

St. Andrew Parish

Guidelines for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

January 2014

Before Mass

As you can imagine, the scheduling of Extraordinary Ministers for each weekend Mass is quite an undertaking. Our Parish Secretary does an outstanding job of maintaining our scheduling software program. You will receive instructions on how to set up and maintain your profile, as well as how to find a substitute if you cannot serve. Please be proactive and not just assume that someone else will take your place during Mass. The delay that this causes disrupts the flow of the Mass and the distribution of communion.

- 1) There is no specific dress code for Extraordinary Ministers, but please dress in a “church appropriate” manner which does not draw attention to you and away from the Eucharist.
- 2) Please arrive at church no later than 10 minutes prior to the beginning of Mass.
- 3) If you are scheduled, check your name off on the sign-in sheet in the usher’s cabinet located across the hall from the main floor restroom. If you are substituting for another minister, draw a line through that person’s name and write your name beside it.
- 4) Sit toward the front of the church. It doesn’t matter which side of the church you sit on.

During Mass

- 1) If a deacon or concelebrating priest is present during the Mass, he will take the place of an Extraordinary Minister.
 - The concelebrating priest will always take the “B1” position.
 - ***Important: The deacon will always take the “C3” position when he is present.***
- 2) If you find that your position is being replaced by a deacon or priest, you don’t need to approach the Altar, but do be aware of missing Extraordinary Ministers and fill in for them as necessary.

At the Sign of Peace

- 1) If you are distributing the Body, approach the Altar from behind the Ambo – the lectern where the readings are proclaimed.
- 2) If you are distributing the Precious Blood, approach the Altar from behind lectern where the cantor sings.
- 3) You do not need to bow or genuflect as you're approaching or leaving the Altar unless you are passing in front of the Altar.

NOTE: As you approach the Altar, you will notice labels on the Altar steps that correspond to the position labels on the floor. Please stand by the one that corresponds with your assigned position. In that way, Ministers who are filling in for any empty positions will know which position to cover without having to ask.

Distribution of the Body and Precious Blood

- 1) After you have received Holy Communion, the priest will give you either a ciborium or chalice and purificator. You may not take a ciborium or chalice from the Altar yourself.

If you are in the “B1” position, you may be asked to offer the cup to the other Ministers of the Body and the Altar Servers. After you have done so, place the chalice and purificator on the Altar Corporal and return to your position.

- 2) As the celebrant moves from the Altar to his position, proceed to your assigned position.
- 3) As you approach your position, determine if there are communicants who are not physically able to approach you. If so, go to them to offer communion.
- 4) If you are in the “B4” or “C3” positions, be aware that the cantor may wish to receive communion from you at the end of the communion hymn.
- 5) If you are in the B5 or C4 position, offer communion to anyone sitting in the side pews before those in the front pews.

Distribution of the Body

- 1) When a communicant approaches you, they will bow their head slightly in reverence. Raise the Host slightly and say, “The Body of Christ.” They should respond “Amen.” An Extraordinary Minister should not call a person by name.

- 2) If they do not respond “Amen,” offer them the Host anyway. It’s better to offer someone the Eucharist than to refuse someone who has not responded “Amen.”
- 3) Using your thumb and forefinger, place the Host in their hand if they present their hands to receive it, otherwise place it on their tongue.
- 4) Do your best to insure that the communicants consume the Host before returning to their seat.
- 5) If your line ends and there are still more communicants go to help them as best you can.
- 6) If you notice that you’ll run out of Hosts before your line ends, it’s permissible to break the Hosts and offer fragments to the communicants. It’s also permissible to return to the Altar and retrieve additional Hosts from the ciborium.
- 7) When you are finished take your ciborium to the Altar, whether empty or not, and place it on the Corporal.
- 8) Return to your pew. You do not have to wait on the other Extraordinary Ministers.

Distribution of the Precious Blood

- 1) When a communicant approaches you, they will bow their head slightly in reverence. Raise the Chalice slightly and say, “The Blood of Christ.” They should respond “Amen.”
- 2) If they do not respond “Amen,” offer them the Cup anyway. As with the Body, it’s better to offer someone the Precious Blood than to refuse someone who has not responded “Amen.” Again, an Extraordinary Minister should not call a person by name.
- 3) Carefully hand them the chalice so that they may consume the Precious Blood. When they have returned the Chalice lightly wipe the inside and outside of the rim of the Chalice with the purificator.
- 4) Rotate the Chalice slightly in-between each communicant.
- 5) Change the position of the purificator periodically.
- 6) If your line ends and there are still more communicants go to help them as best you can. Do not pour the contents of your chalice into another chalice.
- 7) When you are finished take your Chalice to the Credence Table, whether empty or not, and consume any remaining Precious Blood. Do not consume it while standing at your assigned position.

8) Place the purificator on top of your Chalice; do not stuff it in the Chalice.

9) Return to your pew. You do not have to wait on the other Extraordinary Ministers.

If a Host drops to the ground

Pick up the Host and consume it or hold it in your hand and wait until the end of Communion. When you return your ciborium to the Altar place the Host on the Corporal so the priest may consume it.

If the Precious Blood is spilled

Take the purificator and dry the spot where the Precious Blood fell. When you leave your spot place the purificator on the ground so the priest may go and purify the spot after Mass. If it is a substantial spill, go immediately to the credence table and get the water and the cloth used to wash the priest hands. The spot must be rinsed with water, repeat as necessary until the spot is removed. The purificator and hand towel should be rinsed in the Sacrarium in the Sacristy.

If Someone Asks for a Blessing

On rare occasions, communicants may request a blessing for themselves or their children. Extraordinary Ministers are NOT PERMITTED to offer a blessing; ask them to see the Celebrant after Mass.

Communion by Intinction

Communion by Intinction, the dipping of the Host into the Precious Blood, is NOT PERMITTED to be done by an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion.

Extraordinary Ministers Serving the Choir

- 1) Extraordinary Ministers offering communion to the choir should proceed directly to the choir loft via either the stairs or elevator and position themselves as designated on the attached schematic drawing.
- 2) At the conclusion of singing the communion hymn, the choir will systematically approach you for communion.

NOTE: There are several choir members who have difficulty walking. A choir member will direct you to them. If possible, offer them communion before the rest of the choir.

- 3) After offering communion to the choir, BOTH Extraordinary Ministers approach the organ to offer communion to the music director, even after the congregation has completed communion and the priest may be sitting, making announcements or doing final prayers. ***If the final hymn has begun before you've been able to give communion to the music director, WAIT until the hymn is finished and offer him communion.*** Follow the lead of the music director if in doubt.
- 4) Consume any remaining Hosts and Precious Blood while in the choir loft and return the ciborium and chalice to the Sacristy.

Cleansing of the Vessels after Mass

Please remember that your responsibility as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion does not end at the conclusion of Mass. If you are in the "B2", "B3", and "C1" positions you are responsible for cleaning the vessels in the Sacristy after Mass. Do not assume that others will do this for you.

- 1) The altar servers will bring the vessels to the Sacristy after Mass.
- 2) Open the Sacrament cover.
- 3) Rinse each purificator over the Sacrament with tap water, insuring that the water flows into the Sacrament drain. Hang the purificators on the racks above the sink.
- 4) Pour a little tap water into each ciborium, swirl, and pour the contents into the Sacrament. Close the Sacrament cover and set the ciboria aside.

5) Pour a little tap water into one of the chalices, swirl, and pour its contents into a second chalice. Continue this process until each chalice has been cleansed. Consume the contents of the final chalice. ***THE PRECIOUS BLOOD IS NEVER TO BE Poured INTO THE SACRARIUM. Do not dispose of the unconsecrated wine left in the cruet (the small flat-bottomed vessel); leave it in the cruet.***

6) Wash all the ciboria and chalices with dish soap and water; dry and put away.

These instructions for the cleaning of the vessels are also posted behind the upper cabinet door housing the ciboria.