

# **EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION GUIDELINES**

## **PREPARATIONS**

Be at your best. Look pleasant. Check your attire.

Be dignified in appearance and posture.

Maintain good hygiene. Wash your hands before the start of Mass.

Avoid unnecessary conversation.

Assemble for prayerful preparation together with other Liturgical Ministers at 15 minutes before the Mass at the Vestibule.

## **ENTRANCE PROCESSION**

The entrance procession is formed in the back of the church and up the center aisle. The ministers walk in pairs behind the servers. Upon reaching the altar near their reserved seats make a head bow to the altar in pairs and in unison without delaying the procession and take the seats left pews.

Walking should be done with grace and smoothness. When ministers are walking together, an impression of unison should be given. The pace should not be rushed but deliberate. The body not allowed slouching.

When walking in pairs, keep abreast, act in unison, doing the same thing at the same time.

The ministers have no particular responsibility until after the priest (s) receives Holy Communion.

## **AFTER THE PRIEST (S) RECEIVES HOLY COMMUNION**

After the priest (s) receives Holy Communion, ministers exit out towards the aisles and proceeds to stand in a single line facing the altar just below the altar steps. If necessary to pass the Blessed Sacrament, reverence it by genuflecting.

Wine ministers stand in line at the left side facing the altar. Bread minister (if no concelebrant or deacon present) go the tabernacle and bring to the altar the ciborium/ciboria and stand in the line at the right side facing the altar.

If a wine minister was given the ciborium by mistake give it to a bread minister. If a bread minister was given the chalice or cups by mistake give it to a wine minister.

After given the cups (with purificator) and ciboria the ministers proceed to their communion stations.

## **COMMUNION**

If we are concerned that people receive Communion reverently (and we should be), then we must be just as concerned that we are not racing to complete the sharing of Communion as quickly as possible.

The ministry of communion is only for those who can look another person in the eye with comfort and touch another person with ease. The human action of sharing the Body and Blood of Christ requires ocular, verbal, and tactile contact to express personal communion. The

person to whom you are ministering deserves your full attention. If you are gazing down the approaching line of people or scanning the faithful instead of giving full attention to the person before you, most of the encounter's human value will be lost.

After everyone has received, the bread ministers place the ciboria on the altar. Bread minister (if no concelebrant or deacon present) collects the remaining bread into the ciborium/ciboria that came from the tabernacle and take them back to the tabernacle. Another bread minister (if no concelebrant or deacon present) clears the altar of the sacred vessels to the credence table or sacristy and cleans the vessels. The wine ministers consume the precious blood immediately and discreetly, clean and cover the cups with purificators, and take them back to the credence table or sacristy. The ministers return to their places without delay.

The ministers take their seats by the time that the celebrant is ready to begin the prayer after communion. At the dismissal, they regroup in procession with celebrant, concelebrant, deacon, lectors, servers, etc.

## **GENUFLECTIONS**

All catholic are taught to genuflect to the Blessed Sacrament when entering and leaving the church.

If there is a tabernacle with the Blessed Sacrament genuflect whenever passing in front of the tabernacle (whenever not holding a sacred vessel).

This is how a proper genuflection is made:

1. Genuflections always begin in a standing position facing the tabernacle. You do not genuflect while moving.
2. With hands folded, eyes looking at the tabernacle, bring your right leg back about half a step, then, bend your right knee to the floor even with the heel of your left foot, body erect.
3. Pause briefly, then, rise to the original standing position, feet together.
4. Proceed with the next action.

## **... DO'S and DON'TS ...**

If it is necessary to pass the altar, when holding the ciborium or communion cup, do not reverence the altar or crucifix because it is already the Blessed Sacrament you are holding.

People are never to be permitted to take the bread and then dip it into the chalice or cup themselves. There is too much danger of the dripping of the precious blood.

## **RECESSIONAL PROCESSION**

The recessional procession is formed during the recessional song. When the altar servers go down and line up in the center aisle, all line up in pairs behind the lectors/altar servers facing to the altar. Bow in unison whenever the priest bows. When the priest leaves the altar and walks down toward the center aisle, turn toward each other and walk down the aisle in unison leading the procession to the vestibule.

## **AFTER THE MASS**

After the Mass has ended the ministers go to the sacristy to take care of the sacred vessels. In the sacristy, they first consume any of the precious blood remaining in the chalices. Then they put some water in each chalice and ciborium, and brush any particles from the patens that have been used by the priest into the water. The water in each vessel swirled around to cleanse the whole inside, and then that water either be consumed or poured into the sacrarium. This is the auxiliary sink found in each sacristy, which leads to a small dry well in the ground near the wall of the church. Then water used again to thoroughly wash and rinse all vessels, especially those parts from which people have been drinking. Soap is not necessary, but when it is, be sure to rinse it all off.

For all of this washing and final drying, which really takes only a moment, the purificators can be used, if they are clean or other cloths, called ablution cloths. All the vessels dried and returned to their usual storage place.