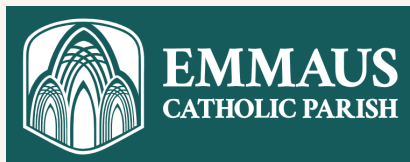


# PROCEDURES FOR EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION



November, 2025

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# I. INTRODUCTION

"THE ACT OF COMMUNION IS ALSO AN ACT OF FAITH. FOR WHEN THE MINISTER SAYS, '**THE BODY OF CHRIST**' OR '**THE BLOOD OF CHRIST**,' THE COMMUNICANT'S '**AMEN**' IS A PROFESSION IN THE PRESENCE OF THE SAVING CHRIST, BODY AND BLOOD, SOUL AND DIVINITY, WHO NOW GIVES LIFE TO THE BELIEVER."

(N. 14, NORMS FOR THE DISTRIBUTION AND RECEPTION OF HOLY COMMUNION  
UNDER BOTH KINDS IN THE DIOCESE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA)

# I. INTRODUCTION

EMHC stands for **Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion**, serving both the host and wine. There is no separate name for those who distribute the wine; they are also referred to as EMHCs.

Only for the purpose of this document we will use the following denomination:

EMHC (those serving The Host)

EMHC-PC (those serving The Host to physically challenged people)

EMHC-C (those serving The Wine)



## II. PREPARATION

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion should receive sufficient spiritual, theological, and practical preparation to fulfill their role with knowledge and reverence.  
(<https://www.usccb.org>).

The most effective preparation for the distribution of Holy Communion is *holiness of life* :



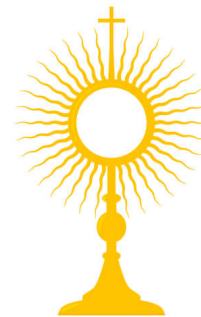
Receive the  
Sacrament of  
Penance regularly



