

Our Lady of Victories Church

Liturgical Ministry Guide

1. General Principles of Reverence

- **Sacred Journey:** The procession is an act of prayer, not a routine walk. Walk slowly, calmly, and prayerfully to lead the assembly into a spirit of worship.
- **Divine Service:** Remember that you are serving Christ Himself in His Body, the Church.
- **Pacing:** Every movement should be deliberate and prayerful—never rushed.

2. Order of Processions

Entrance Procession

1. **Cross Bearer:** Leads the procession holding the processional cross.
2. **Candle Bearers (2):** Walk side by side, behind the Cross Bearer.
3. **Binder Holder:** Holds the binder for the priest presider.
4. **Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (3):** Walk behind the altar servers in two rows :
 - *Row 1:* Two EMHCs side-by-side.
 - *Row 2:* One EMHC.
5. **Lector 2 or Deacon:** Carries the Book of the Gospels.
 - *Note:* If a deacon is present, he carries the Book while Lector 2 walks without it.
6. **Priest (Celebrant):** Processes last, leading the faithful into worship.

Note: EMHCs and Lectors bow to the altar and go directly to their pews without waiting for the altar servers to complete their task.

Recessional Procession

- **Timing:** Altar servers (Cross Bearer, Candle Bearers, and Binder Holder) move into their positions first.

- **The Cue:** The priest bows to the altar. EMHCs and lectors remain in their pews and bow together with the priest. The EMHCs then exit their pews first, followed by the lectors, to join the procession behind the altar servers.
- **The Order:** Ministers exit calmly and in unity, using the same standard order as the entrance procession (EMHCs leave the pews first, then the Lectors walking together before the Priest).

3. Guide for Lectors

Preparation & Skills

- **Prayer & Study:** Prepare your heart through prayer. Grow in your love for the Scriptures, remembering you are proclaiming God's living Word. Read slower than your normal talking speed to adjust for church acoustics.
- **Technical Mastery:** Practice difficult words at home and confirm correct pronunciations. Read the passage aloud beforehand to perfect your posture, voice projection, and pacing.
- **Pre-Mass Prep:** Locate your readings in the Lectionary and review the petitions before Mass begins. Both lectors should sit in the first pew, ready to serve.

Liturgical Actions

- **Approaching the Ambo:** Walk reverently. Make a head bow when passing in front of the altar. Pause briefly at the ambo to allow the assembly to settle before speaking.
- **Microphone Use:** Do not touch or adjust the microphone during Mass; the sound levels are preset.
- **Lector 1:**
 - Proclaims the Welcome and the First Reading clearly, with conviction, and appropriate pace.
 - Waits a moment after saying "The Word of the Lord" so people can think about what they heard.
 - Turns the Lectionary page to the Second Reading before stepping down.
 - Bows reverently to the altar alongside the cantor, then returns to their seat.

- **Lector 2:**

- Bows reverently to the altar alongside the cantor
- Proclaims the Second Reading.
- At the end, places the Lectionary carefully on the back table (never on the altar).
- Bows reverently to the altar and returns to their seat.
- Proclaims the Universal Prayer (Petitions) unless a deacon is present to do so.
 - Goes up to the lectern after the priest's introductory prayer
 - Bows reverently to the altar

Note: The person ascending the ambo should be on the left side when bowing at the altar.

Remember: When you proclaim the Scriptures, it is God Himself speaking through you to His people.

4. Guide for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (EMHC)

Sanctuary Etiquette

- **Seating:** Sit in the first pew on the left side, facing the altar, remaining attentive and prayerful.
- **Approaching:** After the *Sign of Peace*, while the *Lamb of God* is being sung, all three EMHCs walk together toward the sanctuary.
- **Reverence:** Bow reverently to the altar before stepping up.
- **Tabernacle Duty:** Two EMHCs go directly to their assigned positions. One EMHC goes to the Tabernacle, reverently retrieves the Blessed Sacrament, and places it on the altar.
- **Crucial Rule:** Never bow to the altar while holding a ciborium or chalice. The Eucharist itself demands the utmost reverence; carrying it is an act of honor.

Distributing Holy Communion

- **Handling:** Hold the Sacred Host or Chalice with extreme care and deep reverence.
- **Proclamation:** Look at the communicant and say clearly with faith, "*The Body of Christ*" or "*The Blood of Christ.*"

- **Reception:** Wait for the person to respond "*Amen*" before administering Communion.
- **Blessings:** If someone approaches with arms crossed, say gently: "*God bless you.*" Do not make hand gestures or trace the sign of the cross over them. Always respect those who choose not to receive.
- **Restrictions:** Intinction (dipping the Host into the Chalice) is strictly prohibited.
- **Accidents:** If a Host or the Precious Blood is spilled, follow parish cleanup procedures calmly, reverently, and without panic.
- **Dismissal:** Return to your seat prayerfully, bowing reverently at the altar.

Note: Lectors and EMHCs always use the middle aisle to return to their pews. However, if the Precious Blood has been fully consumed but the Body of Christ is still being distributed, EMHCs may return to their pews using the side altar exits instead.

Overseer Role & Responsibilities:

- **Attendance Check:** Verify that all scheduled Lectors and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (EMHCs) are present in their designated areas.
- **Substitute Coordination:** If any scheduled ministers are missing, secure qualified substitutes before Mass begins.
- **Offertory Protocol:** After handing the basket to the priest, the overseer must return to their pew using the side aisle. Please remind the gift bearers beforehand to also use the side aisle to return to their seats.

Protecting God's Children:

In compliance with *Protecting God's Children* guidelines, please refrain from entering the sacristy while the altar servers are vesting.