

COMMUNION MINISTER'S INSTRUCTIONS / PROCEDURES - November 2009

The purpose of these procedures is to make sure that that the Communion Ministers at Our Lady of Lourdes all act in one accord and operate smoothly during the Communion.

A. Before Ministering:

1. Communion Ministers should arrive 15 minutes before Mass begins to sign-in. Initial next to your name on the schedule in the gathering space and make note of your assignment. A "Captain" is appointed for each Mass. The Captain stands near the door to the sacristy. He/she make sure that ministers sign in & makes sure all stations are covered. If someone is missing, the captain should ask a minister from the assembly to substitute and note on the sign-in sheet the individual who is a "no-show."
2. After signing in with the Captain, all Communion Ministers should sanitize their hands using the Purell hand sanitizer dispenser in the walkway to the Sacristy.
3. Stations are referred to as:
 - Music Station: facing altar, aisle to the far left by choir.
 - Left Center Station: facing altar, left center aisle
 - Right Center Station: facing altar, right center aisle
 - Tabernacle Station: facing altar, aisle to far right.
4. Communion Minister's schedule: it is posted in Leitourgia which is mailed to each minister. (Approximately every 8 weeks). When receiving your schedule, mark your calendar and make note of your assigned date/ time.
5. If you cannot serve on your scheduled date, it is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY to find a substitute. Do not assume that someone will take your place if you are not there. If a minister repeatedly fails to be present at his/her assigned time, he/she will be dropped from the schedule.
6. Deacons' assignments are not reflected on our schedules. Each Captain needs to check with the Sacristan or Clergy before Mass to determine if a Deacon will be present. If a Deacon will be present, the Captain must assign the Deacon to Left Center **CUP** Station & adjust the schedule as required.
7. Sanctuary Attire. The Our Lady of Lourdes Worship Committee has established that any liturgical ministers (including Communion Ministers) entering the sanctuary during the liturgy should be appropriately dressed in "sanctuary attire." Sanctuary attire is defined this way. Shorts are never appropriate. Jeans are also never appropriate regardless of how expensive they were or who designed them.

The ideal for men is a shirt, tie and jacket. Either the tie or jacket can be omitted; but the shirt must have a collar. For women a pants outfit, skirt and blouse/sweater, or a dress is appropriate. No mini-skirts, halter tops or low-cut blouses. If you select a pants outfit it should not be so casual that you appear to going to a picnic immediately after Mass without an opportunity to change. The Communion Minister Captain should be selective in drafting subs keeping in mind these guidelines.

B. Distribution of Communion:

1. At the sign of peace, all Communion Ministers are to exchange the sign of peace with those around them and move immediately to the sanctuary. If ministers pass in front of the altar when entering the sanctuary they should make a profound bow to the altar.
2. Ministers form a semi-circle behind the altar facing the assembly immediately after the Sign of Peace and BEFORE the Fraction Rite begins. You do not have to wait for the Priest(s) to return to the altar before getting up there.
3. Ministers should participate in singing the “Lamb of God” litany. It is a part of the communion rite. If you cannot sing at least mouth the words.
4. Ministers do not assist in pouring the wine. Ministers may not touch anything on the altar.
5. Total number of Ministers needed for each Mass including Deacons and Celebrants:
 - 5:30 p.m. = 8
 - 7:30 a.m. = 8
 - 9:30 a.m. = 12
 - 11:30 a.m. = 12
6. After the Priest [Celebrant/Deacons] communicates himself under both species [Bread & Wine], they will distribute personal communion, i.e. the Host, to each Minister.
7. Ministers are to perform the “gesture of reverence”, i.e. a bow of the head – actually more of a nod – before receiving the Body of Christ and a bow of the head before receiving the Precious Blood. This is not the same as a “Profound Bow”
8. After distribution of personal communion to each Minister, the Celebrant/Deacon will then distribute first the cups and then the plates to the ministers. Following is the procedure:
9. Ministers of the Cup:
 - Minister of the Cup take one step forward after they have received communion.
 - The Celebrant/Deacon will hand each Minister of the Cup two things: the Cup of Precious Blood and a purificator.
 - Upon receipt of the Cup and the purificator, step back.
 - If a Minister of the Plate is beside you, offer them the Cup. Saying “The Blood of Christ.” Then receive from the Cup yourself.
 - If no Minister of the Plate is beside you, receive from the Cup yourself.
10. Ministers of the Plate:
 - After the Ministers of the Cup have all received their Cups & purificators, the Ministers of the Plate take one step forward.
 - The Celebrant/Deacon will hand each Minister of the Plate his/her Plate.

