

**Manual for an**

**Extraordinary Minister**

**of Holy Communion**

at the Parish of St. Theresa

Tuckerton/Little Egg Harbor

New Jersey

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion Prayer

Father of Mercy,

forgive my failings,

keep me in Your Grace,

and lead me in the way of salvation.

Give me strength in serving You

as an Extraordinary Minister of

Holy Communion.

May the Eucharist bring me

Your Forgiveness

and give me freedom

to serve You all my life.

May it help me to remain faithful

and give me the grace

I need in Your service.

May it teach me the way to eternal life.

I ask this in your Holy Name,

through Jesus Christ my Lord and Savior.

Amen

1. Introduction

Thank you so very much for hearing and accepting our Lord's call to serve the Parish of St. Theresa as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion. The instruction "Immensae Caritatis" states that the “wonderful gift of the Eucharist . . .demands that such an important mystery, should be increasingly better known and its saving power more fully shared.” The same instruction goes on to state that “provision be made lest reception of the Eucharist become impossible or difficult owing to a lack of a sufficient number of ministers,” and further spells out the various circumstances in which a lack of sufficient ministers for the distribution of Holy Communion can occur, namely: during Mass, because of the size of the congregation or a particular difficulty in which a celebrant finds himself; outside of Mass, when it is difficult because of distance to take the sacred species, especially the Viaticum to the sick in danger of death, or when the number of the sick, especially in hospitals and similar institutions, requires many ministers.

Therefore, here at the Parish of St. Theresa, in order that the faithful, who are in the state of grace and who with an upright and pious disposition, wish to share in the Sacred Banquet, may not be deprived of this sacramental help and consolation, it has seemed appropriate to the Holy Father to establish Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion who may give Holy Communion to other faithful. In extending this great honor to members of the laity, the Holy Father, in the Instruction on Certain Questions Regarding the Collaboration of the Non-Ordained Faithful in the Sacred Ministry of Priests, stated that “The canonical discipline concerning extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion must be correctly applied so as to avoid generating confusion.” That Instruction notes that the ordinary minister of Holy Communion is the bishop, the priest and the deacon. However in cases of “true necessity,” members of the laity who are properly trained may be deputed by the diocesan bishop to act as an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion. Since they are “extraordinary,” they “may distribute Holy Communion at Eucharistic celebrations only when there are no ordained ministers present or when those ordained ministers present at a liturgical celebration are truly unable to distribute Holy Communion” (Instruction on Certain Questions Regarding the Collaboration of the Non-Ordained Faithful in the Sacred Ministry of Priests, Article 8 §2).

To this end our Ordinary, Bishop David O’Connell, Bishop of Trenton New Jersey is permitting you to be an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion to give the Eucharist to other faithful and to take it to the sick that are confined to their homes.

1. Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion within the context of distribution of the Most Holy Eucharist during the celebration of the Mass

As an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion, you are to distribute Holy Communion according to the liturgical norms of the Roman Catholic Church. Since these faculties are granted only for the spiritual good of the faithful and for cases of genuine necessity, you necessarily must be duly instructed and should distinguish yourself by a Christian life, faith and morals. You are to strive to be worthy of this great office; you are to cultivate a real devotion to the Holy Eucharist and show yourself as an example to the other faithful by you piety and reverence for this most Holy Sacrament of the altar.

As an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion, you should see this holy task as more than the mere moments of distribution. You should be present for the entire celebration of Mass, and participate fully, especially by receiving Holy Communion yourself. As an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion you should be dressed neatly in a way consonant with the dignity of this role. As an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion you may participate by receiving Holy Communion under both kinds at Masses during which you will exercise you ministry.

Here at the Parish of St. Theresa you, as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion are *called forward to exercise your ministry* during the Eucharistic Celebration ***as the Community begins the singing or recitation of the* "Lamb of God".** Extraordinary Ministers are to approach the altar when the Lamb of God begins. They are not to hesitate or wait for another to move first.

There are **4 stations of wine & 8 stations of bread** at the regularly scheduled **Saturday 4:00PM, Sunday 9:00AM & Sunday 11:30AM** Masses at St. Theresa. There are **4 stations of wine & 4 stations of bread** at the regularly scheduled **Sunday 7:30 AM Mass**. These stations include the stations serviced by the Priest Presider and the Deacon. When approaching the Altar at the Lamb of God, the Extraordinary Ministers of the Blood stand to the *left of the Altar* and the Extraordinary Ministers of the Body stand *behind the Altar*.

Please remember, if there is a guest priest and/or deacon, one or more of the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion scheduled for that Mass will not be needed. Ideally this should be known before Mass and the coordinator for the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion should inform you of this, but if this fails the celebrant will ask one of the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion to please be seated.

