

SHEPHERD OF THE VALLEY

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTER

GUIDELINES & PROCEDURES

Arrival Time:

At least 15 minutes before Mass starts.

The Lead Person may have to find a sub if you are not on time.

** If you are not scheduled – When you arrive, dressed appropriately, notify the lead person you are available. **

Dress and Hygiene Code:

Respectful, Professional, looking nice, neat and clean, and modest. Jeans are acceptable as long as they are neat and clean.

NOT Acceptable Dress: Shorts, low cut tops, t-shirts w/ graffiti, sloppy t-shirts, halter or tube tops, spaghetti strap tops, midribs exposed, flip-flops, sweatshirts or sweatpants, low-riding pants or mini-skirts.

Your hands should be cleansed thoroughly prior to the start of Mass. Be well groomed (brush teeth, etc.) and go light on perfumes because of allergic persons. As a general note, try to be as sanitary as possible.

Arrival Procedure:

After you arrive, go to the sacristy, put on an EM medallion. The Lead Person or you will check your name on the schedule, and assigned stations for cups and host bowls should be on the board. The Lead person will also notify you of anything happening out of the ordinary.

During Mass:

After check-in go sit till the Priests communion. If possible sit on the side (left, right or middle) you will be serving from so there is minimal confusion on positions. If there is any shifting of positions do so behind the Priest before you receive communion.

IMMEDIATELY after the priest has consumed from his chalice EM's come forward.

Only the Host EM's needs to disinfect their hands with a small amount from the canisters, and take their positions behind the Priest.

REMEMBER: A reverent bow of the head before Priest presents the host to you.

Visiting Priests should be advised of Non Gluten host receivers before Mass begins (Lead Person), and if possible those individuals pointed out to the Priest.

After receiving the host the Priest will hand you a cup & purificator or host bowl.

Take the cup and purificator, consume, wipe area, turn cup then proceed to your station.

NOTE: *Take the cup and purificator from the Presider before you consume, don't make him wait for you to consume first.*

If you are next to the servers, after you receive the cup and purificator, offer it to the server(s) and then proceed to your station. If you are next to a host EM offer the cup to them, then proceed to your station.

All other hosts and cups proceed to your stations.

If you are host and cup on the choir side, proceed over to them first, distribute communion, and then go to your pre-assigned stations.

If there are people who cannot come forward for communion, and they are in the front row host is to go out to them first, and a cup. Offer communion, host and cup then return to your station. If they are seated in the back of the church, wait till communion line is through then go out to them. The usher needs to lead you to who needs communion brought to them. So whether it is a Priest or host EM a cup will always go with them.

Distribute communion *using only this formula:*

“The body of Christ” or “The blood of Christ”

Communicants should always receive host first (cup is optional – not first).

When presenting the host, hold it over the bowl and if possible directly across from the communicants eyes. Not way up in the air, or low. (They should be saying Amen after presenting, so you want to visibly present the host so they acknowledge what they are seeing.)

HOST Ministers:

If someone comes up either with their arms crossed in front of them (this includes little children, adults or babies in parents arms) put the host back in the bowl and extend your hand offering them a blessing “May Jesus bless you”. The blessing should take no longer than it does to distribute the host.

Bless the baby in the parent’s arms first, and then give communion to the parent.

If someone requires a non gluten host, step up to the altar, retrieve a host from the small bowl, return to your station and give to communicant, continue with communion line.

DO NOT use the sign of the cross, or touch them, or use the host to bless them, this is reserved for the Priest.

Communicants are to receive, step to the side and consume. They should not be walking off with the host in their hands.

ALL EM’s (whether serving or not) are responsible to watch for any abuses to the Body and/or Blood of Christ, such as walking away with the Host. You may leave your communion line and go to that person & request the host be consumed or returned. Always be polite, kind and presume ignorance or confusion, this is not a witch hunt.

Return host to the altar place it on the corporal, return to your position if there are more communicants, if not return host bowl to Priest and briefly notify Priest the reason for the host either on the corporal, or returned to him.

