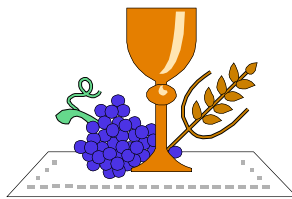


Handbook for
Extraordinary Ministers
of Holy Communion
Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish



December 2013

Introduction

The Most Holy Eucharist is the most august sacrament, in which Christ the Lord Himself is contained, offered and received, and by which the Church constantly lives and grows. What an honor it is to be called to serve as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion. I can honestly tell you that the best part of being a priest – that which gives me the greatest joy and satisfaction – is communicating the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ to his faithful people. To see their eyes of faith and hear their “amen” of consent blesses me every day.

May the Lord Jesus bless you greatly for sharing in this sacred ministry. May you grow every day in love and respect for the Blessed Eucharist.

Father Glenn Jones, Pastor

General Information

There will be one assigned Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion Coordinator for each Mass. This person will recruit the required number of Extraordinary Ministers for that Mass.

4 for Saturday at 4 PM

6 for Saturday at 6 PM, and Sunday, at 11:30 AM

8 for Sunday at 9 AM

Fewer Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion will be needed if there are additional Priests or Deacons celebrating the Mass. One additional Extraordinary Minister will be needed if the Deacon is absent. Check with Father before Mass if there appears to be no Deacon for the Mass.

In order to be properly disposed to receive Communion, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, like all other Catholics, should not be conscious of grave sin and should have fasted for one hour. It is encouraged that all Extraordinary Ministers receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation regularly.

Eucharistic Ministry, like any other ministry, is service to the Church. As such, all ministers are responsible for their assigned Masses. If you are assigned to a particular Mass and you need a substitute to coordinate for you, please find one as soon as possible. A list of possible substitutes is provided with the quarterly schedule of Coordinators. If you are going to be out of town for an extended period, please notify Joan Boudreau

(662-5091 or joan.boudreau@comcast.net) not to schedule you during that time.

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion should demonstrate by their reverence for the Eucharist that they truly believe that this is not just bread and wine, but the very Body and Blood of the risen Lord. Your manner of dress, your respectful silence, and your care with the Sacred Species are observed by all the people and by the Lord. One should not accept this kind of responsibility unless you are willing to carry it out with deep faith and a deep and awesome sense of God's presence.

Please dress appropriately to serve as a Distributor for this important ministry. Sports attire, jeans, tank tops, shorts, clothing with distracting logos, or tattered clothes are too casual. Also be aware that some people are very sensitive to perfume and cologne, so use it only in moderation. It is also important to ensure that your hands are especially clean.

Before Mass Begins

The Coordinator should arrive at Church at least 20 minutes before Mass begins. When the EM Coordinator first arrives, they should go over to the Cantor and Accompanist and determine who will actually be receiving Communion at that Mass. The Coordinator will tell the Deacon how many Hosts will be needed. The Coordinator then gets the small notebook and a pen as well as the hand wiper packets from the Sacristy

(IHM) or the vessel storage cabinet in the old Sacristy (St. Joe's). The Coordinator should stand near the entrance to the Church and recruit the number of Distributors needed for that Mass, giving each one a hand wiper. If not enough Distributors sign up before Mass begins, the Coordinator should tell the Deacon and he will ask for the necessary volunteers after the Sign of Peace.

As Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion enter the Church, you should go over to the Coordinator and sign up to serve as a Distributor at that Mass, then you should sit near the front of the congregation and actively participate in the prayers and responses of the Mass. Each time you attend Mass, remember that you might be serving as a Distributor. Take a few minutes to compose yourself prayerfully on your way to Church.

If it gets to be 10 minutes before Mass is scheduled to start and you have not seen the Coordinator, please go to the Sacristy/old Sacristy and check if Distributors have been signed up. If they have not, please assume the duties of the Coordinator for that Mass.

Procedures for Mass

The Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion should come up to the Altar at the Sign of Peace. At IHM, the Extraordinary Ministers should reverence (bow deeply) the Altar, the central symbol of Christ in the Sanctuary, step up onto the platform, and form a line to either side of the

Tabernacle, as shown in Figure 1. That is, do not stand directly in front of the Tabernacle (the Deacon needs to get the Ciborium) and don't leave a gap much larger than the width of the Tabernacle. In St. Joseph's, the Extraordinary Ministers should reverence the Altar and form one line, on the left side of the Altar, as shown in Figure 2. It is not necessary for all the Extraordinary Ministers to arrive at the Sanctuary at the same time and reverence the Altar in unison.

