

## Instructions for Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist

Christ is always present in the Church, especially in our liturgical celebrations. He is present when we pray, when we sing, when we proclaim the Word, in the Eucharist and in the presence of Father. For us as Catholics, the heart of the celebration of Mass is the Eucharist. It is through the Eucharist that we as Catholics are joined to Christ and to one another.

To bring the sacrament of Christ's precious Body and Blood to our brothers and sisters in Faith is a profound spiritual privilege beyond measure...a moment of profound sharing.

It is critical to fulfill the role of Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist with the greatest reverence...in demeanor...in attire...and in handling the consecrated bread and wine.

Reflect on the following words from the Eucharistic Minister Handbook: **"Yours is a share in the work of the Lord's Spirit who makes of us one bread, one body, the chalice of blessing. Yours is a work of ministering Christ's body and blood to the body of Christ, the Church. Yours is service at the Lord's reconciling table. You minister holy food to holy people in the holiest of all communions."**

### On Your Scheduled Day:

1. Arrive 15 minutes before Mass begins and be sure to let Father know that you are the scheduled E.M.E. Check with the ushers and look around the rear of church to determine if there are any handicapped or physically challenged parishioners who may not be able to walk to the front of church to receive Communion. Whenever possible, let them know that an E.M.E. will bring Communion to them.
2. Join the processional at the beginning of Mass, following the Lector. At the altar bow towards the altar with Father and then return to your seat (near the front).
3. After the sign of Peace as Father begins the "Lamb of God" prayer, go up to the left side of the altar. Walk with dignity...as you approach **make a slight bow of reverence** toward the altar. **Use the hand sanitizer** that is provided on the side table.
4. Proceed to the tabernacle and open the doors (the key will already be in the door lock), **bow**, retrieve the ciborium with the consecrated hosts. Close the doors to the Tabernacle and walk back to the altar. Remove the ciborium cover and place the ciborium (and cover) **on the corporal** in the center of the altar. Then step back in line with the Altar Servers.
5. When Father is ready to provide Communion to the E.M.E. and altar servers, they should **step forward toward Father and then receive Communion**. (If Father is also distributing the Precious Blood, pass the cup and purificator on down the row while he

retrieves the ciborium for distribution.) Once Father has given Communion to everyone at the altar, he will give the E.M.E the hosts to be distributed to parishioners.

6. Go with Father to the front of the center aisle to begin distributing Holy Communion to parishioners. Father will distribute Communion first to any handicapped or elderly parishioners who may be seated in the front handicapped pew. The E.M.E. will distribute Communion first to the congregation.

**It will no longer be necessary to take Communion to the Cantor(s) and Organist** in the choir loft. The Sacristan will take a Pyx with the appropriate number of consecrated hosts to the Cantor in the choir loft prior to the start of Mass. The Cantor will place the Pyx back in the Sacristy after Mass.

**On days when the full Choir is singing:** The E.M.E. will not be required to give Communion to the elderly and handicapped in the rear of church or to the choir. There will normally be an additional E.M.E. who will distribute Communion to the choir and organist and then to the elderly and handicapped in the rear of the church.

**On days when a cantor(s) and pianist are playing in the front of church:** The E.M.E. will be required to give Communion to the elderly/handicapped in the rear of church. The E.M.E. should check with the Ushers prior to Mass to determine if there are any elderly or handicapped parishioners who will need assistance. If so, **the E.M.E. should proceed to the rear of church after delivering Communion to all parishioners in their line.**

#### **When Distributing Communion:**

1. When giving Holy Communion, the E.M.E. should hold the host slightly above the vessel, look at the communicant, and in a clear voice say, **“The Body of Christ”** to which the communicant responds “Amen”. These are the only words to be used. If the communicant does not respond, the E.M.E. should say, “Amen”. Then the Sacred Body is placed in the hand or on the tongue according to the manner indicated by the communicant. If anyone approaches with their arms crossed (young children or an adult) the E.M.E. should place their hand on the person’s shoulder and say, “God bless you” or another form of acknowledgement or encouragement.
2. When giving the Precious Blood, the E.M.E. holds the cup up slightly and says in a clear voice while looking at the communicant, **“The Blood of Christ”** to which the communicant responds “Amen”. These are the only words to be used. Again, if the communicant does not respond, the E.M.E. should say, “Amen”. After the Blood of Christ has been received, the E.M.E. should wipe the rim of the cup, inside and out, with a purificator and turn the cup slightly before presenting it to the next communicant.

