

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

1. **Ministry.** Yours is a Ministry. In participating in this Ministry, you incur certain duties and responsibilities. Included is the responsibility to ensure you adhere to the published Liturgical Minister's schedule (be here when you are scheduled or get a qualified substitute.)
2. **Reverence.** As Ministers, we set the example for proper and reverent demeanor at Mass. Reverence is reflected in our full, active, and conscious participation during Mass. Reverence is reflected in our dress. Isn't it odd that we will dress to the nines for a dance or wedding celebration, but not when we come to heaven on earth? Proper dress is, at a minimum, "business casual." Dress clothing, such as coat and tie for men, suits for women, is highly preferred and encouraged. "Jeans", shorts, bermudas and the like are never permitted. Likewise, good grooming and clean hands helps to show the assembly that you care, love, and respect the Eucharist. Attire, should not detract from your role and belief in the presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Refrain from using strong cologne, perfume or aftershave (some people are sensitive to these scents....some of the fragrance often remains on your hands and can be transferred to the Eucharist.)
3. Arrive at least 10 minutes prior to Mass time. At 5 minutes before Mass, Sacristans will check the sign-in sheets and find substitutes for any missing ministers. If you arrive late and do not sign in, please know that a sub has been made, and you should not come forward at Communion time. The sign-in sheet will be found on the counter in front of the Sacristy window. Select and sign in to an empty station. A diagram is also there to help you find your assigned station for distribution. Remember your station in order to avoid confusion that results when a Minister forgets. Sit wherever you want to with the assembly. It is a powerful sign of unity seeing Ministers come from the assembly and returning to it after they have served.
4. As the *Lamb of God* litany begins, walk forward to the Sanctuary. Take up a standing position at the bottom step (remain on the green carpet); Ministers of the Bread stand to the left side of the Sanctuary and Ministers of the Cup stand to the right side (as you look at the Altar.) Remain standing here until after the Priest has received the Body and Blood. At the end of the Lamb of God litany, the priest will genuflect; EM will make a profound bow. When the Priest sets the chalice back on the altar after he received, walk up the steps proceeding directly to stand in a

line perpendicular to the back wall of the Sanctuary (facing the altar); again Bread Ministers to the left of the Altar (Mary statue) and Cup Ministers to the right (Joseph statue).

Only the priest and/or deacon breaks the bread and places the consecrated bread into the bowls for distribution. You will receive your bowl or cup from the priest or deacon, do not take it from the altar yourself. After receiving, wait for the other ministers to receive. You should receive the Bread and the Cup (if offered). If you believe yourself ill and not able to receive the Cup, you should question if you should even be distributing at all at this Mass. The Priest will usually give a nod at which time you will proceed directly to your station. One minister of the cup will offer the precious blood to the servers before going to your station.

At your station, you will serve the assembly as they come forward. A Minister of the Bread will take a host from the bowl, raise it slightly to show the host, and say to the person receiving “The Body of Christ”. Do not change these words or add anything to them. The Minister of the Cup will slightly elevate the Cup, and say to the person receiving “The Blood of Christ.” Do not change these words or add anything to them. Speak loudly enough that you can be heard. As you distribute, remember to always hold the bowl or cup with the dignity deserved.

Reminder—it is “The Body of Christ” – “The Blood of Christ”. Do not use the person’s name even if it is your family member or closest friend—this is not about individual it is community, it is purposefully vague, referring to both THE body of Christ, and the BODY of Christ as described in Paul’s letters. You are making an invitation, do not narrow or expand it as it really weakens the communicant’s responsive AMEN—an affirmation or profession of faith in three realities: the presence of Christ in the assembly, in the communicant, and under the forms of bread and wine.

The Cup Minister will wipe the rim of and turn the cup after each person has received. As you wipe the lip of the cup while distributing, and turn it for the next person, be aware of the state of the purificator—it may need rotation also! Please unfold and use the entire surface of the purificator.

It is usually best to hand the cup to the communicant, do not try to hold on to it. With small children, or seemingly frail people, simply keep your hand close! Some communicants want to dip their host into the cup (intinction). This is not permitted

by liturgical law and common sense (their fingers get dipped into the cup). The Diocese guideline is to simply cover the cup with your hand, and in a quiet voice tell the person “that is not allowed.”

When your line is finished, look around the Church to see where the longest line remains, and go to that line to assist. Remember, it may not be the closest or most convenient to you—it may be clear across the Church. During the practical training, you will have been shown where to stand at each station, and where to stand if you come to assist a station. It is better to allow the Communion procession to take a little longer than for the Minister to cause a traffic jam by poor positioning.

When your bowl or cup is empty, or your line is finished, return the Bowl to the altar. Usually the deacon will be there to take it from you; otherwise, place the bowl on the ambo side of the altar.

Return the cup to the credence table. You will consume any remaining Precious Blood in your cup, or assist others to do so. Cover the cup with your purificator; do not stuff the purificator into the cup.

Accidents happen. If a Host is dropped, simply pick it up and hold it in the palm of your hand holding the bowl. You may consume it yourself or give it to the priest or deacon when you return the bowl to the altar. If the Cup is spilled, use your purificator to soak up as much of the Precious Blood as possible. Then, leave that purificator over the area on the carpet, and bring it to the attention of the priest or deacon who will complete the cleaning process after Mass.

Purification of the bowls and cups will be done after Mass by the Priest, Deacon, or instituted acolyte. We do not have to concern ourselves with that process.

Holy Communion to the sick, hospitalized, or home-bound is addressed in a separate document. Basically, only Commissioned Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are permitted to bring Communion to the sick or home-bound. They will be called forward after communion, and the priest/deacon will place the required number of Hosts into their pyx. Following a prayer by the preside, they will immediately depart.