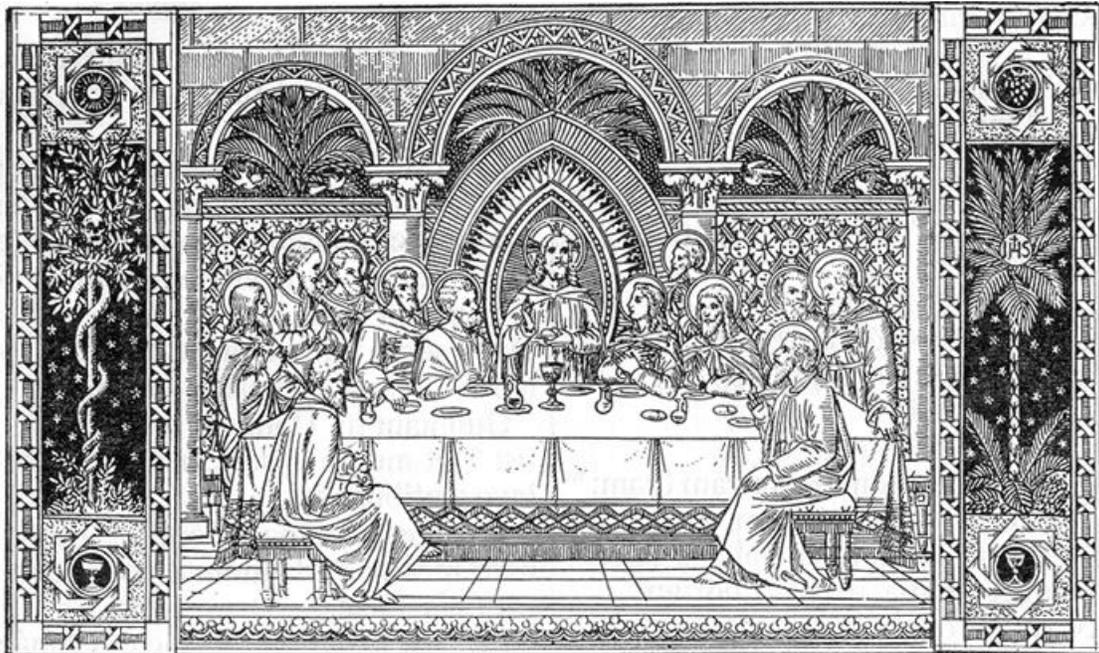


# EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION

## GUIDELINES

3/2024



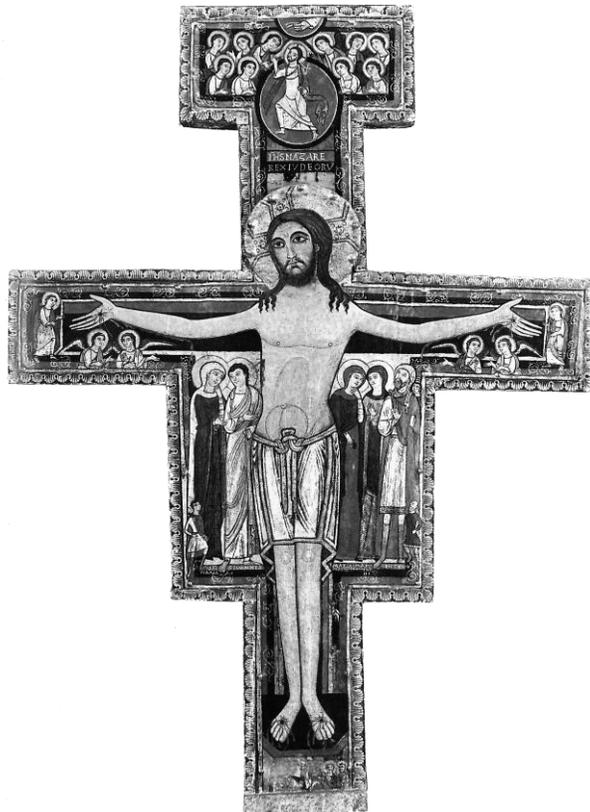
Saint Maximilian Kolbe  
Catholic Church

Picture then the High Priest Christ leaving the sacristy of heaven  
for the altar of Calvary.

He has already put on the vestment of our human nature,  
the maniple of our suffering,  
the stole of priesthood, the chasuble of the Cross.  
Calvary is his cathedral; the rock of Calvary is the altar stone;  
the sun turning to red is the sanctuary lamp;  
Mary and John are the living side altars;  
the Host is His Body; the wine is His Blood.  
He is upright as Priest, yet He is prostrate as Victim.  
His Mass is about to begin.

