

Instructions for EMHC (Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion) St. Mary Catholic Church – January 29th, 2023

Dear EMHC's of St. Mary in Aspen,

Thank you for your service to our Eucharistic Lord Jesus! We are so grateful for your ministry that makes the Holy Mass at our beloved parish even more beautiful.

Distribution of Holy Communion

1. The moment you begin your approach to the sanctuary is at the **Sign of Peace**. Please abbreviate the handshaking, etc. that you are offering to those around you and come to the sanctuary in a quick manner. You want to be as unnoticeable as possible. So, enter the sanctuary when people are distracted while offering a sign of peace to those around them, you will barely be noticed.
2. Walk directly to the credence table and **sanitize your hands** from the bottle of sanitizer on the table. This will give you plenty of time for your hands to dry before distributing communion.
3. Once the priest has consumed from the chalice, he instructs the congregation on how to line up for receiving Holy Communion at St. Mary's. He will then give communion to you at the side of the altar and hand you the ciborium with the Eucharistic hosts.
4. Walk to the front of the sanctuary and meet the priest at the gap between the communion rails. Begin to distribute the Blessed Sacrament to the congregation.
 - As a communicant approaches, offer the Host to the person saying only the words, "***The Body of Christ***". Nothing else is said (such as the communicant's name).
 - Always remain standing on the first sanctuary step between the rails to remain consistent with the priest standing on the same step.
5. When a child or adult approaches you with folded arms, this indicates they do not wish to receive Communion. In this situation, only say the following words to the person: "***Receive the Lord Jesus in your heart***".
 - Do not reach out to touch the person at all.
 - Do not attempt to give the person a blessing.
 - Do not make the sign of the Cross over the person, and especially do not make the sign of the Cross while holding the Eucharist.
 - Instructions from the Vatican Congregation of Divine Worship explicitly states that these actions and blessing within the liturgy are reserved only for ordained clergy.

6. It could happen that someone attempts to carry the Body of Christ back to their pew or out of the Church. Please keep an eye out for this. Try to verify each person has placed the Sacred Host into their mouths. If they haven't, calmly reach out to them, and quietly ask them to consume the Host. Please watch for this as well if you are sitting in the pews. As a mandated EMHC, you have the authority to approach that person and insist they consume the Host, or give it to you to consume, or to return it to the priest.
7. If someone you do not know to be an EMHC for St. Mary requests an extra Host to take to a person who is homebound, **do not do so**. Instead, ask them to talk to the priest after Mass.
8. At St. Mary, we invite people to receive Communion on the tongue while kneeling at the communion rail. Distribute the Eucharist to these communicants on your side of the sanctuary after your communion line has finished.
9. When you have finished distributing Holy Communion, return to the side of the altar and hand the ciborium to the priest. It may likely happen that you finish distributing Communion before the priest, he may be occupied with distributing communion to those kneeling at the communion rail. In this situation, you may place the ciborium on the edge of the altar. Do not walk behind the altar to place the ciborium in the center. The entire altar is consecrated, you may simply set it on the edge/side of the altar and the priest will take it from there.
10. After you have handed the ciborium to the priest, or have placed it on the side of the altar, then purify your fingers by dipping them in the lavabo bowl which is on the windowsill by the credence table. Then dry your fingers with the small linen towel next to it and return to your pew.

Final Note

What a remarkable honor to serve the Holy Mass! Because of the importance of your ministry, we ask you to wear your “*Sunday goin’ to meetin’ clothes*”. Dignified and modest dress shows respect to our Lord present in the Holy Eucharist and is a great reminder to others of the importance of the Holy Mass. Thank you and God bless!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Rev. Darrick Leier

Rev. Darrick Leier
Pastor ~ St. Mary | Aspen