3. When the last person in line has received Communion, pause, allowing that person to turn and begin to walk away before leaving your position.

#### **On First Sundays Of the Month:**

1. On the first Sunday of the month and the Saturday before, both species (Body and Blood) will be offered. There should be three E.M.E.s scheduled at these Masses. One will assist Father in distributing Hosts while the other two E.M.E.s will distribute the Precious Blood. Please decide who will distribute each species and from what side of church prior to Mass so there is no confusion prior Communion.
2. When the three E.M.E.s approach the altar prior to Communion they should wait in front until they are all together, then bow respectfully in unison before proceeding to the altar. Similarly, when Communion is finished all three E.M.E.s should line up, face the altar and bow respectfully in unison before returning to their pews.
3. The E.M.E. who is designated to distribute Hosts will also be responsible for retrieving and replacing the Ciborium into the Tabernacle.
4. All three E.M.E.s will process both in and out with Father.

#### **Accidents During Distribution:**

1. If a Host falls to the ground during distribution of Holy Communion, the E.M.E. should **pick it up immediately and place it on the Altar Server's Paten. A dropped Host should never be put back into the vessel** to be given to another communicant. The E.M.E. should let Father know what happened and then place the fallen host into the receptacle located outside and to the left of the Tabernacle so that Father may dispose of it properly.
2. **If the Precious Blood is spilled, the area should be immediately covered.** It may then be blotted and washed after Mass with water and a purificator.

#### **After Communion:**

1. When you have finished distributing Communion, return to the altar and place the vessel with the remaining Hosts **on the corporal**. Father will consolidate all the consecrated Hosts into the Ciborium and give it to you for replacement into the Tabernacle.
2. Once you have replaced the Ciborium, **genuflect** (because the presence of Christ has been removed from the altar and transferred to the Tabernacle one should genuflect. If you are not physically able to genuflect, then bow reverently.) respectfully, then close and lock the Tabernacle doors leaving the key in the door.

3. Then return to the side table by the sacristy door and **wash your fingers** in the bowl of water and dry them on the towel. Walk with dignity to the front of the altar, turn around and bow reverently to the altar and return to your pew. If there are other E.M.E.s, wait until all have returned to the front of the altar and bow reverently in unison and return to your pews.
4. E.M.E.s who are distributing the Precious Blood:
  - a) When parishioners have consumed the last of your Precious Blood, return your vessel to the altar placing the purificator over the cup.
  - b) If you still have Precious Blood left after all communicants are finished, **return to the altar and consume the remaining Precious Blood**. Then place the cup on the corporal with the purificator over the cup.
  - c) If you are unable to consume all the Precious Blood that is left, hand the cup to Father and he will consume it or give it to the other E.M.E.s present.
  - d) After returning to the altar, E.M.E.s who have distributed the Precious Blood should **wash their hands in the water bowl**.
  - e) As each E.M.E. finishes at the altar, they should proceed back down to the front of the altar and wait for the other E.M.E.s. When all the E.M.E.s are at the front of the altar they should bow reverently in unison to the altar and return to their pews.
5. As Father leaves the altar and has begun the closing hymn, the E.M.E.s should join him and the Lector in the front of the altar and all process out of church together.

**Miscellaneous:**

1. If you are unable to serve as E.M.E. on a date that you have been scheduled, please arrange for a substitute by calling another E.M.E. from the Liturgical Calendar that you have been provided. If you are unable to find a substitute, please call the Eucharistic Minister Coordinator who is also listed on the Liturgical Calendar.

**Thank you for accepting this Ministry!**