

Dear Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion,

Our parish is deeply grateful for your decision to be an Extraordinary Minister. Your service and dedication are important parts of our parish life. It is a privilege to be in the sanctuary as our Savior, Jesus Christ, becomes truly present, body, blood, soul and divinity, just as He was at the Last Supper and Calvary, and therefore Extraordinary Ministers are chosen from those who display a desire for a more intimate union with Our Lord and God, Jesus Christ.

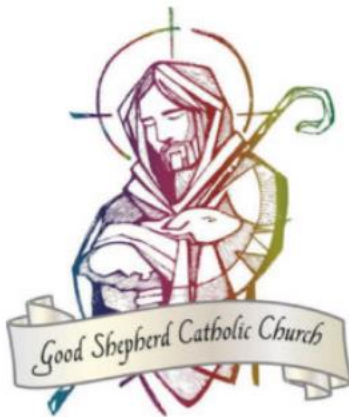
The primary duty of an Extraordinary Ministers is to assist the priest, as a representative of the people of the parish, in a respectful and visible manner, as the mystery of Calvary unfolds on the Altar and to extend His presence in distribution of holy communion to those at mass and those who are unable to attend in person. What an honor to serve our Lord at this most praiseworthy gift of love.

The place of the Extraordinary Minister in liturgical celebrations, and with those who are unable to join us in person, remains one of prominence and distinction. All actions of the Extraordinary Minister are woven from signs and symbols whose meaning is rooted in the works of creation and in human culture, specified by events in the Old Testament and fully revealed in the person and work of Jesus Christ in the Gospels. Accordingly, extraordinary Ministers have a solemn responsibility to do their assigned duties with dignity and reverence. In other words, as a minister, you must show the greatest reverence for the Most Holy Eucharist by your demeanor, attire, and the manner in which you handle the consecrated host. For this reason, all EMHCs are approved by the pastor and then provided sufficient spiritual, theological, and practical preparation to fulfill your role with knowledge and reverence. We are required to follow the guidelines of the General Instruction of the Roman Missal and the guidance of our diocesan bishop's Norms for the Distribution and Reception of Holy Communion Under Both Kinds for the Dioceses of the United States.

Once the catechesis and training are completed, you will be commissioned by our pastor, specifically for this parish only, for a specific period of time. In essence, commissioning is a means of ensuring quality by means of implementing a custom-tailored process for the assignment/position. Like Jesus' bestowing upon the 11 disciples The Great Commission, this is a serious responsibility you willingly accept.

The purpose for this handbook is to give you direction for distributing communion during our parish masses, and to be a guide to help you in taking communion to those who are unable to be with us in person. Along the way, you will learn most matters concerning the Rite of Communion and many matters concerning liturgical worship. We pray that you will strive to grasp their spiritual meaning.

God Bless you all.



Michael Vant

Guidelines for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

The Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion (EMHC) performs a great service to the Church, by distributing Holy Communion to God's people on those occasions where there are an insufficient number of priests and deacons to distribute Holy Communion to the people present at the mass, and to the homebound. It is an honor and a privilege to serve the Church in this capacity and requires careful preparation on the part of the EMHC.

Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion Defined

In short, an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion is a lay person or religious who has been deputed by the bishop for a period of time, or by a priest or deacon for a single occasion, to assist the priest and deacon in distributing Holy Communion to the faithful on those occasions where a shortage of ordained clergy makes it difficult/impossible for them to distribute Holy Communion to all the faithful in a reasonable way. It is thus a privilege to which the Church invites certain individuals under given circumstances, and not a right. It must be looked at as the exercise of a function that is proper to the ordained priesthood, but which, of necessity, must be carried out by others. This highlights the extraordinary nature of this service, which, rather than being part of the structure of the Church, is instead tied to particular needs arising from the limited number of clergy.

Extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion perform a very valuable service to the Church in supplying for this temporary need, but it is important to recognize that this service corresponds to an extraordinary situation in the life of the Church.

