

**HANDBOOK
FOR
EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF
HOLY COMMUNION**



**OUR LADY OF THE ASSUMPTION CHURCH
CARMICHAEL, CALIFORNIA**

REVISED AUGUST 2016

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**SERVING AS EXTRAORDINARY MINISTER
OF HOLY COMMUNION AT SUNDAY MASS
OUR LADY OF THE ASSUMPTION CHURCH**

Thank you for your service as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion (EMC). Through you, God is present to his people.

Because your ministry is so important, here are some basic expectations for all EMCs:

- **Please try to serve as scheduled.** If you are unable to serve on your scheduled day, please try to ensure you have requested a substitute through the computer system. If you are not assigned to serve but are present at Mass, the Mass Captain may ask you to serve if a substitute is needed. Plan only to serve if the Mass Captain is unable to find enough EMCs.
- Please **prepare yourself outwardly** for ministry by dressing modestly and appropriately for Mass.



BEFORE MASS

Please arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the start of Mass to sign in and prepare for service. Ensure that all vessels and linens needed for Mass are in their proper places:

Altar

- Altar should be bare.

Credence table

- Chalice with purificator, paten with large presider host, pall, and folded corporal
- Four cups with purificators; two ciboria
- Pitcher of water, bowl, and hand towel
- Cruet of water

(Please follow the photograph in the sacristy for placement of items on the credence table. The altar servers are trained to recognize the specific placement in the photograph.)

Tabernacle

- Ensure that the tabernacle key is in the tabernacle lock

Gifts table

- Wine Pitcher filled halfway (please note examples in the binder in the sacristy): covered with a purificator
- Covered ciborium with unconsecrated hosts
- Book of Intentions

The ministry of hospitality and creating a welcoming atmosphere belongs to all ministers, not just the ushers. When you have ensured that everything is in place, please greet people as they come in with a simple 'Good morning' or 'Good evening'.

DURING MASS

All ministers are encouraged to join the assembly in sung and spoken responses, as examples of participation for the people.

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

- EMCs approach the sanctuary during the Lamb of God. Stop at the foot of the sanctuary steps then bow reverencing the Altar and the Eucharist present there. Hand sanitizer is provided at the Credence Table for use. Stand behind the Presider at the altar, facing the congregation.
- The Presider will minister the Precious Body to the first EMC, and then minister to the same EMC the Precious Blood. The Presider will then continue ministering the Body of Christ to each EMC and the Altar Servers. The first EMC follows and ministers the Blood of Christ to the EMCs and the Altar Servers.
- The Presider will then distribute ciboria and communion cups with purificators to all EMCs. After receiving either the cup or the ciborium, EMCs should proceed to their designated stations. Please do not wait for all the vessels to be distributed.
- Ministers of the Cup need to place themselves at a sufficient distance from the Ministers of the Body so that a line does not block the flow of communion. A good rule of thumb is to stand at the end of the pew furthest from the Minister of the Body.

Ministering the Body and Blood of Christ

- Communicants may receive either in the hand or on the tongue, at their discretion.
- For those distributing the Body, take a host, hold it before the person saying the “Body of Christ,” then place it in the person’s hand or on his/her tongue.
- For those ministering the Cup, hand the cup to the communicant as you say the “Blood of Christ,” and after the cup is handed back, the minister should wipe the cup with the purificator. Before ministering to the next person, turn the cup a quarter turn or so. When the cup is empty, please return the cup to the credence table, and do not leave the purificator in the empty cup. The purificator can be left on the credence table.
- Distribute communion first from your station. **If someone who is physically challenged is sitting in the first pew, you may minister to them first.** A minister of the Cup should accompany the minister of Body in taking communion to the disabled
- The ministers of the Bread and the Cup who finish their distribution first should immediately move to the back of the church to distribute to those who are physically challenged. Ideally, this responsibility should not fall upon the minister who will serve the choir.

WHAT IF?

- **IF** an EMC runs out of consecrated hosts, he or she should go to the closest EMC with the Body to obtain more.
- **IF** the communion procession is close to the end, it is appropriate to break a few remaining hosts in halves or quarters in order to accommodate all communicants.
- **IF** a communicant comes forward in the communion procession with a pyx for carrying a host to a homebound person, it is not customary to place a consecrated host into the pyx while distributing communion. Without being disruptive, ask the person to come to you after Mass. At that time it can be explained to the person that those designated to bring communion to the sick and homebound should place their pyx on the altar before Mass and retrieve the pyx from the altar before leaving the church. However, if the communicant persists, place a host in the pyx.
- **IF** a host is dropped, it is the EMC's responsibility to pick it up and consume it immediately.
- **IF** a communicant approaches a cup minister with the host in his or her hand with the intention of dipping it into the cup (intinction), on the rare occasion when this happens, please inform the person that intinction is not allowed and can discuss this with the priest after Mass. However if the person insists, you can offer to dip the Body in the cup and place it on their tongue. If they still persist, let the person dip the Body and consume it.
- **IF** a person approaches requesting a blessing, usually by placing his/her arms across the chest, the EMC should bless the person by holding a hand over the head and saying, "Bless you," (NO Sign of the Cross), or touching the person and making the Sign of the Cross on the person's forehead or top of the head. Please be cognizant of hygienic practices, and try to use the non-distributing hand for the Sign of the Cross.

