

# EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION

## IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER:

- Your role in our celebration of the liturgy is one of great importance, and should be treated as such. When you are scheduled to minister at a particular Mass, *it is your responsibility* to either be there or to find a replacement to take your place. It is easy for us to **assume** that if we are not there, someone else will just step forward to fill in for us, but this does not always happen. **If you are not able to find a substitute, please contact the coordinator for your scheduled Mass.**
- Make sure your hands and finger nails are clean.
- In terms of dress, business casual is recommended. We ask that our Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion do not wear shorts or skirts/dresses that are too short. We also ask that you not wear blue jeans. If there is a shortage of EMHCs at Mass, and you are wearing blue jeans, you may come forward and volunteer, but please wait to see if any other volunteers come forward first.
- When you are scheduled to minister, please arrive at the church at least 15 minutes before the start of Mass and check in at the ministry room in the gathering area of the church. *You are then asked to gather with the celebrant and the other ministers in the chapel 5 minutes before Mass for prayer.*
- When walking up to the sanctuary, or any time you walk within the sanctuary, to or from the altar, fold your hands comfortably in front of you, at a respectful level; do not swing your arms as you walk around and do not fold your hands below your waist.

## THE PROCEDURE IN DETAIL FOR ASSISTING WITH THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

- The EMHCs come forward **as soon as the Agnus Dei begins**, and stand at the foot of the steps facing the altar (see diagram on page 7). As you come forward, sanitize your hands using the hand sanitizer that is provided in the dispensers. Do not wait until the last minute and then rush up.
- *Please note: in the event that there is a deacon present or another priest concelebrating the Mass as Ordinary Ministers, he/they will be assisting with the distribution of Holy Communion. In that case, we will have to adjust the number of Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion at that Mass.*
- Remember to fold your hands at a respectful level, and not have them hanging by our side or folded hanging down by your belt or below. Neither of these positions are too becoming and should be avoided at all times both for the women and men. This is a bit awkward at first, but the more you do it, the more comfortable it will become. Our demeanor **should be respectful** at all times as we minister.
- The celebrant will give himself the Precious Body. **As soon as the priest consumes the Body of Christ**, the EMHCs come forward into the sanctuary. Line up as 'evenly as possible' on each side of the altar (see diagram on page 8). **DO NOT WAIT FOR THE PRIEST TO RECEIVE FROM THE CHALICE.**

- The celebrant first distributes the Body of Christ to the EMHCs, and they consume the Body of Christ as it is given to them. As a sign of reverence, bow your head right before you are offered the Body of Christ.
- The celebrant then distributes the Blood of Christ to the EMHCs. Again, as a sign of reverence, please bow your head right before you are offered the Blood of Christ.
- Once all the ministers of the cup have been given the cups and purificators, those who will be assisting with the distribution of the Body of Christ have been given the ciboria, then everyone proceeds together, at the same time, to their stations. **All Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, along with the celebrant step down to their station at about the same time.** The EMCHs on the choir side are to go to the stations on that side, and the EMHCs on the opposite side are to go to distribute on that side (*see diagrams on pages 10-12 for distribution stations*). Try to be as smooth and fluid as possible.
- Those distributing the Blood of Christ should spread out as far as possible so as to allow those receiving the Body of Christ plenty of room.
- When distributing Holy Communion, be as reverent and respectful as possible. Try to establish some sort of eye contact with those who come forward to receive. **Plainly and distinctly** say “The Body of Christ” or “The Blood of Christ”, as you are either placing the host in the hand of the person or handing them the cup. **No other words or names should be added.**
- Also, *it is not a race*, so do not feel hurried. This is a *sacred* and *holy* moment, for both the person receiving the Blessed Sacrament and the minister.
- If a person does not wish to receive the host in the hand, carefully place the host on the tip of their tongue when they open their mouth.
- The blessing of young children and/or non-Catholics is permissible, as long as the minister does not do a blessing in the manner of a priest or deacon. The minister should simply and kindly look the individual in the eye and address in the following (or similar) way: “God bless you. Received the Lord Jesus in your heart.” **No outward sign, such as touching the person or making the sign of the cross, should be made by a lay minister. We don’t want to put Jesus in someone’s hair.**
- When distributing the Blood of Christ, once the person has taken a drink from the cup and hands it back to the EMHC, the minister uses the purificator to wipe the lip of the cup and then turns the cup slightly (about ¼ turn) before handing it to the next person in line.
- After you have distributed the Body of Christ, you may help out at another station if you finish ahead of them, but no more than two (2) ministers at any station. The remaining ministers should line up on the choir side of the altar with their ciborium in hand, and wait for the priest to return. This avoids confusion for those still coming forward to receive Holy Communion.
- Those distributing the Blood of Christ may also go to other stations to help once they have finished distributing Holy Communion at their station.
- Be attentive to special needs. If someone is not able to come forward to receive Holy Communion, one of the ushers will let the EMHCs know this. That Extraordinary Minister can then simply go to where that person is seated, give them Holy Communion and then return to the altar. This includes both the Precious Body and Precious Blood. Be mindful that you can and may need to break hosts in half by looking ahead and making a good judgment if you should do so.

