

Daily Mass Ministries Guide

**St. Dominic Church
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Washington, DC 20024
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Lectors proclaim the word of God in the liturgy and so share in the prophetic mission of Christ in the parish. Altar Servers (Acolytes) and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (EMHCs) assist the Priest at Mass and so share in the priestly mission of Christ. Ushers serve the financial stewardship of the parish and so share in the kingly mission of Christ. Lectors, Acolytes, and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are expected to be committed to Christ and to Catholic belief and practice, to be in good standing with the Church, and to faithfully fulfill their liturgical roles. Ushers are expected to fulfill their role with the utmost integrity. We are very grateful for your service.

Note: Through the Ministry Scheduler Program (MSP), daily Mass ministers are urged to make substitute requests early when they cannot make an assigned Mass. They are also encouraged to be generous in responding to substitute requests.

ALTAR SERVER (ACOLYTE)

BEFORE MASS

- It is the duty of the Priest to set up for daily Mass. You may help if you know how.
- 5 minutes before Mass, please light the Altar Candles, and check to make sure that the sound system and proper lights are turned on.
- For the 12:10pm Mass, also check to make sure the collection baskets are in the back of the church.
- Be in the Sacristy a few minutes before Mass begins.

DURING MASS

- **At the Beginning of Mass:**
 - Ring the mounted bell at the door of the sacristy when the Priest is ready, before the Lector introduces the Mass at the Ambo.
 - Lead the Priest toward the space between the Altar and Tabernacle. Stand to the Priest's right as you genuflect (or bow if unable) toward the Tabernacle with Him. Turn around and simply stand still as he kisses the altar.
 - Move to the first choir seat on the Chair-Side of the Sanctuary. The Priest will proceed to the Chair.
 - Bring up the Missal (which will be on its stand on the table behind the Priest's chair) and hold it for the Priest for the Collect / Opening Prayer (after the Penitential Act, or after the Gloria on Feasts and Solemnities). When the Priest says, "let us pray," it is a cue that he needs the Missal for the Opening Prayer. Ideally, you would begin to approach the Priest with the Missal just before he says "let us pray."
 - Stand right in front of the Priest with the Missal, resting the binding of the closed Missal against your upper chest. Hold the book at an angle with your hands. The Priest will open the Missal.
 - After the Collect, replace the Missal on its stand on the table, and be seated.

- **Altar Setup:**

1. When the Intercessions are finished, bring the Missal with its stand to the Altar. Set up the stand. Open the Missal to the PRESENTATION AND PREPARATION OF THE GIFTS (pp. 380-381) by means of the green tab toward the middle of the book. Before this, nothing should be on the Altar except the Altar Crucifix.
2. Cross to the other side of the Sanctuary in order to immediately bring the Chalice(s) to the Altar, placing them on the right side of the Altar. The Priest or Deacon sets up the Altar. If the Altar Mic is to be used (usually when there are Concelebrants), bring it up now as well.
3. Bring the Water & Wine Cruets to the Altar with their handles facing the Priest and caps left at the Credence Table. The Wine Cruet should be in your right hand, the Water Cruet in your left hand. Traditionally one “gives with the right and receives with the left.” This means that one transfers the Water Cruet to one’s right hand after the Priest takes the Wine Cruet. One receives the Wine Cruet back from the Priest with the left hand, and then gives the Water Cruet with the right hand. Once the Priest takes the Water Cruet, one transfers the Wine Cruet to one’s right hand and receives the Water Cruet back with the left hand. Although this traditional method is preferable, it is not a big deal if you don’t remember this technicality. After the Water Cruet is given back, give a head bow to the Priest and bring both Cruets back to the Credence Table.
4. Bring the Water, Lavabo (Hand-Washing Bowl), and Finger Towel to the Priest. Hold the Water Cruet with your right hand and the Lavabo with your left hand, with the Finger Towel draped over your left arm, just above your wrist. Pour the water over the fingers of the Priest into the Lavabo. Pour until the Priest pulls his hands away. Let him take the finger towel, dry his hands, and place it back over your arm. Give a head bow to the Priest and return everything to the Credence Table.