Excerpt from Calvary and the Mass, A Missal Companion

Written by Venerable Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen, Ph.D., D.D., LL.D., Litt.D.



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## DRESS CODE

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*“In effect, we all speak by the clothes we wear.  
Dress is a language, as it is a very form of external expression.  
It should never be forgotten that the actual clothing of the liturgy is a clothing of sanctity.  
We are to put on that holiness, realizing the fullness of participation.”*  
- Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI

**Those who serve in the various roles at Mass assist in setting the tone and the high regard with which the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass should be held. It is important, therefore, that liturgical ministers dress in a fitting manner.**

For Lectors, Cantors, and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, the dress code is as follows:

- Modest attire is expected
- Men - a sport coat and tie, sport coat with button down shirt, or a button down shirt and tie, is preferable
- Women - a skirt/dress (No higher than the knee), or slacks are also acceptable. Please wear a cover over shoulders.
- **It would be much appreciated if all ministers could come to every Mass dressed as if you were ready to substitute.**

Respecting the solemnity of the Mass and the significance of your very public role in the liturgy, please **do not wear the following:**

- Tank tops, t-shirts, shorts
- Tight clothing
- Jeans
- Short skirts
- Sweatshirts and sweatpants
- Low-cut necklines
- Sleeveless dresses and blouses (without a cover-up)
- Flips flops or running shoes
- Bold or distracting logos
- Any clothing that would be a distraction for others

While daily Masses do not normally have the same level of ceremony as Sunday Masses, they remain nonetheless the Holy Sacrifice of our Lord. Attire may be more relaxed, but should still reflect the dignity of the ministry being performed.



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**PROCEDURES FOR EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION**  
*WEEKEND MASSES*

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**Before Mass**

- Please arrive at least twenty minutes before Mass, wearing the appropriate attire.
- Sign in at the EMHC kiosk station.
- Identify your assignment for the Mass. Please take a position where you are most needed, not your personal preference.
- If you take a position marked to help wash the vessels after Mass, please remember to go to the sacristy following the prayer to St. Michael. If you cannot fulfill this role, please tell the Captain when we you sign in or ask another minister to wash on your behalf.
- Mass captains may start accepting substitutes by 10-12 minutes prior to Mass to ensure stations are filled. If you are late to arrive, another EMHC may have been asked to fill your position.
- Mass Captains will be able to answer any questions.
- Stations are marked on the front of each section of pews in the church. A diagram is also placed at the sign-in kiosk.
- If you are unsure exactly where the section to which you are distributing is, consider walking over to your section before Mass to ensure you are going to the right place when it is time for Communion.

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**ASSEMBLING FOR DISTRIBUTION**

*(HOSTS ONLY, WITH 1 CHALICE FOR THOSE WITH A GLUTEN INTOLERANCE)*

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- As the Lamb of God begins, assemble at the baptismal font.
- The EMHC distributing from the chalice picks up a purificator from the back table.
- All form a single file line in any order in the back of church, with the Captain at the end and the one chalice distributor (for those with a gluten intolerance) in front.
- When the Communion song starts, proceed down the aisle in reverent procession. The first person in line stops at the first pew.
- Wait for the presider to come down the steps and distribute Holy Communion to you.
- After receiving our Lord, go up the steps to receive your paten from the deacon. There is no need to bow before entering the sanctuary.
- Holding the paten with two hands and lifted at about shoulder height, proceed to your assigned station, standing on the left side as you face it, so the assembly can come out to their right.



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**ASSEMBLING FOR DISTRIBUTION**  
**(HOSTS AND CHALICES FOR ALL THE FAITHFUL)**

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- As the Lamb of God begins, assemble at the baptismal font.
- Those distributing from the chalice first pick up a purificator from the back table and drape it over their left arm, then all proceed to form 2 lines, one of either side of the baptismal font.
- Those distributing the Sacred Host form a single file line on the Mary side of the church.
- P6 and P14 are last in line on the paten side
- Precious Blood distributors form a single line on the St. Max side of the church.
- C6 and C14 are first in line on the cup side
- When the Communion song starts, the Precious Blood distributors start down the aisle towards the sanctuary in reverent procession. The paten line then follows so that everyone comes down single file. The first person in line stops at the first pew.
- Wait for the presider to come down the steps and distribute Holy Communion to you.
- After receiving the Sacred Host, a deacon or other minister will offer the Precious Blood to C6 and C14, (the first and second people in line). C6 and C14 take the chalice from the deacon/minister and turn and serve as distributors to the remaining EMHCs in line, with one on either side of the priest. After C6 and C14 have finished distributing to all EMHCs, they go directly to their assigned positions.
- Sacred Host distributors go directly to their station after receiving their paten and wait if need be to distribute to their section until the Precious Blood distributor arrives. This will ensure that all people in that section will have the opportunity to receive under both species if they choose.
- If you are distributing to more than one section, please wait to move to the second section until the chalice distributor is ready to move with you. The paten and chalice should move together. They also move together when distributing to the elderly and handicapped in the chairs around the perimeter of the church.



