not take or replace things on the Altar. If you are given a cup by Father and are not a cup Minister, take your drink and then pass the cup to a Blood Minister saying, “Blood of Christ”.

The first Blood Minister to receive the cup from Father should take a sip of the Precious Blood, wipe the cup and then immediately bring the cup to the Body Ministers on the St. Joseph side of the Altar. The second person to receive the cup will take a sip, wipe the cup and then immediately bring the cup to the Altar Servers. As Father goes to his place to serve the congregation, follow to your designated place.

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, it may be necessary to go to the large ciborium on the Altar to get more of the Blessed Sacrament. If 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 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 the Minister or Communicant drops a Host, it should be picked up by the Communion Minister and consumed by him/her immediately. If it has fallen out of someone’s mouth, pick it up and either hold it in your hand under the ciborium or return it to the Altar, put it on the corporal and tell Father what happened at the end of the distribution of Communion.

Ministers of the Precious Body and Blood should go to their spots on the ground level. Hold the cup away from your body by its stem with the other hand underneath holding the purificator, 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 children who

have celebrated their First Communion. When they hand the cup back to you, wipe the spot where they drank and turn the cup a quarter of a turn. Note that some women may leave a lipstick mark on the cup that may require more aggressive wiping. *When your cup becomes empty return the cup immediately to the credence table, put your purificator on top of your cup and stand by the credence table while the distribution of Communion is completed.*

If you are #1, #4 or #5 Blood Minister and you finish early, move to the end of the first pew and continue to distribute the Precious Blood.

If Precious Blood is spilled, cover it immediately with a purificator and stand over it; if necessary, have an usher stand by it so it is not walked on. Get the purificator that was used with the Presider's chalice off the Altar or credence table to continue distributing your cup. Tell the Presider 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."

CHOIR

The choir is served differently at each Mass. Check with an experienced Communion Minister to get the procedure for the Mass you are serving.

WHEELCHAIR 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 the people in that pew. Check on your own or with the assistance of the ushers to see if there are people who are unable to come forward on their own. 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.

PEOPLE NOT RECEIVING COMMUNION/BLESSING

If someone who is not receiving Communion comes in the Communion Procession to the minister of the Body of Christ, the minister may offer a simple greeting, e.g., "May Jesus be with you always." *Words or gestures of blessing should be avoided.*

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 bring the ciboria back to the Altar and wait for the priest to take the ciboria from them. The "A" Body Minister waits by Father as he condenses the Hosts and then

returns the large ciborium to the Tabernacle, bowing before closing the Tabernacle doors. All Ministers bow together and 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 at the Entrance 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 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 can 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 until the final song is complete.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF “A” COMMUNION MINISTER

- Arrive 20-30 minutes before Mass to set up
- Get tabernacle key and check tabernacle for consecrated host count. Leave key in tabernacle with doors shut
- 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 the Mass and the large host
- Fill the Large wine flagon with the correct amount of wine for that Mass
- Place **ONLY** the wine flagon and the plate of hosts on the gift table in the back of the 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 on the top, Pall over purificator and corporal on top of pall

Water carafe filled full with regular (not Holy) water from the water dispenser

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

PURIFICATION

COMPLETE Purification takes place **BEFORE** washing the Sacred Vessels in the Sacristy

To purify a ciborium, simply wipe any crumbs or fragments from the ciboria or plate with a purificator into a cup or chalice (This is usually done by Father at the Altar)

To purify the cups and wine flagon, place water in the flagon, swirl the water around the flagon to collect any remaining Precious Blood and then pour the water from the flagon into a cup to gather any crumbs of the Body of Christ or droplets of Precious Blood. This process is repeated in each cup and then the water is consumed.

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

Once **COMPLETELY** purified, the cups can be taken to the Sacristy for further washing and then returned to the cupboard in the Altar Server/Workroom.