11. All Ministers remain in the semicircle until the Celebrant/Deacon pick up their plate/cup and proceed to their position. All Ministers then proceed to their assigned stations.
12. NOTE: Please watch for anyone in a wheelchair or disabled who cannot walk to Communion....usually sitting in the first rows. You may take Communion to him/her and the Cup always follows. Only take Communion to people who physically cannot approach the altar.
13. If ministering the Host, do not begin until the Cup is in place.
14. Cup Ministers should leave enough space between the Host Minister and himself/herself to avoid a back up.
15. Communicants should be performing the gesture of reverence before receiving communion.
16. Make eye contact as you reverently say “The Body of Christ” or “The Blood of Christ.” Pause for the Amen response. Do not say the communicant’s name.
17. Intinction: If a communicant wants to dip their host in the cup, this is not allowed. If they insist, you should take the host and dip it yourself and present it to them so none of the precious blood drips or gets on their fingers. You can wipe your fingers on the purificator.
18. Any adult or child who comes to Communion with hands crossed over their chest means they are seeking a blessing only. Communion Ministers may offer a blessing simply saying “God bless you” and/or laying a hand on the head or shoulder of the person receiving the blessing, however, *personal contact is not necessary* to offer a blessing. A sign of the cross *should not* be made on or over the person receiving the blessing.
19. On First Communion Days or Special Wedding Anniversary days, do not proceed to your station until after the children or the anniversary couple have received communion. Exception: unless you are called upon to be the Minister of the Cup with the Celebrant/Deacon.
20. SPECIAL NOTE FOR MUSIC STATION MINISTERS:
 - If you are scheduled to minister at the Music Station both Plate and Cup Ministers should position themselves so as to not cause communicants any difficulty.
 - Also, when finished at your station, turn around or change positions and wait for the musicians, choir and cantors to receive from you.
21. If you run out of Precious Blood, remain in your station but take one step back. Lay the purificator across the cup to signal to communicants that you have run out.

If you run out of hosts, estimate the number of hosts needed & break some in half. Or approach another minister for additional hosts. **ONLY GO TO THE TABERNACLE TO REPLENISH YOUR PLATE AS AN ABSOLUTE LAST RESORT.**

22. After distributing communion, remain in place until EVERY person has received communion. Assist at other stations when necessary.
23. After everyone has received communion, all ministers go directly to the Credence Counter and set down their plate or cup. Special notes:
 - Maintain silence and dignity at the Credence Counter.
 - **Consume all remaining Precious Blood at this time.**
 - **Do not take hosts to tabernacle.** Leave them in the plates on the Credence Counter.
 - **Do not stack plates**, even if empty, just set them down quietly on the Credence Counter. Do not attempt to combine hosts from one plate to another.
 - After the Communion Ministers have placed their plates on the Credence Counter, the Sacristan will consolidate the remaining hosts and take them to the tabernacle.
 - Return immediately to your seat so the rest of the liturgy can continue without interruption.
 - All Communion Ministers should **exit the Credence Counter area by way of the Music Station**, so as not to interfere with the Sacristan taking the remaining hosts to the tabernacle.