After receiving Holy Communion from the Priest or Deacon the Priest or Deacon will hand you a Ciborium or Chalice for the Distribution of the Communion. The Minister of the Sacred Blood standing closest to the Ministers of the Body at the altar is to assist in the distribution of the Sacred Blood to the Ministers of the Body.

Ministers of the Sacred Body are to stand around the 4 corners of the Altar.

Ministers of the Sacred Blood are to stand at the point of the ‘compass’ in the floor facing the Altar.

As an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion distribute Holy Communion in the usual manner:

1. Holding the Host slightly raised, you show the Host to the communicant and say, ‘The Body of Christ’; the communicant makes a profession of faith saying, ‘Amen’ and receives it;
2. Holding the Chalice, you show the Chalice to the communicant and say, ‘The Blood of Christ’; the communicant makes a profession of faith saying, ‘Amen’ and drinks from the Chalice.
3. Please realize the joy in the privilege of distributing the Holy Communion. As a Communicant approaches you, smile as you distribute the Holy Communion to them
4. Should someone approach you and asks for a blessing, simply say: "May God bless you always.'' It is not recommended to touch them or trace the sign of the cross on their forehead.
5. While distributing the Holy Eucharist, if a Host or particle falls, it should be reverently picked up immediately. If any of the Precious Blood spills, it is to be picked up with the Purificator. The area should be cleaned after the Mass with water and a damp Purificator.

Once you have completed your designated role in the distribution of the Sacred Body, you should go and assist in other distribution lines. Once completed, return any remaining Hosts in the Ciborium to the Altar. There the Deacon or Priest will consolidate the consecrated hosts into one or two ciborium to be reserved in the tabernacle. Then return the Ciborium to the Credence table and rinse their fingers in the Lavabo Bowl. There is a small finger towel to dry their hands. Use of the Lavabo Bowl is to ensure that any particles of the Eucharist are cleansed from the Minister’s fingers. The water from the lavabo bowl is poured down the sacrarium at the conclusion of Mass.

Once you have completed your designated role in the distribution of the Sacred Blood, you should go and assist in other distribution lines. Once completed, you return to the Cup to the Credence Table. Ministers, if possible, should consume the remaining Sacred Blood in the Cup they distributed. If they cannot consume the remaining Precious Blood, they are to place the Cup carefully on the Credence Table and gently cover it with the purificator. Ministers are not to pass the Cup to another minister(s) to consume the rest. Please ensure that the Chalice and all the Cups are covered with a purificator.

Minister of both the Sacred Body and Blood whose Ciborium or Cup is empty, before all distribution is completed, should return their vessel to the credence table and return to their seat.

Do not attempt to purify any of the vessels at the Credence Table.

Extraordinary Ministers are to return to their seats immediately after placing their vessels on the Credence Table. They are not to wait for the priest or deacon to reverence the Tabernacle.

1. Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion within the context of distribution of the Most Holy Eucharist outside the celebration of the Mass

Sacramental communion received during Mass is a more complete participation in the Eucharistic celebration. This truth stands out more clearly, by force of the sign value, when after the priest’s communion the faithful receive the Lord’s body and blood from the same sacrifice.

The faithful are to be led to the practice of receiving communion during the actual Eucharist celebration. Priests, however, are not to refuse to give communion to the faithful who for a legitimate reason

ask for it even outside Mass. In fact it is proper that those who are prevented from being present at the community’s celebration should be refreshed with the Eucharist. In this way they may realize that they are united not only with the Lord’s sacrifice but also with the community itself and are supported by the love of their brothers and sisters.

The faithful should be instructed carefully that, even when they receive communion outside Mass, they are closely united with the sacrifice that perpetuates the sacrifice of the cross. They are sharers in the sacred banquet in which through the communion of the body and blood of the Lord, the people of God share the benefits of the paschal sacrifice, renew the new covenant with us made once and for all by God in Christ’s blood, and in faith and hope foreshadow and

anticipate the eschatological banquet in the Father’s kingdom, as they proclaim the death of the Lord, until he comes.

In giving communion, the custom of placing the consecrated bread on the tongue of the communicant is to be maintained because it is based on a tradition of several centuries. However the American Conferences of bishops has been confirmed by the Apostolic See, that communion may also be given by placing the consecrated bread in the hand of the faithful.

It is important that the faithful realize that the elderly and those suffering from any kind of infirmity, as well as those who take care of such persons, may receive the Eucharist even if they have taken food or medicine within the hour before communion. The Church guides us by insuring that the reception of Holy Communion apart from Mass is only permitted for those who cannot receive within the celebration of Mass. This applies especially to you as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion to the sick in hospitals and in their homes.

