

PROCEDURES FOR COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION AT WEEKEND LITURGIES

The procedure is as follows:

1. Those functioning at the liturgy in any capacity as a liturgical minister (i.e. lectors, extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist, ushers, musicians, etc.) must be present for the full and entire liturgy, even when attending more than one liturgy.
2. During the time of the “Our Father”, EME #2 will go to the tabernacle, bring the two ciboria to the altar during the time of exchanging the sign of peace and then immediately go to their EME #2 position. Do not take the lids off of the ciboria.
3. After exchanging the sign of peace with those closest to them, the remaining Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist (EMEs) will come to the foot of the sanctuary (on the floor, not the step).
4. Once the priest has fully communicated, he will come to each EME and offer them The Body of Christ. Just before the priest says, “The Body of Christ” you will make a reverential bow of the head and then respond “Amen.” The priest will distribute to all the EMEs in this manner, one right after the other.
5. Once all the EMEs have received The Body of Christ, the priest or the deacon will offer The Blood of Christ to those EMEs who will distribute The Blood of Christ to the faithful. Just before the priest or deacon says, “The Blood of Christ” you will again make a reverential bow of the head and respond “Amen.” Note: Those who will be distributing The Blood of Christ to the faithful should consume some of the consecrated wine immediately (this is the reason you respond “Amen.”). If you are unable to take alcohol or are sick and, therefore, can not receive The Blood of Christ,, then please note that you are not to consume the remaining Precious Blood left in the cup after communion has ended.
6. After the EME distributing The Blood of Christ to the congregation has received it from the hands of the priest or deacon, they will then turn to an EME who will be distributing The Body of Christ and offer The Blood of Christ to him/her. You should only have to do this to one person who is either immediately to your left or to your right. You should not walk around another person in order to distribute the Precious Blood.
7. While the EMEs are offering The Blood of Christ to those EMEs who have not yet received it, the priest or deacon will return to the altar and give the dishes to those EMEs who will distribute The Body of Christ. Once everyone has their vessel, all will turn around and proceed to offer Communion to the faithful. Please note that the new GIRM does provide for people to receive The Body of Christ either in their hand or on the tongue. Both practices should be respected. *See additional note on reception of communion, #6 under the section entitled “Miscellaneous Considerations.”
8. After all the faithful who wish to receive communion have come forward — and making sure that those who are unable to come forward on their own have had both The Body and Blood of Christ brought to them — the EMEs will, like normal, turn and face the altar.

9. After all have received, those who are distributors of The Blood of Christ will bring their cups to the altar. Those who are distributing The Body of Christ will remain in their place at this time. If there is any Blood of Christ remaining in the cup, it will be consumed by the EME or another EME. The empty cup, covered with a purificator, is then placed on the communion cup tray, which has remained on the altar, and the EME immediately returns to his/her seat in the congregation. Note: The purificator should never be placed inside the cup before the cup itself has been purified, lest the purificator soak up some of The Blood of Christ that could be consumed. The priest or deacon will take the tray of cups to the credence table where all of the communion vessels will be purified by the priest or deacon.

10. Those who have distributed the Body of Christ will now bring their distribution vessels to the altar, place them on the altar and immediately return to their seat in the congregation. The priest will combine the remaining Hosts into the two ciboria. EME #2 will remain at the altar to receive the ciboria from the priest and will then move directly to the right-center aisle leading to the Blessed Sacrament Chapel.

11. EME #2 will proceed back to the Blessed Sacrament chapel where he/she will return the ciboria to the tabernacle.

MISCELLANEOUS CONSIDERATIONS

1. If you would happen to drop The Body of Christ on the floor, it should be picked up and consumed right away.

2. If you spill the Precious Blood, first, make every effort that it is not stepped in or walked upon. Make a mental note of where it is spilled and after the distribution of Holy Communion, take your purificator and place it over the spot where it spilled. After Mass, return to the spot where it was spilled and, using a small amount of water, clear the location thoroughly with a purificator. Place the soiled purificator in the soiled linens container.

3. Please remember that the vessels used to distribute Holy Communion are sacred by their very use to hold The Body and The Blood of Christ. They should be handled as precious objects with due reverence and care.

4. Those distributing Holy Communion at Mass should be appropriately dressed. In our culture, how you dress is a reflection of how seriously you view the occasion you are attending. Therefore, one who distributes Christ Himself to the community of believers should be attired in a manner consistent with the dignity of a Baptized Catholic presenting themselves before God. Your clothing should be neat and simple.

5. When offering The Body of Christ or The Blood of Christ, be sure to say either “The Body of Christ” or “The Blood of Christ.” Also, the person should respond “Amen.” The key here is not to say the words as if they are a question, but rather that it is a fact—what you hold before them is the Body and Blood of Christ. By saying the words in this way, the faithful will know to respond with a statement of belief—“Amen!” which means “I believe!”