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## GUIDELINES FOR DISTRIBUTION OF THE SACRED HOSTS

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- As the communicant approaches, hold the Host aloft and say only, “The Body of Christ”. After the communicant has responded “Amen”, the Host is placed on the tongue or on the hand as indicated by the recipient. *It is the communicant’s personal choice to receive according to either manner.*
- If their “Amen” is not audible, Communion should still be distributed.
- Communicants should not be denied Holy Communion because they kneel to receive.
- FYI: *“When receiving Holy Communion, the communicant bows his or her head before the Sacrament as a gesture of reverence and receives the Body of the Lord from the minister . . . When Holy Communion is received under both kinds, the sign of reverence is also made before receiving the Precious Blood.” (GIRM #160)*
- EMHCs do not use the names of individuals when distributing the Body and Blood of Christ. Such a practice, while meaningful to those whose names are known, could be hurtful to those whose names are not, thereby creating an expression of disunity at the very moment when the unity in Christ ought to be most visible.
- The Body of Christ is always ministered *to* the communicant. Communicants are not permitted to take the consecrated Host and communicate themselves, nor is intinction permitted (“dipping” the Host in the Precious Blood).
- If a Host should fall during distribution, the EMHC should pick the Host up without excessive display, place it in the Communion vessel, holding it to the side. Then, notify the presider when you return your paten to the altar. The clergy will consume the Host. The communicant should not pick it up and consume it themselves. It is recommended to scan the area where the Host landed for any particles or pieces that may have broken off and should be picked up and placed in the paten.
- If someone who is not receiving Holy Communion comes up in the procession, please **do not extend your hand, place your hand on the heads of children or others, or make the Sign of the Cross on foreheads.** The Sign of the Cross should be avoided since that blessing is imparted to all the faithful at the end of the liturgy. Instead, the EMHC should say “May God bless you” or “May you receive the Lord Jesus in your heart.” Again, without a gesture.
- When distributing to a communicant receiving on the tongue, it is recommended that you hold the paten slightly under their chin, just in case the Host should fall from their mouth.
- Patens should always be carried with two hands, except in certain circumstances.



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## GUIDELINES FOR DISTRIBUTION OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD

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- When arriving at your section, keep the purificator over top of the chalice and turn and face the sanctuary until the paten distributor has arrived.
- The Precious Blood is offered to the communicant with the words, "The Blood of Christ," to which the communicant responds, "Amen."
- Generally, the communicant should hold the chalice firmly in both hands and drink from it. However, in the case of physical disability or frailty, the EHMC should be ready to assist in holding the chalice.
- After each person has received the Blood of Christ, the EHMC should wipe the inside and outside rim of the chalice with a purificator and turn the chalice slightly before repeating the procedure for the next communicant. Continual shifting of the purificator to a clean spot is also recommended.
- When walking with the chalice, **always cover with the purificator, and a firm hand on top.** While it may be fitting, it is not necessary to cover the Chalice when standing still.
- If, by chance, the Precious Blood should spill, the area should immediately be covered with a purificator. Leave your position and retrieve another purificator from the sacristy. When returning your chalice to the altar, alert the clergy of the spill. The EMHC or the deacon may clean up the spill after Mass (see procedures on page 11).  
It is important to note that the purificator used to cover the spill should be left in place until the spill is attended to.

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## PROCEDURE FOR PRECIOUS BLOOD DISTRIBUTOR *FOR GLUTEN INTOLERANT*

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- At the start of the Lamb of God, on the back table, pick up a purificator and drape it over your left arm.
- Be the first person in line at the font.
- When the Communion song begins walk down the aisle in reverent procession, and stop at the first pew.
- After the priest distributes Communion to you, go up the steps to receive the chalice from the deacon left side of the altar. The EMHC only receives the Precious Blood if they themselves are GI.
- Cover the chalice with the purificator and walk to the spot for distribution. This is indicated by an X on the carpet.
- Stand between the organ and the ambo, on the floor, facing the baptismal font, as parishioners will come from every angle, over to you.
- Uncover the chalice and wait.
- Do not deny the chalice to someone who you know to have received the Host, even though the chalice is not intended for them. We must distribute to those who come forward to us.
- Remain in this spot until the musicians receive Communion, just in case any of them are gluten intolerant.