- When the EMHCs with the Body of Christ have completely finished distributing the hosts, they take their ciborium and line up on the choir side of the altar (see diagram on page 9). It is a good act to gently wipe your fingers used for the distribution on a corporal to protect any crumbs that might be present. Wait for the priest or deacon to consolidate the contents of the ciboria. He will then **hand the empty ciborium back to the EMHC who then takes it to the credence table**. Once they have returned their ciborium to the credence table, the EMHCs who distributed the Body of Christ may return to their pews.
- As the EMHCs finish distributing the Blood of Christ, they consume any Precious Blood left in their cups from the place of distribution, and then take their cups to the credence table by walking around or through the sanctuary (DO NOT GO THROUGH THE WORKING SACRISTY BEHIND THE ALTAR). When consuming what is left in your cup, you can either consume the remnants yourself or ask another EMHC to assist. If you do need assistance with consuming the remnants, this can be done at the credence table. Cups should be empty before they are put on the credence table. **DO NOT WIPE THE CUPS OUT BEFORE THEY ARE PURIFIED BY THE PRIEST, DEACON, OR ACOLYTE and DO NOT PUT THE PURIFICATORS IN THE CUPS.**
- When you return to your pew always go by the most direct route **without** crossing in front of the celebrant; go behind him.
- Those EMHCs who distributed the Blood of Christ may return to their pews once they have returned the cups to the credence table, by the most direct route. There is no need to wait for the celebrant or to wait for all of the other EMHCs.
- The celebrant will consolidate the ciboria and then take them to the Tabernacle. **While the priest is returning the Blessed Sacrament to the Tabernacle, those ministers still in the sanctuary or at the credence table are asked to make a simple bow out of reverence to the Blessed Sacrament as the priest genuflects, and then return to their pews.** There is no need to congregate by the credence table after you have placed your empty cup on the tray, unless the priest is approaching the Tabernacle.

The main thing that we need and want is that all of the movements of the lay ministers, celebrant, and servers be as smooth and fluid as possible, ***without being a distraction to the congregation.***