Receive the  
Holy Eucharist  
regularly



Practice  
Eucharistic  
Adoration

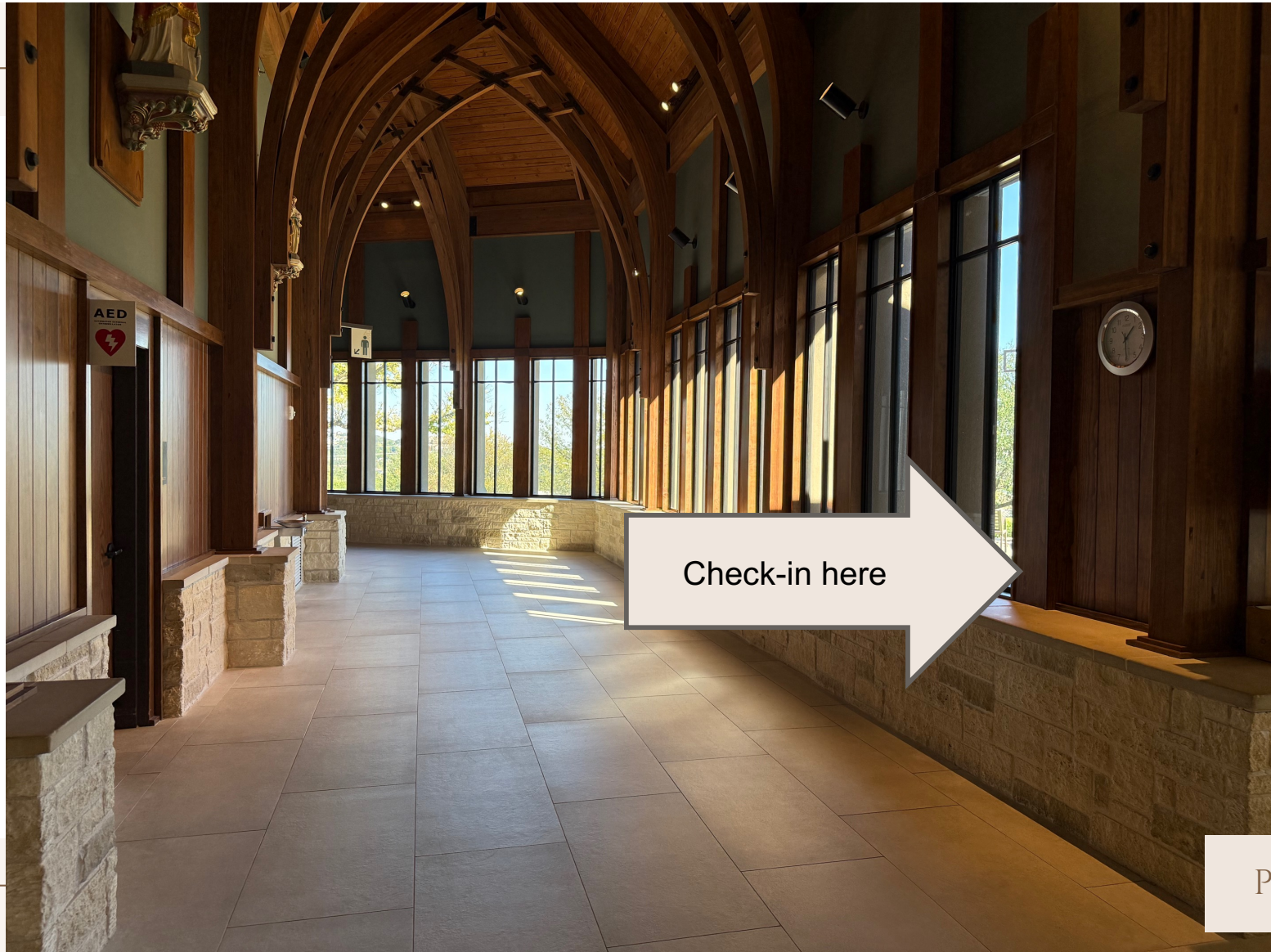


Practice devotion  
to the Blessed  
Virgin Mary.



### III. BEFORE HOLY MASS

- Arrive at the church at least fifteen minutes before Mass. Your position will be assigned to other person if you arrive later than that.
- Check in at the sacristy - the check-in sheet is under the clock outside the Sacristy (**picture #1**) and will have the position you are to serve: EMHC and EMHC-PC positions: 1,2, 5, 6, or PC. / EMHC-C positions 1,2,3,4. Please refer to **picture #3** to see the EMHC positions on the sanctuary and **pictures #5** and **#6** to see the EMHC serving locations according to the positions assigned.
- Please wear your parish name tag with the EMHC banner attached.
- Dress appropriately as you are serving the Body and Blood of Christ.
- It is practical to be seated in an area that will allow walking to the altar with a minimum of time.
- In the remaining time, place yourself in a spirit of prayer.



PICTURE #1

## IV. AFTER THE SIGN OF PEACE

- Prior moving towards the Altar, please apply sanitizer discreetly on your hands. It is practical to carry a small container to use after the giving the Sign of Peace. (A large container is on the ledge in the Altar area for your use as well. Take into consideration that it is a distraction to the liturgy to rub the sanitizer vigorously on your hands or to wave your hands around.)
- Walk toward the Altar after giving the Sign of Peace to those around you. Stop at the bottom of the stairs and wait for the rest of the EMHCs to arrive.
- Bow toward the Altar (as shown in **picture #2**) before stepping up carefully into the sanctuary.
- Stand on the gold markers (or numbers, as shown on **pictures #3**) facing the Altar. Please stand at the number you are to serve at.
- The EMHC who serves Holy Communion to the Physically Challenged stands on the marker closest to the Ambo (marked PC) and is responsible for giving Holy Communion to the Choir.





