

NOTRE DAME OF MT. CARMEL CHURCH

These guidelines and procedures were taken from Fr. Jared's talk on December 1, 2025, as well as from the General Instruction of the Roman Missal. Please review and put into practice immediately.

For those who were not able to attend the talk, we have a recording available I will set a date for us to gather and view it together as members of these ministries.

PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES FOR LECTORS AND EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION

Purpose

These procedures are intended to help Lectors and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (**EMHCs**) serve reverently, confidently, and in accord with the General Instruction of the Roman Missal (**GIRM**) and diocesan norms.

General Expectations for All Liturgical Ministers

- **Spiritual Preparation:** Arrive prayerfully prepared; frequent reception of the Sacraments is encouraged.
- **Arrival Time:** Arrive **at least 15 minutes before Mass** to sign in and prepare.
- **Dress Code:** Modest, neat, and appropriate for the sanctuary (avoid shorts, flip-flops, or distracting accessories).
- **Posture & Reverence:** Maintain prayerful demeanor; genuflect or bow according to church custom.
- **Participation:** Fully participate in the Mass when not exercising a ministry.

I. GUIDELINES FOR LECTORS

A. Preparation Before Mass

- Review the assigned readings ahead of time (pronunciation, meaning, pacing).
- Pray with the text; understand its message and tone.
- Check the *Lectionary* before Mass to confirm the correct readings and page numbers.

B. During Mass

1. Procession & Seating

- If there is no Deacon, **Lector 2**, will carry the Book of the Gospel. **Lector 1**, will read the Prayers of the Faithful / Universal Prayer.
- Sit attentively in a designated place once Mass begins.
- If there is a deacon present, he will carry the Book of the Gospel.
- If you are carrying the Book of the Gospel, do not genuflect or bow. Walk straight to the Altar where the Book of the Gospel is placed.

2. Proclaiming the Readings

- Genuflect or Bow to the Tabernacle as you approach the altar for proclaiming.
- Approach the ambo reverently; pause briefly before speaking.
- Proclaim clearly, slowly, and prayerfully - not theatrically.
- Use the text as written; do not add names or commentary.
- After the reading, pause briefly, then say: "**The Word of the Lord.**"
- After proclaiming the reading, bow or genuflect as you passing directly in front of the tabernacle.

3. Responsorial Psalm

- If the Psalm is sung, the cantor leads it.
- If spoken, **Lector 1**, proclaims it from the ambo with appropriate pacing.
- If proclaiming the Psalm, do not announce it (i.e., don't say, "**the responsorial psalm is....**"), simply state the actual response.

4. Prayer of the Faithful / Universal Prayer

- **Lector 2**, reads the Universal Prayer clearly, allowing a pause for silent prayer after each.
- Please check and review the folder containing the Universal Prayer, paying special attention to the Mass intention and the correct pronunciation of names.
- After reading the prayers of the faithful, wait for the priest to finish the prayer before leaving the ambo/lectern.
- Return reverently to your seat.
- Continue full participation in the Mass.

II. GUIDELINES FOR EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION (EMHCs)

A. Requirements

- Must be **commissioned** according to parish policy.
- Be a **fully initiated Catholic**, living a life consistent with Church teaching.

B. Preparation Before Mass

- Wash hands before Mass.
- If unable to serve, arrange a substitute according to parish procedure.

C. During Mass

1. Approaching the Sanctuary

- EMHCs approach the altar *after the priest receives Communion*.
- Stand reverently at the designated place - by side of the altar close to the Ambo / Lectern.

2. Receiving Holy Communion

- Receive Communion from the priest or deacon *before distributing* to others.
- Never self-communicate or take the vessel without it being given.
- If you are not receiving the Blood of Christ, cross your arms.
- When going to your spot, do not pass by behind the altar.

3. Distribution of Holy Communion

- Use the proper formula:
 - **The Body of Christ / The Blood of Christ** (no additional words).
- Wait for the communicant's "**Amen.**"

- Please do not say “**Amen**” if the communicant does not say it. That response belongs to them, not to you.”
- Do not bless children (or adults) if they come up to you for a blessing. You may say (*without touching*), “**May God bless you.**”
- For **Communion in the hand**, ensure the host is consumed immediately.
- If someone walks away holding the Blessed Sacrament without consuming it, gently call his/her attention and ensure he/she consume it reverently.
- If Communion is **received on the tongue**, place the host carefully.
- When distributing the Precious Blood, the communicant is not permitted to dip the Sacred Host in the cup.
- To the Deacon or lead minister: Do not bow at the altar while holding the ciborium as you return it to the tabernacle. Place the ciborium back in the tabernacle, genuflect, and then close the door.

4. Special Situations

- **Dropped Host:** If the **Sacred Host** is accidentally dropped while giving **Communion in the hand**, and it's still clean and suitable, the minister should immediately pick it up reverently and give it to the priest / deacon, after distributing communion.
- If the **Sacred Host** is accidentally dropped while giving **Communion on the tongue**, the minister should immediately pick it up reverently and place it in the ablution bowl by the tabernacle, after distributing communion.
- **Spilled Precious Blood:** If the **Precious Blood is accidentally spilled**, the area should be covered immediately with a **purificator**. Then, inform the priest or deacon or our Sacristan after Communion.

The Church teaches that Christ is fully present, Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity, in either species. Therefore, a communicant who receives only the Host has received the fullness of the sacrament.

D. After Communion

- Return the cups to the altar.
- If necessary, an EMHC may consume what remains, but this must be done immediately, at the altar or credence table, before purification, during the Mass, not afterward or elsewhere.
- Only the priest, deacon, or instituted acolyte purifies the vessels.
- After giving communion, gather around the tabernacle.
- Return to your seat reverently.

III. Communion to the Sick (Homebound)

1. Prepare your pyx or pix

- Place your **empty pyx or pix** on the **credence table** at the beginning of Mass.
- Do **not** take a **consecrated Host** from the tabernacle before Mass to place on the altar, credence table, or remain with you during Mass. **This is strictly FORBIDDEN.**

2. Notify the priest, deacon, or sacristan

- Let the priest, deacon, or sacristan (Marc) know that you will be bringing Communion to the homebound after Mass.

3. Attend Mass

- Participate fully in the celebration.
- **You are not permitted to receive a consecrated Host in your pyx/pix** when coming forward for Communion. Always place your pyx on the credence table at the start of Mass.
- Please **do not retrieve** the Blessed Sacrament from the tabernacle on your own for a homebound visit. If you cannot attend Mass beforehand, ask a priest or deacon to obtain the Consecrated Host. If no ordained minister is available, you may retrieve it yourself.

4. After Mass

- Once the priest or deacon has purified the vessels, they will call and commission you to take the Body of Christ to the sick and homebound.
- Receive a blessing to go forth and carry out the ministry.

5. Use the approved rite

- A copy of the approved rite will be provided to you this February.
- Treat the Eucharist with utmost reverence; never leave the Blessed Sacrament unattended.
- Minister must go directly to the homebound parishioner/s, right after Mass. No stops on the way to the visit are permitted.

Key points from the GIRM

(General Instructions of the Roman Missal)

- For homebound visits, the Precious Body of Christ should not be taken from the tabernacle before Mass or placed on the altar.
- The pyx/pix is prepared empty at the credence table.

IV. Absences and Substitutes

- Notify the coordinator as soon as possible if unable to serve.
- Arrange a substitute according to parish policy.

V. Ongoing Formation

- Attend parish or diocesan **training and formation sessions**.
- Review guidelines periodically.

Conclusion

The ministry of Lector and Extra Ordinary Minister of Holy Communion is a sacred service to God's people. By preparing well and serving reverently, ministers help the assembly encounter Christ in His Word and Sacrament.

“Let all things be done decently and in order.” (1 Corinthians 14:40)