***ALL EMHCs ARE TO HELP WITH THE CLEAN UP AFTER MASS.***

***(SEE AFTER MASS DETAILS BELOW.)***

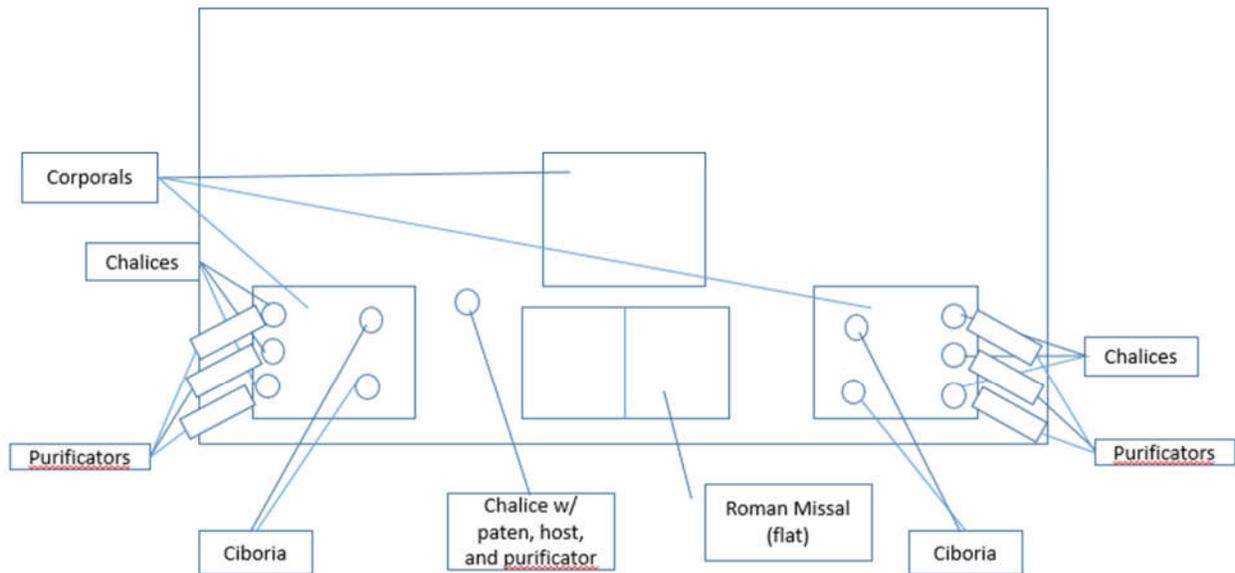
# DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE EUCHARISTIC COORDINATORS:

## BEFORE MASS:

- When you arrive, the first thing you need to do is check the Tabernacle to see how many hosts are in the ciboria so that you will know how many hosts to put out for the Mass you are coordinating. Leave the key in the Tabernacle for Mass.
- **For the Masses where the cup is to be distributed**, take the tray and place the required number of cups from the cabinet on the tray. Place the required number of purificators on the tray. Also on the tray, place the celebrant's chalice, a purificator, and the paten with a large host, (place the partially unfolded purificator on top of the chalice with the paten/large host on top), and three (3) corporals.
- Take enough ciboria from the cabinet so as to make the total ciboria required for your Mass, including the one(s) in the tabernacle. Each ciborium holds 250 hosts when full. Fill the empty ciboria with enough unconsecrated hosts to ensure that when combined with the consecrated hosts already in the tabernacle you will have a sufficient number for the Mass you are preparing for. As a point of reference the church holds 1200 people, so judge accordingly. **Try to estimate as close as possible. The Roman Missal instructs that the priest is not to consecrate more hosts than what will be used at a particular Mass.** When filling the bowls please use your hands rather than dumping as we do not want all of the crumbs to be placed in the bowls with the hosts. A ciborium filled with unconsecrated hosts and the cruets of wine and water go on the offertory table in the back of the church to be carried in during the Preparation of Gifts.

## DURING MASS:

- If there is no deacon assisting at Mass, as soon as the people are seated following the petitions and the offertory begins the coordinator will enter the sanctuary on the side where the Celebrant and servers sit. They will take the three corporals located on one of the trays, the Roman Missal from the stand by the servers, and place the Missal in front on the altar opening the book to the gold ribbon. Then open one corporal on the right side of the altar and one in front of the Missal. **The oldest server will then bring the tray holding the cups with wine and place it on the left side of the altar.** Then place all that is on the tray on the altar: **3 chalices and purificators on the right corporal – the other 3 chalices and purificators will go on the left corporal after the second tray is brought over; the chalice with paten should be placed to the left of the center corporal will go.** The other server will bring the other tray containing the ciboria and place it on the left side of the altar. Then place all that is on that tray on the altar. Evenly distribute the ciboria on the corner corporals.