PICTURE #2



## POSITIONS OF EMHCs ON THE SANCTUARY

EMHC  
EMHC-PC  
Positions  
Behind  
Altar and  
Ambo

EMHC-C  
Positions  
Behind Altar

PC

6

5

2

1

Deacon

4

3

Priest

4

3

2

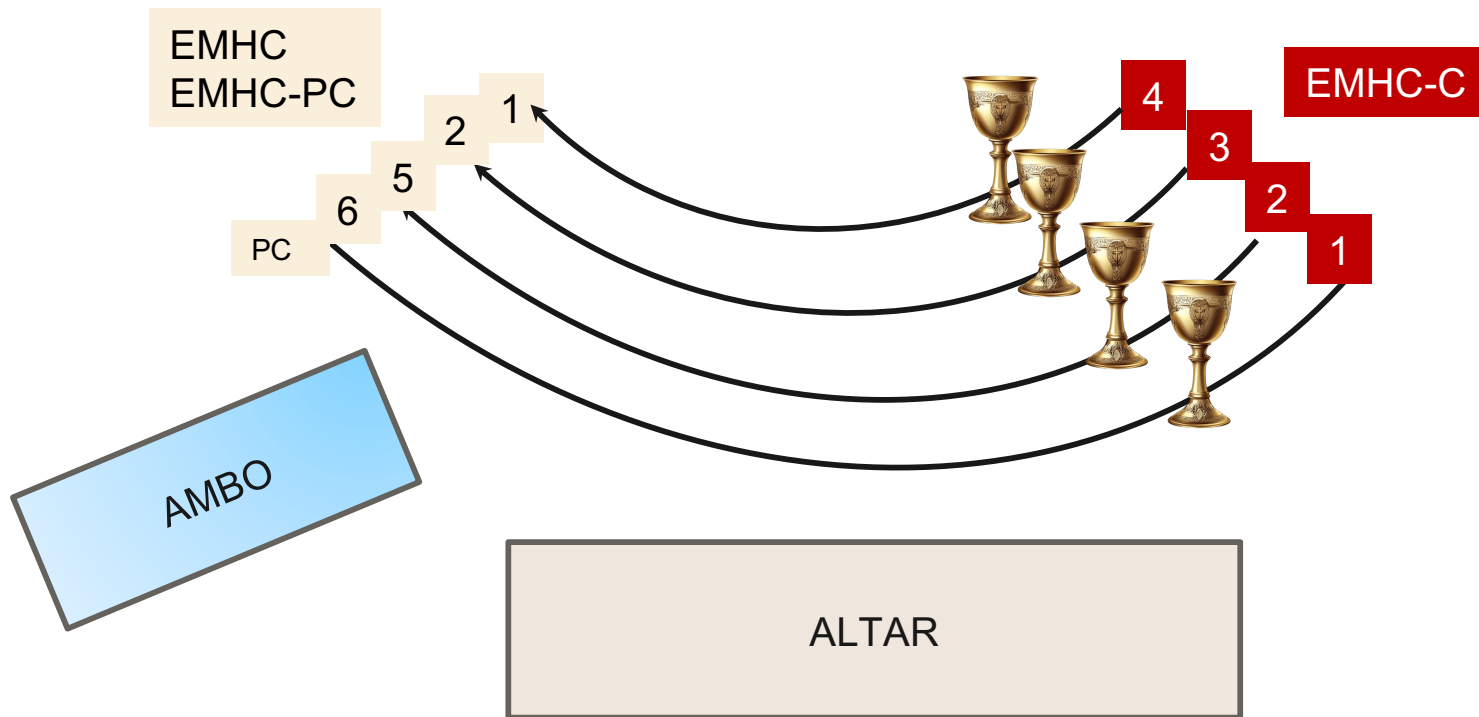
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PICTURE #3

## V. WHILE STANDING ON THE SANCTUARY

- The Celebrant will give the Host to all EMHCs, one at a time, and will say “The Body of Christ”, EMHC answers “Amen”.
- If the priest celebrant gives you a portion of the celebrant's host, do not break it but consume it whole.
- The Deacon or Acolyte will pass the Cups to the EMHC-C and say “The Blood of Christ”, EMHC-C answers “Amen”
- Once each EMHC-C has received the Cup and Purificator, they will follow the Celebrant and give the Precious Blood to one of the Host Ministers according to the order shown in **picture #4** and will say “The Blood of Christ”. EMHC answers “Amen”.
- The Deacon or Acolyte then will deliver the ciborium to each EMHC and EMHC-PC.
- The Priest Celebrant will stand off to the side until completed. Then proceed to your assigned location.

EMHC-C SERVES THE WINE TO EMHCs AND EMHC-PC





## VI. MOVING ON TO SERVING LOCATIONS

- Everyone moves to the serving places, carefully going down the steps, and according to *picture #5*.
- Avoid placing your hand over the top of the ciborium while carrying it. Use both hands and hold it at the level of your heart.
- Stand in the place where you will serve Holy Communion with your heels all the way to the edge of the step. If you are compelled to move a few steps forward then return to the edge of the step as soon as possible. Please notice that this is very important to avoid create confusion on the communicants. There must not be a gap in between positions (#1 and #2), (#3 and #4) or (#5 and #6). Each couple must be at the same level and against the step. This is a team effort!