Watch for children or babies in parents’ arms for grabbing of the bowl or cup.

If you run out of hosts and you still have many communicants:

1. Excuse yourself, go to the Altar and see if there are any hosts left in the ciborium (gold bowl w/ lid), if so set your bowl down on the altar take the lid off other bowl and go back to your station, continue with distribution.
2. If there are only a few left in your communion line, or no hosts left on the altar, just return the bowl to the credence table, the Priest or other EM's will finish.
3. Extreme case – Running out of hosts, get permission from Priest to break the hosts to finish communion.

All EM's need to be aware of other EM's running out of hosts or wine. If communion is still taking place; before they return to the altar they need to move to be accessible to communicants, esp. the EM's on the side pews.

Note: Individuals may present a pyx (a small communion holder) before they receive. Just put a host(s) in the pyx and then offer them communion.

After the last person has received, look around to be sure no one needs communion brought to them.

Then return the host bowl to the Priest or deacon (hand it to him do not place it on the Altar yourself); wait there he will return the empty bowl to you, go place it on the credence table. He may also hand you another item just take them to the table. Return to your pew.

Cup Ministers:

Offer the cup and after each person, wipe the area with the purificator and turn the cup. Be sure and use different areas of the purificator, not the same location. Hold it by the fold over one finger, when the cup is passed slide the purificator to a new spot.

When your cup is empty, return it and the purificator to the credence table and wait for a break in the flow of communicants and return to your pew.

If any blood remains in the cup, consume the remainder or have others help if you cannot consume it all yourself and then place it and the purificator on the credence table.

Place purificators to the side of the cups, not in it.

NOTE: Intinction (dipping the host into the cup) is not permitted. Be kind and simply say, "I'm sorry, but we can't do that."

After Mass EM's are responsible for final cleaning of the vessels, drying them thoroughly and setting up for the next Mass, or putting everything away.

General Instructions for Eucharistic Ministers

(Shorter Version)

Arrive early, dressed appropriately (refer to guidelines).

Notify Lead Person you are present or available.

Leadperson will let you know your assigned positions or check the board

Return to your pew.

As soon as the Presider starts to put his chalice down after his communion, come forward and stand in your pre-assigned positions behind the Priest

Receive communion, go to your stations.

After communion, return cups to the credence table, place the purificator next to the cup, and return to your pew.

If you are host minister, stand at the side of the Altar and wait for the Presider to take the hosts from you, he will put those hosts in the ciborium, hand the bowl and perhaps another item back to you, go place them on the credence table, then return to your pew.

Do not take items from or off the altar and do not place hosts back on the altar – wait for the priest or deacon to take them from you.

When a person approaches you with their arms crossed, give them a blessing, such as “May Jesus bless you”. *Do not touch them or make the sign of the cross on them or with the hosts.* Don’t forget to give the children a blessing and babies in the arms of parents first.

After Mass clean the items used in communion, except the Priest’s chalice and paten.

Assist in cleaning and replacing items for the next Mass. (see cleaning vessels guidelines)

Sacrarium: its proper use. (see vessel cleaning guidelines)

Hang up your medallion and check schedule for your next assignment and you are finished.

Please do not take any directives from anyone but the Leadperson.

Please ask appropriate questions to the Leadperson such as: Where do I stand? Is this the right medallion? When do I come forward? Etc.

If there are any changes or something different, the Leadperson will notify you.

They may have to rearrange positions etc in order to accommodate the Liturgy, Priest, and community.

Remember to get a sub if the schedule is already done, and notify the Lead person for that Mass. If the schedule is not done, notify the scheduler of your unavailability.

WHAT TO DO IF.....

DROP A HOST

If you drop a host, or it has been dropped by the communicant, request the person to wait and you retrieve the host and return it to the Altar on the corporal. DO THIS IMMEDIATELY; do not place the host back in the bowl or give to another person. Resume your position and continue with distribution. After communion, notify the Presider, he will decide what to do with the returned host.