As noted above, it is very important to establish a visible and spiritual link between distributing the Holy Eucharist to the sick and infirmed and the Eucharistic celebration of the community. Thus as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion to the Homebound you should allow enough time prior to the celebration of the Eucharist Liturgy to place hosts in your Pyx prior to the start of Mass. There will be a paten with unconsecrated hosts on the gift table. You are to place the number of unconsecrated hosts you require for the communicants you will visit in your Pyx. The Pyx is then placed on the tray to be consecrated during the celebration of the Holy Mass. No one is ever to approach a Priest, Deacon or an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion distributing the Body of Christ and ask that a number of Host be placed in their Pyx. If you as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion did not arrive in time to submit your Pyx for the consecration, you are to request that the Priest, Deacon, or Sacristan assist you in getting the consecrated Host required from the Ciborium following the Celebration of the Holy Mass.

The Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion to the Homebound will be given their Pyx containing the consecrated Eucharist from the altar during the Mass which they attend. After the reception of the Holy Communion of the faithful, the Priest calls forward to the altar the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion to the Homebound. The Priest will offer them the tray from which they will retrieve their Pyx. Once the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion to the Homebound have taken their Pyx, the Priest will bless them and dismiss them. At this dismissal the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion to the Homebound leave immediately for the sick person's home or facility.

When the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion to the homebound is not going immediately to the sick person, the Priest will reserve their Pyx directly in the Tabernacle so it can be retrieved at a later time. Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion to the Homebound should only take the Holy Eucharist from the Ciborium in the event of an emergency.

The person or persons receiving should be informed in advance that communion will be distributed by the Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion in the hospital or their homes. A specific time should then be selected that will allow adequate reflection and attention by the communicant.

The rite to be used is found in the pamphlet Communion of the Sick published by The Liturgical Press which was presented to you at your training. This pamphlet contains the approved Roman Ritual, Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist Outside Mass. Please do not create your own ritual or use another.

If any hosts remain after the distribution of communion to the homebound, you should return the Pyx to the Ciborium in the Tabernacle at the Church of St. Theresa.

It is very important that you inform the Coordinator of the Ministry to the Homebound of the names of the persons you bring the Eucharist to in their home or facility. This allows the Parish Administration to know who is sick and not able to attend the regular weekly Masses. Additionally, it will ensure that no more than one Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion is scheduled to visit this person at any given time.

