

Our Lady of  
Mount Carmel Church  
Chicago, IL

Procedures for  
Parish Readers and  
Extraordinary Ministers  
of Holy Communion

*Rev. 06/12*

## Procedures for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

- ◆ Sign-in at least 10 minutes before Mass, please wash hands. Even though you may not be scheduled, and you are at Mass, it wouldn't hurt to check-in to make sure all the "bases" are covered. If it's 5 minutes before Mass, and those assigned haven't signed-in, feel free to sign-in and take their place. If you are a sub for someone, state that on the sign-in sheet.
- ◆ If the priest is ready to begin Mass and sees that we are short ministers, he will make the needed accommodations, for example, eliminating chalices. If ministers come forward at Communion, and haven't signed in, there won't be any vessels for you!
- ◆ Ministers are asked to approach the altar after all have recited, "*Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be **healed***", and stand to the left or right on the sanctuary level. Do not step up to the altar platform. Please do not make the priest wait. Sitting in the front half of the church helps! If you are assigned to serve on the right side of the church, stand on the right and the same for the left.
- ◆ When receiving Communion from the presider, you may either do so by the hand or mouth. If you choose to receive in the hand, please remember that we create a "throne" with our hands, the hand that we will pick up host is under the hand that will receive the host from the priest. We **receive** Communion, we do not **take**—that is why we do not grab the host from the priest. A bow of the head before receiving the Body and Blood of Christ is the unified gesture of reverence of those receiving Communion in the United States.
- ◆ When its time for the priest to hand off the vessels, those who are assigned as bread ministers will just hold out their hands —chalice ministers keep your hands down. With this "sign language", the presiding priest will know who should get a plate or a chalice!

When proclaiming the readings, please **pause** after the introduction to the reading and at the end of the text before ending the reading with "The Word of the Lord". This way the text of the reading is set apart from the introduction and concluding statements.

The new microphone system is new and improved, but does not work miracles. The microphone must be pointed at your mouth at all times to work properly. The microphone receiver is at the tip of the wand. Extending your thumb and pinkie gives you a good measure of distance to be from the microphone. Too close and your p's will pop.

The binder for the Universal Prayer is placed in the pew where you sit before Mass or on the shelf under the ambo. The binder is never carried in with the Book of the Gospels.

Proper attire is the same for lectors as EMHC's: Sunday's best. Anyone serving in the sanctuary should be models of how to dress when coming to Mass. NO jean, shorts, t-shirts with slogan or pictures, tennis or running shoes or flip-flops. During the winter months, coats should be either left in the pew or hung in the sacristy. Purses can be left in the pew with a companion or hid in the sacristy.

If it happens that there are no acolytes or deacon, please assist the priest at offertory— When the gifts are presented, you will need to take the collection basket from the priest and take it into the sacristy to the awaiting priest and return to your seat discreetly.

Reader 1, carrying the Book *slightly elevated*, will walk behind the acolytes, leaving a few pews in between you and the servers. When you approach the sanctuary step, pause, make a slight bow of the head to the altar and proceed up the stairs to the altar by the right side. Walking behind the altar, place the Book flat, face down (cover facing altar top) on the center of the altar, leaving enough room for the priest to kiss the altar, and move to your seat in the congregation by way of the right side. This way you will not collide with the priest who is walking a few feet behind you.

Approach the ambo, no bow, to proclaim the first reading, no ad libbing. Afterwards, return to your seat in the congregation, at which time the cantor will sing the psalm from the ambo. After the cantor returns to his/her place, Reader 2 approaches the ambo to proclaim the second reading, no ad libbing. When finished and all have responded "*Thanks Be to God*", place the Lectionary closed on the shelf under the ambo and return to your seat with the congregation.

After the immediate conclusion of the Creed, (*...and the life of the world to come. Amen*) Reader 2 begins to move to the ambo to read the Universal Prayer. Waiting for the priest to begin reading the introduction causes an undo delay.

At the conclusion of the prayers, the priest will give the closing prayer, just turn and face him. After he finishes the concluding prayer, return to your seat, placing binder on shelf under ambo.

You are finished. You do not process out. After Mass, please return the Book of the Gospels, lectionary and binder to the sacristy for the next Mass.

A few notes from previous workshops:

