

The Proper Way to Receive Holy Communion in the Hand

These directions for properly receiving Communion in the Hand are following the spirit of reverence recommended by St. Cyril of Jerusalem:

“In approaching therefore, come with your wrists extended, or your fingers spread; but make your left hand a throne for the right, as for that which is to receive a King. And having hollowed your palm, receive the Body of Christ, saying over it, Amen. So then after having carefully hallowed your eyes by the touch of the Holy Body, partake of it; giving heed lest you lose any portion thereof; for whatever you lose, is evidently a loss to you as it were from one of your own members. For tell me, if any one gave you grains of gold, would you not hold them with all carefulness, being on your guard against losing any of them, and suffering loss? Will you not then much more carefully keep watch, that not a crumb fall from you of what is more precious than gold and precious stones?”

Updated USCCB instructions for receiving Holy Communion, implemented in the Diocese of Little Rock in November of 2003:

The communicant will come forward, bow your head prior to receiving Holy Communion (a simple bend of the neck, not from the waist) as a sign of reverence to Our Lord in the Holy Eucharist. (This is usually done while the person before you is receiving so as not to hold up the Communion line.) As you step forward to receive, place your palms on top of each other, with your dominant hand on the bottom. As the priest says, “This is the Body of Christ,” you reply, “Amen.” Your “Amen” is a declaration of agreement, “I believe.” The priest will then place the Host in the palm of your top hand. (The communicant is not to “take” the Host from the priest’s fingers.) Step aside out of the way, and with your dominant hand, take the Host from your top palm and consume It, followed by the Sign of the Cross. (This may be difficult if you rely on a cane to walk, just do your best.)

If you need any help understanding these instructions, Fr. Amal will be glad you assist you, just ask him after Mass.