

## **Lay Eucharistic Ministers**

### **Setting the Table and Other Things**

In days gone by, Lay Eucharistic Ministers (LEMs) had only one task; administer the wine to those who chose to receive. Setting the altar table at the onset of communion was the task of the acolyte(s) who were scheduled for that service. Covid changed a lot of things. One of the things that changed was we no longer have acolytes on the altar and the process of setting the table therefore became the mission of the Lay Eucharistic Ministers. It is a simple process; however, it does have its own flow and that is something that has not been generally addressed with all our LEMs. So, the wardens in concert with our rector, Nina thought that for clarity and smooth communion transitions, we should put together some more specific information as to how and when the table is set before and after communion. Please review the information below and let us know if you have any questions.

1. Please come up to the altar at the onset of the Peace and pass the peace as you are moving forward. Go directly to the credence table where the bread, wine etc. are waiting. If there is an ongoing song and the priest is singing, wait until they are ready to receive the sacraments then take them to the altar in the following order:

A. The Bread Box is taken to the priest first.

B. Pick up the Flagon, which contains the wine and the smaller Cruet which contains the water. Pick them up by the neck so that when you present them to the priest, she can take them by the handle. Offer her the Flagon first, she will pour out a portion of the wine into the chalice on the altar and then set it aside. At that time, present her with the water cruet. She will pour a small amount of water into the Chalice and then some into the Flagon and then hand that cruet back to you to be returned to the credence table.

C. Bring over the Ciborium (the small chalice like item with a top on it that holds the consecrated hosts left over from the prior service) and the small round container with the consecrated Gluten Free hosts. At that point each LEM should go to their chosen side of the altar for the communion service.

D. The priest will then offer each LEM bread from the lectern side to the pulpit side. She will then offer the wine to the LEM on the lectern side and then offer it to the LEM on the pulpit side and then hand them the chalice and purificator. After the LEM on the lectern side receives the wine, they should go to the credence table and bring the 2nd chalice to the altar.

E. The priest will add wine to that chalice and give it back to the LEM with a purificator. Once the priest moves to go to the front of the altar, each LEM should take their stations outside of the altar railing.

F. When the last parishioner is served do a quick check to see if the priest is moving to serve someone in the congregation who could not come to the altar. One LEM should follow up to serve that parishioner.

G. If there is a guest musician, check to see if the priest is offering them communion and follow as before to ensure they are offered the wine as well.

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H. When there is a choir, the priest will go back to the choir section on each side and distribute the host. Each LEM should serve the choir on the side where they served the congregation.

I. After everyone has been served, return to the altar to remove the communion vessels etc. and return them to the credence table. Do a last check to make sure nothing was missed and then return to your seat.

### **Notes Regarding Presentation of the Chalice to Parishioners:**

As you all know by now, unless this is your first time, not everyone receives the wine in the same way. However they receive, whether intincting, sipping or simply acknowledging the wine chalice is some way, you should always say to them in a clear voice: "The Blood of Christ, the Cup of Salvation" When someone has received the wine by sipping, you should wipe the inside and outside of the chalice rim where they sipped and then turn the chalice ¼ turn in your hand before presenting it to the next person. It is advisable that you never fully let go of the chalice when people wish to drink from the cup. Some will simply take it from you but keep a light touch on it with your fingers if possible. Sometimes when people intinct, the wine drips off the host. If you hold the cup with one hand and hold the purificator with your other up against the cup that will catch any wine drips and keep them from falling to the floor. Personally, after every few parishioners have received, I wipe the outside of the chalice and turn it a ¼ turn a couple times so the entire exterior and rim have been cleaned.

On the front of the altar in front of the left candle as you face the altar there is a small sterling plate and spoon. If (and it does happen) someone drops their host into the chalice, invite them to go back to Nina for a new host and as they are doing that, go to the altar, use the spoon to scoop the wayward wafer out of the cup and leave it and the spoon on the small tray and return to your station.

One last item. Not everyone is the same height. Be mindful as to whether, when you offer the chalice to someone that they can look down and see the wine in the chalice. So, you need to be below their chin at the least. When children come up, meet them at their level. My personal choice when I offer the chalice for intinction is to tilt it forward slightly so that the wine is clearly visible but, not so close to the rim that it will spill over.

Know that your service as a LEM is an honored position and we are all so very grateful that you have chosen this ministry and service to all those who seek Christ's love and strength.

David Nevin  
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