6. Intinction, which is the distribution of the Body and the Blood of Christ at the same time, is permitted in the Church, but is done by the priest. If someone comes to receive the Blood of Christ and attempts to dip the Host into the cup, they should not be permitted to do this. According to the Norms for the Distribution and Reception of Holy Communion Under Both Kinds in the Dioceses of the United States of America (#50): “The communicant, including the extraordinary minister, is never allowed to self-communicate, even by means of intinction. Communion under either form, bread or wine, must always be given by an ordinary or extraordinary minister of Holy Communion. This means that if the person wants to receive the Body and Blood at the same time (by intinction), you, as an EME, should take the Host, dip it into the Blood of Christ, and then offer it to the communicant by saying: “The Body and Blood of Christ.” They will respond “Amen.” Note: They must receive communion on the tongue when receiving by intinction.

PEOPLE REQUESTING A BLESSING

Some people coming up in the communion lines may request a blessing instead of receiving the Eucharist. This is more frequent during the Christmas Masses when we have non-Catholics attending Mass with their families.

First of all, receiving a blessing at Communion time is not something the church promotes. We come forward to receive the body and blood of Christ, not a blessing. We all receive a blessing from the priest as we are dismissed from the Mass. But for pastoral reasons, we should do something. So the question is what do I do as communion distributor when someone signals that they are requesting a blessing by crossing their arms across their chest or placing a finger over their mouth.

First of all, what you cannot do. Only the ordained (priest or deacon) can administer the official blessing of the church. That is, blessing the person with the sign of the cross as the priest does at the final blessing at Mass.

You as a Communion distributor have been called forth by our St. Pat's community in a role of service. Those attending our liturgies see you in a servant-leader role. If someone outside of our Catholic faith wishes to participate more fully with us by seeking a "blessing", then you as our representative need to acknowledge them and show them respect. With that in mind, if someone comes forth asking for a blessing rather than the Eucharist during communion time, it is suggested that you simply make a small cross on their forehead with your thumb. Do not use any words or phrases, just make a simple cross. In this way you are showing respect for them and helping them feel welcomed by our St. Pat's community.

RESPONSIBILITIES AFTER MASS

Immediately after Mass has ended, EMEs #2 and #3 will bring the communion distribution vessels from the credence tables to the work sacristy. The altar servers will bring all the other vessels used during the Mass to the work sacristy. EMEs #2 and #3 will clean the vessels.

1. Wash all the vessels with soap and water. Do not use any kind of harsh surface or scrub brush to wash the vessels to avoid scratching the vessel. Gold plated vessels are easily scratched.

2. Dry all of the vessels thoroughly.

3. Saturday 4:30pm Mass and the Sunday 11:30am Mass.

After washing the vessels, the bread patens and communion cups should be put away in the cabinets. After the Sunday 7:30am and 9:30am Masses, the vessels should be left out for the next Mass.

4. Please follow the priests' instructions if they have a special chalice.

PURIFICATION OF DISTRIBUTION VESSELS

Since some of the precious body and blood will always remain in the sacred vessels (Chalice, communion bowls and cups), it is necessary to purify the vessels prior to washing them with soap and water. The Church's current instruction is that only a priest or deacon may purify the sacred vessels. Therefore the vessels are purified immediately after communion during the Mass. The purification procedure is listed here so that you may be familiar with it.

1. Pour a little water into each of the communion cups. Each cup receives a water rinse (purified). The water from each cup is then carefully poured into the priest's chalice.
2. Pour a little water into each of the communion bowls. Each bowl receives a water rinse (purified). The water from each bowl is then carefully poured into the priest's chalice.
3. Consume the water in the priest's chalice.

LITURGICAL SCHEDULING

All of our liturgical ministers are scheduled by means of a computer program. The liturgical schedules are issued quarterly and published on our website, www.toledostpats.org. Those ministers with email also receive their individual schedules via their email account.

About three weeks prior to the publishing of a new schedule, each minister has an opportunity to provide any dates or times that they will be unavailable to minister due to work requirements, vacation, etc. This three week update period will be announced in the bulletin and via your email account.

GETTING A SUB

We understand the difficulty in finding someone that will be able to complete your ministry assignment when you are unable to fulfill your assignment because of another commitment. It seems that one of the hardest parts of getting a sub is the communication with other ministers involved in the same ministry as yours. Calling or asking several people takes time and doesn't always produce results.

One of the best ways to avoid not being able to keep your commitment is to give us advanced notice before a new schedule is generated. In many cases a minister is aware of a future commitment way in advance of a new schedule. In these cases, simply go to our website and submit a "Minister Update form" prior to the issue of the new schedule and the scheduler program will accommodate your request as the schedule is being generated.

But things do come up that are unexpected, so in order to help you find a sub we have designed a system utilizing the power of the web and the Email system. We have provided a means that you can use to help you find that minister who will help you when you need a sub. Go to our website, www.toledostpats.org, and click on the "Help Me Find A Sub" link under the Liturgy section. Follow the directions provided.

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