The Deacon will remove the Ciborium from the Tabernacle and place it on the Altar, the Altar Servers will bring the plates to the Altar, and Father will place the Hosts in the plates. If there is no Deacon, Father

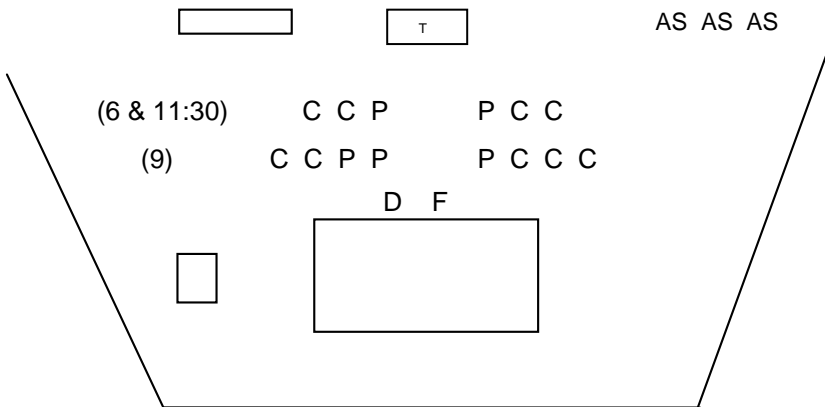


Figure 1 IHM

- T = Tabernacle
- AS = Altar Server
- P = Extraordinary Minister will receive a plate of Hosts
- C = Extraordinary Minister will receive a Cup
- F = Father
- D = Deacon

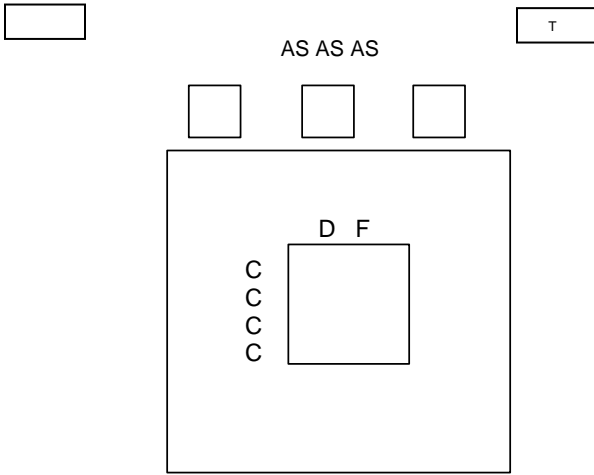


Figure 2 St. Joseph's

will get the Ciborium. After all the Hosts have been placed in the small plates, the large plate remains on the Altar to be purified after Communion

Receiving the Eucharist

Father will receive Communion under both forms first. He will then give Communion under both forms to the Deacon. In IHM, Father and the Deacon will then give a Host to each of the Extraordinary Ministers. They will start in the middle and work outward. The Extraordinary Ministers should consume their Host as soon as it is given to them. Father and the Deacon will then offer the Cup to each of the Extraordinary Ministers. On Father's side, the first Extraordinary Minister should receive and hand the Cup back to Father and remain in line. The

second Extraordinary Minister should take the Cup and the purificator, receive, keep the Cup, and remain in line. Father then will get two additional Cups and purificators from the Altar and give them to the last two Extraordinary Ministers on his side who should receive, keep the Cups, and remain in line. Father will give the first Extraordinary Minister a plate of Hosts. On the Deacon's side, the first two Extraordinary Ministers should receive and hand the Cup back to the Deacon and remain in line. The third Extraordinary Minister should take the Cup and the purificator, receive, keep the Cup, and remain in line. The Deacon then will get an additional Cup and purificator from the Altar and give them to the last Extraordinary Minister. The Deacon will give each of the first two Extraordinary Ministers a plate of Hosts. At St. Joseph's, Father will give a Host to each of the Extraordinary Ministers. He will then give each of them a Cup and purificator. Each Extraordinary Minister should receive, keep the Cup, and remain in line. Then Father and the Deacon will take their stations and start distributing Communion to the congregation, and the Extraordinary Ministers all follow.

