

GUIDELINES FOR EXTRAORDINARY MINISTER OF HOLY COMMUNION (EMHC)

Sts. Peter & Paul - Haubstadt

The ordinary minister of Holy Communion is a bishop, priest or deacon according to the norm of Canon Law #910 & 1.

The extraordinary minister of Holy Communion is an instituted acolyte or another member of the Christian faithful designated according to norm of Canon Law #230 & 3. (Special ministers (EMHC) of the Eucharist may distribute Holy Communion when the needs of the Church requires it and when (ordinary) ministers are lacking).

At each scheduled weekend Mass, 6 ministers are required for distribution of Holy Communion. The priest and 3 EMHCs will be needed for the Precious Body. For the Precious Blood, the deacon and 1 EMHC will be needed. If no deacon is present at Mass, then 2 EMHCs will be needed for the Precious Blood.

Occasionally, there may be 2 priests at Mass. If this is the case, we will need only 2 EMHCs for the Precious Body. If 2 deacons are at a given Mass (or deacon and instituted acolyte), no EMHCs will be needed for the Precious Blood. For example, if only 2 EMHCs are needed, the first 2 EMHCs that arrived at the bottom of the sanctuary steps in front of the altar will be the EMHCs for that Mass.

Remember, the ordained are ordained for a reason: the celebration of the Eucharist in all its aspects (preparation, consecration, distribution) belongs to them in virtue of their very office and their sacrament of Holy Orders.

Before Mass

- 1.1 **If you are unable to fulfill your scheduled time, you are expected to find a replacement in advance.**
- 1.2 Dress modestly and appropriately in your "Sunday Best", rather than casual clothing. Refrain from wearing shorts, short dresses, jeans, flip-flop, spaghetti straps, plunging neck lines, etc. If you have to question it, wear something else.

- 1.3 Jewelry or strong scents that would be distracting to the assembly should not be worn.
- 1.4 The use of a symbol such as a cross or a medal is permissible.
- 1.5 Have clean hands, with neatly trimmed and clean finger nails.
- 1.6 EMHCs should sit within the assembly of believers; they should not be part of the opening or closing procession, nor sit in the sanctuary.

During Mass

- 1.1 EMHCs are called, as is the entire assembly, to full conscious, active participation in the Eucharistic celebration.
- 1.2 Because EMHCs are models for the ritual behavior of the assembly, they should do all the ritual gestures of the assembly with strength and reverence, and make all verbal and sung ritual responses with faith and enthusiasm.

Approaching the Altar

- 1.1 During the sign of peace, extend the sign only to those nearest you in the pew. Then, leave the pew, allowing enough time to get to the bottom of the sanctuary steps in front of the altar without rushing.
- 1.2 Once all the required number of EMHCs are at the bottom of the sanctuary steps, bow together and then proceed in single file past the presider chair (chair the priest seats in) to the server room to use the hand sanitizer. Then everyone returns at the same time in single file to the sanctuary and stands in front of the presider chair in single file.
- 1.3 EMHCs receive Holy Communion after the priest and deacon have received, and before the reception of Holy Communion by the assembly.
- 1.4 When EMHCs receive Holy Communion, remember to bow your head before the Sacrament as a gesture of reverence and say "Amen" before you receive both the Precious Body and the Precious Blood of Christ from the priest or deacon. This is just the same as you would receive in the communion line.
- 1.5 After the priest (sometimes the deacon) distributes the Precious Body to all the EMHCs, the deacon (if no deacon at Mass, the priest) will give the chalice with Precious Blood in it to only one EMHC. Please take the chalice and the purificator (white cloth) from the deacon (or priest). Normally two chalices are used at Mass. One for the deacon and one for the EMHC.

- 1.6 Then the EMHC of the chalice give the Precious Blood to the other EMHCs who did not receive a chalice.
- 1.7 Please note: if the whole assembly is not being offered the Precious Blood, it is not appropriate to offer to the EMHCs.
- 1.8 The priest (sometimes the deacon) will give the ciborium (containing the hosts) to those EMHCs who will be distributing the Precious Body to the assembly.
- 1.9 EMHCs are not to self-communicate (give communion to one's self) either the Precious Body or the Precious Blood.
- 1.10 After all are ready, the priest will start heading towards his position, then the EMHCs move to your communion position.

EMHCs Positions for Distributing Holy Communion under both species

- 1.1 The first two EMHCs facing the assembly that have the Precious Body and Blood will go to the left side of the church and give Holy Communion first to the servers and music ministers. Then the EMHC of the Precious Blood will stand near the doors below the bottom of the sanctuary steps, and the EMHC of the Precious Body will stand in front of lectern below the bottom of the sanctuary steps.
- 1.2 The remaining two EMHCs of the Precious Body, one will stand next to the priest in the middle aisle below the bottom of the sanctuary steps and the other EMHC will go to the right side of the church and will stand in front of ambo (by baptismal font) below the bottom of the sanctuary steps. The deacon (if no deacon at Mass, another EMHC) with the Precious Blood will stand near the doors below the bottom of the sanctuary steps. Note: The EMHC who stands in front of the ambo will give Holy Communion first to the people in back of church (normally the last pew) who are less able to walk. Also, there may at times be people in the front pew.
- 1.3 The priest position will be in the middle aisle with the Precious Body.
- 1.4 When the Precious Blood is offered at Mass, the deacon serves as the minister of the chalice for the distribution of Precious Blood even if the priest does not distribute Holy Communion due to illness or infirmity. If the priest cannot distribute Holy Communion another EMHC will take his place which will be an EMHC from the assembly that is not scheduled.

