

Guidelines for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

Church of the Epiphany
Revised, September, 2016

Introduction

The Communion rite is the heart and center of the entire Eucharistic liturgy. The gathering of the community, the proclamation of God's Word, the Eucharistic Prayer - all are directed toward the moment of Communion in which we, fed with His own Body and Blood, are made one in the Lord.

Extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion are called to a most beautiful ministry. Therefore, they should exemplify all that is encompassed in Christian virtues and should lend to this service the dignity and respect it requires.

The following are a few basic guidelines to make this task easier and uniform for all extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion at Epiphany. These basic rules are intended to better prepare you to serve. When observed, your service will be both more meaningful to you and to the community. Please read them carefully and put them into practice.

Dress

Men:	Jacket and tie
Women:	Dress or skirt (no low cut, sleeveless or short dresses, no pant suits)
Both:	Always wear your medallion from the beginning of the Mass to the end.

You should also be properly attired when taking the Eucharist to the sick and homebound.

Seating

When scheduled to serve at a Mass, please sit either in the main transept on the gospel/Blessed Mother's side, or in the gospel transept, in the first few pews.

For all Masses:

- Arrive at least 10 minutes before Mass begins.
- Genuflect once (if you can, if not bow) when you approach your pew. Also genuflect when you open or close the tabernacle door.
- Proceed to the sacristy and put a check mark by your name on the schedule. If you don't, a substitute might be placed in your stead inadvertently. If you are substituting for someone, cross out that person's name and add your name.
- There are extra medallions in the sacristy if you forget yours. They are kept inside the cabinet just above the clipboard that holds the schedules. Please return them after Mass.
- If there is an additional priest or deacon, #1 drops out, but should be available to substitute should there be an absence. The additional priest or deacon always distributes Communion in the front, next to the priest.
- Gentlemen should defer to women, so that a woman (#1), always distributes Communion in the front, next to the priest.
- Bow reverently before you receive Communion. This should be done as the person before you receives Communion.
- When you distribute Communion, look the communicant in the eye thinking about what you are saying: "The Body of Christ".
- You cannot give yourself Communion.
- If you finish before others, please do help out, but only by standing next to the first pew, a few feet away from the isle.
- After distributing Communion, the first person that arrives back at the tabernacle places his or her ciborium into the tabernacle and remains there. That person is in charge of placing all of the other ciboria into the tabernacle. Everyone else should place their ciboria on the glass shelf, then walk down the two steps and line up facing the tabernacle until its door is closed. Be aware of how many ciboria are being used at a Mass so that you will know how many ciboria need to be placed into the tabernacle should you be the person in charge of putting them away. Avoid, if possible, looking out towards the congregation to see if everyone is back from his or her station.

- Wash your fingers on the side credenza after serving and return to your seat.

For daily Mass:

- At the sign of peace, any two of the extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion should go to the tabernacle.
- Take the necessary number of ciboria out of the tabernacle so that there will be 4 ciboria on the altar. The ciboria are placed on the corporal (linen cloth) on the altar.
- All three stand perpendicular and close to the altar, between the priest and the ambo [lectern], facing the school transept.
- Bow reverently before you receive Communion. This should be done as the person before you receives Communion.
- #1 distributes Communion in front, next to the priest. #2 initially serves in the gospel transept and then serves in front of the first pew, a few feet away from the main isle of the church. #3 goes directly to his or her station in front of the first pew, a few feet away from the main isle of the church. #2 and #3 should not stand next to the priest or #1/deacon as this causes a conflict in the flow.

For Saturday vigil and Sunday Masses:

- At the sign of peace, all extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion go to the sanctuary.
- Numbers 1, 2, and 3 go to the tabernacle and take out the necessary ciboria and place them on the altar. The ciboria are placed on the corporal (linen cloth) on the altar. Those at the tabernacle genuflect when the doors are opened.
- Numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 line up and stand perpendicular and adjacent to the altar, between the priest and the ambo [lectern], facing the school transept. They leave the sanctuary together with the priest. Please wait for the priest.
- Numbers 6, 7, and 8 (choir, if scheduled) line up and stand perpendicular and adjacent to the altar, between the priest and the priest's chair, facing the gospel transept. They leave the sanctuary as soon as they all receive their ciboria.
- Please note that #8 serves the choir. #8 is not always scheduled for all Masses. #8 is scheduled only for certain Masses at certain times of the year. Do not get up to substitute for #8 unless you know that #8 has been scheduled and is absent.

Communion to the sick

Only certain authorized extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion who have received special spiritual, theological, and practical instruction, may take Communion to the sick and the homebound, and only at the request of a priest.

When you take the Eucharist to the sick and homebound you are required to wear your medallion at all times. You should also be properly attired when taking the Eucharist to the sick and homebound. Men: jacket and tie, women: dress or skirt. Do not engage in conversation with others as you leave the church. You must go directly from the church to your destination.

Absenteeism

If you are unable to fulfill your commitment for your assigned Mass, please call a substitute in advance. If you have an emergency the day you are assigned to serve and cannot find a replacement, please call the coordinator as soon as you can so that he or she can try to get a replacement for you from the congregation.

If there is an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion missing at Mass, you may substitute only if you are properly dressed.

Thank you for your service

Thank you for making the liturgies at Epiphany something very special. Your service is vitally important to the people of our parish and we rely upon your meeting the requirements of the schedule for the good of the community.

If your Mass preference has changed, or if you are unable to serve for an extended period of time, please update your information on the form provided in the sacristy and leave it there.