AFTER COMMUNION

- Return to the credence table. No bow is necessary because you are completing your ministry and the original bow will suffice. Ministers of the Precious Body should take their ciboria to the tabernacle and hand it to the priest. When the priest hands back the empty ciborium, please place it on the credence table.
- As noted earlier, ministers of the Cup should take their empty cups and place them on the credence table immediately when empty. However, after Communion is completed, ministers with cups with the Precious Blood remaining, should go to the credence table and consume the Precious Blood at the table, then place the Cup on the credence table with the purificators on the table, not in the cups.
- **The sacred vessels are now purified in the sacristy after the Mass.**
- Return to your seat by the most direct route. Reverence the altar with a bow at the foot of the sanctuary steps and participate in the remainder of the Mass.

AFTER MASS

After the end of the recessional song, **all EMCs should assist the Altar Servers in removing vessels and linens from the credence table.**

The sacred vessels are now purified after Mass. Only one minister should purify the sacred vessels, using the following procedure:

- Begin with the chalice and paten – make sure any remnants on the paten are brushed into the chalice with your thumb.
- Pour water over the paten into the chalice, then swish it around. Pour that water from the chalice into each of the remaining vessels, swishing the water around each time to remove all consecrated remnants .
- Drink the water from the final vessel, and then wipe all vessels with a purificator.

All ministers should now assist and clean purified vessels using the following procedure:

- Wash all vessels (except the two ciboria that have reliefs of the apostles, as the water gets in between the two pieces), using soap and water.
- Thoroughly dry them before preparing them for the next Mass or placing them in the cabinet.

Set up the credence table as follows:

- Priest's Chalice with clean purificator draped over the mouth of the chalice, paten with presider host placed on top of the chalice, pall placed on the paten, folded corporal on the pall.
- Four cups and purificators ; two ciboria
- Pitcher of water, bowl, and hand towel
- Cruet of water

(Please follow the photograph in the sacristy for placement of items on the credence table. The altar servers are trained to recognize the specific placement in the photograph.)

AFTER MASS (*continued*)

Set up the gift table:

- Fill the wine pitcher half-full with a purificator over the top. (Please note the examples in the photographs in the binder in the sacristy.)
- Fill the large ciborium with hosts for the next Mass. If the ciborium in the tabernacle is full, which is roughly 200 hosts, then fill the ciborium for the gift table about a third to half full. Ciborium in the tabernacle is half full, then the ciborium for the gift table should be two-thirds to full.
- Place cloths to be laundered in the bin; wet cloths over the side to allow some drying and to prevent mold.

PLEASE NOTE: After 5:30 Saturday and 11:00 Sunday, leave all vessels on the counter in the sacristy. Leave wine pitcher and ciborium empty. After 7:30 Sunday, place vessels in the cupboards.

GROWING AS AN EXTRAORDINARY MINISTER OF HOLY COMMUNION

Being an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion does not mean simply being a minister of Communion on Sundays when scheduled. As God uses you to bring his sacred presence to his people through the Sacrament, please reflect on how you reflect this love and presence in your daily life.

GLOSSARY

- Chalice: The large cup used at Mass to hold the wine that becomes the Blood of Christ. A chalice does not have a lid.
- Ciborium: A cup-like vessel with a lid that is used to distribute the Eucharist to the people. It is also used to reserve the Blessed Sacrament in the Tabernacle.
- Communion Cup: A cup, usually of semi-precious metal, used to minister the Precious Blood to the people.
- Corporal: A square white linen napkin on which are set the vessels containing the bread and wine during Mass. It is folded into a small square. When unfolded, it is placed on top of the altar cloth.
- Credence Table: The credence table is situated directly behind the Tabernacle. This table serves as a staging area for vessels and linens for Mass.
- Finger Towel: A small white terrycloth towel used by the priest as he washes his hands before the Eucharistic Prayer.
- Pall: A square of stiffened linen which serves as a cover for the chalice.

GLOSSARY

- Paten: The plate that holds the Presider's host, the visible symbol of the bread being broken in the Eucharist.
- Purificator: A white cloth used to cleanse the chalice and/or communion cups after each person drinks. Also used to dry the chalice and communion cups after cleaning. The priest's purificator has a double fold in the center.
- Pyx: A pocketwatch-shaped case in which a consecrated host is carried to the sick.
- Sacrarium: A special sink in the sacristy that drains into the ground under the building, not into the sewer system. Used to dispose of Holy Water, to rinse linens still containing Precious Blood, etc.
- Sacristy: A room located off the sanctuary, where communion vessels, linens, ritual books and vestments are kept.
- Sanctuary: The area of the church where the Altar, Ambo and Presider's Chair are located.
- Tabernacle: The small storage cabinet where the reserved Blessed Sacrament is stored.



Extraordinary Minister's Prayer

Soul of Christ, sanctify me;

Body of Christ, save me;

Blood of Christ, inebriate me;

Water from the side of Christ, wash me;

Passion of Christ, strengthen me;

O good Jesus, hear me;

Within your wounds hide me;

Separated from you, let me never be;

From the evil one protect me;

At the hour of my death, call me;

And close to you bid me;

That with your saints, I may be,

Praising you forever and ever. Amen.

(Anima Christi)