Distributing Holy Communion – Precious Body

- 1.1 The EMHC holds the host slightly above the ciborium, looks at the communicant, and in a clear voice says, *“The Body of Christ”* to which the communicant responds *“Amen”*. These are the only words to be used. Nothing is to be added or subtracted, not even the name of the person. Then the Precious Body is placed in the hand or on the tongue according to the manner indicated by the communicant.
- 1.2 If a communicant approaches and doesn't appear to know what to do or how to receive Holy Communion, you may ask if they are Catholic or just offer them a blessing.
- 1.3 If a communicant begins to walk away carrying the host, the EMHC should say in a subdued voice, *“Please consume the host now”*.
- 1.4 If a host falls to the ground during distribution of Holy Communion, the EMHC should pick it up immediately and consume it then, or after distribution is over give it to the priest or deacon. It should never be put back in the ciborium to be given to another communicant.
- 1.5 This is a very rare circumstance, but if a host is placed on the communicant tongue and should fall off the tongue and land on the floor, the EMHC should pick it up immediately and hold it. It should never be put back in the ciborium to be given to another communicant. After distribution of Holy Communion give the host to the priest or deacon explaining what happen. The host will be placed in the ablution cup (small bowl-like container filled with water) by the priest or deacon.
- 1.6 If a person (usually a child) comes up with their arms crossed, simply say, *“May God bless you”*. Please do not make the sign of the cross on their forehead or touch them. This is for protection of the Precious Body and for sanitary reasons.
- 1.7 If a person comes up to you with arms not crossed, but the hands or tongue are not indicated by the communicant for reception for Holy Communion after the EMHC says, *“The Body of Christ”* to which the communicant did not respond *“Amen”*, place the host back in the ciborium and simply say, *“May God bless you”*.

- 1.8 If EMHC is running short of hosts, you may break the hosts in half OR go to the closet minister of the Precious Body to get more. However, remember if you are running short, it is probable that the others are too.
- 1.9 Celiac disease, (disorder causing an allergic intestinal reaction to the gluten in wheat) as an EMHC it is important to recognize that there may be persons in the assembly who are medically advised against the reception of the Precious Body. Canon Law #925 permits the reception of communion “under the form Precious Blood alone in case of necessity.”

Distributing Holy Communion – Precious Blood

- 1.1 The EMHC holds the chalice up slightly and says in a clear voice while looking at the communicant, “*The Blood of Christ*” to which the communicant responds “*Amen*”. These are the only words to be used. Nothing is to be added or subtracted, not even the person name. Generally, the communicant should hold the chalice firmly in both hands and drink from it. However, in the case of a physical disability or weakness, the EMHC should be ready to assist in holding the chalice.
- 1.2 Special care should be taken when children receive the Precious Blood from the chalice.
- 1.3 After the Blood of Christ has been received, the EMHC should wipe the rim of the chalice, inside and out, with a purificator and turn the chalice slightly before presenting it to the next communicant. The EMHC should be careful not to wipe in a manner where the purificator is dipped into the Precious Blood.
- 1.4 The chalice is always ministered to the communicant; it may never be left for self-communication.
- 1.5 When Communion under the form of the Precious Blood is offered to the assembly, it shall always be clear that it is the option of the communicant and not of the EMHC whether the communicant shall receive the Precious Blood.
- 1.6 Intinction (by dipping the consecrated Host into the Precious Blood) is not allowed. If a communicant with consecrated host in hand approaches an EMHC distributing the Precious Blood, it is advisable to cover the chalice with the purificator.

- 1.7 Any danger of spilling the Precious Blood should be carefully avoided. If, by chance, it should spill, the area should be marked, covered immediately and washed after Mass.
- 1.8 If your chalice is empty and there are more communicants, remain in your designate position and place the purificator over top of the chalice so that communicants can see that there is no more Precious Blood available.

EMHC Procedures after Distribution of Holy Communion

- 1.1 Once all the EMHCs are done with distribution of Holy Communion, all will meet at the bottom of the sanctuary steps in front of the altar. All will bow together and then proceed in single file to the altar towards the presider chair side of the altar. EMHCs, who distributed the Precious Body, will place their ciborium on the altar and then proceed to the sacristy with the EMHC(s) of the Precious Blood who will place the chalice on the cabinet counter top to be purified after Mass.
- 1.2 Any Precious Blood that is not consumed during Holy Communion may be consumed by the EMHCs in the sacristy. If EMHCs cannot consume it, give it to the priest or deacon. The chalices should be covered with the purificator by laying it over top of the chalice. Do not put the purificator down into the chalice to absorb the remaining Precious Blood.
- 1.3 Purification of the chalices and ciborium is reserved to priests, deacons, and instituted acolytes.
- 1.4 If any remaining hosts are returned to the tabernacle, EMHCs are to wait in the sacristy until the priest or deacon places the extra hosts into the tabernacle and returns to the altar. Then the EMHCs will return in a single file pass the past the presider chair and down to the bottom of the sanctuary steps in front of the altar. All will bow together and then proceed to their pews.