Saint Joseph Catholic Church

Guidelines for Distribution of Holy Communion



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Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (EMHC)

We must never forget what a privilege it is to be called to serve as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion (EMHC). By answering this call, we are responsible for administering the Precious Body and Blood of Christ to our faith community. Whether serving at Sunday Mass, daily Mass, or bringing Holy Communion to the sick or homebound, we must always be conscious of Jesus' presence in what we are doing. How we worship and carry ourselves should also be an example to the faith community of our belief in the sacredness of the mystery that is taking place in the liturgy.

These guidelines have been prepared as an aid to assist all ministers in performing their roles in a prayerful, reverent, and consistent way. If there are any questions about any aspect of serving as an EMHC, please contact Fr. Andy Gonzalez.

Minister Preparation before Mass

- *Arrive 10 to 15 minutes before Mass and sign in. This will help the sacristans with their preparation for the Mass.*
- *Spend some time before Mass in prayer to help focus on what you are about to do.*
- *The sacristy is a place for the priests and deacons to prayerfully prepare for Mass. To help maintain the spirit of prayerfulness for all ministers, please limit social conversation in the sacristy.*

Scheduling

Having enough ministers available to serve at each Mass is an important part of creating the prayerful environment for Mass and attending to the spiritual needs of the community gathered. Each minister is responsible to fulfill their assignments or arrange for a substitute if necessary.

- *Number of EMHCs needed: 4:30 pm Mass: 4 ciboria, 2 chalices, 8:00 am Mass: 4 ciboria, 2 chalices, 10:30 am Mass: 4 ciboria, 2 chalices.*
    - *Holy Family Center assignments: If one EMHC (HFC center aisle), If 2 EMHC's (HFC1 & HFC2 positions)*
- *If you are unable to serve at your scheduled time, it is your responsibility to find a replacement.*
- *If you are going to be unavailable for most of the next schedule, let the scheduler (Doug Januszewski) know a month and half before the next schedule is due to come out.*
- *If someone asks you to substitute, you should fill in for them even if they cannot reciprocate. Remember you have answered the call to serve and not to be served.*
- *To avoid confusion during Mass, know your position and the responsibilities of that position.*
- *For holy day Masses, sign-in sheets will be put in the sacristy a few weeks before the holy day. If we don't get enough ministers, we will have to cut back on the number of chalices there will be at Mass.*

Proper Attire for Liturgy

All EMHCs should show the greatest reverence for the Eucharist by their attire, demeanor, and the way they handle the Precious Body and Blood of our Lord.

The focus of the liturgy is the Eucharist. Anything that could detract from this should be avoided.

Appropriate Attire

For Women	***For Men***
Dresses, skirt suits	*Dress shirt w/ tie*
(appropriate length & cut)	*Collared shirt*
Pant Suits, dress pants	*Sport coats*
Sweaters & blouses	*Suit & tie*
Dress shoes	*Dress shoes*

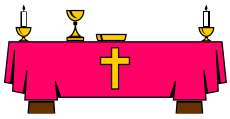
Inappropriate Attire

For Women	***For Men***
Jeans of any kind	*Jeans of any kind*
Tube or Halter tops, spaghetti strap blouses	*T-Shirts of any kind*
Bare midriff tops	*Shorts (casual or dress)*
Short skirts, shorts (dress or casual)	*Thongs, flip flops or beach footwear*
Thongs, flip flops or beach footwear	*Tennis shoes*
Tights or spandex	
Tight or low cut pants, tight fitting blouses or sweaters	
Blouses or sweaters with a plunging neck line	

- *Although you may not be scheduled for a particular Mass, keep in mind that it is possible that you could be called to serve at any Mass you attend. So, please dress appropriately as often as possible.*

Serving as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion at Mass

*Come forward to the sanctuary after the Sign of Peace and be in place **before** the Lamb of God begins. The Lamb of God is a prayer intended to be prayed by the whole faith community. Keeping this in mind, unnecessary movement should be avoided to maintain the spirit of prayerfulness for all. Please follow the instructions below for proceeding to the altar depending on whether you are administering the Precious Body or Precious Blood.*



- *All EMHCs should approach the altar from the right side (by the baptismal font) remembering to sanitize your hands on the way. Once you are behind the altar, position yourselves right in front of the step of the altar.*
- *The Precious Blood ministers should line up on the right end of the line, directly behind the priest's chair facing the community. The servers will take their places in the center of line (directly behind the altar) and Precious Body ministers should line up next to the servers facing the community. Remember when receiving the Host, gently bow from the waist, say, "Amen," and create a pedestal/throne with your hands to receive the Host. If receiving on the tongue, gently bow from the waist, say, "Amen," and open your mouth with your tongue out enough to receive the Host.*
- *The priest will distribute the Precious Body and the Precious Blood to the chalice ministers. The first chalice minister will distribute the Precious Blood to the EMHCs and servers starting on the right side of the line. The second chalice minister will distribute the Precious Blood to the EMHCs and servers starting on the left side of the line. When there is a deacon, chalice 1 should distribute to whoever the deacon doesn't. Once the priest has completed distributing Holy Communion to all the ministers, he will move to the ciborium side of the altar and hand out the Precious Body to the ministers. All ministers should remain in the sanctuary until the priest leaves the altar, and then proceed to their assigned positions.*
- *Precious Blood Ministers – if there is Precious Blood left in your chalice, look to see if you are needed at the other position. If you aren't needed, **return to the altar and wait reverently for the priest/deacon to arrive**. Please do not place your chalice on the altar and walk away. Also, please **do not** "finish" the Precious Blood in your chalice by consuming it yourself. If you're going to consume what is left in your chalice, wait for the other chalice minister or priest/deacon to offer you the cup ("The Blood of Christ." "Amen.") before you consume what remains in your chalice and then hand your chalice to the priest/deacon.*
- *All Host positions – when there are no more communicants at your position, look to see if you are needed at the positions. If someone is already there, check to see if anyone needs more Hosts in their ciborium. If you are not needed, **return to the altar with your vessel and hand it to the priest/deacon. If they're not there yet, wait reverently for them to return and hand them your vessel, and then return to your pew.***

What if……

- *If someone approaches with their arms crossed over their chest (this means they can't receive Holy Communion but would like a blessing): Simply say, "May God bless you", or "May Jesus bless you."* ***Do not make the sign of the cross while giving a blessing.***
- *If the Precious Body is dropped: Pick the Host up and hold the Host in your other hand until you have finished distributing Holy Communion. Then give the Host to the priest or deacon at the altar.*
- *If someone takes a Host but does not consume the Host: If close by, ask them to consume the Host. After Mass, let the priest or deacon know.*
- *If someone approaches you with a pyx (a vessel used to bring the Blessed Sacrament to someone who cannot come to Mass): Give the person Communion and place the Host(s) in their pyx, making sure they close the pyx.*
- *If you can see you're running low on Hosts, you may fraction (i.e., break in half) the Host. Please only fraction the Hosts when it's clear you are running out of Hosts.*
- *If you run out of Hosts, ask the next communicant to wait there until you return. Approach the closest minister to you and ask for some Hosts from them.*
- *If another EMHC is in your position: Look around for an open position and then move to that position. Clear up any confusion after Mass, not during Mass.*
- *If the Precious Blood is spilled: Pause distributing the Precious Blood, asking the communicants to wait, and cover the spot with your purificator. Additional purificators should be available on the counter in the sacristy so you can continue administering the Precious Blood. Return to your position and move your station to avoid anyone stepping in the Precious Blood. When finished, let the priest or deacon know so the affected area can be purified appropriately.*
- *If there is a handicapped or disabled person in your area, administer Holy Communion to those individuals first and then return to your position.*
- *If someone brings the Precious Body to the chalice for intinction (i.e., dipping the Precious Body in the Precious Blood): Cover the Precious Blood to indicate that intinction is not appropriate. Kindly ask the person to consume the Host and administer the Precious Blood to the person as normal.*
- *If someone approaches you for Holy Communion that you believe should not receive Holy Communion: It is not your responsibility to decide who should and who should not receive Communion, nor is this the time to educate the person on how to receive. If a person approaches to receive, Holy Communion should be offered. Discuss the matter with the one of the priests after Mass.*

To Bow or Not

In liturgical language, a bow is a sign or gesture of reverence, and bowing is appropriate at certain points during the liturgy. Some helpful hints on when to bow or not:

- *Bow from the waist during the Nicene Creed when we say, "For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man."*
- *When approaching the sanctuary at the Communion Rite, you should bow from the waist when passing in front of the altar.*
- *Bow from the waist before receiving the Precious Body and the Precious Blood.*
- *When returning to the sanctuary after distributing Holy Communion, if you are carrying the Hosts or the Precious Blood, you need not bow to the altar or tabernacle. Nothing is more sacred than what you already hold in your hands.*
- *When you are leaving the sanctuary after returning your ciborium or chalice to the altar, you should bow from the waist as a sign of reverence to the sanctuary.*

When serving in ministry during liturgy, your actions can model for the congregation the actions and gestures they should be using during the Mass.

Prayer for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

Lord Jesus Christ, You are the Word of God and Bread of Life.

Help me to bring your gospel message and Eucharistic Presence to others.

Help me to do so with faith, hope, love, and reverence.

May I carry out this holy ministry with humility and a profound respect for the sacred mysteries.

All praise to You, the God who is, who was, and who is to come at the end of the ages.

You are Lord, for ever and ever.

Amen.

St. Joseph Catholic Church Guidelines for
Distribution of Communion to the Sick or Homebound

Greeting: *Minister: We begin as we begin all prayer with the sign of the cross. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.*

Response: Amen.

Minister*: Use one of these greetings*

A) *The peace of the Lord be with you always.*
B) *Peace be with you (this house) and with all who live here.*
C) *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.*
D) *The grace and peace of God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.*

Response: And with your spirit.

The Penitential Rite:

Use one of these to begin the rite.

A) *My brothers and sisters, to prepare ourselves for this celebration; let us call to mind our sins.*
B) *My brothers and sisters let us turn with confidence to the Lord and ask his forgiveness for all our sins.*

Pause for a brief moment of silence.

All say: I confess to Almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do; (strike your breast as we say) through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault, therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.

Minister*: May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring to everlasting life.*

Response: Amen.

Minister*: Lord, have mercy*

Response: Lord, have mercy.

Minister: *Christ, have mercy.*

Response: Christ, have mercy.

Minister: *Lord, have mercy.*

Response: Lord, have mercy.

Liturgy of the Word

A) A reading from the holy gospel according to John:

Jesus says:

"He who feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has life eternal, and I will raise him up on the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. The man who feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him. Just as the Father who has life sent me and I have life because of the Father, so the man who feeds on me will have life because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Unlike your ancestors who ate and died nonetheless, the man who feeds on this bread shall live forever."

The Gospel of the Lord

B) A reading from the holy gospel according to John:

Jesus says:

"I myself am the living bread come down from heaven. If anyone eats this bread he shall live forever; the bread I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world."

The Gospel of the Lord

C) A reading from the holy gospel according to John:

Jesus says:

"I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through me."

The Gospel of the Lord

D) A reading from the holy gospel according to John:

Jesus says:

"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who lives in me and I in him, will produce abundantly, for apart from me you can do nothing."

The Gospel of the Lord

E) A reading from the first letter of john

We have come to know and to believe in the love God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.

The Word of the Lord

A brief period of silence after reading the Word of God.

Minister: *Give a brief explanation of the reading, applying it to the needs of the sick person and those looking after them.*

Liturgy of Holy Communion:

Minister:

A) *Now let us pray as Christ our Lord has taught us:*

Or

B) *And now let us pray with confidence as Christ our Lord commanded.*

All: *Our Father who art in heaven……*

Minister shows the Eucharist to those who are present, saying:

Minister: *Behold the Lamb of God, Behold Him who takes away the sin of the world, blessed are those called to the supper of the Lord.*

Response: *Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.*

Concluding Prayer after Communion

A) Minister:

God our Father, you have called us to share the one bread and one chalice and so become one in Christ. Help us to live in him that we may bear fruit, rejoicing that he has redeemed the world.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

B) Minister:

All-powerful God, we thank you for the nourishment you give us through your holy gift. Pour out your Spirit upon us and in strength of this food from heaven keep us single-minded in your service.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

C) Minister:

All powerful and ever-living God, may the body and blood of Christ your Son be for brother/sister (or the name of the person) a lasting remedy for body and soul.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Concluding Rite:

A) Minister:

May the Lord bless us, protect us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.

All: Amen.

B) Minister:

May the almighty and merciful God bless and protect us, the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.