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**LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS**  
**AT**  
**Jesus, the Good Shepherd Parish**

***A REFERENCE GUIDE FOR:***

***ORDAINED MINISTERS***  
***USHERS***  
***READERS***  
***EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION***  
***SERVERS***

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## Foreword

Thank you for making the commitment to serve as a Minister to the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass for Jesus, the Good Shepherd Parish. This Reference Guide is intended to answer questions that you may have regarding procedures during the various parts of the Mass, and how the various Ministers are expected to respond based on Church law and parish tradition. *This guide is intended for reference only, it is not intended to be read in its entirety* (although, of course, you are quite welcome and encouraged to do so.)

It is important to remember that the celebration of the Eucharist is “the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; at the same time it is the font from which all her power flows” (*Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* 10.) As such, it is the public prayer of the Church – no one should ever consider any Mass to be “their” Mass, be it either layperson or priest. Called upon to serve in ministry during the Mass, either through ordination or by commission, we must serve God and the people with dignity and humility. These guidelines are intended to direct our actions and our worship to God alone in accordance with the wishes of the Church, which Christ instituted to carry on his teachings upon this earth.

Please note that this is considered a “living document” and is subject to revision and correction. You will be notified if a more recent version has been posted and what changes have been made from previous editions.

-Fr. Ed Blanchett,  
Pastor.

## **Summary of Changes**

September 2008 – Initial release of document.

November 2008 – Spelling corrections, inclusions for Book of the Gospels, updates for EMHCs and Readers at “Lamb of God” and after Communion.

## Key for Terms used in this Document

**Altar** – the large central table used for celebration of the Mass

**Blessed Sacrament** – the term used to describe the bread after it has been consecrated by the Celebrant. It is the real and substantial Presence of Christ’s sacramental Body

**Book of Gospels** – a large book which contains each Sunday’s Gospel reading (different from the Lectionary, which contains all three readings.) It may be used by the Deacon or Priest to proclaim the Gospel

**Cantor** – the person who is leading the Congregation in the songs for the Mass

**Celebrant** – the priest who is celebrating the Mass. He may be accompanied by one or more other priests, or **Concelebrants**

**Chalice(s)** – the cup(s) used for the wine at Mass. There may be one for use by the priest and up to four for use by the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

**Ciboria** – the containers used for the bread used in Communion. The singular of this word is **ciborium**

**Congregation** – all other participants at Mass

**Corporeal** – the large folded white cloth which is placed on the Altar on top of the Altar cloth and under the Chalice(s) and Ciboria. It is used in case any of the Precious Blood is spilled

**Credence table** – the side table where the Chalice(s), finger bowl and towel are placed before Mass

**Cross** – the large processional Crucifix is carried by one of the Servers when processing in and out as well as when leading the people with the gifts for the Offertory to the Sanctuary

**EMHC** – Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion, a layperson who has been commissioned by the Pastor to distribute the Blessed Sacrament to participants at Mass as well as those in hospitals, nursing homes and the homebound.

**Genuflect** – to go down on one knee, pause for a moment, and stand up again

**GIRM** – General Instructions of the Roman Missal, the set of liturgical directives that are given in the front of the Sacramentary

**Incense Boat** – a small container with a lid and tiny spoon, used for placing incense into the Thurible

**JtGS** – Jesus, the Good Shepherd Parish, which is comprised of two church buildings, *St. Joseph’s* (StJ) and *St. Peter’s* (StP)

**Lectionary** – a large book used by the Reader to proclaim the First and Second Readings and may be also used by the Deacon or Priest to proclaim the Gospel

**Ministers** – the collective name for the EMHCs, Readers and Servers

**Pulpit** – the stands which are on either side of the Sanctuary at StJ and StP. The larger one is used to proclaim the Readings, Gospel and Homily, while the smaller one is used by the Cantor to lead the Congregation in songs. An older term for the pulpit is “Ambo”

**Purificator** – the white cloths used by the Celebrant and the EMHCs to clean the Chalices. They usually have a red Cross sewn into them in order to distinguish them from finger towels

**Reader** – a layperson who has been commissioned by the Pastor to proclaim the Readings at Mass. This term is used synonymously with the word **Lector**

**Sacramentary** – the large red book with 5 or 6 ribbons. It contains the prayers used by the Celebrant during Mass

**Sacrarium** – the special sink located next to the regular sink in the Sacristy. Leading directly into the ground, it is where any of the vessels used during the Mass are to be purified. *Nothing else* is ever to be poured into this sink as it can become clogged very easily

**Sacristy** – the room where the Celebrant and the Ministers prepare for Mass.

**Sanctuary** – the raised area upon which the Altar sits

**Simple bow** – a slight nod of the head, with little or no movement at the waist

**StJ** – St. Joseph's Church, located at 805 Warren St. in Beverly

**StP** – St. Peter's Church, located at 102 Middleton St. in Riverside

**Precious Blood** – the term used to describe the wine after it has been consecrated by the Celebrant. It is the real and substantial Presence of Christ's sacramental Blood

**Tabernacle** – the locked container that hold the Blessed Sacrament. In StP it is behind the celebrant's chair and at StJ it is to the right of the altar (facing front)

**Thurible** – metal container with a lid and long chain used to hold burning charcoal and incense

## Checklist Before Mass

All Ministers for the Mass should **arrive** and **sign in** at the back of the church at least 10 minutes before Mass begins. Please see the Celebrant regarding any special instructions for the Mass.

*Servers* should decide who will perform which duties for the Mass:

- ✓ holding the Sacramentary for the Celebrant
- ✓ carrying the candles for the procession
- ✓ carrying the Cross for the Offertory
- ✓ bringing up the Chalices and Sacramentary to the altar after the Offertory
- ✓ ask if the Celebrant wants to purify the Chalice after Communion or wait until after Mass
- ✓ *if incense is being used*, make sure that the charcoal is lit at least 5 minutes before Mass begins.

*EMHCs* should make sure that the following preparations have been made:

- ✓ Decide who will administer the Blessed Sacrament and who will administer the Precious Blood
- ✓ Check with the Ushers to determine if someone needs to go to the back of the church to administer Communion to someone who is unable to come forward.

*Readers* should make sure that the following preparations have been made:

- ✓ Lectionary is on the pulpit and turned to the correct first reading
- ✓ Petitions and announcements have been placed on the Pulpit
- ✓ If present, that the Book of the Gospels will be carried in the procession by the Deacon. If **no Deacon** is present at the Mass, it should be placed on the Altar before the beginning of Mass.

*Ushers* should make sure that the following preparations have been made:

- ✓ The plastic bag(s) has been prepared for the collection
- ✓ A family has been selected to present the gifts for the Offertory
- ✓ The gifts for the Offertory have been placed on the back table
- ✓ If there are any Congregants who are unable to come forward for Communion, the Deacon and/or Celebrant are made aware of the need to bring Communion to them
- ✓ Determine if a second collection will be taken up at the Mass.

## Entrance Rite

When the Mass begins, the processional order is as follows:

- ◆ *[Server carrying incense, if used]*
- ◆ Server carrying the Cross
- ◆ Servers carrying the candles
- ◆ Deacon carrying the Book of the Gospels
- ◆ *[Concelebrant(s), if any]*
- ◆ Celebrant (and Deacon if he *is not* carrying the Book of the Gospels)

- ◆ The Servers wait until the introduction to the opening song has finished and the Congregation has started singing before they begin the procession.
- ◆ All in the procession either walk to the edge of the Sanctuary. Server(s) carrying candles and the Cross perform a simple bow and move to place the items they are carrying in their proper holders. The Deacon places the Book of Gospels upright into the stand on the Altar.
  - Customarily, the Celebrant will genuflect to the Blessed Sacrament (at StP) and bow to the Altar (at StJ) – be sure to follow whatever the Celebrant does. After making the sign of reverence, all move to their places.
- ◆ The Celebrant will begin Mass in the usual way. At the words “Let us pray,” the Server who will hold the Sacramentary comes forward with the book, holding it until the Congregation replies “Amen” and the Server takes the Sacramentary back. All return to their places and sit.

## Liturgy of the Word

- ◆ After the Congregation has sat down, the Reader for the First Reading comes forward, moving directly from their seat to the Pulpit, with a simple bow to the Blessed Sacrament before entering the Sanctuary.
- ◆ The Reader proclaims the First Reading, starting with the words “*A reading from...*” and ending with “*The Word of the Lord.*” After the Congregation says “Thanks be to God” the Reader steps back from the Pulpit and stands (or sits if a chair is available) during the Responsorial Psalm.
- ◆ After the Responsorial Psalm, the Reader proclaims the Second Reading, starting with the words “*A reading from...*” and ending with “*The Word of the Lord.*” After the Congregation says “Thanks be to God” the Reader removes the Lectionary from the Pulpit, places it into the shelf space on the side of the pulpit and returns to their place in the Congregation.
- ◆ After the Gospel and the Homily have been proclaimed, if there is no Deacon at the Mass to proclaim the General Intercessions, the Reader who will proclaim them waits until the Profession of Faith has almost completed, at which time they will come forward, make a sign of reverence to the Blessed Sacrament, and move to the Pulpit to proclaim the General Intercessions. The Reader turns to face the Celebrant during the invitation and closing prayers of the Intercessions. After proclaiming them, the Reader returns to their place in the Congregation.

## Liturgy of the Eucharist

- ◆ When the Congregation sits, the Servers who will bring the Chalices to the Altar go to the Credence table and carry the main Chalice, followed by all of the other Chalices, the Corporals and the Sacramentary to the Deacon or Priest who is preparing the Altar. The Servers then return to their places and sit.
- ◆ When the Ushers have nearly completed taking the collection, the Server who is carrying the Cross stands up, gets the Cross and proceeds to the back of the Church. When the Ushers have completed taking the collection, they retrieve the individuals who will present the gifts for the Offertory. Once the Ushers have signaled that all is ready, the Server, Gift-bearers and Ushers move forward at a steady and even pace. When the Server reaches the area just in front of the Sanctuary, the Server does a simple bow, returns the Cross to its stand and goes to the Credence table.
- ◆ When the Celebrant stands up to collect the gifts, the other Servers will proceed to the front of the Sanctuary and wait on either side of the Celebrant. He will take the gifts and give them to the Deacon who in turn will give them to the Servers. The Servers will then move to the Altar and place them on the altar (remove the tops from the Ciboria after they have been placed on the Altar.) The Servers will then return to the Credence table. While the Celebrant is saying the prayer over the bread, one Server takes the water and brings it to the Deacon, who will mix a small amount with the wine. The Deacon will give the water back to the Server, who then returns to the Credence table.

*[If incense will be used, one Server will take the Thurible, go to the Celebrant and open the Thurible. The other Server will take the Incense Boat and give it to the Celebrant. The Celebrant will place a little incense into the Thurible and will silently bless it. He will then return the Incense Boat to the Server. The Server holding the Thurible will close it and give it to the Celebrant. Both Servers will then step back. The Celebrant will incense the gifts, the altar and may also incense the Congregation. Once the Celebrant has finished with the Thurible, he will give it to the Server, who will return it to its stand.]*

- ◆ One server will get the water for washing and the water bowl, while the other Server takes the finger towel. They wait until the Celebrant bows and begins to walk to the side of the Altar. One Server will pour water on the Celebrant's fingers and the other Server will give the finger towel to the Celebrant. After the Celebrant has given to finger towel back to the Server, both Servers return to the Credence table, place their items back, and proceed to their chairs.
- ◆ The Servers, Readers and EMHCs will perform the same actions as the Congregation during the Eucharistic Prayer (e.g. standing, kneeling, singing, etc.)
- ◆ As the "Lamb of God" begins, the EMHCs begin to move into the Sanctuary. They line up to one side of the Altar and the Servers will line up on the other side.
- ◆ After the Celebrant, Concelebrants and Deacon (if present) have received Communion, they will administer Communion to all standing in the Sanctuary, Blessed Sacrament first, Precious Blood second. The EMHCs will proceed to their assigned stations at the edge of the Sanctuary while the Servers return to their places. When distributing Communion all Ministers are to use the formula, "The Body of Christ" or "The Blood of Christ."
- ◆ When Communion has completed, EMHCs with Precious Blood remain at their stations to consume any Precious Blood that remains in their Chalice (if they are unwilling to do so, they may ask one of the other EMHCs, the Deacon or Celebrant to consume the Precious Blood at the Credence table.) The EMHCs with the Blessed Sacrament proceed

to the Altar and give their Ciborium to the Deacon or Celebrant, who will repose the Blessed Sacrament into the Tabernacle. Once the Tabernacle door is closed, all genuflect and the EMHC closes the Tabernacle door. All EMHCs then return to their seats.

- ◆ If the Deacon or Celebrant wishes to purify the Chalice immediately after Communion, depending on whether they wish to purify at the Altar or at the Credence table, one Server may bring the water to the Altar and then return to the Credence table after the Deacon or Celebrant has given the water back, or will remain at the Credence table to assist the Deacon or Celebrant as needed. When the Deacon or Celebrant has finished purifying and/or re-assembling the Chalice, one Server goes to the Altar and take the Chalice back to the Credence table, then return to their seat.

### **Concluding Rite**

- ◆ Once the Congregation has been seated and a few moments have been allowed for private reflection, the Reader who will proclaim the announcements comes forward, reverences the Altar, approaches the Pulpit and reads the announcements, if any. After reading the announcements, the Reader returns to their place in the congregation.
- ◆ When the Celebrant stands and says, “Let us pray,” the Server who will hold the Sacramentary comes forward and takes it from the Celebrant. The Celebrant will say the closing prayer. If there is a final blessing, the Celebrant will indicate that the Server is to remain standing in place and holding the Sacramentary until the Celebrant takes the Sacramentary back.
- ◆ When the Celebrant or the Deacon says the dismissal (i.e. “The Mass is ended”), the Server carrying the Cross retrieves it and the other Servers move to the edge of the Sanctuary and wait for the Celebrant and Deacon to take their places. *Neither the Book of Gospels nor the Lectionary are to be carried out in the Recessional.*
- ◆ Whether the Celebrant bows or genuflects, all Ministers perform the same action (except for those Ministers who are carrying an item, who only perform a simple bow.)
- ◆ Immediately after the Ministers have processed out, one of the Ushers is to ensure that the collection has been put into a safe place in the sacristy (at StP) or in the St. Luke’s counting room (at StJ).

## **Checklist After Mass**

*Servers* should:

- ✓ Make sure that anything that they carried in and out of Mass (Cross, Candles, Incense, etc.) has been put away properly. *The sacred vessels (Chalice and Ciboria) are not to be put away until after they have been purified by the Deacon or Celebrant, if they were not purified during Mass*
- ✓ Make sure that the vestments they used during Mass have been properly placed on a hanger and stored in the vestment closet.

*EMHCs* should:

- ✓ Ensure that the Tabernacle key has been returned to the Sacristy and placed in the cabinet with the Chalices.

*Ushers* should:

- ✓ Check that the Collection has been taken from the Sanctuary and either (a) has been given directly to the counters (b) has been placed in the safe.

*Readers* should:

- ✓ Remove the Book of Gospels from the Pulpit and has either been placed in the Sacristy (if there is another Mass following) or has been placed in the Sacristy (if this is the last Mass for the day)
- ✓ Replace the Lectionary on the Pulpit turned to the proper first reading for the next scheduled Mass.

*All* should:

- ✓ Take a quick look in the Sacristy and in the Sanctuary. If anything has been moved out of place or something has been forgotten by a Minister, please take the initiative to put it away properly.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **When should Ministers bow and when should they genuflect?**

Typically, one should make a sign of reverence whenever approaching the Sanctuary, as it symbolizes that they are approaching in a special way the throne of God. One should *genuflect* when approaching the Blessed Sacrament at the beginning and at the end of Mass and should *bow* at other times during the Mass. In order to maintain consistency amongst the Ministers, please try to follow the example of the Celebrant (who may bow at the beginning and end of Mass due to physical infirmity.) This also means that servers only need to bow/genuflect at the beginning and end of Mass, not every time they cross in front of the Altar/Tabernacle.

### **I'm a Minister of the Precious Blood and I can't consume any of it due to medications I am taking (or other reason.) What do I do?**

There are two options in this case. The first is to ask one of the other Ministers to consume any of the Precious Blood. The second is to go directly to the Sacristy after Communion and leave it on the counter for consumption after Mass. *Under no circumstances* is it to be poured down the Sacramentum.

### **I'm an EMHC and when I am distribute Communion at Mass I like to be more personal by including the person's name (e.g. "John, the Body of Christ.") Is this OK?**

When we come forward to receive Jesus in the Eucharist we are all equally welcome to this precious gift. People that are *not* referred to by name when offered the Blessed Sacrament or the Precious Blood may feel as if they are "inferior" because they are not addressed the same. So the rule of thumb is, unless you can refer to everyone who comes to you by his/her name – and there may be such occasions, such as small group Masses or situations where name tags are worn – you should not refer to anyone by name when distributing Communion.

### **As an EMHC I'm used to approaching the Altar only after the Celebrant and Deacon have received Communion. Why is this changing to during the "Lamb of God"?**

Asking the EMHCs to approach the Altar during the "Lamb of God" has a two-fold purpose. The first is to allow those Ministers that may require extra time to approach and climb the Altar steps so that there is no need to hurry and jeopardize safety. The second is to ensure that if for some reason there is an insufficient number of Ministers at the Altar to assist in distributing Communion, it is possible for the Deacon or Celebrant to take appropriate action in requesting someone else from the Congregation for assistance.