- **Hand Bells:** The Hand Bells should be rung moderately and confidently, neither brashly loud nor timid and soft. One should let the bells resonate after the ring, not putting it down on the carpeted square until the ring has died down. The Hand Bells are rung at these three points in the Mass:
 1. ***Epiclesis:*** Once at the calling down of the Holy Spirit, when the Priest holds his hands flat over the bread and wine and invokes the Holy Spirit.
 2. ***Elevation of the Host:*** Three Times when the Priest holds up the Host just consecrated.
 3. ***Elevation of the Chalice:*** Three Times when the Priest holds up the Chalice just consecrated.

- **Altar Cleanup (8am):** After Communion, bring the Water Cruet to the Altar to pour over the Priests hands into the Paten or Chalice as much as he signals, afterward returning the Water Cruet to the Credence Table. Return to bring the assembled Chalice to the Credence Table after the Purification.

- **Altar Cleanup (12:10pm):** While the Priest is giving Communion to the Congregation, fold the Corporal and bring it to the Purification Table. Make sure you fold and carry the Corporal correctly (see separate sheet on handling the Corporal).

AFTER MASS: Help bring everything carefully back to the Sacristy. In the Sacristy:

- Before bringing the Vessels into the Sacristy, make sure that the Purificators are placed flatly over the Chalices (not stuffed inside), and that the Paten is fitted over one of the Chalices with the Pall and Corporal over it. Bring the Vessels to the Sacristy first.
- If Purification has happened at Mass, place all the Vessels and Purificators on the closed Sacrarium (special sink with the lid on it). If not, place the Vessels on top of the Corporal on top of the fold-up table underneath the refrigerator. Let the Priest or Deacon take care of purifying these.
- Return the Corporal used in the Mass to its drawer.
- Dump out the water in the Lavabo in the regular sink, wiping it dry with the used Finger Towel. Afterwards, place the Finger Towel in the Laundry Basket behind the safe in the Closet to the left of the main counter.
- Dump out the Water Cruet in the regular sink and place it upside down on a peg on the drying rack above the refrigerator in the wall.
- Refill the Wine Cruet to 1 inch below the bottom part of the handle. Both Wine Cruets (for the 8am and 12:10pm Masses) should be kept filled and with their tops on in the refrigerator. The smaller cruet (for the 8am Mass) can be kept in the door. The other cruet can be placed in the main compartment of the refrigerator.
- Put everything back in its proper cabinet or drawer.
- If it is convenient for you, you may allow liturgical ministers not assigned for that particular Mass to help you clean up.

LECTOR

BEFORE MASS

- At home, please practice the reading.
- Please arrive at the sacristy 5 minutes before Mass to check in with the Priest, to make sure the reading is correct and set, and that it is clear what Mass is being celebrated.
- The Lector should be at the Ambo before the Acolyte rings the Mass Bell, and be ready to announce the Mass and lead the Entrance Antiphon. Make sure that the *Breaking Bread Hymnal* is opened to the page on which the Entrance Antiphon appears. You are encouraged to turn on the reading light at the Ambo and adjust the height before Mass begins. The ideal height is when the bottom of the shelf is at your waist.

DURING MASS:

- **Beginning:** Right after the Mass Bells are Rung by the Acolyte, the Lector should announce the Mass and lead the Entrance Antiphon according to the sheet.
 - *Announce the Mass* (“Today we celebrate Tuesday of the 4th Sunday of Ordinary Time” or “Today we celebrate the Memorial of St. Clare,” etc.). *Note:* On Solemnities, for the 12:10pm Mass, there is usually music, in which case the Cantor will take care of the Introduction of the Mass, the Entrance Antiphon / Hymn, and the Communion Antiphon / Hymn.
 - *Lead the Antiphon.* Make sure you speak in a way that is easy for people to follow, not too quickly. After the Antiphon, you can step away from the Ambo until after the Opening Prayer is finished, when you would step back into the Ambo to proclaim the 1st Reading.
 - After the 1st Reading and Responsorial Psalm, please be seated in the cushioned chair close to the Ambo, or in one of the wooden seats in the sanctuary. If there is a 2nd Reading (on Solemnities and certain Feasts), the lector should proceed to read it after the Responsorial Psalm. On Solemnities, for the 12:10pm Mass, there is generally music, and the Responsorial Psalm is sung by the Cantor. In this case, sit in the large chair at the pillar after the First Reading and return to the Ambo for the Second Reading after the Cantor is finished singing the Responsorial Psalm.

