

# Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion at Mass

## Guidelines and Responsibilities

1. All Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion ought to show the greatest reverence for the Most Holy Eucharist by their demeanor, by the manner in which they handle the Precious Body and Blood of our Lord, and by their attire, (no tee shirts or shorts, short skirts, low cut blouses, or dress to attract attention to self).
2. Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are required to have received sufficient spiritual, theological, and practical preparation to fulfill their role with faith, knowledge and reverence. They must be in good standing with the Church and have been properly commissioned and installed as Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. In all matters they should follow the guidance of the diocesan bishop.
3. Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion need to be signed in 15 minutes prior to Mass or their spot may be filled. Sign in at the position you wish to serve. Please vary the positions you choose in order to allow everyone the opportunity to serve at various positions. After signing in, move to the hallway outside the sacristy and wait for the priest to come out to pray with the group. Please volunteer when asked to wash vessels or retrieve the collection after Mass.
4. Those serving the Precious Body need to go to the sacristy to cleanse their hands before Communion. Proceed to the sacristy before the sign of peace so that you are in place at the altar before the end of the "Lamb of God". The priest must not have to delay Mass while Extraordinary Ministers are coming forward. Those serving the Precious Blood do not need to wash hands before Communion since they are not touching what people are consuming. Please pay attention to who is on either side of you to avoid confusion at the altar.
5. The proper and only permissible form for distributing Holy Communion is to offer the Eucharistic Bread by saying, "The Body of Christ" and to offer the Precious Blood by saying, "The Blood of Christ." No other words or names may be added or edited in any way. For those that do not wish to receive Holy Communion but come forward, place your hand over their head and pray "Receive the Lord Jesus into your heart".
6. When wiping the chalice, be careful not to dip the purificator into the precious blood. Wipe just the upper lip of the chalice.

7. When distributing the Eucharist, it is important that each minister **ensure the hosts are consumed before the communicants walk away.** Ministers distributing the precious blood can also help to watch.
8. If the Eucharistic Bread or some particle of it falls, it should be picked up reverently by the minister. The Eucharistic Bread may be consumed or completely dissolved in water before being poured down the *sacrarium*.
9. If the Precious Blood is spilled from the chalice, the purificator is placed over the spill. The minister may retrieve a new purificator from the sacristy and continue distributing. After Mass has ended, the area will be washed by the priest, deacon, or acolyte, and the water poured into the *sacrarium*. If carpet, the piece will be removed and burned and a new piece of carpet installed.
10. The minister whose line is completed first should go to the back of the church to attend to those who cannot come forward, and a minister of the cup should follow.
11. All plates are returned to the altar so that the priest or deacon can place remaining hosts into the ciborium in the tabernacle and plates can be purified. Chalices are returned to the sacristy, remaining Precious Blood is consumed, and the empty chalices are placed on the corporal to be purified. **Do not wipe the Chalices out with the purificator until after they have been purified.**
12. When there remains excess Precious Blood, Extraordinary Ministers reverently consume what remains from their cup. If you need assistance in consuming the remaining Precious Blood, please ask. **The sacred vessels are to be purified only by the priest, deacon or an instituted acolyte.** It is strictly forbidden to pour the Precious Blood into the ground or into the *sacrarium*.
13. Silence and proper demeanor in the sacristy after Communion is important. Please refrain from visiting or from any unnecessary chatter. Return quietly to your seats.
14. Those ministers who are assigned to retrieve the collection should do so in pairs after the song is completed. **Without sorting, place the collection into the proper bag, lock it, and place it into the safe.**
15. Those assigned to wash vessels **must wait for the vessels to be purified before washing them** and follow the posted directions to maintain proper care of the vessels.
16. If you will be gone on an assigned day, **PLEASE ARRANGE FOR A SUB AHEAD OF TIME** to avoid the problem of finding people to fill in at the last minute.