Distributing Communion

In IHM, the Extraordinary Ministers closest to the Altar Servers should give them Communion before starting to distribute to the congregation. You can stand on the floor or on the platform, whichever works best for you. If you are a Distributor of the Cup, you should stand about halfway between the two Distributors with Hosts. The location of the stations is shown in Figure 3. All stations are used for the 9:00 Sunday Mass, the right most station by the choir is not used at the 6:00 PM Saturday Mass

and 11:30 AM Sunday Mass. If there are people sitting in the handicapped row, the Extraordinary Ministers at that station should give them Communion first before taking their usual positions.

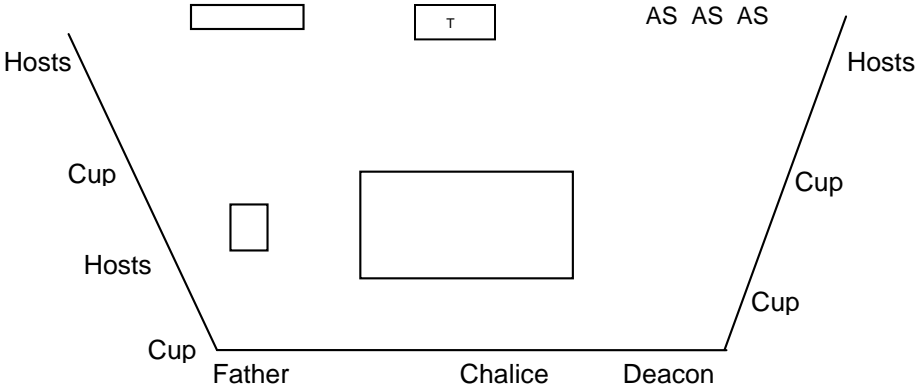


Figure 3 IHM

In St. Joseph's, the Deacon and the nearest Extraordinary Minister will give Communion to the Altar Servers. There will be one station for Hosts (Father or the Deacon) and two stations for Cups on each side of the Church. Father and the Deacon will stand in front of the aisle between the two banks of pews. Distributors of the Cup should stand on either side of them. One should stand about half way down the bank of pews and the other should stand near the wall behind the Altar. If there are people sitting in the handicapped pew, Father or the Deacon will give them Communion last. One of the Distributors should follow them to this pew.

When distributing Communion you should look at the communicant and say “The Body of Christ” if you have the Hosts, or “The Blood of Christ” if you have a Cup. You may say this either in English or Spanish (“Cuerpo de Cristo” or “Sangre de Cristo”). However, you should not say “Receive the Body/Blood of Christ” or “This is the Body/Blood of Christ” or use the person’s name. Wait for the communicant to respond with “Amen.” If they fail to respond, say “Amen” for them before distributing Communion. Place the Host reverently in the person’s hands or on their tongue, or pass the Cup very carefully.

As young children, or even adults, who have not made their First Holy Communion come forward in the Communion line, the Extraordinary Ministers are encouraged to place their hand on the person’s head, make a small sign of the cross with their thumb, and say “God bless you” or “God loves you” or words to that effect. However, you should not make the sign of the cross in a blessing as Father or the Deacon does.

If you are distributing Communion from the Cup, be sure to wipe both the inside and the outside of the Cup rim with the purificator after each person drinks. You might find it helpful to hold the purificator draped over your hand and wipe the Cup between your index and middle fingers. Remember to turn the purificator often so you are working with a clean spot. Also rotate the Cup slightly so the next person is drinking from another spot. With children or the elderly, it might be a good practice to keep one hand on the Cup while they are receiving.

If you run out of Hosts, get some from the Ciborium. If all stations are running short, the Hosts may be broken and a portion given to each person. Once a Cup is empty, the Extraordinary Minister should place it on the corporal on the Altar and take their place either on the side of the Tabernacle (IHM) or in front of the Altar (St. Joseph's), do not try to refill it from another Cup.