## **AFTER MASS:**

- It is important that all EMHC's come back to the working sacristy after Mass to clean up. Don't assume someone else will take care of this duty or that it is only the coordinators responsibility.
- After Mass retrieve the trays with the cups, purificators, and empty ciboria from the credence table and return them to the working sacristy. Also refold the 3 corporals from the altar and bring them back to the working sacristy to be placed on the tray for the next Mass. **Do not place corporals in the laundry basket until after the 5 pm Sunday Mass. If cups have not been purified you must wait until a priest, deacon, or acolyte purifies them before washing.** Once purified the cups should be washed using hot water and soap, then rinsed and dried after every Mass. To dry the cups use only the cotton dish towels (do not use purificators or terry-cloth towels). There is no need to wash the ciboria after each Mass. **Do not wash the priest's paten or chalice.**
- If one of the special pyx was used for low-gluten hosts please return it to the top middle drawer in the priest's sacristy.
- After all the vessels have been cleaned, place them on the trays for the next Mass. **Do not fill the cups with wine for the next Mass or put hosts in the ciboria.** The coordinator for the next liturgy is responsible for filling the cups and setting everything up on the credence table. NOTE: After the 5 pm Sunday Mass the corporals should be placed in the laundry basket to the left of the sink and cups, ciboria, and trays placed back in their cabinets. Leave wet towels unfolded on the counter edge to dry.

## **NOTES REGARDING THE PROPER CARE FOR CLOTHS USED AT OR NEAR THE ALTAR**

### **ALTAR CLOTHS**

Just as the altar is a sign for us of Christ the living stone, altar cloths are used "out of reverence for the celebration of the memorial of the Lord and the banquet that gives us his body and blood." By their

beauty and form they add to the dignity of the altar in much the same way that vestments solemnly adorn the priests and sacred ministers. Such clothes also serve a practical purpose, however, in absorbing whatever may be spilled of the Precious Blood or other sacramental elements. Thus the material of altar clothes should be absorbent and easily laundered.

While there may be several altar cloths in the form of drapings or even frontals, their shape, size, and decoration should be in keeping with design of the altar. Unless the altar cloth has been stained with the Precious Blood, it can be cleaned by regular methods, making sure that methods are used to preserve the beauty and life of the altar cloth. If it has been stained with Precious Blood it must first be cleansed in a sacrarium before laundering. In the absence of a sacrarium, it should be cleansed in a container of clear water first before it is laundered. The water from the container should be poured directly on the ground and not poured down the drain.

## **CORPORALS**

Sacred vessels containing the Body and Blood of the Lord are always placed on top of a corporal.

Corporals are spread by a deacon or another designated minister in the course of the preparation of the gifts and the altar. Because one of the purposes of the corporal is to contain whatever small particles of the consecrated host may be left at the conclusion of Mass, care should be taken that the transferal of consecrated hosts between sacred vessels should always be done over a corporal. The corporal should be white in color and of sufficient dimensions so that at least the main chalice and paten may be placed upon it completely. When necessary, more than one corporal may be used. The material of corporals should be absorbent and easily laundered.

Any apparent particles of the consecrated bread which remains on the corporal after the distribution of Holy Communion should be consumed in the course of the purification of the sacred vessels.

When corporals are laundered they should first be rinsed either in a sacrarium or in a container of clear water. If rinsed in a container of clear water, once the corporals have been rinsed, the water from the container should be poured directly on the ground and not poured down the regular sink drain. Only after they have been properly rinsed can they be washed with laundry soaps in the customary manner. Corporals should be ironed in such a way that their distinctive manner of folding helps to contain whatever small particles of the consecrated host may remain at the conclusion of the Eucharistic celebration.

## **PURIFICATORS**

Purificators are customarily brought to the altar with chalices and are used to wipe the Precious Blood from the lip of the chalice and to purify sacred vessels. They should be white in color. Whenever the Precious Blood is distributed from the chalice, poured into ancillary vessels, or even accidentally spilled, purificators should be used to absorb the spill. The material of purificators should be absorbent and easily laundered.

Because of their function purificators regular become stained with the Precious Blood. It is therefore essential that they should first be cleansed in a sacrarium, or in the absence of a sacrarium, in a container of clear water. If cleansed in a container of clear water, once they have been cleansed, the water from the container should be poured directly on the ground and poured down the drain. Then they may be washed with laundry soap in the customary manner. Purificators should be ironed in such a way that they may be easily used for the wiping of the lip of the chalice.

## **LAVABO TOWELS**

The Order of Mass calls for the washing of the hands (lavabo) of the priest celebrant in the course of the preparation of the gifts and the altar. Since the Roman Missal instructs that it is his hands and only on his fingers which are washed, the towel should be of adequate size and sufficient absorbency for drying his hands. Neither the color nor the material of the lavabo towel is prescribed, though efforts should be made to avoid the appearance of a “dish or bath towel” or other towels with a purely secular use.