

CUSTOMARY FOR CHALICE BEARERS

SAINT THOMAS OF CANTERBURY EPISCOPAL CHURCH TEMECULA, CALIFORNIA

The Chalice Bearer is the one who administers the Chalice during the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. While there is a purely functional aspect to the ministry of the Chalicer, there is a spiritual and sacred aspect, as well. The functional aspect has to do with the role of providing a means by which communicants can receive the wine. The spiritual and sacred aspect involves the belief that the wine has taken on the real presence of Jesus Christ as the blood of Christ. Neither aspect of this ministry should be neglected. The following procedures are to be followed:

BEFORE THE SERVICE:

- The Chalice Bearer should be at the church with enough time to vest (if applicable) and receive any last minute instruction (suggested: at least fifteen minutes before the scheduled start of the service). This is especially important in the case of a visiting Celebrant or a special service.
- Vest in Cassock/Alb and cincture (if applicable). The Cassock/Alb should be long enough to come just to the tops of your shoes; but should not be so long that you might trip, especially going up or down stairs.
- Check in with the Celebrant for any last minute instructions.

DURING THE SERVICE:

- If vested and processing, the Chalice Bearer's place in the procession¹ is generally in front of the Celebrant (and behind the Choir). If there are two Chalice Bearers, they should walk side-by-side.
- Leave a distance of three rows of seating between yourself and the person(s) in front of you. This should allow each person to reverence the Altar without those behind having to stop.
- Upon arriving at the Chancel steps, if you are immediately preceding the Celebrant, separate enough for the Celebrant to come in between, and all reverence the Altar together. (If you are the only Chalice Bearer processing, move slightly to the right and wait to reverence the Altar with the Celebrant.)
- Turn to the right and take your place at one of the two benches near the Credence Table.
- Following the Invitation to communion, the Chalice Bearers come to the 'Ambo Side' of the Altar and receive communion after the Celebrant has received communion. The Chalice Bearer closer to the back wall will receive the Chalice from the Celebrant. The

¹ There are many variations on this part of your ministry. For example, you may also process with the Choir as a Choir Member and come into the Chancel only when it's time to administer the Chalice. Or you may be in the Sunday School as a student or teacher and come into the Chancel when the Sunday School comes into the Church. Or you may remain (without vestments) in the congregation until the time for communion.

other Chalice Bearer follows the Celebrant behind the Altar to get the other Chalice and a Purificator.

- The Chalice Bearer who follows the Celebrant, will administer the Chalice to the Server and then proceed to administer the Chalice to the congregation. This Chalice Bearer will administer the Chalice from the 'Choir Side' to the center. Be sure to use proper Words of Administration and to wipe the rim of the Chalice inside and out after each person who drinks from the Chalice. (Try not to stain any embroidery work on the Purificator.) Please do not use the name of the person as you administer the Chalice. While this can feel very intimate, there are a number of potential difficulties: you are not likely to know each person's name and those whose names you do not know may feel slighted—especially visitors and guests, or you may use the wrong name.
- The other Chalice Bearer moves to a position just in front of the Altar and waits for the Celebrant to administer the bread. This Chalice Bearer will administer the Chalice from the center to the side opposite the Choir seating area.
- When there is to be a station for communion, each Chalice Bearer takes a position to the side of the Celebrant, as far from the Celebrant as reasonably possible.
- Each Chalice Bearer should continue to administer the Chalice until all have received communion.
- If there are people in the congregation to whom communion will be brought, the Celebrant will approach one of the Chalice Bearers who will precede the Celebrant into the congregation. The other Chalice Bearer should place the Chalice and Purificator on the Corporal, and return to the place where the Chalice Bearer had been sitting.
- The Chalice Bearer going out into the congregation is not to reverence the Altar upon leaving the Chancel or upon returning when carrying the Sacrament. The Chalice Bearer should proceed to where the people in the congregation are waiting to receive Communion. Offer the Chalice to each person following the administration of the bread until all have received. Precede the Celebrant back to the Chancel. Place the Chalice and Purificator on the Corporal, and return the place where the Chalice Bearer had been sitting.
- If there is more than a small amount of wine left in the chalice, the Chalice Bearer is invited to consume some of the wine so that just a small amount is left at the bottom of the Chalice. (There is no obligation to consume additional wine.)
- At the procession out, wait for the Acolytes (and Choir) to clear the Chancel steps. Then proceed to the center. Stand facing the Altar slightly to one side or the other leaving room for the Celebrant to come to the center. Reverence the Altar with the Celebrant, turn, and process out.

February 2009