- Once it is clear no one else is in need of receiving from the chalice, and if there is still Precious Blood remaining in the chalice, walk up the steps of the sanctuary and hand the chalice to the priest or deacon.
- The priest or deacon will consume what is remaining and **hand the chalice back to you**.
- Take the chalice and purificator to the sacristy and place both on the counter.

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## AFTER THE DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

### *SACRED HOST DISTRIBUTORS*

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- Once you are finished with your section(s)
  - Look around to see if other ministers need a second minister to assist them in distribution. If possible, be a second distributor.
  - Look around to see if another minister needs more Hosts and carefully share yours into their paten. Then return your empty paten to the work sacristy, only if you cannot serve as a second distributor.
- If there are surplus Hosts in your the paten:
  - Bring them to the altar. There is no need to bow as you enter the sanctuary, since you are carrying our Lord.
  - Hand the paten with extra Hosts directly to the priest or deacon. If the priest or deacon has not yet returned to the altar, wait for them. Your paten must be given to the deacon or priest. Do not place your paten on the altar. After receiving the empty vessel back from the priest, exit the sanctuary.
  - Take the paten as usual to the sacristy. It is not necessary to turn and bow when leaving the sanctuary in this instance.
  - To avoid congestion around the altar and in the work sacristy, whenever possible, distributors should give their full or empty paten to another distributor to bring to the altar and back to the sacristy.
  - Reminder: Please never stack the patens.
    - a. Ablution cups are available on the credence table and in the work sacristy for those who distributed the Hosts so as to purify their fingers. Simply dip the thumb and forefinger into the water and then wipe them on the purificator.
  - When leaving the sacristy, be attentive to when the Eucharist is being reposed into the Tabernacle. If the timing is such that you are walking past or coming out when they are reposing the Blessed Sacrament, stop, turn and face the tabernacle, and bow/genuflect as the clergy genuflect. Then return to your seat.
  - Always refrain from walking behind the sanctuary. Walk around the front steps or go through the Blessed Sacrament Chapel if need be, reverencing the Tabernacle as is fitting.

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## DISTRIBUTION TO THE MUSIC MINISTERS

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- The captain distributes Holy Communion to the musicians and choir as their final station. If a large choir is present, a 2<sup>nd</sup> Host distributor should assist the captain. One or two distributors of the Precious Blood should assist if available, if the Precious Blood is being distributed to the entire assembly.

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## AFTER THE DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

### *PRECIOUS BLOOD DISTRIBUTORS*

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- Once you are finished with your section(s), look around to see if other ministers need a second minister to assist them in distribution. If possible, be a second distributor.
  - To enable everyone in the church to receive the Precious Blood, please do not return your chalice with Precious Blood remaining to the altar until you've checked to see if you can distribute elsewhere.
- The reverence due the Precious Blood of the Lord demands that It be fully consumed after Communion is completed and never poured into the ground or the sacrarium. (Norms #55)
- The *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* states the following: "Whatever may remain of the Blood of Christ is consumed at the altar by the **priest or the deacon** or the duly instituted acolyte who ministered the chalice. The same then purifies, wipes, and arranges the sacred vessels in the usual way." (GIRM, 284)
- Those distributing the Precious Blood should, therefore, **not consume** any remaining Precious Blood, but instead bring the chalice to the altar for the priest or deacon to consume.
- Completely empty chalices are brought directly to the work sacristy and placed on the counter according to the diagram.
- Purificators are not left at the altar. Purificators can be placed in the basket at the credence table, or, if the chalice was empty and brought to the sacristy, the corresponding purificator can be left on the counter in the sacristy. EMHCs can assist each other in the return of the purificators so that not every single Precious Blood distributor is heading to the credence table at the same time.