SPILL THE PRECIOUS BLOOD

SMALL SPILL: If you spill the Precious Blood, again request the line to wait and depending on the quantity of the spill ask them to move back. Immediately cover the spot with the purificator. If at all possible have the communicants move away from the area, but not so far that you risk someone stepping on or picking up the purificator. Tell the communicants "please wait" or go to another EM w/ a cup, go to the Altar (there is usually one left there and get another purificator and continue distributing. You could also put your cup on the Altar and go to the sacristy and get another purificator. After Mass, take a small bowl of water and rinse the area. Leave the purificator on the spot until the area dries (esp. if another Mass follows). This should be a signal to all not to walk on the spot. Once the area is dry, rinse the purificators in the sacarium, let them dry and then put in the laundry bag. Notify the Lead person and the Priest of the spill for further directions.

LARGE SPILL:

Same procedures as above except, cover the spill w/ purificator, and stand there and guard it.

ALL EM's (whether serving or not) are responsible to watch for any abuses to the Body and/or Blood of Christ, such as walking away with the Host. You may leave your communion line and go to that person & request the host be consumed or returned. Always be polite, kind and presume ignorance or confusion, this is not a witch hunt.

* SUDDEN SICKNESS OR NEAR FAINTING BEFORE OR DURING COMMUNION:

If you find yourself in this situation, just return the communion bowl or cup to the Altar (if possible), try to notify another EM who is in the sanctuary/or the Lead person, so they can cover your position and either go in the sacristy, or if you have to leave do so but NOTIFY THE LEADPERSON!

* EMERGENCY

If you are called/paged on an emergency and have to leave at any time during Mass, NOTIFY THE LEADPERSON. They are usually in a position that they can cover for you or find a substitute. If you need to use the phone for an emergency, do so discreetly!

* MAKING MISTAKES:

If you make a mistake - make it with reverence!!

* DOUBLE DUTY:

If at all possible you should not do double duty at Mass - e.g., EM and Lector both. If this should happen check with the Lead Person for directions.

* CHEWING GUM

If a communicant is chewing gum, ask them to please remove the gum before giving them Holy Communion.

* NON-CATHOLIC

Sometimes non-Catholics will come forward to receive Holy Communion. This happens often at funerals and weddings. If you know that the person is a non-Catholic or that one obviously does not know or understand what they are doing, you may ask them if they are Catholic. If not, say, "*I am sorry but I cannot give you communion but, let me give you a blessing before you return to your place*". Remember these people are coming up in good faith, usually out of respect for the deceased or the newly married couple.

* SMALL CHILD

If the communicant is a small child and you are not sure that they have received First Holy Communion, simply ask if they have (sometimes the parent is with them and they will tell you yes or no). If they have not yet received FHC, give them a blessing instead of communion. Be pleasant and courteous.

* COUGHING, SNEEZING ETC. (on the part of the EM)

It may become necessary at some point to stop your line, place your communion bowl or cup on the Altar, handle the problem, purify your hands again get your communion bowl or cup and return to your station. If another EM has relieved you of the station, stand in a place accessible to the communicants. If communion is almost through and your cup or hosts are not needed, consume what is in your cup and leave it and purificator on the credence table. If you had host bowl wait for the priest to combine host give you back the bowl, go place it on the credence table, return to your pew.

* THE LONE EM

If you find yourself at a Mass and there is no other EM available and/or prepared, you and the Lead person will fill all functions necessary to assist at the Mass. (this may include, Lector/server/usher). Check with the Lead Person for ministerial duties. But....REMEMBER... your first obligation is to the Eucharist and your ministerial duties.

* COMMUNION TO THE SICK - PYX

If you do not have a pyx there are loaners in a drawer in the sacristy. Remember after you are done with it, purify it, and return them. After Mass you should go immediately and directly to the home of the sick and distribute to that communicant. You should not be taking Jesus to the mall, dinner, movie etc. If this is not possible then please place the Blessed Sacrament in a special place in your home, out of the way of children, animals and guests. If at all possible attend a Mass which will put you closer to your appointed time.