Why the Church Regulates the Liturgy

The activity of the Church, and especially her sacred liturgy, is an expression of that communion between Christ and man and of the inheritance that she has received from the Lord. While recent times have amply demonstrated the human dimension of the liturgy, and the many ways in that it can be adapted to different concrete circumstances, it remains, in essence, a sign of that communion, something shared by believers throughout the world. As such, it is not the property of any individual, priest, or local community, but belongs to the whole Church. To change those elements of the liturgy that express its universal character would be to isolate the local community from the broader communion of the

Catholic Church, and, ultimately, to make its worship inward focused and arbitrary. The Church provides certain guidelines and regulations to express the universal character of Catholic worship, showing that the essential character of her public prayer is shared throughout the world, and is received as part of a dynamic tradition reaching back to Christ's own action, while at the same time providing sufficient flexibility to be at home in local situations all over the world. The procedures discussed in this document should be understood with that spirit – not simply as rules to be followed, but as expressions of the unity of the Church throughout the world in her common worship of Christ.

Qualifications to Serve as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion

It is important that those individuals selected to serve as extraordinary ministers are chosen carefully. The instruction *Immensae Caritatis* describes them in the following manner: The faithful who are special ministers of communion must be persons whose good qualities of Christian life, faith, and morals recommend them. Let them strive to be worthy of this great office, foster their own devotion to the Eucharist, and show an example to the rest of the faithful by their own devotion and reverence toward the most precious sacrament of the altar. No one is to be chosen whose appointment the faithful might find disquieting. Those interested in becoming part of this ministry must complete an application for approval by the parish Pastor. One must be approved prior to the beginning of training. The training will be renewed annually. Homebound Ministers must receive additional training specific to that ministry.

God bless you for your faithful interest in this ministry

Protocol for the Distribution of Holy Communion

1. Prepare properly for your assignment. This means that you should be appropriately dressed (see GSCC Dress Code Policy), that you know where the Communion Positions are in the Church (see attached diagram) and that you arrive at least 15 minutes ahead of mass time. Consult the monthly schedule and check to see whether you are assigned. Assignment is a solemn obligation you have freely accepted. If for some reason you are unable to fulfill your obligation, it is incumbent on you to find a suitable replacement for you so that there is no disruption to the service. We suggest you form individual groups, exchange directory information and then help each other out when problems arise. When you arrive, sign in at the church conference room and report to the Mass Coordinator.
2. If you are the first EMHC listed on the schedule, you are assigned as the “Captain” and are responsible for working with the Mass Coordinator to assure that all positions are filled on the signup sheet. If you have not signed in 10 minutes prior to mass commencement, you will be replaced.
3. Do not erase anyone’s name from the posted sign in sheet. Do not write on the posted schedule taped to the cabinets. If you are standing in for someone who can’t perform EMHC service inform the Captain or the Mass Coordinator. Changes to the list will be made by the Captain or the Mass Coordinator only.
4. Important - arrive no less than 15 minutes before Mass. Go to the church Conference Room and sign in on the sign in sheet. Then, take a seat in the congregation.
5. Priests and Deacons are clergy and are Ordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. The Vatican prefers that as many Ordinary Ministers of Communion be utilized at any given Mass as possible. Therefore, if you sign up for position 1 and you notice that there are 3 clergy on the altar, or if you sign up for position 4, and you notice that there are 4 clergy on the altar, you should return to your seat.
6. If you are not assigned for a particular Sunday, but you are appropriately dressed, please do check in with the Captain or the Mass Coordinator in case there is a need for a substitute. Let the Captain know where you will be seated. In that case, the Captain will be able to locate you and advise you of your position as a substitute.

7. At the end of the Sign of Peace, the EMHCs approach the altar and stand to the left of the foot of the altar during the Lamb of God- Please leave the center of the altar open, i.e., please do not stand directly in front of the altar. At this time, hand sanitizers and masks are provided on the side table. **After the Priest and other clergy complete their personal Communion**, you will come up the steps and stand behind the priest to receive Communion. After receiving, if wearing a mask (or while masks are required), hands must be re-sanitized after adjusting mask. Extra sanitizer is available at Ambo to avoid crossing the Altar or going to Credence Table. If more than one EMHC, the captain or the person closest to the Ambo should obtain the sanitizer and assist other EMHCs after their Communion.

