

Guide for Eucharistic Ministers of Holy Communion at Mass

After the Sign of Peace, Eucharistic Ministers can come to the Altar (use sanitizer). This is available on the west side of the altar. Stand in front of the Tabernacle and wait to receive communion and then you will be given a ciborium with hosts for the congregation. Choose the left or right rail to stand and distribute the host.

Ministers that receive the ciborium should place a hand over the top of the ciborium when proceeding to their station to prevent any hosts from dropping to the floor. When proceeding to your station, it is not necessary to reverence the Altar. At your station, turn and wait for the celebrant to start distributing Holy Communion before you begin.

“The Body of Christ”

Please remember that we are bringing Christ to the people. This is an honor and privilege; therefore, it is important to smile and look people in the eye. Don't worry about how long the line is or how long it takes.

When giving communion, the minister holds the Eucharist at eye level and says: "The Body of Christ." A Eucharistic Minister should never say anything except “The Body of Christ”. The communicant should respond with: “Amen”.

The minister then gives the Eucharist to the communicant. The communicant will receive the host in their hand. If they have a pyx with them, place an extra host in the pyx as well. They will bring this host to a parishioner who is not able to attend Mass in person.

If a host is dropped, do not panic! The Eucharistic Minister picks up the host and places it in the palm of the hand holding the ciborium. Upon returning to the table, he or she should give the host to the sacristan or priest. It is important to note that the dropped host should never be placed back into the ciborium, given to the next communicant or be consumed by the Eucharistic Minister.

“The Blessing of Christ”

At communion time, Eucharistic Ministers should be prepared to acknowledge a person's presence with a blessing. Children and adults that approach with arms crossed over their chest are given a blessing and should not be given Holy Communion. Using their free hand (without holding a host) the Eucharistic Minister extends their hand over the shoulder of the person and says, “May God bless you” or “The Blessing of Christ”. When your hand is extended over their shoulder, it is advisable to do so without touching the person. **DO NOT TRACE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS ON THE PERSON'S FOREHEAD OR MAKE A CROSS WITH YOUR HAND OVER THEM.** Only a priest or deacon is permitted to do so.

Following the distribution of Communion, go back to the tabernacle and wait for Communion to be complete. You can assist at another rail if you see a long line after you are finished on your side. After everyone is finished, sanitize your hands and return to your seat. If you pass in front of the altar, stop and bow slightly in reverence.