

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion



Our Lady of Guadalupe Church

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Dear Extraordinary Ministers of Communion:

Thank you for your special service to the Lord, to the Church, and to our parish community. The Holy Eucharist is the greatest gift on this earth. To be commissioned as an extraordinary minister of Communion is the most sacred ministry that a lay person may perform. It is a commission granted for one year, for a particular parish, and is not automatically renewable, but by special invitation. Your service is not simply a job, but a great privilege and responsibility. You must first of all recognize and adore the real and substantial presence of the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. Your internal reverence must be expressed externally in each moment, posture, and gesture, so as to honor Our Lord and to inspire our people to worship Him.

This ministry at times requires sacrifices from you and your family; for example, the sacrifice of arriving early and showing up when you are assigned to a time that is inconvenient. I thank you for being dependable, so that the community may rely upon your faithful service. When circumstances make it really impossible for you to minister at your assigned time, be sure to get a reliable substitute in advance. The Lord will reward you many times over.

May this guide lead you to faithful fulfillment of your important role and to growth in God's love.

Fr. Larry and the Oblates of St. Joseph

PROCEDURE FOR MINISTERING AT MASS

1. PREPARING. You should arrive twenty minutes before Mass, and say a brief prayer to Christ in the Blessed Sacrament, so as to perform your ministry consciously and reverently. In the sacristy, sign in, and wash your hands. Observe quiet in the ministers' sacristy, talking only in a whisper when necessary. A sign displayed there will remind you of the reason for this. Put on an alb before entering the sanctuary. Genuflect to the Blessed Sacrament whenever crossing the center. (A bow is not the proper reverence to the Blessed Sacrament present in the tabernacle. Only while the Mass is being celebrated are you to bow to the altar rather than genuflect to the Blessed Sacrament.)

You should not enter the priests' sacristy, unless absolutely necessary. One minister may enter to prepare the following:

For the offering table at the back of the Church: a communion plate with a large host atop the number of small hosts needed for the particular Mass, and a cruet of wine.

For the credence table at right of tabernacle: the celebrant's chalice with purificator, pall, corporal, and tabernacle key (if it is not

already in the tabernacle).

2. PROCESSION. Vested in white robe, enter with the priest and other ministers, and remain in the sanctuary for the entire Mass. Your place in procession is in front of the deacon or reader carrying the Gospel book (and behind any other readers and servers). When an entrance song is sung, the procession comes down the center aisle. When the entrance antiphon is simply recited, the procession goes directly from the sacristy to the foot of the altar steps, passing in front of the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe. On arriving at the foot of the altar steps, genuflect together with the priest at his right, by placing your right knee next to your left heel. You precede priest up the step, taking your place on the right side of the sanctuary.

3. DURING MASS. Ministers lead the congregation in responding to the prayers, listening to the Word Of God, and above all in adoring the Eucharistic presence. This includes observing proper postures with reverence. The body is kept straight. When standing or kneeling, hold hands always flat together pointing upward in prayer. When sitting place hands apart flat on knees or thighs. Bows are made to the altar during the Mass. The proper reverence to the Blessed Sacrament (in or out of the tabernacle) is a genuflection, and not simply a bow.

4. COMMUNION. The Communion minister closest to the tabernacle approaches the altar to receive Communion first, and then receive the ciborium to give Communion to all the other ministers on that side. After receiving, the second Communion minister also receives a ciborium. Each minister then proceeds directly to his or her Communion post (without waiting for the priest to arrive first). On giving Communion, say "The Body of Christ," awaiting the response of "Amen."

When you are the only extraordinary Communion minister, if there is a choir in the loft, go there first; if there is no choir, accompany the priest in the center aisle. If there are two extraordinary Communion ministers, one accompanies the priest, and the other goes to the center aisle near the back of the Church.

Ordinarily, handicapped persons unable to join the Communion procession should be invited to sit up front; if however, they insist on having Communion taken back to them, this is to be done before arriving at your regular Communion post, so as not to detain the whole congregation at the end of Communion.

If a Host drops to the floor, pick it up, taking care to see that no particle remains on the floor. Consume the Host if at all possible; otherwise place the Host on the server's paten, or apart on the edge of your Communion plate; then after Communion, place it in the ab-lution cup near the tabernacle.

5. AFTER COMMUNION. As soon as you finish giving Communion, take your ciborium to the priest at the tabernacle altar and place it on corporal in front of tabernacle. Remain standing facing the tabernacle, until the priest genuflects before closing it. Genuflect with him and then be seated while he purifies the sacred vessels. After the final "Thanks be to God," proceed ahead of the priest to your place at the foot of the altar step for the final genuflection and exit procession.

After Mass, keep your albs on and return all the things you used to their proper place in the sacristy, or prepare them for the next Mass if there is another Mass soon following. Do not touch anything at the lectern of the priest near his chair. Remember the same procedures for reverence as for before Mass and the quiet to be maintained in the sacristy. Hang your alb carefully in its place.

Thank God for the opportunity to serve and go forth to live in communion with the Lord.

FOR COMMUNION TO THE SICK

1. WHO MAY TAKE COMMUNION TO THE SICK. Only a commissioned Communion minister may take Communion to others and only during the duration of and in the parish of his or her commission.

2. CARRYING THE BLESSED SACRAMENT. When carrying the Blessed Sacrament to someone at home or in a hospital or rest home, the minister must carry Communion directly to the person and may not stop anywhere along the way. The Blessed Sacrament is to be carried only in a proper pyx. The Blessed Sacrament is carried with reverence and full consciousness, with the minister avoiding any distractions, such as playing the car radio. The minister is not allowed to keep the Blessed Sacrament at home, or retain it on his or her person or in any other place for any period of time. Any unused Hosts must be returned immediately to the tabernacle or else consumed.

3. ADMINISTERING COMMUNION. The minister must take a corporal to be spread on arriving to rest the pyx upon. (A small purificator may be used as well to function as a corporal). When possible those assisting shut-ins should be instructed to have a clear table area covered with a white cloth and two candles, as well as a crucifix hanging somewhere in the room. The minister must follow the approved Rite for Communion to the Sick and comply with all diocesan policies.

5/26/2015

Praised be Jesus Christ. Now and forever!