



Thank you for being an Extraordinary Minister of Communion at St. Francis Parish. When you serve as a Communion Minister you are helping the priest presider bring Christ, in the Sacrament of the Eucharist, to the members of St. Francis. This ministry allows St. Francis Parish to have a more orderly liturgy, especially on Sundays. It is also a way to show hospitality to fellow Catholics. This guide is meant to answer questions that have come up over the last few months and to serve as a review for both new and experienced Communion Ministers.

- Please attend the Mass for which are scheduled and make every attempt to get a substitute when you are not able to attend your scheduled Mass.
- When you are scheduled to serve. Please come to Mass in proper attire. Consideration should be given to dressing modestly, and not wearing blue jeans, shorts, or athletic shoes. On those occasions when you are not scheduled and additional ministers are needed, you should consider your attire before approaching.
- Although there is no designated seating for Communion ministers, it is requested that you sit in one of the first 10 pews so the distance you have to walk to the sanctuary is reasonable.
- Immediately after the sign of peace come into the sanctuary. This can be after greeting just one or two persons around you. As soon as you step up into the sanctuary stop and make a bow of reverence (a bow of the head) toward the altar.
- If there is no deacon at the Mass, the first Communion Minister should go immediately to get the ciborium of the reserved consecrated hosts from the tabernacle. This is important to allow the Mass to proceed in a timely manner.
- The Communion Ministers should form a semi-circle behind the altar.
- In the past it has been the practice that those who are to minister the Eucharistic bread would wash their hands using the bowl and towel that the priest uses. This will be discontinued. This is because there is no liturgical requirement for it and although the intention was to have proper hygiene the fact is that the result is actually the opposite.
- Communion Ministers should be prepared to distribute either species of the Sacrament.
- The Communion Ministers who are assigned to the north side of the church should assure that the musicians have had an opportunity to receive communion and that the persons who have difficulty with mobility have the Sacrament taken to their places.
- Sometimes there are persons who are not able to receive communion who come into the line with their arms crossed to receive a blessing. It is requested that when these people approach you place your hand on their head or shoulder and say, “May God bless you today,” or similar words. Signing them with a cross on their forehead is not necessary or desired.
- The proper words to use when ministering the Eucharistic body is “The Body of Christ.” The proper words to use when ministering the cup is “The Blood of Christ.” Please do

not add or take away from this. It is important to make eye contact with the communicant when saying the words and to use a loud enough voice to be heard.

- If an usher tells you about a person who is unable to walk up the aisle to receive, take the Blessed Sacrament to them after the line in your aisle is complete but before helping another communion minister.
- After you are done in your assigned aisle, please look to see if other ministers need assistance with those to whom they are ministering. It is requested that when you go to assist other ministers that you leave space (at least four to five feet) for those coming for Communion to be able to make a line. It becomes more congested if you take a spot too close to the ministers who are already there.
- When communion is over place the ciborium with the Eucharistic bread on the altar. Do not start collecting the left over hosts; this is to be done by the priest or the deacon.
- If you are ministering the cup please consume the remaining precious blood, and if you need help please ask another minister for assistance. Place the empty cup on the credence table. Please do not place the purificator on top or inside the cup. Place the purificator(s) neatly to the side on the credence table.
- Please be prepared to take the ciborium to the tabernacle if asked.

South aisle

- The minister with the Eucharistic bread should start by facing directly to the south. The minister of the cup should be on this person's left. This will allow those who are seated in the transept to receive the Eucharistic bread and then receive from the cup.
- When you begin to minister to those coming from the side aisle the minister with the Eucharistic bread will now be facing west. The minister of the cup should transition to the right side of the minister with the Eucharistic bread.

North Aisle

- If the main choir is at the Mass, take Communion to them first.
- Minister to those with mobility issues.
- When the line is forming from the side aisle, the minister with the Eucharistic bread should be on the right and minister of the cup should be to their left; four to five feet away.

Center Aisle

- There will be two ministers of the Eucharistic bread in the center aisle as there always have been.
- If there are two additional ministers of the Eucharistic bread, they should place themselves along and close to the front of the first pew. They should be about half-way along the pew. This will allow a line to form.
- The ministers of the cup should place themselves outside the two ministers who are next to the front pew. Again, this is to allow space for those receiving Communion to be able to approach any of the ministers and then receive from the cup.

For those taking Communion to the homebound and nursing homes

- Use only a pyx to take the Blessed Sacrament to the home or nursing home.
- If you need a small number of hosts (1-5) you can receive these while in the Communion line. First present the pyx and request the number you need from the Communion Minister, and then receive Communion for yourself in the usual way.
- If you are taking Communion to the homebound or a nursing home and are also scheduled to minister at the Mass you are attending present your pyx to the priest, deacon, or another minister after the assembly has received Communion but before you return to your seat.
- If you need a large number of hosts (over 5) you should get the number you need from the tabernacle after Mass is over.
- Please use a guide such as *Communion for the Sick*, (Liturgical Press, 1984) when ministering to those persons who are homebound or are residents in a nursing home.