



ST AGNES
LONGSIGHT



Information for Eucharistic Ministers

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A Eucharistic Minister is...

A lay person licensed to assist with the administration of the Blessed Sacrament either in church during the celebration of the Eucharist or by taking the Sacrament to the homes of the sick and the housebound.

Key points...

1. Eucharistic ministers serve Christ present in the assembly by ministering his Body and Blood to their brothers and sisters.
2. They also serve the unity of the worshipping community by taking Communion to those members who are prevented by sickness, old age, or other cause from taking part in Parish Eucharist.
3. When assisting at the Eucharist please remember the following points:
4. It is important that you come up from your seat towards the altar in good time. The ideal time is during the last verse of the Offertory hymn in order to be in your place - standing near to the altar - as the priest begins the offertory prayers. It is vital you are near the altar in good time so that the minister on 'stand-by' knows whether s/he is required or not.
5. After the Eucharistic prayer has finished, please come nearer to the altar (if you are not already) so

that you can receive the Sacrament without the priest needing to move to far over towards you.

6. Take care when carrying the Sacrament and be aware of where the other ministers are.
7. The words of administration are important. Please be aware of what the other ministers are saying - which form of words they are using. The notes at the back of this booklet will help.
8. At the end of the distribution please place the chalice (or paten) back on the altar and on the square linen cloth (called a corporal) which is in the centre. Stand back and when the priest and other minister have also placed the chalice/paten on the corporal, all genuflect or bow together.
9. Remain by the altar during the ablutions (the cleansing of the vessels) and only return to your seat when all the Sacrament has been either consumed or returned to the Tabernacle.
10. Eucharistic ministry is a very public and solemn role. Your own reverence and presence makes an important impression on the rest of the assembly. It is a privilege to minister to our brothers and sisters at the Eucharist in this way.

Words of Administration

The form of words used has sometimes been a matter of controversy in the church - and the Church of England is no exception!

The main difficulties lie around the issue of what we actually believe the Eucharistic elements to be. Without going into too much background the range of belief goes from those who believe that the bread and wine actually, substantially and literally become the Body and Blood of our Lord, to those who believe that the bread and wine remain just as they were and the only reference to body and blood is merely symbolic or figurative. Of course there are many beliefs in between and variations on these beliefs.

It is fair to say that most people today in the Anglican (CofE) church will tend towards the end of the spectrum whereby we believe that the bread and wine are in some way changed or transformed into the actual Body and Blood of Christ and that when the elements have been consecrated by the priest on the altar then Christ is present in a real form. This is not that the real presence of Christ is apparent just when we consume the elements (that is known as Receptionism) but that the presence of Christ is brought about by the Eucharistic Prayer and is objective rather than subjective.

Whereas the Thirty Nine articles of the Church of England err against Transubstantiation ('the change of the substance of Bread and Wine) it is clear from all Anglican Eucharistic liturgies from Cranmer's time to the present day that the Church teaches and believes that Christ is truly present in some mysterious, spiritual and real way. This can be seen from the way the Church of England has always taught that the remaining elements

should be consumed either during the service or immediately afterwards and must not be re-used or merely discarded. The permission to reserve the sacrament tells us that the church believes the elements to remain 'changed' and sacred so that they may be taken to those unable to be present at the Eucharistic celebration itself.

The Church of England permits the following alternatives:

1

The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for you, preserve your body and soul unto everlasting life. Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your heart by faith with thanksgiving.

The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for you, preserve your body and soul unto everlasting life. Drink this in remembrance that Christ's blood was shed for you, and be thankful.

2

The body of Christ.
The blood of Christ.

3

The body of Christ keep you in eternal life.
The blood of Christ keep you in eternal life.

4

The body of Christ, broken for you.
The blood of Christ, shed for you.

5

The bread of heaven in Christ Jesus.
The cup of life in Christ Jesus.

The administration of the Holy Sacrament is a joy and a privilege entrusted to us by God's Church and his people. May God bless you in this ministry and may you know Christ's powerful saving presence as you serve his people in this way.

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