

# Receiving Our Lord Reverently

## Be Respectful of Others

Please respect those around us and remember that the church is not a social center or hall. Talking loudly can and sadly, often does create a distraction to others around us who are trying to kneel in prayer.



The Catechism reminds us that our bodily demeanor (dress and gestures) while in church and, most importantly, when processing forward to receive Communion, “ought to convey the respect, solemnity, and joy of this moment when Christ becomes our guest.” (CCC, 1387) Our focus should be on the celebration of the Eucharist.

## Approach the Altar Prayerfully



Gentlemen: Hands out of pockets.  
Ladies: Close your purses.  
Kids: Pay close attention.

As we approach the altar, we should act in a prayerful manner, reflecting on the holy event in which we are about to participate. Hands should be prayerfully folded in front of the body, as if in prayer.

As the person before you receives communion, you are asked to bow slightly from the waist (behind them) to reverence Christ present, and then move forward to receive communion yourself.

Sometimes the atmosphere in churches can be like that of a baseball game. People show up late and leave early to miss the traffic jams. Others become so engrossed, they are oblivious to those around them—parents seemingly forget about their children who run through the pews. Cell phones ring, pagers chime, conversations are held at full voice, and there is an overall relaxed sense of decorum and attitude.

Things are different, however, at more “formal” events like the opera, a Broadway play or movie, where latecomers, loud talkers, and ringing cell phones are not acceptable. We act differently in every situation and place.

But what about the Mass? If our actions matched our belief that, “Christ himself is present in the Sacrament of the altar (Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC), #1418),” we would act with more awe, respect, gratitude, and adoration.

This handout is similar to one from *The Catholic Standard and Times* (newspaper from the Archdiocese of Philadelphia), which offers a brief refresher on the customs and protocols that Catholics should observe in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament.

## Receiving Communion Properly

By mouth? By hands?

(Left) If you receive Communion by mouth, please open the mouth wide and stick out your tongue slightly.

(Right) If you receive Communion by hand, let your dominant hand cradle your other hand; forming a throne for the Body and Blood of Christ.

Please do not grab or take the Host from the minister. The Host will be placed in your mouth or your hand.



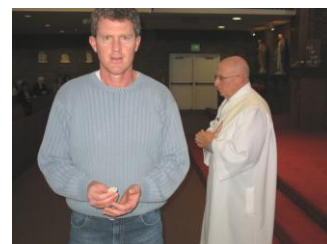
## Respect the Host

(Left) Treat the consecrated Host with respect at all times. Do not simply “pop” the Host in your mouth, as if it were a breath mint. As the CCC reminds us, “Under the consecrated species of bread and wine, Christ himself, living and glorious, is present in a true, real, and substantial manner...” (CCC, 1413)

(Right) Please do not take an extended period of time placing the Host in your mouth while someone is waiting to receive Communion behind you. Be considerate. Step aside and place the Host in your mouth in front of the altar.



## Don't Walk Off With The Host



Once you receive Communion, immediately consume the Host near the altar and proceed to receive from the chalice or return to your seat. It is improper in this diocese to dip the consecrated Host into the chalice (also known as *intinction*).

## Use Clear Body Language

Please make sure that the Eucharistic Minister understands how you intend to receive the Holy Communion—whether by the mouth or by the hand.

When receiving Communion by the mouth, clasp your hands as if in prayer to avoid any confusion.