- **Reading Tips:**

- There is no reason to bow to the Altar before and after the Reading unless you are coming from the congregation and would pass in front of the Altar.
 - Remember to project your voice; look out at the congregation when introducing the reading and at its closure.
 - Give a slight pause after introducing the reading and before saying “The word of the Lord” at the end.
 - Generally don’t emphasize conjunctions and prepositions, but verbs and important words. Pause as appropriate.
 - Please leave the ribbon in the lectionary in place, marking the first reading. Please do not adjust the ribbon at all when turning pages in the lectionary.
- **For the Responsorial Psalm:** After the 1st Reading, pause for 2-3 seconds before beginning the Responsorial Psalm. Please do not introduce it by saying, “The Responsorial Psalm,” or “The Response is. . .” There is also no need to use your hands to signal people’s repetition of the response after you recite it at the outset of the Psalm. Simply say the response. At the end of every stanza, you can simply look up at the congregation to signal their response. If the congregation is weak in response, you are encouraged to repeat the response out loud every time it is repeated, so that they may better catch on. Otherwise there is no need for you to repeat the response with the congregation after each stanza.
 - **Communion Antiphon:** When the Priest receives the Host, please go to the Ambo in order to lead the Communion Antiphon. Begin the Antiphon after he receives the Host. Before reciting the Antiphon, please say, “The Communion Antiphon,” so as to signal people to join in.

AFTER MASS:

- Kindly return the Lectionary and Guide Sheet to the Sacristy cabinet.
- Please help with the money after the Mass when there are not two other people to do so.

Extraordinary Ministries of Holy Communion ("EMHCs")

BEFORE MASS

Please be seated in the congregation, ideally on an aisle in one of the front pews.

DURING MASS

- *Are you needed?*
 - *For the 8am Mass*, typically 1 EMHC is needed. If besides the Celebrant there is another Priest or Deacon able to distribute Holy Communion, no EMHC is needed.
 - *For the 12:10pm Mass*, typically 3 EMHCs are needed. If besides the Celebrant there are Priests or Deacons able to distribute Holy Communion, EMHCs are only needed to complete the number of 4 total ministers of Holy Communion. Because of their ordination, Priests and Deacons have precedence in distributing Holy Communion. Along with Bishops, they are thus called "Ordinary Ministers of Holy Communion."
 - Ordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (Priests & Deacons) would normally distribute the Hosts rather than the Chalice.

- *If you are scheduled and needed:*
 - After everyone says "Lord, I am not worthy. . .", come up, bow to the Altar, quickly sanitize your hands if needed, using the sanitizer at the Credence or Purification Table, and make your way to the Ambo side of the Altar.

- To receive the Host, all EMHCs, Lectors, and Acolytes should form one line and come up to receive the Host from the Priest. EMHCs should ideally receive last. However, the lector will often naturally receive last—because of needing to lead the Communion Antiphon at the Ambo before receiving.
- After receiving the Host, the EMHCs should stand next to each other, shoulder to shoulder as it were. If 3 are needed, the EMHC closest to the Altar would distribute the Hosts along with the Priest. The other 2 would distribute the Chalices. After those distributing the Chalice receive from the Chalice, the Chalice EMHC closest to the Host EMHC should distribute the Precious Blood to him/her. Any Acolytes or Lectors wishing to receive from the Precious Blood should line up behind the Chalice EMHCs and receive from the Chalice EMHCs after they have received. If there is a Deacon or Priest, he might help with distributing the Chalice to the EMHCs, the Lector, and the Server.
- After the Chalice EMHCs have distributed the Precious Blood to everyone in the sanctuary, they make their way carefully to their station, by the pillar on either side, at the head of each side aisle, facing the middle of the church. The Chalice EMHCs need not wait for the Priest to move toward the congregation first. They can precede him: they will naturally take longer to get to their stations. The Host EMHC, on the other hand, should wait for the Priest to the congregation.

- ***When distributing Holy Communion:***

- Please distribute first to any persons with disabilities in the front row and who can't come up.
- See the “Troubleshooting Questions” section at the end of this document for questions about what to do when the out-of-the-ordinary occurs.
- For the Chalice, if there is only one chalice (as normally during the 8am Mass), distribute it from the side aisle on the Chair Side (next to the piano).
- **At the 8am Mass**, the EMHC should place the Chalice with its Purificator on the Corporal on the Altar. The EMHC should consume any remaining Precious Blood either at the station before coming up, or at the Altar before placing the Chalice on the Corporal. Return to your seat in the congregation.

