

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion Guidelines, November 2018

Sharing with the priest and deacon in the distribution of Holy Communion to the faithful at Holy Mass is a ministry to be taken very seriously as a privilege and honor. Jesus present in the Eucharist is the center of our life and worship as Catholics. At Holy Mass, as simple bread and wine is changed into the real Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, we share in the one ultimate sacrifice that our Savior offered on Calvary. Each time we participate at Mass we are literally taken back to Calvary, remain here at Mass, and are transformed into the Messianic Banquet in the Kingdom of Heaven! In order for this special ministry to be accomplished with due reverence here at St. Andrew Parish, I ask all Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion to follow the guidelines listed below.

1. Dress "smart casual" or "business casual." To give proper reverence for distributing Holy Communion, please no shorts or t-shirts.
2. Come to Church 15 minutes prior to Mass and check your name off on the sign in sheet in the sacristy, where Father, the deacon and the servers get vested for Mass. If you are substituting for someone, write your name next to theirs then check your name off the list.
3. Sit wherever you like in church. Spend some moments in prayer before Mass asking the Lord for all of us who will minister at this Mass to have a greater sense of awe, reverence, and understanding of what is happening at the Mass. Spend time thanking Jesus that He called you to give his body, blood, soul and divinity in Holy Communion to fellow members of the Body of Christ, the congregation. Pray for those who will receive from you today.
4. At the appropriate time, make the sign of peace with those around you and then come up and stand shoulder to shoulder at base of the sanctuary. You may make the sign of peace with those around you in the sanctuary as well. Please complete the sign of peace before we sing the "Lamb of God." Please precede to the top step of the sanctuary after the celebrant has consumed the body & blood of Jesus.
5. Father or the Deacon will take the ciborium from the tabernacle and place it on the altar. Father and deacon will offer the hosts to each communion minister. Please make sure to set the example by bowing your head before you receive and saying "amen" in an audible voice. Father and deacon will offer the precious blood to four communion ministers. Again, please bow your head and say an audible "Amen" before receiving. At that time, you will also be handed a purificator. Please offer the precious blood to the musicians first (if you are on musicians' side) to the other communion ministers and to the servers.
6. The patens of hosts will be given to those who are communion ministers who do not have the precious blood. When we all have our cup or paten, we will go to our places to distribute. There are two host stations and four cup stations in front of the ambo and two host stations and four cup stations in front of the presider's chair on main floor. Cup stations are ten feet away from host stations to avoid traffic jams. If there is a smaller crowd, Father may say we will distribute from the center aisle. If that is the case, he will explain the placement of ministers at that time.
7. Give communion to the handicapped in the first couple of pews first; first the host, then the cup. If there is a person who we need to go to not in the front pew, the priest or deacon will distribute the host; watch if you are a cup minister next to him and follow him if he goes toward the congregation at the end of the communion line.
8. When distributing the host, hold up the host so you look through the host into the eyes of the one receiving and say, "The Body of Christ." Place the host in the palm of their hand or on their tongue. If distributing the cup, look through the cup into their eyes and say, "The Blood of Christ." Wipe the cup with the purificator and turn it. (Do not use their name when offering them the Eucharist. We are all one in the Body of Christ.) If they come forward with their arms crossed, say, "May God bless you." It is up to you if you touch them while saying this.
9. If you are given a pix or have whiter than normal hosts in the ciborium given to you, those are gluten free hosts. Father or the deacon should point out to you who receives these hosts. If it is in a pix, that means no one but the person receiving communion can touch the host; so say, "The body of Christ" then when they say, "Amen" open the pix and flip it upside down in the palm of their hand so the host comes from the pix into their hand. Place the pix under the ciborium and hold it until you have finished distributing communion. If it is a whiter than normal host, just give them that host in the same way as any other host.

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10. If you are distributing the host, watch that before they turn from you, they have placed the host in their mouth. If you are distributing the cup, watch those receiving the host, that by the time they get to you, regardless if they take from the cup, they have placed the host in their mouth. If any of you see them walking with the host in their hand, stop them and tell them to either consume or give it back to you. Be pleasant; be firm. They will cooperate.
11. If a host should drop, pick it up and consume it or place under the ciborium in your fingers and give to Father when you return to the altar. If the precious blood should spill, place the purificator over the spill and tell the deacon or Father when we return to the altar and assist us with clean up after Mass.
12. When you have given to the last person, check to see if the other side is close to finished, if so, return to the altar, place your ciborium on the altar, wait in the sanctuary until all have returned. If there are still several to receive communion on the other side, assist them. If you are distributing from the cup, consume what is left at your station, unless there is too much, then return to the altar with it. Place the purificator and cup on the altar and wait for everyone else to return to the altar.
13. When the deacon or Father returns the one ciborium to the tabernacle, all bow, as he closes the door to the tabernacle; then everyone returns to their pew and says a prayer of thanksgiving for the awesome gift of Eucharist and being called to be his Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion.