

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION

A. BEFORE MASS - ARRIVAL AND SIGN-IN

- 1) Please arrive at least 20 minutes before the start of Mass, dressed appropriately. This means no shorts, no loud shirts or blouses, no flip-flops. If you choose to wear jeans, they should be of the dress variety – not faded and no holes. Remember, we are serving the Lord and should look respectable.
- 2) When you approach the altar to go to the sacristy, please kneel or bow respectfully toward the tabernacle.
- 3) Place a check mark next to your name on the sign in sheet and select a station to serve at, writing your name next to the station number. Please remember which station is yours – people can sometimes forget, which causes confusion during Mass. Refer to the diagram at the end of this document (also posted on the sacristy bulletin board above the sign-in sheets) for station locations, both at the altar and in the church. Remember that the priest, deacon, servers, and sacristan are preparing for Mass, so sign in and promptly leave the sacristy.
- 4) If you are subbing for someone else, you do not need to draw a line through that person's name – just write your name in the sub spot next to the name and again at your selected station.
- 5) If you are not scheduled to serve, please check the list no more than 5 minutes before Mass starts. If there are open spots, sign in for one in the substitute column and at a station number.
- 6) If there is no deacon for Mass, an “extra” EM will be assigned. That person should sign in for host station #2 / Deacon.
- 7) Please DO NOT sign in for Mass before you are actually at the church for your Mass. Do not ask other people to sign you in early; sign in only when you are present for Mass to ensure you will be there.

B. DURING MASS

- 1) As the “Agnus Dei / Lamb of God” starts, approach the altar (again, kneel or bow respectfully) and take the spot you signed up for (refer to the diagram below). Note that the host EMs stand up against the first step to the altar, while the cup EMs stand about 3 feet behind them. H9 stands on the ambo side, while H10 stands on the tabernacle side. Please follow the diagram so that the area does not get too crowded.
- 2) There's a little bit of choreography as the priest/deacon distribute communion to the EMs. The host EMs should receive first, then step back to allow the cups EMs to come forward to receive. Then those EMs will receive the cup and offer it to the host EMs.
- 3) H8 and C4 will serve the choir (if present) and should go there immediately after receiving the ciborium and cup (location: near the organ); they do not need to wait for the priest and deacon to leave the altar. After serving the choir, H8 and C4 go to their respective spots in the church.

- 4) The other EMs should wait until the priest and deacon leave the altar before going to their respective spots in the church. Refer to the diagram for where to go, as well as finding the floor sticker with your spot. There is no floor sticker for H9 and H10.
- 5) H3 and H8: If you finish at your station, immediately check the priest and deacon lines. If needed, go to assist there by standing about midway along the first pew frontal on your side (marked as H3² and H8² on the diagram). Do not go to assist H4 and H7 unless the priest and deacon lines are finished.
- 6) H7: When your line is finished, remain near the organist/pianist to see if she/he wants to receive communion after the communion hymn.
- 7) H9/H10: If only one person signs up for these spots, he/she should serve the balcony first, then come to cover the handicap rows. If someone in the handicap row tries to stop you on your way to the balcony, just inform them that you (or another EM) will be back to serve them.
- 8) All host EMs: After finishing at your primary or secondary spot, take a glance at the handicap rows to see if they've been served. The ushers are pretty good about making sure of this and will guide an EM to the rows if needed.
- 9) Host EMs: When finished, return your ciborium to the priest, deacon, or sacristan – do not put it in the tabernacle yourself. If you finish very early and the sacristan is not at the tabernacle, place your ciborium in front of the tabernacle (on the pedestal), making sure it will not fall off.
- 10) Cup EMs: When finished distributing, the rest of the Precious Blood **MUST** be consumed. You can do so yourself, or you can ask the deacon or another EM; it should be consumed reverently in full view of the congregation. Once the cup is completely empty, place the purificator over top of the cup, not in the cup, and place the cup on the credence table.

C. SPECIAL NOTES

- 1) If a host is dropped, do not put it back in the ciborium. The EM should pick it up and consume it immediately. If you are not comfortable doing this, keep the Eucharist in your hand until finished distributing. Then give it to the sacristan, explaining what happened. The sacristan will put the Eucharist in an ablution cup. Again, do not put the host back into the ciborium.
- 2) If some of the Precious Blood is spilled, immediately stop distributing and use your purificator to blot up the spill. Try to signal the sacristan or an altar server to bring you another purificator. Once you have another purificator, resume distribution of the Precious Blood. If warranted, additional purifying with water can be done after Mass.
- 3) If a person approaches you with crossed arms (as for a blessing), there is no rubric for EMs to give a blessing, but you may hold your hand over the person's head and simply say, "May God bless you". Technically, only ordained priests and deacons may give a blessing, so any gesture resembling a priestly blessing, such as tracing the sign of the cross on someone's forehead or making the sign of the cross in the air, is explicitly prohibited for lay ministers. This avoids liturgical abuse and maintains the distinction between ordained and lay roles.

- 4) If you are a Precious Blood EM, after someone receives, wipe the cup with the purificator in one direction only, to your left or your right. Then turn the cup in that same direction about one-eighth turn. This way, the next person will be drinking from a “fresh” spot on the cup.
- 5) Occasionally, there is no deacon assisting at Mass. When this happens, an EM will be assigned, and he/she should stand where the deacon stands (both at the altar and at the H2 location on the floor). This EM will also assist in distributing communion to the other EMs at the altar and give them their cups and ciboria.
- 6) Also, there may be times when there is more than one priest or deacon. Although they may defer to our scheduled EMs, they may also supersede you in distributing. Please do not be offended if this happens.

NOTES: Communion Stations

H8 & C4 SERVE CHOIR IMMEDIATELY

H3 & H8 Move to the center aisle (as noted) after you have finished your section**