- **At the 12:10pm Mass**, when distribution is finished, the Host EMHC should give the Ciborium to the Celebrant so he can consolidate remaining Hosts before placing them in the Tabernacle. After he does this, the Celebrant will give you the empty Paten to take to the Credence Table. Place the Pall on top of the Paten. Place the empty Paten on top of a Chalice with a Purificator draped over it. Purify the fingers used in distributing the Host by dipping them in the Purification Bowl and drying them on the small Purificator next to it.
- The EMHCs distributing the Precious Blood should consume any remaining Precious Blood (either at the station or at the Purification Table), place the Chalice on the Purification Table, and drape the Purificator over the Chalice. Be sure not to stuff the Purificator inside the Chalice, or to leave the Chalice uncovered. After this, place the Paten with the Pall and Corporal on it on one of the Chalices. Take your place in one of the wooden seats in the Sanctuary. After Mass, process into the Sacristy before the Priest.

AFTER MASS

The assigned EMHCs should take care of the collection together. Immediately after Mass and together, they should bring it into the Sacristy, dump it out on the counter, separate the bills according to their amounts, place all the money into the correctly designated security bag, sign their names on the bag, deposit it in the safe, and turn the handle to ensure that the bag drops into the safe. NOTE THAT THERE MUST BE 2 PEOPLE DOING ALL THIS TOGETHER, for accountability purposes. The EMHCs should also do all of this before helping the Acolyte and Lector clean up, and before—or while—engaging the Celebrant in conversation. If the service of the EMHCs is unnecessary at Mass due to the rare occasions when Priests and Deacons cover all the Communion Stations, those assigned to be EMHCs in MSP should still come to the Sacristy after Mass in order to take care of the collection.

Ushers

(Those Who Take Up the Collection at the 12:10pm Mass)

BEFORE MASS

- Please make sure that there are a sufficient number of trustworthy collectors.
- Please make sure that the baskets are prepared (the collection baskets with the poles as well as the basket in which all the money is placed and brought up).

DURING MASS

- All collectors should be ready after the homily.
- Once the Intercessions are done, the collectors should make their way to the front isles of the church, genuflect (or bow if unable), collect the money in the metal baskets with poles, and help consolidate the money in the collection basket at the back of the church.
- The Head Usher should consolidate the money from the collection baskets into the basket to be taken up. He/she should take it up the side aisle, into the sanctuary, and place it next to the sacristy door **INSIDE** the sanctuary, **NOT** inside the sacristy.

Troubleshooting Questions for EMHCs

What if someone comes up wanting to receive Holy Communion kneeling?

The bishops of the United States have legislated a common way for us to receive Holy Communion in this country. In a Communion line, persons should make a head bow in Adoration before receiving, and they should receive standing. If a person kneels, however, the person should not be refused Holy Communion, as long as the person is receiving the Eucharist properly.

What if someone wants a blessing?

Simply say “God bless you” without using any gestures.

What if someone isn't Catholic?

If someone doesn't seem to know what to do when coming up, or if you know that the person isn't Catholic, ask politely, “Are you Catholic?” If the answer is no, then smile, and say, “I'm sorry. I'm not able to give Holy Communion to you. You should speak with the Priest after Mass. God bless you.”

What if someone doesn't consume the Host right away?

As an EMHC, you are not only a distributor of the Eucharist. You are also a steward and guardian of the Eucharist. It is part of your duty to make sure that the Eucharist is respected and received properly. The faithful should receive and consume the Host immediately after receiving it. If they do not, you need to tell them to do so. Say politely, “Excuse me, Sir / Madam, please consume the Host immediately.” Motioning can help. Sometimes you will need to pursue someone to insist that he consumes the Host. Do not be afraid. The faithful should know better. Those who don't know need to be instructed about the proper way to receive.

Is “Self-Intinction” permitted?

