

PROTOCOLS FOR RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION

Sign of Reverence: Each communicant is to make a sign of reverence before receiving the Host and the Precious Blood. One may genuflect or bow. For the sake of keeping the communion line flowing smoothly, you should make the bow/genuflection just as the person in front of you is receiving.

All Communicants: As you are about to receive the Host or Precious Blood, the Minister of Communion will say, ***The Body of Christ*** or ***The Blood of Christ***. **The correct response is simply *Amen*.** No other response should be used for example: *I believe* or *My Lord and my God*. It is particularly inappropriate to respond with *Thank You Father* or some other form of secular or seasonal greeting *Merry Christmas* or *Happy Easter*.

Receiving The Host In The Hand: The proper way to receive the Host in the hand is to place one hand flat on top of the other so that the open palm is facing upward.

Going Back to Early Church Fathers. St. Cyril of Jerusalem (ca. 315-386) on the reception of Holy Communion taught that:

When you approach, do fingers held apart; with right hand since the latter in your cupped hand, Amen. With care, sanctify holy Body, then eat it, should lose would be like



not advance with extended palms or your left hand make a throne for your is to receive the King of Kings, and, receive the Body of Christ, saying, your eyes through contact with the careful to lose nothing, For what you losing one of your own members.

Tell me, if you were given specks of gold, would you not keep them with utmost care, taking pains not to lose any and suffer a loss? Are you not going to watch with greater care over this object more precious than gold and gems, so that you do not lose any crumb?

In order to indicate clearly that you intend to receive in your hands, you should have your hands in this position already when you approach the Minister of Communion and not wait until after the dialogue ***The Body of Christ / Amen***. It is not appropriate to receive the Host by taking it with two fingers as if *plucking* or *grabbing* from the Minister of Communion. Once the Minister of Communion has placed the Host onto your palm, step to the side and consume it immediately by taking it with the fingers of the lower hand and placing the Host in your mouth. You do not have to make the Sign of the Cross or show the Host to the altar before putting it into your mouth. It is not appropriate to take the Host with your mouth directly from your open palm.

You may also receive Holy Communion by mouth by opening your mouth and sticking out your tongue respectfully.

Receiving From The Cup: The procedure is similar to that of receiving the Host, as you approach the Minister of the Cup, bow as a sign of reverence. The Minister will say, ***The Blood of Christ*** and you are to answer ***Amen***. Take the cup in your own hands; take a sip of the Precious Blood and then slowly and carefully return the cup to the Minister.