8. EMHCs will be administered the Eucharist, and then the Precious Blood in the Cup (when authorized). They will then be given a Ciborium. Cups will be provided along with a purificator cloth (when authorized). Only a Priest or Deacon is permitted to distribute a Ciborium or Cup to an EMHC. Ministers should not begin to go to their assigned station until the Celebrant leaves the altar for his station. EMHC never retrieve or return Ciboria or Cups directly to the Altar.

9. When receiving the Eucharist, the communicant should bow his head, then indicate whether they desire communion in the hand or the tongue by holding their crossed hands open or presenting their tongue.

10. The EMHC should administer the Eucharist by selecting one from the Ciborium holding it vertically slightly above the vessel. They should say in a clear voice "The Body of Christ". The communicant then responds "Amen", after which the EMHC administers the Eucharist on the tongue or in the hand as indicated. Should the communicant not respond "Amen" the EMHC should respond for him. No other commentary is to be used. The host should be delivered to the communicant and the communicant should never reach for host to directly from the EMHC.

11. Ideally communicant's hands are held together to form a cross, with dominant hand at the bottom to pick up host to place in their mouth. Avoid touching communicant's hands but do assure host is safely deposited in their hands. When host is to be place on the tongue or mouth, use appropriate technique to avoid touching your hand to communicant mouth or tongue. If inadvertent touch does occur, re-sanitize hand before continuing to next person. Assure sanitizer is completely dry before administering to next person.

12. The EMHC – should administer the Precious Blood (if authorized) by saying in a clear voice “The Blood of Christ”, and by then handing the Cup to the Communicant. When receiving the Cup, the communicant should bow his head, respond “Amen”, take the Cup from the EMHC, consume a portion, and then return the Cup to the EMHC. Should the communicant not respond “Amen” the EMHC should respond for him. No other commentary is to be used. When the Communicant returns the Cup, the rim should be thoroughly and firmly wiped clean with the purificator cloth both inside and outside the rim, and then the Cup turned a quarter turn. The purificator cloth should be rotated or otherwise repositioned to use the entire cloth during the process.

13. All who present themselves for Communion in either form should be served. If there is a question of propriety or scandal, administer Communion and speak to the Celebrant after Mass. Note that the ministers must administer the Eucharist and Cup to the communicants.

14. The congregation is not permitted to self-administer the sacrament. If someone attempts intinction (where they attempt to dip the host into the cup themselves), they should be politely told that intinction is not permissible. Understand that some rites other than the Roman Rite, intinction is the norm.

15. You are responsible for assuring that the host is consumed. If you notice someone has not consumed the host you gave them, go after the person and politely ask them to consume the host. They must consume or return host if not immediately consumed.

16. As a reminder, the invitations “The Body of Christ” and “The Blood of Christ” must not be modified by narrowing them or expanding them.

17. If the Eucharist is dropped during administration, the EMHC should pick it up, and then hold it with the same hand with which the vessel is held. Do not place it back in the ciborium. Assure there are no broken pieces on the floor before continuing. When Communion is finished, the host may be consumed by the EMHC or may be given to the Celebrant for proper disposal.

18. If the Precious Blood is spilled or pieces/crumbs of Eucharist on floor, the EMHC should first ask the communicants to go to another minister, then cover the spot with the purificator cloth. The area should be protected from traffic and when appropriate should be cleaned by EMHC or Clergy.

19. Some persons, including spouses who are not Catholic and young children, may present themselves for a blessing by crossing their arms in front of them. Do not give them Communion. **The Vatican has issued statements that EMHCs not to bless people in the Communion Line because that's the role of the clergy.** However, we suggest you simply say “May Jesus Christ enter your heart” or “Christ’s peace be with you”. DO NOT extend your hand. This invocation prepares young children for actual Communion and serves as an invitation to a spiritual Communion for adults. It is not a blessing.

