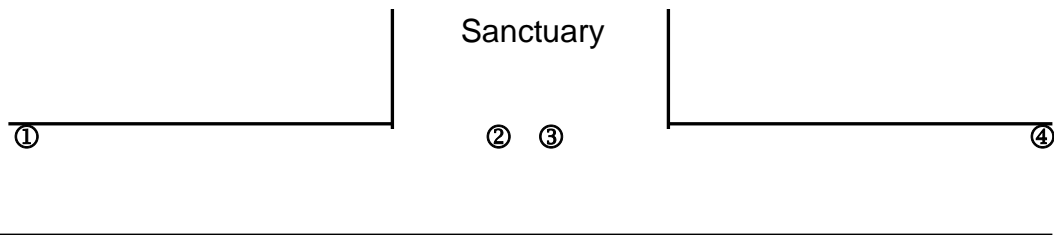


Sharing the Body of Christ with the Body of Christ

Practical Guidelines for Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist at The Catholic Center

- As a rule, three Eucharistic ministers should be present and ready to serve at all campus Masses. (If there is a deacon serving at the liturgy only two ministers are needed.) [*At St. Peter's there are normally 7 students needed.*] Please arrive at least ten to fifteen minutes before Mass begins and check in with the Mass rep so they know you are there and do not begin to find replacements.
- At the Breaking of the Bread (when the “Lamb of God” is sung), the Eucharistic ministers leave their places in the assembly and come forward to the sanctuary, where they reverence the altar with a bow. This bow need not be done as a group since it may require an awkward period of waiting... Simply bow and then proceed to your places on either side of the altar. [*at St. Peter's*] Those taking the plates will go to the left; those taking the cup will go to the right. [*At Busch, Cook & Livingston, everyone stands on one side together and waits there.*]
- As the presider begins to partake of the Eucharist, walk behind the altar and face the assembly [*at St. Peter's only*]. Then he will share the Eucharist with you under the form of both bread and wine. After all the Eucharistic ministers have received communion, the presider will give them either the Body of Christ or the Blood of Christ in the appropriate vessel to share with the members of the assembly. (NOTE: If there are any music ministers or altar servers in the sanctuary, share Eucharist with them before the assembly.) [*wait until everyone has their sacred vessel before you begin to move out toward the assembly*]
- Normally there are four communion stations at each campus Mass. They are arranged below.



The presider and one other Eucharistic minister share the Body of Christ with the assembly at positions ② and ③. Two Eucharistic ministers share the Blood of Christ with the assembly at positions ① and ④, with enough distance between them and the Eucharistic ministers with the Body of Christ to allow a free movement of the assembly between them. (Note for St. Peter's Church: There are usually a total of eight communion stations. The above diagram is replicated at the break in the church.)

- The Eucharistic minister with the Body of Christ takes the consecrated host out of the ciborium (or other sacred vessel) and holds it before the communicant. After the communicant bows, and while maintaining eye contact, the Eucharistic minister says “The Body of Christ.” The communicant responds “Amen.” After this response, the minister places the Body of Christ either in the communicant’s open palm, or on his/her tongue.

(NB: Do not *ad lib* the words “The Body of Christ” in any way... do not add the communicant’s name to this formula. Also, in general, the people who join in the communion procession intend to receive communion. However, there are 2 exceptions. If any children join in the procession with their parents but have not yet been prepared for the sacrament of Eucharist [*if in doubt, ask the adult accompanying the child*], the minister with the Body of Christ should extend some words of blessing to the child, for example, “May God bless you.” If an adult comes with hands crossed over the chest, you may say words of blessing as well. *If*, however, they also open their mouth, it means they are of a different Catholic Rite and can receive Communion on the tongue).
- The Eucharistic minister with the Blood of Christ should extend the chalice to the communicant. After the communicant bows, and while maintaining eye contact, the Eucharistic minister says “The Blood of Christ.” The communicant responds “Amen.” After this response, the minister carefully gives the communicant the chalice, making sure the communicant has a firm grip before letting go. After the communicant has received from the chalice and gives it back to the Eucharistic minister, the Eucharistic minister wipes the place where they have sipped from with the purificator, slightly rotates the cup, and then offers it to the next person in the same way.

- After the assembly has received communion, the remainders of the Eucharist need to be consumed, or reserved in the tabernacle if there is one. If you are at St. Peter's and you have the Body of Christ, walk with it to the tabernacle and wait there until the other ministers with the Body of Christ have all brought their ciboria there. Then the presider will open the tabernacle and place the ciboria inside. If you have the Body of Christ and are at either Busch, Cook or Livingston, walk with it to the credence table (or altar) and wait there for the presider. If you have the Precious Blood, walk back to the credence table with what remains and reverently consume it there. If you cannot do this for any reason, then let the presider or another Eucharistic minister do so. Do not leave the Precious Body or Blood on the credence table unattended. If no one else is there to consume it, wait with it until someone is. (**NB:** Do not consume what remains while walking back to the credence table or while moving at all, and do not bow towards the altar while carrying the Eucharist - you are carrying what makes the altar holy.)
- After the remains of the Eucharist are consumed, place the vessels on the credence table and return to your seats in the Assembly, reverencing the altar with a bow as you pass it. The priest or deacon will purify the vessels.

What to do if...

- **you are running out** of the Body of Christ... if it appears that more people are coming to receive than hosts have been consecrated, 1) check with your partner to see if you can take some hosts from him/her, or 2) begin to break the hosts in half and distribute the halves to the assembly.
- **you have run out** of the Blood of Christ... Simply remove yourself from your station, return the empty chalice and the purificator to the credence table, and return to your place in the assembly. If you cannot move, place the purificator over the chalice and remain standing at your place until you can move easily and peacefully.
- **the Body of Christ** drops. First, don't panic! Simply pick it up off the floor and either consume it then or set it aside to be consumed after. While you should be concerning yourself with the consecrated host, you should also be concerning yourself with the feelings of the person in front of you. They will feel awkward at best and perhaps guilty at worst. Handle the situation in a way that does not encourage these feelings. Let them know that everything is okay, and offer them the Body of Christ again. (*If the Body of Christ has fallen out of someone's mouth, do not consume it. Place it on the side of the vessel and give it to the presider after communion. Be sure to tell him what happened!*)
- **the Blood of Christ** drops or spills. Again, try not to panic. Let the person know that everything will be okay. Simply place yourself in front of the spill so that no one inadvertently walks over it. After you are done serving the Precious Blood, take the purificator, gently place it over the spill, and let the presider know so that he can cleanse the spot. He will do that after Mass.
- **someone wants to use intinction.** Let them know that they should consume the Body of Christ before receiving the Blood of Christ. Intinction is not an acceptable practice for receiving communion in the Diocese of Metuchen.

General Reminders:

- Slower is holier
- Gestures: genuflect to Sacrament in tabernacle; bow to altar
- If you make a mistake, act like it wasn't
- Attend to the liturgical action at all times
- Dress appropriately
- Reverence... remember you are a leader of prayer

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Where to find the **LITURGICAL MINISTER SCHEDULE:** <http://www.catholic-center.rutgers.edu>

- click on [Mass & Worship](#)
- scroll down to [Assisting at Mass](#)