If you should happen to drop a Host, you should pick it up immediately and consume it. If it has touched a person's tongue before it dropped, you should re-offer it to that person or set it aside on the plate. After Mass the Host should be put in a small glass or container of water, and placed in the Tabernacle. After about a week, the Host will completely dissolve, and the water then can be taken outside and poured on a tree or a flower. If you should spill some of our Lord's Blood from the Cup, you should tell the next person in line to wait. You should place the Cup on the Altar, get the extra towels from the shelf of the credence table, and wipe up what was spilled. Leave the towel on the floor over the spill area so it can be cleaned better after Mass. Then take the Cup again and stand in front of the towel (so people don't try to pick it up) and continue distributing Communion. After Mass, come back to the spill area and wash the floor with a clean towel.

If the line at your station is finished, you should move as a pair to a station that still has a line, but do not triple up at one station. Two pairs of Distributors are enough for any station. Be aware that Father's Chalice is smaller than the other Cups, and a second Cup may be needed to provide Communion to all the people in the center section.

When a Communion station is finished, one of the EMs will take the Paten with the required number of Hosts (not the Nambe plate) and give Communion to the Cantor and/or Accompanist. A cup is not brought to them. When finished, the empty Paten is brought back to the Altar. The Choir usually comes up to receive Communion first. However, on certain occasions the Choir and other musicians will wait until the end. Please be sure they have an opportunity to receive before the Hosts are returned to the Tabernacle. It may be necessary for one pair of Distributors to wait at their station, even if no one else is in line, until they come up for Communion.

Purifying the Communion Ware

When you are finished distributing Communion in IHM, if you have a plate, take it to the Altar and place it on the corporal, then take your place on the side of the Tabernacle and wait there for all the Distributors to finish. If you have a Cup, and are sure that a second Cup is available for the center section, turn to face the Altar and consume what is left while you are still at your station. Then come up and place the Cup on the corporal on the Altar. The purificator should not be placed in the Cup or directly on the Altar; it should be either placed on the corporal or draped across the top of a cup. After you have placed the Cup and purificator on the corporal, take your place on the side of the Tabernacle and wait for all the Distributors to finish. After placing the vessels on the Altar, one of the Extraordinary Ministers should bring the tray and the cruet of water and place them on the Altar. Father and the Deacon will

place all remaining Hosts into the Ciborium. Father will then place the Ciborium back in the Tabernacle. Before Father closes the doors of the Tabernacle, he will genuflect. The Extraordinary Ministers should remain standing, but should watch what is going on in reverence and bow when Father genuflects. Once the Ciborium is placed back in the Tabernacle, the EMs will step down from the platform, bow to the Altar in unison, and return to their seats in the congregation. Father and the Deacon will purify the plates and the cups and the Altar Servers will place them on the credence table.

In St. Joseph's when you are finished distributing Communion, each Extraordinary Minister should place the empty Cup on the corporal on the Altar. They should do this one at a time, as soon as they are ready. They should then immediately start to form a line in front of the Altar (not on the side). The four Extraordinary Ministers should wait in front of the Altar until the Ciborium is replaced in the Tabernacle and the Tabernacle is closed. They then bow to the Altar in unison, and return to their seats in the congregation. The Altar Servers will bring the cruet of water to the Altar and as the vessels are purified, they will bring them to the table.

Washing the Communion Ware

After Mass in IHM, the Extraordinary Ministers should come up and bring the vessels to the Sacristy to be washed, dried, and put away. After the 6:00 PM and 11:30 AM Masses, if the key is in the Tabernacle it should be brought back to the Sacristy and put away.

The proper places for the Communion vessels at IHM are as follows. Upper cabinet to the left of the sink, lower shelf: cruet and lavo bowl. Upper cabinet to the right of the sink, top shelf from left to right: plastic measuring container, new silver Communion Cups, Father's gold Chalice and Paten. Upper cabinet to the right of the sink, lower shelf from left to right: weekday silver Communion Cups, cloth sleeves, silver Chalice and older gold Chalice and their Patens. Top draw to the right of the sink: Nambe Communion plates in their protective sleeves. Second draw to the right of the sink: large Nambe plate in its sleeve in the back right corner and the ceramic plates in the front left of the draw.

After Mass in St. Joseph's, the Extraordinary Ministers should come up and bring the vessels into the kitchen to wash and dry them. The vessels are then stored in the old Sacristy. If the key is in the Tabernacle, it should be brought back to the Sacristy and put away.

