

St. Mary Parish
Policies and Procedures for
Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion
at Mass

October 2022

Eligibility:

- Men and women, sixteen years and older, representative of the parish community, may be chosen.
- Each person selected should be a practicing Catholic, in good standing, whose conduct of life does not contradict the teachings of the Catholic Church as described by the Magisterium, who is fully initiated through the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist.
- Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are commissioned annually at one of the Sunday Masses on the First Sunday of Advent. Prior to their commissioning, they are required to provide a baptismal certificate and/or Confirmation certificate.

General Principles:

- Bishops, priests, and deacons are the ordinary ministers of Holy Communion and, therefore, assume this responsibility first. Only when the number of ordinary ministers is insufficient to meet the pastoral needs of the sick, that Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion assist in this ministry.
- Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion should receive sufficient spiritual, theological, and practical preparation to fulfill their role with knowledge and reverence. In all matters they should follow the guidance of the diocesan bishop (*Norms for the Distribution and Reception of Holy Communion Under Both Kinds for the Dioceses of the United States of America*, NDRHC, no. 28).

- All ministers of Holy Communion should show the greatest reverence for the Most Holy Eucharist by their demeanor, their attire, and the way they handle the consecrated bread or consecrated wine.
- Extraordinary ministers distribute Holy Communion at the Masses at which they participate.

Procedures:

- As the *Agnus Dei* or *Lamb of God* begins, the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion approach the sanctuary, sanitize their hands using the hand sanitizer located under the credence table and line up on the side of the altar.
- After the priest has concluded his own Communion, he distributes Communion to the extraordinary ministers, assisted by the deacon, and then hands the sacred vessels to them for distribution of Holy Communion to the people.
- After all Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion have received the Eucharist, the bishop or priest celebrant reverently hands vessels containing the Body or the Blood of the Lord to the deacons or extraordinary ministers who will assist with the distribution of Holy Communion. The deacon may assist the priest in handing the vessels containing the Body and Blood of the Lord to the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. (NDRHC, 40).
- The Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion then proceed to their respective station for the distribution of Holy Communion.
- The proper and only permissible form for distributing Holy Communion is to offer the consecrated bread by saying, "The Body of Christ" and to offer the consecrated wine by saying, "The Blood of Christ." No other words or names should be added; and the formula should not be edited in any way. (Cf. GIRM, 161; 284-287).
- If a person is unable to receive Holy Communion due to age, religious affiliation, or spiritual state, but would like the minister to pray for them, the extraordinary minister can extend their hand and say, "May the Lord Jesus be in your heart." Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, like any lay person, do not have the authority to bless. As such, praying over a person with the words, "May God bless you," is inappropriate.
- If the Eucharistic bread or some particle of the Eucharist falls on the ground, the minister reverently picks up consecrated fragment. The consecrated bread may

be consumed or completely dissolved in water before being poured down the *sacrarium*.

- If consecrated wine is spilled from the chalice, the extraordinary ministry should soak up the consecrated wine with purificator and return to the altar. After the Mass the sacristan, priest, or extraordinary ministry washes the area with clean water and the water poured into the *sacrarium*.
- At the conclusion of the distribution of Holy Communion, the extraordinary ministers return to the altar with their ciborium. The priest or deacon will take your ciborium from you. Please do not place the ciborium on the altar. The extraordinary minister steps back, waits for the priest or deacon to repose the Blessed Sacrament. They return to their seat.
- The vessels are purified by the deacon or priest.