

## COMMUNION GUIDELINES

The Holy Spirit has gathered us together to celebrate the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ. The Eucharist is Christ's great gift to us—a sign of God's enduring love. As we receive Christ's body and blood, let us remember that the Eucharist is food that sustains us on our journey of faith and compels us to continue Christ's work here on earth. Let us also remember some guidelines when receiving His Body and Blood:

### BEFORE MASS: PREPARE TO RECEIVE THE BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST

- BE IN A STATE OF GRACE.

This means having recently made your confession of serious sin to a priest (\*\*noting especially a lack of consistent presence at the public worship of the Mass).

- FAST FROM ALL FOOD (INCLUDING GUM) AND DRINK (EXCEPT WATER) FOR ONE HOUR BEFORE RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION.

Along with asking for forgiveness from sins before receiving Christ in the Eucharistic meal, this is a sign of our willingness to “empty ourselves” so that Christ may fill us up with his presence.

- DRESS APPROPRIATELY (EVERY MASS IS A SPECIAL OCCASION!)

Our belief is that we are about to meet the Lord...we should desire to be at our best in every way for this holy encounter.

### RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION: APPROACH THE ALTAR WITH REVERENCE, RESPECT AND DIGNITY

- APPROACH THE PRIEST /DEACON/EUCHARISTIC MINISTER WITH HANDS FOLDED.

This posture is one of prayerful humility and supplication (asking to receive).

- TO RECEIVE THE BODY OF CHRIST:

Place one hand (palm up) over the upturned palm of the other hand, extend them toward the minister, nod your head slightly, and **AUDIBLY** respond “Amen” to the minister's greeting (“The Body of Christ”). This is an affirmation of your belief in the real Presence of Christ, in accord with His teaching at the Last Supper when he said, “This is my Body.”

(\*\*Note: You may prefer to receive directly on the tongue)

The Body of Christ is to be consumed immediately upon receiving it. Do not return to your seat before doing so.

- TO RECEIVE THE PRECIOUS BLOOD:

Approach the minister, nod your head slightly and respond “Amen” to the minister's greeting (“The Blood of Christ”). Then take the cup with both hands and sip from it.

In some cases one may elect to receive only from the cup (for example, someone with a wheat intolerance, or in the event there are no more consecrated hosts to distribute). In the same way, a communicant may receive only the Body of Christ and not to receive from the cup. A communicant who receives only one species (either the Body or the Blood of Christ) fully receives Christ, whole and entire, given for our salvation.

### AFTER RECEIVING COMMUNION: TAKE TIME TO CONSIDER AND APPRECIATE THE GIFT

- WITH HANDS FOLDED, RETURN TO YOUR PLACE. You may kneel or sit at your place, whichever you prefer.

(\*\*Note: It has always been a Catholic custom to kneel until the Blessed Sacrament is reposed in the tabernacle. You may have noticed that most people kneel until the priest sits after Communion; the priest traditionally clears the altar and places any undistributed host in the tabernacle, to be taken to the sick during the week. At OLPH, either the deacon or one of the Eucharistic Ministers carries the ciboria containing the consecrated bread to the Blessed Sacrament Chapel, where the tabernacle sits. Many people elect to continue kneeling until the Minister returns from this task.)

- AT YOUR PLACE, MAINTAIN AN ATTITUDE OF PRAYER AND REFLECTION.

Silently offer your personal prayer(s) of praise, thanksgiving, and /or petition for a short time, realizing that communion is a strengthening of your own personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

- GO AND BRING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST TO THE WORLD.

Remember this great gift you have received, and share it throughout the week with everyone you meet!