## POSITIONS OF EMHCs ON THE SERVING LOCATIONS





EMHC-C #2 AND #3 ON THE SERVING LOCATIONS (CONTINUATION)



PICTURE #6

## VII. CONSIDERATIONS WHILE GIVING THE HOST

- Hold the ciborium in your left hand and take a host, holding it in view of the communicant say, "The Body of Christ."
- Avoid turning the host, simply place it carefully on the hands or tongue.
- If the communicant does not respond "Amen," do not respond for them.
- Give the host to the communicant as they best receive it.
- A person who crosses their arms in front is asking for a blessing rather than Holy Communion.
- A lay person is not to give a blessing in the context of Mass. This means that an EMHC cannot bless a communicant who comes forward but does not receive Holy Communion.



## VII. CONSIDERATIONS WHILE GIVING THE HOST

### The EMHC may say:

- "May Christ always be in your heart" or "Receive the Lord in your heart."



### The EMHC is not to:

- Do not use the word "Bless" or "Blessing(s)" in this context even if you know the person.
- Extend their hand over the person in any way. Touch the person or child.
- Hold the consecrated Host over a person who has come forward for a blessing.
- Also, to not make the Sign of the Cross with the consecrated Host over a person.



## VII. CONSIDERATIONS WHILE GIVING THE HOST

### Warnings



- Pay close attention to the hands of the communicant. Sometimes it can be difficult to tell whether a person intends to receive Communion or simply wishes to receive a blessing. If their hands are crossed at chest level instead of their arms, it may appear as though they are about to receive the Host. In such cases, you might find yourself holding the consecrated Host over someone seeking only a blessing before realizing it.
- Be mindful of children who may suddenly step forward from behind their parents. This can also lead to a similar situation, where you are holding the consecrated Host over someone who has come forward for a blessing rather than to receive Communion.



## VII. CONSIDERATIONS WHILE GIVING THE HOST

### Warnings



- Do not break the Host.
- If the host is dropped, bend down to pick it up and place it on the communicant's hand or tongue. You may also consume the host or place it on the edge of the hosts in the ciborium and put it on the corporal when you return to the Altar.
- If the person walks away without consuming the host, you may follow them and say "**Put it in your mouth.**" If the person continues onward without acknowledging, then a parishioner who will have noticed this occurrence will help the person to understand.
- If you have someone present themselves with a pyx in your line during communion, you simply state the phrase "**after Mass**" and move on. The Sacristan will give out the Host.
- If, after Mass a host is found inside the church, place it reverently upon the Altar and inform the sacristan.





## VII. CONSIDERATIONS WHILE GIVING THE HOST

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### Looking for assistance or assisting others

- If the hosts are depleted, turn to the EMHC closest to you to obtain more hosts. If the line for Holy Communion is short, then return the empty ciborium to the Altar.
- If the EMHC is finished at their station they may move to assist another EMHC. Please stand to the side, close to the pew and out of the flow of traffic - see attached **pictures #7, #8, #9**.



