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# EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF THE EUCHARIST INSTRUCTIONS

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Transfiguration Catholic Church



SEPTEMBER 11, 2017

**Purpose of the Eucharistic Ministry:** In the Catholic Church, the “ordinary” ministers for the distribution of the Eucharist are the “ordained” clergy, bishops, priests, and deacons. The Church permits members of the laity to assist those clergy, but only when needed in the distribution of the Eucharist. EMs are “Extraordinary” (“outside-the-ordinary”) Ministers of the Eucharist.

**Requirements:** EMs must be sixteen years of age, Baptized and Confirmed, able to worthily receive the Blessed Sacrament on a regular basis, and they must exhibit good moral character. They must be without any Church impediments, i.e., they must be living a lifestyle in keeping with the teachings of the Catholic Church, and, if married, they must be living in the Sacrament of Matrimony as recognized by the Catholic Church.

**Summary of Responsibilities:** EMs must attend initial and ongoing training. They have the awesome privilege and responsibility to communicate God’s own Son Jesus Christ to the Assembly of Christians. Accordingly, EMs must prepare themselves to minister effectively. Please allow your ministry to bring you and your life more into conformity with the model offered to us by Jesus Christ.

- 1. Dress:** Keeping in mind the dignity of your role in the Mass as an EM, you should dress neatly, modestly, and respectfully. In general, this means not wearing anything that would shift attention from the Eucharist to your appearance. No jeans, shorts, flip-flops, or sneakers, and no tank-tops or other clothing of a revealing nature. The preference for men is at least dress slacks with a collared shirt; a jacket is better. The preference for women is a dress, pantsuit, or blouse and skirt/slacks.
- 2. Prior to Mass:**
  - Arrive at least 15 minutes prior to Mass, and sign in on the ministry schedule on the bulletin board in the gathering space of the Church so that the Sacristan knows you are ready.
  - Please plan to sit somewhere near the front of church, so that everyone will not have a long wait as you make your way towards the altar.
- 3. Preparing to Distribute the Eucharist:**
  - When Father has consumed the Precious Blood, the EMs come to the front of the church and face the altar. When all have arrived, they make a reverent bow of the head all in unison. They walk up the steps and wait at the priest’s right-hand end of the altar nearest his chair.
  - In Masses where a deacon is not serving, one of the EMs will help distribute the Blessed Sacrament, while all the rest will distribute the Precious Blood. The EM distributing the Blessed Sacrament will stand closest to the tabernacle to receive the ciborium of the Blessed Sacrament from Father.

- Father will distribute both the Blessed Sacrament to each EM, and then the Precious Blood to the EMs of the Precious Blood. Be sure to take the purificator from Father as you take the chalice, rather than having him wait for you to consume.
- Father and any deacon serving will distribute the Eucharist to the Altar Servers.
- Once the EMs have received both the Blessed Sacrament and the Precious Blood and their Cups or the Ciborium, all of the EMs will proceed directly to their assigned stations. Do not wait for the Priest to make his move.
- Precious Blood EMs' stations are one each over towards each door up front, and one in front of the ambo, and one in front of the priest's chair.
- You are carrying the Blessed Sacrament and the Precious Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. You do not need to bow, nor ever to genuflect, while doing so.

#### **4. *Distributing the Eucharist:***

- Distribute the Eucharist, holding up the Blessed Sacrament or the Precious Blood and saying "The Body (or the Blood) of Christ," while meeting the eyes of each communicant, and always meaning exactly what you are saying. It is important for you clearly to say all four and only those four words, and not to say simply "Body of Christ" or "Blood of Christ."
- Wait for the communicant to respond "Amen," and then administer the Blessed Sacrament on to the communicant's tongue or into the hand, and the Cup into the communicant's hands.
- If someone comes to receive the Eucharist while carrying a baby, holding a cane, etc. and tries to receive with only one hand, kindly act as if you did not notice the extended hand, and place the Blessed Sacrament on their tongue. This is to protect the Blessed Sacrament from being dropped or otherwise treated irreverently.
- If someone comes to you with hands crossed, indicating they would like a blessing, smile and say, "May God bless you," without any accompanying hand gestures. Only the priest or the deacon may give a blessing. Please do not make up any other greetings.
- Be alert for anyone who cannot come forward in procession for the Eucharist. Take the Eucharist to those communicants pointed out to you by the Ushers. If you finish distributing at your station and you have Precious Blood remaining, offer to assist the other EMs if any of them has a long line remaining.
- EMs of the Precious Blood should hand the Cup to the communicant, and not hold it out for the communicant to drink the Precious Blood from the cup still held in the EM's hands. Let the communicant hand the Cup back to you, wipe the rim where the communicant drank, and turn the Cup a quarter turn before offering it to the next communicant.

**5. *Problems Distributing the Eucharist:***

- If you run out of Precious Blood during distribution, place your purificator over your Cup to indicate to those in line that it is empty.
- Intinction, the dipping by a communicant of the Blessed Sacrament into the Precious Blood, is not practiced in the Catholic Church. Politely direct anyone attempting to do this to consume the Blessed Sacrament before receiving the Precious Blood.
- All unconsumed Blessed Sacrament is to be placed in the Tabernacle by the priest or the deacon until after the end of Mass. If anyone, including any EM, approaches you with a pyx during the distribution of the Eucharist, politely inform him or her to receive the Eucharist after Mass at the Tabernacle.
- Watch all the people as they receive the Body of Christ, to insure that they consume Him at once. Do not allow anyone to take Him back to their seats unconsumed.
- If an EM or a communicant should drop the Blessed Sacrament, the EM should pick Him up and consume Him. Or place Him on the altar for Father to consume Him.
- If the Precious Blood is spilled, and it is a small spill, straddle Him so that no one accidentally walks on Him. Continue offering the Cup and, once finished, use your purificator to cover Him. If needed, get the assistance of an Usher. After distribution, place your purificator over Him. The spill must be cleaned by you and by the Sacristan immediately after Mass, using water from the Sacristy, which is then to be disposed of in the Sacramarium in the Sacristy.

**6. *After Distributing the Eucharist:***

- EMs with chalices walk to the priest's chair end of the altar and consume any remaining Precious Blood. If the amount of Precious Blood is too much to consume with comfort and safety, then please offer the rest to the other EMs to consume.
- The EMs will then place their Cups and purificators on the corporal on the priest's chair end of the altar, ready for the purification of Cups by the priest or the deacon.
- The EM with the ciborium of the Blessed Sacrament will bring it to the altar and place it on the center corporal for the priest or the deacon to consolidate the Blessed Sacrament and place it into the Tabernacle.
- The EMs return to the congregation to observe a time of prayer after the Eucharist.

**7. *Scheduling our EMs for our Masses:***

- A call for notice of your unavailability to serve as an EM will go out a week or so before the end of each month. It is the responsibility of each EM to respond in time to indicate their own unavailability.
- EMs are responsible for finding their own replacements if they are not going to be able to fulfill their published schedule. Please update the schedule, or have your replacement update it, if you make arrangements for another EM to take your place.
- The parish office will reach out for EMs for weddings, funerals, etc., when needed.