

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

The Table of the Lord



The word Liturgy comes from the Greek word “Leitourgeia” which means – people at work. We in the mass and beyond are people at work and all people working together for:

- WORSHIP
- PROCLAMATION
- SERVICE TO CHARITY

Worship is what we do together when we gather as a faith community. We hear the proclamation of the Word and take that proclamation *we hear* into our daily lives by serving others in actions and prayers. Many of our Visitation Ministers who administer communion to the sick and housebound are living this service each day.

We are Christian people through our Baptism. In our baptism we become a member of the body of Christ, with Christ as our Head. We are called to worship and through our anointing become ‘priestly people’, people who serve as a king would serve the poor and lost.

Our origin in Christ makes us holy and we can only become more holy by being fully active and participating in the mass and during our worship. Our function as the ‘people of God’ who actively participate is to gather to form one body in Christ, listen and hear the Word of God, join in the prayers and singing. It would be a pretty silent mass if nobody responded or spoke out the prayers. During the Eucharistic Prayer, which is our prayer, not only the priest’s prayer we offer the sacrifice together and commonly participate at the Lord’s table.

When we minister to the people of God it is to be done with dignity and respect, and the call is put out to people who have a talent to do it, and do it well.

The Word of God becomes the foundation of the liturgical celebration. It is the role and support of all our life. It is our sustenance for the way we live. If the Word is not heard we are not nourished. The Eucharist cannot be celebrated without the Word, they go hand in hand.

The Eucharist is the centre of our Liturgy. It is the time we remember Christ’s death and sacrifice. The Eucharist creates and fosters unity. We come together – many parts to form One Body – the Body of Christ, who are the people assembled. The bread and wine are the same. One seed is planted, the wheat grows and has many seeds on each head. It is gathered, crushed into flour, baked into bread and broken into many pieces to be distributed to the One Body. Grapes are the same – many pieces of grapes are crushed to form a body of wine, which is poured out to be shared in One Cup to the Body of Christ. The cycle continues and never ends.

Ministers of the Eucharist should be those with FAITH who have come to share that faith with others. The qualities of a Minister of Communion should be one of humility, - by serving whenever needed and doing it with honour. Hospitable by being welcoming to those who approach by having eye contact, a warm smile, unhurried and cordial tone. Reverence by the way we approach the altar, how we handle the sacred species of bread and wine, how we dress to perform our ministry, these not only express our own attitudes but also form the attitudes of others. They must be aware of the needs of those coming to table of the Lord, by administering to the elderly who cannot come forward, or disabled people in walking frames or wheelchairs, parents holding young babies or children may need more care.

As a baptised Christian, you are already participating fully and deeply in the ministry of Jesus. As a minister of communion, you are called on to serve the body of Christ, the church, as it performs its most important work – the Eucharist. Like all ministries this is a great honour and a great responsibility. Undertake it with the intention to grow in your devotion to the Mass, to the church that celebrates it, and to the Lord, through whom, with whom and in whom it can be done. We thank you for your participation and ministry to our community of St Declan’s.

Outline For Distribution of Communion at St Declan's

- **When you arrive at church**, tick off your name on the roster sheet in the sacristy.
- **Please wash your hands well, before Mass begins**, it is advisable to use the anti-bacterial gel in the sacristy.
- **The Liturgy of the Eucharist begins with the bringing down of the gifts**, followed by the preparation of the gifts, blessing of the gifts and distribution of the consecrated bread and wine.
- Here at St Declan's, Peshurst, the Ministers of Communion come forward at the singing or saying of the "Lamb of God". The ministers approach the altar at the bottom of the steps **as the first verse of the Lamb of God is sung or said**. There are usually 6 ministers. If you see there are not enough ministers, please feel free to come forward to serve.
- When all ministers have lined up (and without hesitation), bow and then step up to the Sanctuary, dividing yourselves into two groups of three, go to either the credence table or the presider's chair side and sterilise your hands with the antibacterial gel at the credence table or in the book/flower alcove, then line up. Please try to do this before the singing or saying of the Lamb of God has concluded, so as not to keep the Priest waiting to begin the Breaking of the Host.
- The priest distributes communion to each minister. The acolyte then gives out four cups or chalice of consecrated wine and purificators (*purifiers*) to four ministers. The ministers who receive the cup, then offer the consecrated wine to the ministers beside them. The acolyte then gives a bowl or ciborium to the other remaining ministers.
- When all ministers have received their sacred vessel they position themselves in the communion aisles ready for the distribution of Communion.
- **The giving of consecrated bread**. Take the host, hold it up to the communicant and proclaim – "The Body of Christ". The communicant will respond with "Amen". Place the host in the person's hand. If the person sticks out their tongue, carefully place it on their tongue, avoiding touching it with your finger.
- **The giving of consecrated wine**. Hold the chalice with both hands and the purificator under the chalice. When approached proclaim with the words, "The Blood of Christ", with the person responding with "Amen". Give the cup to the person who will drink a little wine. When the cup is returned wipe the chalice with the purificator where the lips have touched the chalice. Turn the cup around slightly so the cup is clean for the next person. Rotate the purificator on each wipe so that the cup is cleaned by a clean part of the purificator each time. We do not practice intinction (dipping the host into the chalice). Explain to the communicant of our practice and encourage them to drink from the chalice.
- **If wine should spill onto the carpet**, step over it to protect any one walking on it. After communion is over, place your purificator over the spill. The acolyte or priest will sponge it up after mass with the purificator/s.
- **If a host is dropped**, pick it up. Either consume it yourself or place it in the palm of your hand under the bowl you are holding. After communion place it on the corporal and explain to the acolyte that it was dropped. After mass the acolyte will dissolve it and place it in the sacrestium.
- **When distributing communion keep an eye out if the person has consumed the host**. The Ministers giving out the consecrated wine could keep an eye on this also. You may approach a person and ask them to consume the host if they have not done so after receiving it.
- **Please bless all children and those unable to receive** that come in procession. For practical reasons bless the children first and then give the parents communion. To give a blessing, just say "May God Bless you" or do the sign of the Cross, or Lay your hand over their head. We are all doing the same ministry as the priest at this time, so we have the same authority to grant a blessing.
- **If you run out of wine** return the chalice to the altar and wait on the Sanctuary. **If you run out of hosts** wait for the minister next to you to complete distributing to a person and ask for some hosts from their ciborium/bowl.
- When distributing communion and there are no more people in your aisle wait until the person next to you distributing communion has concluded before returning to the Sanctuary.
- **The chalice and ciborium or bowl are to be returned to the altar and placed on the corporal**. *All vessels will be purified by the priest with the assistance of the Acolyte straight after communion.*
- **One of the Eucharistic Ministers may be asked to assist with the consumption** of the consecrated wine.
- **Eucharistic Ministers line up near the credence table**. When the Acolyte or priest places the Blessed Sacrament into the tabernacle and genuflects, all Eucharistic Ministers bow as well. When the tabernacle is locked all ministers walk down to the bottom of the steps in one line, bow with reverence to the altar and return to their seats.
- After Mass the Eucharistic Ministers and Acolytes may go to the sacristy and collect the purifiers, finger towels and corporals to be washed. There are instruction sheets on how to wash, fold and iron these cloths. Please return them by the following weekend.

Thank you for your ongoing participation and ministry at St Declan's Parish (2/2017)