## EMHC LOCATIONS TO ASSIST OTHER EMHC

Position  
to assist  
EMHC  
#3



Position  
to assist  
EMHC  
#4

PICTURE #7

## EMHC LOCATIONS TO ASSIST OTHER EMHC

Position  
to assist  
EMHC  
#1



Position  
to assist  
EMHC  
#2

PICTURE #8



## EMHC LOCATIONS TO ASSIST OTHER EMHC

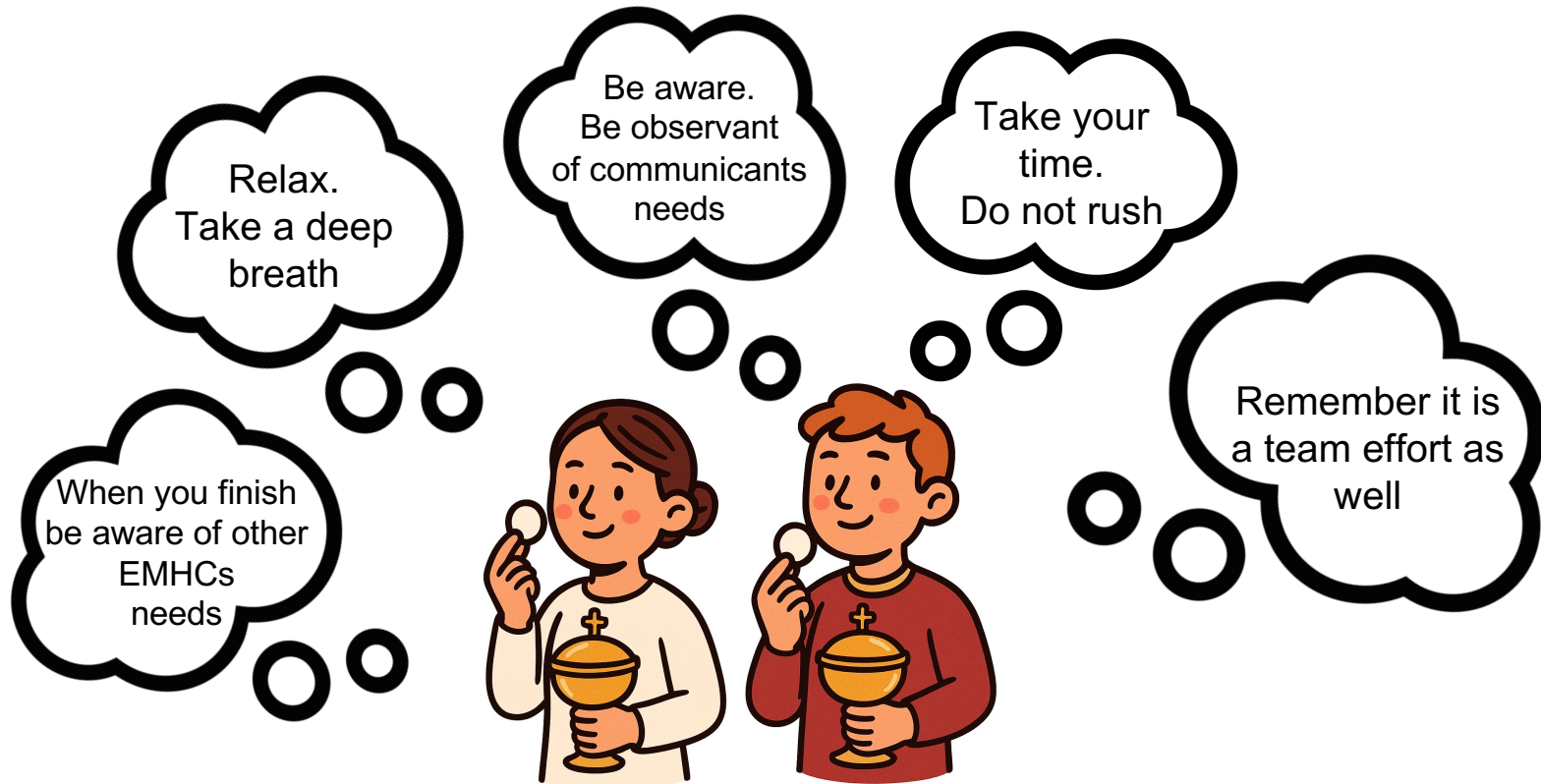
Position  
to assist  
EMHC  
#5



Position  
to assist  
EMHC  
#6

PICTURE #9

## VII. CONSIDERATIONS WHILE GIVING THE HOST

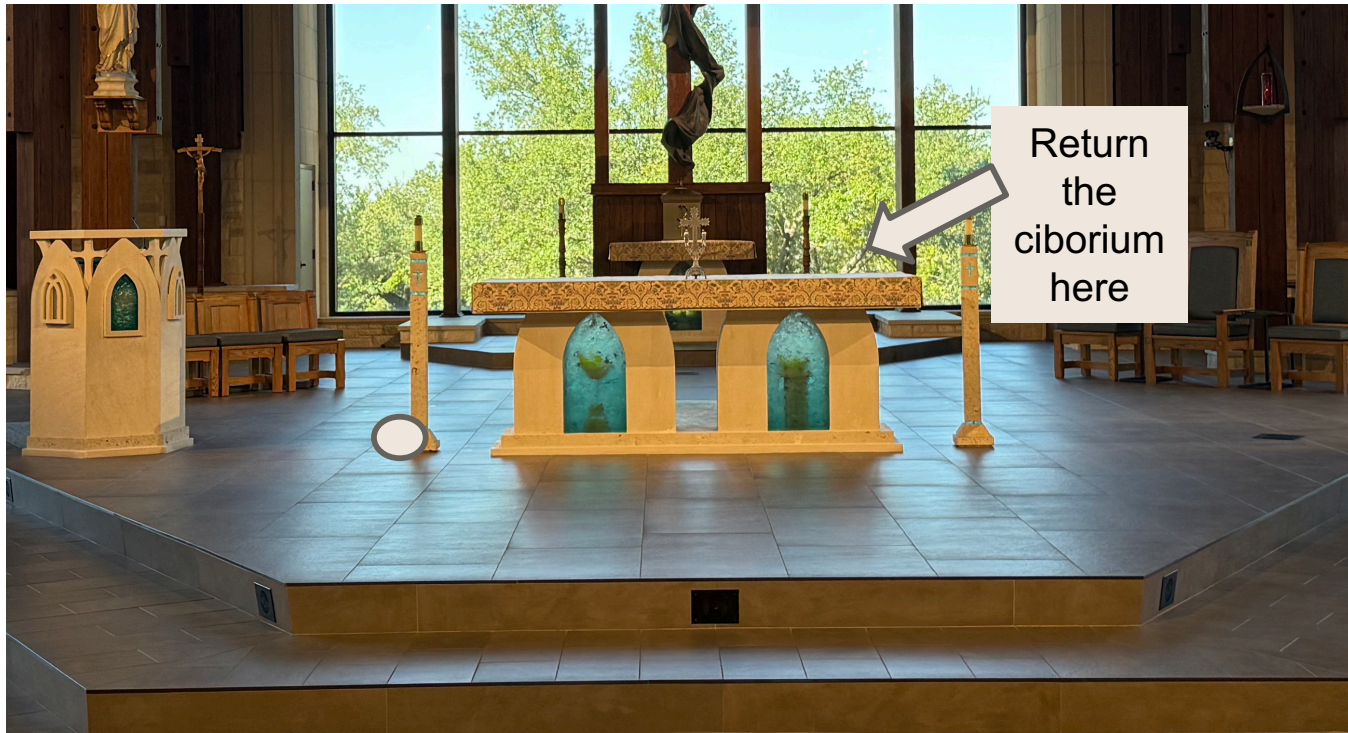


## VIII. RETURNING HOLY COMMUNION TO THE ALTAR

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- Avoid placing your hand over the top of the ciborium while carrying it back to the Altar. Use both hands and hold it at the level of your heart.
- Place the ciborium on the front of the Altar on the left corporal (picture #10). Do not reach over the back of the Altar to place the ciborium across.
- Do not consolidate the hosts by pouring the contents of one ciborium into another.
- Return to the area where the markers are placed. As the priest celebrant or deacon carries the ciborium turn toward the Tabernacle.
- When he genuflects or bows, bow at the same time.
- Walk back to your seat and when you reach the nave floor level, turn and bow toward the Altar.

## RETURNING HOLY COMMUNION TO THE ALTAR



PICTURE #10

## IX. CONSIDERATIONS WHILE GIVING THE WINE

- Hold the cup in your left hand in view of the communicant and say, "The Blood of Christ." Carefully hand the cup to the person.