C. **Cleaning Up After Mass:**

1. All Ministers must assist in clean up.
2. Proceed to the Credence Counter:
 - Consume any and all remaining Precious Blood. **Do not use the sacrarium for the disposal of Precious Blood**, it should be consumed.
 - Take all dishes & linens from the Credence Counter to the room to the right of the Altar.

3. **Washing Vessels:**

- Rinse out the cups with a small amount of water and consume.
- Rinse out plates with a small amount of water and consume.
- Cups and plates are washed with hot soapy water, rinsed and dried.
- The wine decanter is rinsed out with hot water.
- The large pitcher may be washed with soap.
- The altar chalice – either the one belonging to the Parish or the Priest's personal chalice – is rinsed and dried. Do not immerse.
- Remember: Consecrated Wine and Hosts should never be poured down the regular sink or thrown away.
- Soiled purificators are placed in a container on the floor.

D. Setting up for the Next Mass:

1. Cups:
 - Cups are placed in the wooden trays.
 - Purificators are folded and placed inside the cups.
 - Correct number of cups are placed on credence counter for the next Mass.
 - See set up instructions posted inside the cabinet doors.
 - Cups not required for next Mass are placed in cabinet below credence counter.
2. Plates and Wine Pitcher:
 - Also placed on credence counter. The sacristan for the next Mass will fill the pitcher and the plates and take them to the back of the church to be carried up with gifts during next Mass.
3. Parish Chalice [it matches the cups]:
 - Place on Credence Counter for use at next Mass.
 - If 11:30 a.m. Mass, place in cabinet under credence counter.
4. Priest's personal Chalice [enameled/silvered]:
 - Always return to the sacristy [priest vesting room].
5. Water bowl and small pitcher are put back on the credence counter or if 11:30 a.m. Mass, leave in small room to right of altar.
6. After the last Mass of the day the plates and cups are placed in the cabinets under the credence counter for overnight storage.
7. Tabernacle key is put away after the 11:30 a.m. Mass. It goes in the altar care room. Drawer is labeled.

D. SPECIAL NOTES ON USE OF THE SACRARIUM (Holy Sink):

1. The Sacarium is located in the cry room at the back of the church if it is needed.
2. The Sacarium drains directly into the ground and not into the sewer system.
3. Only use the Sacarium if the consecrated Wine or Hosts have become contaminated and cannot be consumed.
4. Hosts must be dissolved in water before being poured down the Sacarium.

If there are any questions, please contact:

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OUR LADY OF LOURDES CHURCH
COMMUNION MINISTER TRAINING

Four qualities a minister should possess or strive to possess:

- **Humility**
- **Christian hospitality**
- **Gratitude**
- **Reverence**

Other mandates of our ministry:

- **Reliability**
- **Dress**
- **Service when needed**
- **Full, Conscious, active participation**
- **Willingness for on-going formation**
- **One liturgical ministry role in each liturgy**

Procedures:

- **All ministers should take responsibility for their assignment and get their own substitute if needed.**
- **Inform the coordinator [Greg Bourke] if you are going to be out of town and need to be off the schedule.**
- **Schedules come out approximate every two months, so advise well in advance if you will not be available.**
- **SIGN IN with the Captain in the gathering space. That way you will have a reminder of your station and if you are a plate or cup minister.**
- **Be on time. Do not come in right when Mass is starting. You need to sign in and be reverently prepared to minister.**

Reminders:

- **Ministers take their place behind the altar before the beginning of the Fraction Rite.**
- **Ministers receive communion after the priest and before taking their stations.**
- **Do not wait for all ministers to receive, consume when served.**
- **Lay ministers may not pour wine or take vessels from the altar.**
- **A gesture of reverence [bow of the head] precedes receiving of communion**
- **Do not say the person's name when saying "the body of Christ or "the blood of Christ."**
- **If you run out of hosts, you may go to another station and get some of theirs.**
- **Remain at your station until all have received communion unless assistance is needed at another station.**
- **All ministers proceed to the table together.**
- **Return to your seat, not passing in front of the altar unless you perform a profound bow.**