Taking Communion to the Los Alamos Medical Center

There is no set time for taking Communion to the Los Alamos Medical Center. Extraordinary Ministers of Communion first need to get the key to one of the Tabernacles. They can use either the key from the lock box for the Tabernacle in the Chapel or the key to the main Tabernacle in the Church. The combination to the lock box can be obtained from the Parish Office.

Place several Hosts into a pyx and replace the Tabernacle key. The key should not be taken out of the Church. If all the Hosts are not consumed by the sick, and some need to be replaced in the Tabernacle, the same process should be followed. Alternatively, extra Hosts may be consumed by the Extraordinary Minister.

As you enter the Medical Center, request the Religious Census, which is kept at the front desk, so that you know which patients have identified themselves as Catholics. Make a note of the room numbers and patients' names. You should visit only those patients that are Catholic; do not visit patients that have identified themselves as belonging to another religion or have indicated "no preference." State laws and hospital regulations require that we respect the choice the patients have indicated regarding their religious preference.

When you enter the patient's room, identify yourself as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion from IHM and ask if the patient would like to receive Communion.

Note: Communion is not given to anyone who is comatose. Ask a nurse before giving Communion to anyone in the Intensive Care Unit or who has an “NPO” sign on their door. There is no requirement that the patient be fasting. Communion should not be given to others who are present. Communion is only for those who are unable to attend Mass, not family and friends who happen to be there.

Before giving a patient Communion, start with the sign of the cross; say a brief prayer of repentance, and then the “Our Father.” Then, holding up a Host, say “Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.” You can prompt them to respond with “Lord, I am not worthy that You should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.” Then say “The Body of Christ” and wait for them to respond “Amen.” If you think any patient might have difficulty swallowing a whole Host, ask them if they would like just a piece. If so, break off a small part of the Host for them.

Most patients will take the Host on their tongue but receiving either on their tongue or in their hands is acceptable. Offer them a drink of water to help them swallow. Stand quietly with the patient for a few minutes while they pray silently. This is not a time to preach but a closing prayer should be said.

Hosts that are not distributed should be returned to the Church or be consumed by the Extraordinary Minister. The Hosts should never be taken home or on other errands. If a Host has been given to someone

and they do not swallow it; the Host should be taken back to the Church, put in a small glass or container of water, and placed in the Tabernacle. After about a week, the Host will completely dissolve, and the water then can be taken outside and poured on a tree or a flower.

It is never appropriate to ask anyone whether they have been to confession lately or to imply that they should go to confession before receiving. We are not in the position of making judgments, we simply give the Eucharist to any Catholic who asks to receive it.

Rosaries are available to give to patients whether they receive or not.

A Point of Ethics

For those who bring Communion to the hospital or to shut-ins, the identity of the people you visit should be kept in confidence. Do not discuss who you saw or what was said with anyone, not even their family members. Some people do not want it to be general knowledge that they are in the hospital or sick. If you are asked about them your best reply is "You should ask them yourself."

If you would like to participate in this ministry, call Joan Boudreau (622-5091).

Taking Communion to Sombrillo Intermediate Care Facility and Aspen Ridge Assisted Living Facility

An Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion takes Communion to Catholic residents at Sombrillo and Aspen Ridge nearly every day. In addition, at Sombrillo one of the Deacons offers a Communion Service on the first Tuesday evening of the month, and Father says Mass on the third Tuesday of the month.

Volunteers are needed to bring the residents out to the meeting area and to return them to their rooms after the services.

If you would like to participate in this ministry, call Joan Boudreau (622-5091).

Taking Communion to Shut-Ins

Some Extraordinary Ministers take Communion to private homes on a short- or long-term basis. Individuals who wish to receive Communion at home because of illness, immobility, etc. call the Parish Office and request this service. If you wish to participate in this ministry, call Connie Pacheco (662-2323).

When taking Communion into someone's home, you might want to expand the prayers said before Communion, depending on the seriousness of their condition. You can start with a short penitential rite, using the "Lord, have mercy" prayer, and the Scripture readings for that day can be shared. This can be followed by the "Our Father" and the "Lamb of God." The rest is the same as at the Medical Center.

Cards with appropriate prayers for this occasion are available.

Notes

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