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## GENERAL NOTES AND FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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1. An Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion must be a parishioner and Confirmed.
2. Whenever an EMHC has completed distribution at his/her station, scan the church for any other station that may need help with distribution. Always look to be a 2<sup>nd</sup> distributor first before giving your remaining Hosts with another EMHC.
3. When returning to the church from the sacristy, be attentive to what is happening in the sanctuary. If the presider/deacon is at the tabernacle reposing the Blessed Sacrament, please stop in place and then bow or genuflect with the presider/deacon.
4. During the Mass, no liturgical minister should walk behind the sanctuary along the back wall of the church (behind the ½ wall). If it is necessary to go from one side of the church to the other, walk through the Blessed Sacrament chapel or in front of the sanctuary area, always being attentive when crossing in front the tabernacle.
5. With our ever changing attendance at Masses, we are constantly updating positions at all Masses. Please arrive early enough so the captains have time to brief you on any changes or updates.
6. Do not distribute Communion on the hand to anyone wearing gloves. Ask them to remove both gloves first or receive on the tongue.
7. Do not distribute Holy Communion into a pyx that someone may bring forward in the Communion line. Simply ask the person to talk to the priest or deacon after Mass.
8. Be attentive to the Ushers in back sections who may direct you towards anyone who needs Communion brought to them (handicapped, elderly).
9. If a handicapped person is seated with his/her family in a front row of any section, distribute walking across the front of the pew to the entire family not just the person who is handicapped. Then, continue with regular distribution to those seated in the rest of the section.
10. The use of hand sanitizer is completely optional. There is a bottle in the back of church and one on the credence table. As you gather at the Lamb of God, feel free to get some there and work it into your hands before coming down the aisle. For those serving at weekday Masses, use the one on the credence table or at the server chairs.
11. If you run out of Hosts in your paten and you need more, tell the next person in line to please wait a moment. Turn and face the altar. Other Extraordinary Ministers will be looking to see if they can bring Hosts to those in need before returning their paten to the altar. Do not break Hosts. Be patient. Someone will come to you.
12. Hold sacristy and church doors for each other as is needed.
13. Be attentive to the Ministry Scheduling Program's emails for requests for substitutes and reminders about your assignments. Please don't be a no-show. Request a substitute even if it is last minute and at all possible.
14. Low Gluten Host requests are handled before Mass by the clergy and distributed by the clergy.
15. Communion to the Sick EMHCs are trained separately. Only a deacon or priest is allowed to access Hosts in the Tabernacle following Masses.
16. Be attentive to emails which may contain updates from your coordinator.
17. An EMHC is not allowed to take the paten or chalice off of the altar, it must be handed to you by a member of the clergy.
18. If you are approached by someone chewing gum in the Communion line, ask them to remove their gum before receiving Our Lord.

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## PROCEDURES FOR EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION

### *DAILY MASSES*

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- At the start of the Lamb of God, proceed to the base of the sanctuary steps, to the left side near the server kneeler pads.
- Wait until the presider has consumed under both species and has gone to the Tabernacle to retrieve the consecrated Hosts, then bow to the altar and come up the sanctuary steps and stand just to the right of the chairs. The servers will join you. The presider will then distribute to you and the servers and give you a paten.
- While holding your paten aloft with two hands, go directly to your position.
- The priest stands behind the kneeler and an EMHC stands on either side, a good distance away.
- After the distribution of Holy Communion, bring the paten to the altar to be purified. There is no need to bow as you enter the sanctuary.
- Give the paten with extra Hosts to the priest. Do not leave a paten at the altar.
- Since the priest will purify the vessels at the altar, there is no need to return your paten to the sacristy.
- Exit the sanctuary. At the base of the steps, turn and make a profound bow.
- When exiting the sanctuary, be attentive to when the Eucharist is being reposed into the Tabernacle. If the timing is such that you would be walking when they are reposing the Blessed Sacrament, stop, turn and face the Tabernacle, and bow or genuflect as the clergy genuflect. Then return to your seat.
- The use of hand sanitizer is completely optional.
- If desired and needed, use the ablution cup on the credence to cleanse your fingers after distribution.

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## PROCEDURE FOR DROPPED HOSTS

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1. If a Host should fall during distribution, the EMHC should pick the Host up without excessive display, place it in the Communion vessel, holding it to the side.
2. The communicant should not pick it up and consume it themselves.
3. It is recommended to scan the area where the Host landed for any particles or pieces that may have broken off and should be picked up and placed in the paten.
4. When you return your paten to the altar, notify the presider or deacon and he will consume the Host.

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## PROCEDURE FOR CLEANING UP SPILT PRECIOUS BLOOD

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Please tell the deacon or priest if there was a spill at your station.

Here's what you can do to help:

1. Place purificator over the spill and leave there until after Mass.
2. Bring a bowl of water from work sacristy along with a purificator.
3. Dab the spill to sop up the Precious Blood, using the purificator.
4. Wash the area of the spill with water.
5. Pour the water down the sacrarium.
6. Place on the drying rack. The sacristan will later place the purificator with the other used purificators to be washed accordingly.

