

# LIVING LITURGY™

for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

Year C • 2022

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*Presented to*

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*in grateful appreciation  
for ministering as an  
Extraordinary Minister  
of  
Holy Communion*

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*(date)*

## **USING THIS RESOURCE**

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Extraordinary typically refers to outstanding or exceptional. But extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion are “extra”ordinary in the sense of “in addition to” the ordinary (as well as being outstanding and exceptional!). Ordinary ministers of Holy Communion are the ordained and those properly installed as acolytes, usually seminarians. In parishes today there are simply not enough “ordinary” ministers of Holy Communion, so we call forth additional ministers, referred to as “extraordinary.” Imagine how long the distribution of Communion would take if only the ordained or seminarians were those who distributed! It is not only because of need, however, that we have extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion. It is also by virtue of one’s baptism. We parishioners are grateful that so many baptized Christians respond to the call to serve as extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion. In so doing we are reminded that we are all holy, and we are all called to ministry by virtue of our Christian baptism.

### ***Preparing for This Ministry***

Though different dioceses and parishes have slightly different preparation requirements for those who would be extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion, there is preparation nonetheless. We hope that this book will be a source of reflection for such preparation, and also for ongoing reflection throughout one’s ministry. We know that it is not enough to simply attend a training event and never look back. Each ministry of the church requires regular prayer, reflection, reading, and thoughtfulness. This book is intended to assist with that process by providing prayers and reflection for each Sunday and for certain solemnities. This resource can also be used by groups who would like to share their faith with questions that prompt discussion.

### ***Holy Communion for the Homebound and Sick***

In the New Testament Letter of James we learn about the concern and care that the early Christians had for those members of their community who were sick. Such care and concern was a hallmark of Jesus’s own ministry, and it has been a Christian charism ever since. Each week there are parishioners who are not able to join us

for the liturgy, and so the Eucharist is brought to them as a sign of our unity. Extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion are often those who perform this ministry, and, in so doing, they extend the parish's reach to so many more fellow parishioners. This book is intended to be a resource for them as well.

***Adapting This Resource for  
Holy Communion for the Homebound and Sick***

The Communion rite (Ordinary Rite of Communion of the Sick) is provided as a separate publication to this book and enclosed within. Those who are extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion have undoubtedly been made familiar with this rite as part of their preparation. This book may be adapted for use with the rite, by sharing the gospel reflection, the prayers, or even the reflection question, so that the visit becomes a true ministry. It is to be remembered that ministers are not mere functionaries. As such, extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion bring not only the presence of Christ in the eucharistic species, but the presence of Christ in their very person by virtue of their baptism. So this book has been designed with that in mind, and it can be used to assist with making this a meaningful encounter and ministry.



In today's gospel Jesus tells us to be mindful about the ways our hearts may grow drowsy. Let us remain awake and aware, asking for God's mercy and forgiveness . . .

### **Prayer**

God of heaven and earth,  
your ways are beyond our thinking,  
your holiness is your gift to us.

*To you, O Lord, I lift my soul.*

Receive it, and bring me to completeness in you,  
who are God, for ever and ever.

**Amen.**

### **Gospel**

**Luke 21:25-28, 34-36**

Jesus said to his disciples: "There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on earth nations will be in dismay, perplexed by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will die of fright in anticipation of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. But when these signs begin to happen, stand erect and raise your heads because your redemption is at hand.

"Beware that your hearts do not become drowsy from carousing and drunkenness and the anxieties of daily life, and that day catch you by surprise like a trap. For that day will assault everyone who lives on the face of the earth. Be vigilant at all times and

pray that you have the strength to escape the tribulations that are imminent and to stand before the Son of Man.”

**Brief Silence**

**For Reflection**

Advent challenges us to let our hopes reach beyond cozy domesticity to the huge and human hope of a new creation. Just as a woman watches for the signs that the birth of her child is imminent, so Jesus urges his disciples to be alert to the birth pangs of the reign of God in all its fullness. In our present time, in the womb of human and cosmic history, God is nurturing and preparing for the birth of the new heaven and new earth. In the midst of any personal suffering, international tension, opportunist politics, or natural disasters that we might experience during these Advent weeks, the Word of God urges us to be people of hope. Nor are Christians to be the captives of frantic seasonal consumerism. We are called, rather, to be a people awake and alert to the promises of God already revealed, grateful for what has been liberating for us as Jesus's disciples in the year just past, and confident in the gifts of God that are yet to come.

◆ How do you live as a person of hope?

**Brief Silence**

**Prayer**

Loving God, thank you for the gift of this day and the opportunity to grow in relationship with you. May we bear witness to the hope you promise so that our hearts might be ready to receive you, as we remain faithful to your Gospel and the way of life to which we are called. **Amen.**



In today's gospel John cries out, "Prepare the way of the Lord." For the times our lives have not heralded God's coming, we ask for forgiveness and peace . . .

### Prayer

Powerful and mighty Redeemer,  
You have *done great things for us*;  
*we are filled with joy* in your presence.  
Help us always to remember the gladness of your salvation.  
Give to us peace and perseverance always.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

### Gospel

**Luke 3:1-6**

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene, during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the desert. John went throughout the whole region of the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah: */ A voice of one crying out in the desert: / "Prepare the way of the Lord, / make straight his paths. / Every valley shall be filled / and every mountain and hill shall be made low. / The winding roads shall be made straight, / and the rough ways made smooth, / and all flesh shall see the salvation of God."*

### Brief Silence

**For Reflection**

We are used to heavy earth-moving equipment and technology that builds roads to speed travelers on their way—cutting out sharp bends, smoothing treacherous bumps, straightening dangerous curves to give us a clearer and safer view of what is ahead or oncoming. Advent is the season of Christian “road work,” with John the Baptist as our overseer. With John’s voice, the church asks us both personally and communally to level and straighten out whatever is an obstacle or danger on our journey to God. What are the “potholes” in our discipleship, those sins of omission? From what do we need to be converted if we are to make the way smoother for others who find it difficult to travel to God because of our intolerant or erratic behavior? Do we indulge in outbursts of destructive “road rage” towards our sisters and brothers as we all try to follow the way of the gospel? Have we a kingdom vision that can enable us to see around the twists and turns of personal tragedy or ecclesial failure and recognize there an advent of Christ—his presence with us in the suffering, dying, and rising from these painful realities?

◆ Which paths in your own life might God be inviting you to straighten?

**Brief Silence****Prayer**

Loving God, thank you for the gift of this day and the opportunity to grow in relationship with you. May we heed the forerunner’s voice and redirect our thoughts and actions to you alone, ever smoothing the rough edges of our heart so that we might remain faithful to your Gospel and the way of life to which we are called.  
**Amen.**