

DIRECTIVES FOR EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF THE EUCHARIST  
MARCH 01, 2005

1. Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist are fully initiated members of the Church who have received Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist. They are regularly receiving the sacraments of the Church and have completed the eleventh grade.
2. Extraordinary Ministers are Eucharistic people. They possess a deep love for and the practice of the Eucharist. **Because of their dependence on the Body and Blood of Christ they reach out in faith to the brokenhearted, the sick, the lonely, and those in need. These men and women possess the respect of God's people.**
3. The Bishop must give permission for men and women to minister the Body and Blood of Christ at Mass. Pastors submit requests in writing to the Bishop. They are formally commissioned, ideally at Sunday mass, with the Order for the Commissioning of Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion in the Book of Blessings, Chapter 63, Numbers 1871-1896.
4. Extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist receive sufficient spiritual, theological, and practical preparation to fulfill their role with knowledge and reverence. **Their demeanor and the manner in which they handle the Body and Blood of Christ should reflect a genuine Eucharistic reverence.** These ministers are trained on how to deal with mishaps that may happen during the distribution of Holy Communion.
5. Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist function only when not enough ordinary ministers (bishops, priests, deacons, and instituted acolytes) are present. For Communion from the chalice it is desirable that there be generally two ministers of the Precious Blood for each minister of the Body of Christ lest the liturgical celebration be unduly prolonged.

6. Please be open to assignment with a willingness to participate at Masses when needed. Preference to a particular Mass will be acknowledged, but be open to help out at other times in response to need.
7. Arrive no later than **20 minutes** before the time of the Liturgy so that you can assist in preparing the vessels and linens as needed. **Since sound from the sacristy is a source of annoyance to those praying in the church, conversations in the sacristy should be minimal and in a subdued tone.**
8. Be sure to check yourself in on the schedule on the counter, so the coordinator for the Mass will know you have arrived.
9. Be sure to know where the tabernacle key is kept and how to use it. It will be placed in the tabernacle before Mass. After Mass be sure the key is returned to its proper storage site.
10. The Extraordinary Ministers will prepare the altar bread and wine for the offertory procession. As a general rule Holy Communion is given from Hosts consecrated at the same Mass but at our church the Hosts reserved in the tabernacle will also be placed on the altar.
11. The Extraordinary Ministers will prepare the credence table.

Starting at the far left of the credence table moving to the right:

- a. a bowl of hot water and a towel
- b. 1 water cruet containing cold water
- c. Father's chalice: purificator, pall/paten cover, 2 corporals
- d. 2 plates or ciboria
- e. 4 cups or chalices with a purificator for each placed on top of them

12. There is no hierarchy of the Eucharistic elements. Be willing to administer the Precious Blood or the Consecrated Hosts even though you're assigned to another.

13. At the Lamb of God the Extraordinary Ministers come from their seats within the assembly and approach the sanctuary. They step to the altar and bow towards the altar as the Sacred Body and Precious Blood is on the altar.

14. The first Extraordinary Minister reverently moves forward to the tabernacle. Open the door with the key, genuflect and then remove the ciborium. Leave the lid there. Take the ciborium and place it upon the altar. The other Extraordinary Ministers reverently walk and stand behind the priest.

15. After the priest has concluded his own Communion, he distributes Communion to the Deacon and then, assisted by the Deacon, to the Extraordinary Ministers. Extraordinary Ministers always receive the Eucharist from the bishop, priest, or deacon. They must **never communicate themselves**. They may communicate others after they have received.

16. After all Extraordinary Ministers have received the Eucharist, the priest reverently hands vessels containing the Body and Blood of the Lord to the Deacon and Extraordinary Ministers who will assist with the distribution of Holy Communion. The Deacon may assist the priest in handing the vessels containing the Body and Blood of Christ to the Extraordinary Ministers.

17. When carrying the ciborium or the chalice containing the Eucharistic elements the Extraordinary Ministers do not bow or genuflect to the altar after distribution and/or waiting at the tabernacle.

18. The proper form for distributing Holy Communion is to offer the Host by saying, "The Body of Christ," and to offer the cup by saying, "The Blood of Christ." **No other words or names should be added;** and the formula should not be edited in any way.

19. The person receiving the Host has the option to receive in the mouth or in the hand.

20. After each communicant has received the Blood of Christ, the Extraordinary Minister **carefully wipes both sides** of the rim of the chalice with a purificator. This action is matter of both reverence and hygiene. For the same reason the Minister **turns the chalice slightly** after each communicant has received the Blood of Christ.

22. The blessing of children or infants should not be encouraged while distributing communion. Children and infants are blessed with the full assembly at the end of Mass.

23. If the Eucharistic Bread or some particle falls, the Minister should always accept responsibility in order to reassure the communicant. The Host or particle should be picked up reverently and consumed by the Minister. If it cannot be consumed due to dirt or for some other reason, it should be placed at the side of the ciborium until it can be placed in a cup and completely dissolved in water before being poured down the sacrarium. If the consecrated Wine should spill from the chalice place the purificator on the spot until the area can be washed. After washing, pour the water into the sacrarium. Then a purificator may be placed on the spot until a more thorough cleansing can be accomplished.

24. When there remain more Hosts and Precious Blood than were needed for Holy Communion, the Extraordinary Ministers return to the altar with the consecrated elements. The remaining Hosts will be combined by the priest or deacon into one ciborium and placed in the tabernacle. Remaining Precious Blood must be immediately consumed at the altar. If unable to consume ask an EM to consume it.

**25. When you complete your job return reverently to your seat. Do take a moment and make sure a EM remains at the Tabernacle to receive Father's ciborium. You will then combine all the consecrated Hosts into one ciborium and return it to the Tabernacle. If the Deacon is at the Mass, he will take care of putting the ciborium in the Tabernacle.**

26. The vessels are to be purified immediately following Mass. Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist are permitted to purify the sacred vessels. Purification means to shake the corporals into a ciborium or the sacrarium. Put water in Father's chalice and swish it carefully pouring it into other ciborium and chalices. Consume or pour into the sacrarium. After their purification all vessels should be washed and returned to their proper place. Be sure the vessels are dry so that the elements for a following mass will not absorb moisture residue. (Use warm/hot water and sponge to wash the vessels. Use diaper soft cloths to wipe them. Any towels containing polyester material will scratch the surfaces of the vessels. Make sure the vessels are dry. Return all vessels to their proper place. Remove all jewelry when cleaning the vessels so no scratches will occur on the inside and outside surfaces. Do not put wet purificators or towels in the wash bag. Hang them to dry on the rack.)

27. Consecrated hosts are to be reserved in a vessel in sufficient quantity in the tabernacle for the needs of the faithful; they are to be frequently renewed and the old hosts properly consumed. It is strictly forbidden to bury consecrated hosts or to pour the Precious Blood into the ground or into the sacrarium.

28. Extraordinary Ministers should be willing to take the Eucharist to the homebound members of our parish family. When you are performing this ministry, it is important to go directly from the church to the home of the person who will receive the Eucharist. You should contact them earlier to establish a time that fits your schedule and theirs, but the **ideal** is to take the Eucharist to them directly from the mass.

29. While there are no specific guidelines regarding style of clothing, please use good taste and good sense by dressing in attire that is modest, reverent, and befitting the celebration of the Eucharist.