Intinction means dipping the Host in the Chalice before receiving It. Under certain conditions, a Priest can distribute the Eucharist by means of Intinction. There is a special method and/or Vessel for this. “Self-Intinction” means that someone seeks to dip the Host himself into the Precious Blood before receiving it. This is not allowed. So, if you are distributing the Precious Blood, and someone comes up to you with the Host he has received, wanting to dip it in the Chalice, you must not allow it. Simply put the Purificator over the Chalice, to block it. Say, “I'm sorry, but that is not allowed. You need to consume the Host first, before you drink from the Chalice.” If the person becomes difficult or argumentative, then tell him that he must see the Priest after the Mass to talk about it.

What should I do if a Host is dropped?

If a Host falls, it should be picked up right way. If it is safe to consume, you should consume the Host. Sometimes the person picks up and consumes the Host. This is praiseworthy. If there are no visible particles where the Host dropped, then one need not do anything further. If there are, then, one should protect that area. After Mass, tell the Priest what happened. He will go to purify the area where the Host dropped. You can purify the area yourself. This involves simply dampening an unused Purificator and wiping the area so as to collect any remaining particles. Practically speaking, when one is in the middle of distributing the Host, it is hard to see whether any particles are present. With the type of small round hosts used at St. Dominic's, it is unlikely that there are visible particles that have broken off. So, if one looks down and doesn't see any visible particles, one can assume safely that there are none. One can always check briefly after distribution is finished. One should not be scrupulous, that is, overly worried about particles which one cannot see. However, one should also be diligent about protecting the Sacrament, even in its smaller forms. All used Purificators should go in the laundry basket behind the safe in the Sacristy.

What should I do if some of the Precious Blood is spilled?

One should be careful to prevent all possible spilling or splashing of the Precious Blood. However, every once in a while an accident occurs. Remain calm, and deal prudently with the situation.

Generally, the solution is to dilute the spilled precious Blood with water, using a Purificator, and then to dry the place using a Purificator.

The problem is that this cannot be done very easily in the middle of distributing the Chalice and in the middle of Mass. So, things should be done to mark the spill and protect the area until after Mass.

The Precious Blood can be spilled onto different things. In each case, the solution will be slightly different:

- ***Skin***: Immediately, wipe the skin dry with the Purificator. Later, dilute and dry, using a Purificator. If this includes the skin of a congregant, the EMHC will need to prudently instruct and guide a member of the congregation as to what should be done.
- ***Floor***: Immediately, put your Purificator over the spill, to mark and protect it. Then, either return the Chalice to the Altar, after informing those remaining in line that one must return to the Altar. If there is time to retrieve another Purificator from the Sacristy and continue distribution, then that is ok. If not, then, unfortunately the

people remaining in line won't be able to receive from the Chalice in that Mass (at least not from your Chalice). Tell the Priest what happened after Communion or after Mass, so that proper purification can occur. Make sure that you or he actually takes care of it.

- ***Clothing:*** If the Precious Blood is spilled on your clothing, then, immediately, blot the clothing dry with the Purificator. If the Precious Blood spilled on the clothing of a congregant, it might be best to give the Purificator to that member and instruct them to blot his/her clothing dry with the Purificator and return the Purificator to you. Then, invite the person to come to the Sacristy after Mass to complete the Purification. Later (after Mass), dilute and dry with a Purificator. All used Purificators should go in the laundry basket behind the safe in the Sacristy.

What if there is an insect in the Precious Blood?

Flies and gnats are attracted to wine. Therefore, extra caution should be exercised to prevent bugs from finding their way to the unconsecrated wine or the Precious Blood. Prevention is by cover. The wine cruets should always have a stopper in it when not being used. The Acolyte should ensure this. If there are bugs flying around the sanctuary, then the Priest and Deacon should ensure that the Chalices on the Altar are covered using a Pall or Purificator. If there are bugs flying around when one is distributing the Precious Blood, then cover the Chalice with the Purificator until the bug flies away.

But alas, sometimes a bug gets in! If this happens before distribution, the Priest can seek to safely remove the insect. This is not realistic in the middle of distribution. In most cases, swallowing an insect is harmless. However, because of the psychological factor, it is best to discontinue distributing. If one is courageous, one can seek to swallow the insect oneself, especially if it is a gnat. However, we do not expect you to do that. And this should not be done if there is any chance that one will gag and spit out what one has sought to swallow. Simply return the Chalice to the Priest, who will take care of the Chalice. The Chalice should be covered. After Mass, there can be time to remove the insect and consume the rest of the Precious Blood. Typically, the insect is burned.

Thank you for your faithful and generous service to St. Dominic Church!