- When they return it to you, wipe the edge where their lips have touched with a purificator. You may either keep the purificator folded or unfolded for this process.
- Then turn the cup **one-quarter** of a turn for the next communicant to receive.
- Do not give any type of Blessing to the communicant.
- If you run out of wine, return the Cup to the ledge (**picture #11**).
- When there are no more parishioners in your line, consume the remaining wine in the Cup and return it to the ledge (**picture #11**).
- After you return the cup to the ledge, do not stuff the purificator inside the cup, fold it and lay it alongside the cup and return to your pew.



## RETURNING HOLY COMMUNION TO THE ALTAR



Return  
the cup  
here

PICTURE #11



## X. INSTALLATION AND RECORDING

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- A ceremony of installation is required.
- Once this ceremony is completed, the names of the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are recorded in the Office of the Bishop of Austin.

“AS EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION, YOU CARRY OUT ONE OF THE MOST SACRED ACTS IN OUR FAITH — SHARING THE BODY OF CHRIST WITH OTHERS.

YOUR REVERENCE, DEDICATION, AND LOVE FOR THE EUCHARIST ALLOW CHRIST’S PRESENCE TO REACH HIS PEOPLE IN A DEEPLY PERSONAL WAY.

THANK YOU FOR BEING INSTRUMENTS OF GRACE, UNITY, AND COMPASSION.

THROUGH YOUR HUMBLE SERVICE, YOU REMIND US ALL THAT WE ARE THE BODY OF CHRIST — CALLED TO SERVE AND TO LOVE.”

THANK YOU