- ◆ Now its time to move into position.  
One station will be behind the organ (OB) (Assisting priest or minister) Bread stands in aisle, allowing people to return to pew by way of the wall aisle. Only those seated along the west wall pews will receive from you and return to their pew by way of wall aisle.
- ◆ Another station on the marble steps in directly in front of the Blessed Virgin Mary Shrine, labeled Confessional Bread (CB) Only those seated along the east wall pews will receive from you, returning to their pew by the wall aisle.
- \* Another station is in the center aisle, Mary's side, Hence MC & MB (Mary chalice & Mary bread) the presiding priest is always the bread minister, will stand on the marble and the chalice will stand on the step in front of the priest's chair. If a deacon is present, he is automatically MC
- ◆ Another station will also be in the center aisle, but on Sacred Heart side Hence SHC & SHB (Sacred Heart Chalice & Sacred Heart Bread) the bread minister will stand on marble step beside Priest and chalice will stand at the entrance of the ramp, closer to the ambo.
- ◆ Those sitting in the 2 center set of pews will form two lines down the center aisle, receive bread and wine and return by way of the side aisles.
- \* FYI-a priest is always MB and deacon will always be MC!
- \* When you sign-in, you will see the above abbreviations next to your name, so will know your position before Mass.
- ◆ After distribution, chalices are placed on the credence table (behind the altar) bread plates on the high altar in front of tabernacle. Most times, the EMHC next to the priest can hand off the plate to the priest. A priest or deacon will consolidate hosts and close the tabernacle. If there is any of the Precious Blood left in a chalice, you may choose to consume it at the credence table or just cover them with a purificator.

- ◆ Acolytes will stand in line to receive Communion.
- ◆ The host is held up before the communicant. Use only the declaration: **THE BODY OF CHRIST/THE BLOOD OF CHRIST**. Chalice: Wipe rim of chalice, inside and out and rotate for each communicant. Be sure to open the purificator and make use of the entire cloth. INTINCTION (the dipping of host in the wine) is not permitted in the United States. We do not self serve. Only a priest may intinct. If someone is approaching with a host in hand, simply cover the chalice, and ask them to kindly consume bread first—NO FIGHTS PLEASE.
- ◆ All those coming to receive will make a slight bow of the head BEFORE receiving communion. Wait until the bow is finished before making the declaration. This is the only approved sign of reverence that the Bishops of the United States has approved.
- ◆ Please, no blessing of children in the Communion line. They will be blessed with the entire assembly at the end of the Mass.  
*“Special blessing of children or infants are not recommended while Communion is being distributed. Children and infants are blessed with the full assembly at the end of Mass.”*  
 (Archdiocese of Chicago Policies and Procedures, 3/1/94)

## Procedures for Readers

- Sign-in in the sacristy/ If you are attending a Mass that you are not scheduled, it doesn't hurt to stop in the sacristy and see if the reader(s) have signed in.
- When a deacon **IS** present:  
Set out the Lectionary opened on the Ambo (pulpit), adjust the microphone to point at your mouth and take a seat with the congregation. You are **NOT** in the opening procession.
- \* When all are seated for the first reading, approach the ambo (no bow to the altar) and proclaim the first reading, reading the introduction as printed; **“A reading from the...”** No ad libbing please. Afterwards, return to your seat.
- ◆ When the cantor returns to his/her seat, Reader 2 approaches the ambo for the second reading and reads the introduction as printed, **“A reading from the...”** **NO AD LIBBING please.** When you are finished and all have responded: *“Thanks Be to God”*, close the book and place it on the shelf under the ambo and return to your seat in the congregation. You are finished.
- ◆ At the end of the Mass, you do not process out. Return the Book of the Gospels, Lectionary and binder to the sacristy as you found it.
- When a deacon **IS NOT** present: Reader 1 carries in the Book of the Gospel in the opening procession and Reader 2 reads the Universal Prayer. Set out the Lectionary opened on the ambo. Reader 1 retrieves the Book of the Gospels and joins in the opening procession at the entrance of the Church. Reader 2 retrieves the binder with Universal Prayer and takes a seat in the assembly. Readers 1 & 2 might want to sit in separate pews as to not have to climb over one another between readings.



Ministers in place on sanctuary step



Main aisle bread stations



Mary Chalice and Confession Bread (CB) stations

#### WHAT IF...

You drop a host: Immediately pick it up and place it back in the dish off to the side and distribute later or consume it lastly.

You spill wine: after all have received from the cup, place your purificator over the spilled wine and notify a priest or sacristan after Mass.

A Minister of Care comes forward with a pyx (small host container): They will only request 2 or 3 additional hosts at the most, please comply. Please fill the pyx before serving the communicant. Those Ministers of Care needing more hosts will go to tabernacle after Mass. Ministers with pyx's are the only people allowed to take additional hosts with them. No baggies, Kleenex, etc.

Your station is a chalice, there are more people in line and your chalice is empty...You are finished, there are no refills. Just place the empty chalice on the small table behind the altar.

You are Organ Bread or Confessional Bread, your lines are finished and there are people still down the center aisle, you may move to the front pews and assist the center aisle.

#### WHAT ABOUT...

Dress code: Sunday best always! Ministers in the sanctuary should always model for the congregation proper attire at Mass. NO jeans, shorts, t-shirts with pictures or slogan, bare shoulders, flip-flops, gym shoes, etc.

The only declaration allowed is the ministers " THE BODY OF CHRIST" or "THE BLOOD OF CHRIST" and the communicants response "AMEN".

If you feel a sneeze or cough coming on...please do so into your upper shoulder, as not to use your hand.

So often, the presider is asked by ministers before Mass, "Now where do I stand?" The pictures on the following page should help.