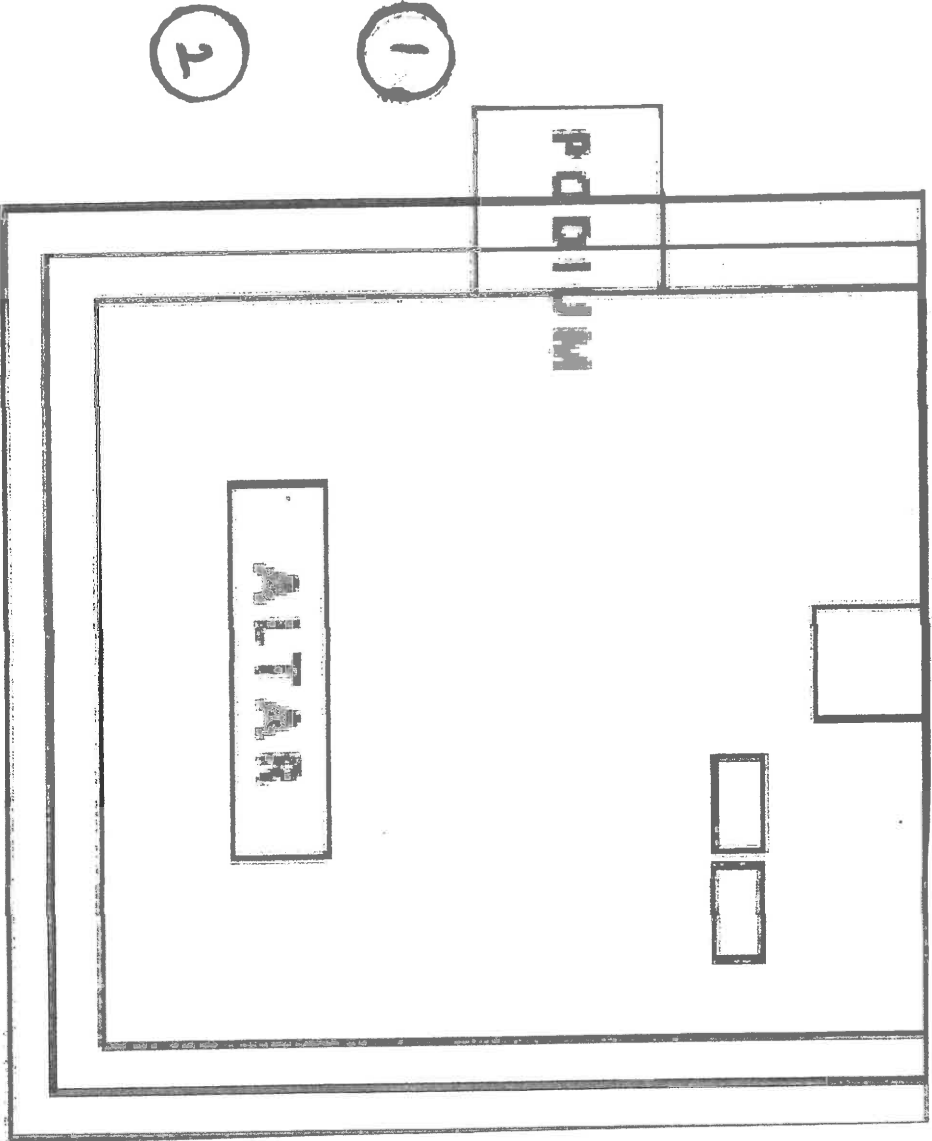
20. After distribution of Communion, the EMHCs should remain at their station or go to secondary stations as assigned to assist with further distribution. When clergy has completed distribution, present the Ciborium to the Priest or Deacon from the foot of the steps. EMHC should return to side table to rinse and re-sanitize hands, before returning to their seat. Do not return cups or ciboria directly to the altar. When done, simply reverence the altar individually and return to your seat.

21. After distribution of the Precious Blood, the EMHC’s holding the Cups should take them to the side table, consume any remaining Precious Blood and then place the purificator cloth over the Cup. The Precious Blood must be properly consumed by the EMHC, another EMHC, or the clergy, especially in cases where an EMHC needs assistance in consuming their excess. Then return to your seat.

22. For stations assigned to purify vessels after mass you must plan to remain in church with sufficient time to ensure the tasks are properly accomplished. Carefully collect vessels and perform reverent purification per protocol in the Sacrament Room. All 1st rinsed water will be disposed of in the Sacrament Room. Vessels will be prepared for next mass (if appropriate) or appropriately secured.

23. Please note that at no time is an EMHC or a Home Bound minister authorized to open and take/replace consecrated hosts from the tabernacle. You must go to clergy to accomplish the given task. On rare occasions individuals assigned specific duties may assist you but only with the specific one-time approval of clergy.

Thank you for participating as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion.



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