**General Norms**

* An Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion must be properly formed, instructed and commissioned by the Pastor and the Bishop.
* The Pastor selects and appoints the Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion for the Parish of St. Theresa to aid in the distribution of Holy Communion to the faithful attending Mass and to the sick and homebound when an Ordained Ministers of Holy Communion are unavailable.
* An Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion cannot function as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion outside the Parish of St. Theresa unless authorized by the Pastor of another parish.
* An Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion should not serve any other liturgical ministry during the Mass at which they serve as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion unless otherwise requested by the Priest Presider or by necessity.
* In exercising their ministry, an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion must show the utmost reverence for the Eucharist.
* The demeanor and manner of an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion during the Mass must express a deep reverence for the Eucharist.
* An Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion must be attired in such a manner as to bring dignity to their ministry and a deep reverence for the Eucharist. The personal appearance of an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion must be in keeping with the minister’s role and belief in the presence of Christ in the Eucharist. The minister’s attire should be neat, reverential, and appropriate and should not detract from that role as public minister of the Church.
* An Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion should refrain from using strong cologne, perfume or aftershave as some recipients of Holy Communion have sensitivities to these scents and many fragrances often remain on a person’s hands and may be transferred to the Eucharist.
* An Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion should arrive at the church 15 minutes before their scheduled Mass.
* An Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion must check in with the Ministry Coordinator in the Parlor. When checking in, an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion will be assigned a Communion station.
* If the Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion has not checked in 5 minutes before mass begins, the Coordinator will replace them and they should not approach the Altar to serve at the time for Communion distribution.
* An Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion should enter the sanctuary as soon as the Fraction Rite (Lamb of God) begins.
* Ordinarily, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion should not go to the tabernacle to bring previously consecrated hosts to the Altar. However, if the Priest Presider needs help he may ask an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion to go to the Tabernacle.
* An Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion should not remain in the aisle waiting for other Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion to make the first move to the Altar. An Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion is expected to walk to their specific place around the Altar. Therefore the minister’s movements to the Altar should be deliberate and without hesitation.
* An Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion receives Holy Communion after the Priest Presider (and Deacon) have received, and before the reception of Holy Communion by the assembly.
* If there is no deacon, the Sacristan will assist the Priest Presider in distributing Holy Communion to the other ministers.
* If an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion chooses not to receive the Precious Blood, they should cross their arms across their chest indication they choose not to receive the Cup.
* An Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion receives their Communion vessel from the Priest Presider or Deacon after they have received Holy Communion.
* Once all Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion have their vessels, they proceed reverently to their Communion stations.
* An Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion must keep their back as close as possible to the Altar while distributing the Sacred Body of Christ. An Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion should not step forward to meet the communicant unless they recognize a handicap or the person needs assistance. If that is the case, the Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion gives that person the Eucharist and return to their place at the Altar.
* In distributing the Eucharist, an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion holds the host or chalice, looks at the communicant, and in a clear voice says, “The Body of Christ” or “The Blood of Christ” to which the communicant responds “Amen”. These are the only words used. Do not add or subtract any verbiage. Do not address the recipient of communion by name.
* An Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion will place the Sacred Body of Christ (the Host) in the hand or on the tongue according to the manner indicated by the communicant.
* If a communicant begins to walk away carrying the host, an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion must leave their position and gently inform the recipient of Communion that they are to consume the Host.
* If a Consecrated Host falls to the ground during the distribution of Holy Communion, the Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion should pick it up immediately and give it the Priest Presider after distribution completed. They may place it on the corporal on the altar until the end of distribution.
* An Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion should never consume the Consecrated Host themselves or put it back in the vessel and given to another communicant.
* An Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion never takes a complete, a fraction, or a particle of a Consecrated Host from a Ciborium and consumes it themselves. This action is self-communicating and is exclusively reserved for a Priest.
* When distributing the Sacred Blood, hand the Sacred Chalice to the communicant who holds the cup firmly in both hands and drink from it.
* An Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion should be ready to assist in holding the Sacred Chalice, in the case of a person’s physical disability or weakness.
* An Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion must wipe the rim of the Sacred
* Chalice, inside and out, with a Purificator and turn the Sacred Cup slightly before presenting it to the next communicant.
* An Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion must be careful to not to dipped the Purificator into the Precious Blood when wiping the rim.
* Intinction (dipping the Host into the Wine) is not customary in the United States and not allowed in the Diocese of Trenton without specific permission from Bishop David O’Connell, our Bishop.
* If the Precious Blood (the Wine) is spilt, move from your location in such a way that persons receiving the Eucharist will not step where the Precious Blood spilt. Inform the Priest Presider who will care for it.

**The Discipline for after Distribution of Holy Eucharist**

* Once an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion has finished their distribution of the Precious Body, they return their vessels to the Altar. The Priest Presider or Deacon will consolidate the Hosts into a Ciborium.
* The Priest Presider or Deacon takes the ciborium to the Tabernacle. However, if the Priest Presider needs help, he may ask an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion to go to the Tabernacle.
* Once an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion is finished with distribution the Precious Blood, they return their vessels to the Credence Table.
* The Priest Presider, Deacon or Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion consumes any remaining Precious Blood at the Credence Table.
* Purification of the Sacred Vessels will occur in the in sacristy after Mass. The Church suggests that a Priest or Deacon should purify the vessels. The Priest Presider may assign this responsibility to the Sacristan only.
* Please remember what you are handling and the ministry you are exercising is service to Jesus and the Holy People of God.

**The Discipline for Ministering to Sick and Homebound**

* An Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion who brings Communion to the sick and homebound represents the Pastor and have a role in the Church’s total ministry to the sick after the manner of Jesus.
* An Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion does not replace the ministry of the Priest to the people, but rather extend and expand it so that all will have more contact with Christ in Holy Communion.
* An Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion may bring Communion to the sick and the homebound any day of the week in accordance with the sick person’s schedule and

the protocol of each hospital or nursing home. Bringing Communion to the sick and homebound after Sunday Mass brings a closer link between the parish liturgical celebration and the parishioner.

* An Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion should always take care to maintain the confidentiality and dignity of the individual and be present to them in a prayerful manner.
* The United States Catholic Conference of Bishops has instructed the Church: “The Eucharist carried outside of Church is to be carried only in a pyx or other covered
* vessel.”
* In March of 2004, the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacrament of the Holy See issued the Instruction entitled Redemptionis Sacramentum: On Certain Matters To Be Observed Or To Be Avoided Regarding The Most Holy Eucharist.
  + In this document the Holy See clearly lists several grave abuses against the sanctity of the Sacrament of the Eucharist which, if they occur, are to be handled in accordance with the Norms concerning grave abuses reserved to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith’.
  + It is imperative that an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion understand the severity of abusing the most Holy Eucharist.
  + First on the list of these grave abuses is the sacrilege of an individual taking or retaining the consecrated species outside the Church.”
  + Carrying the Blessed Sacrament on your person and not going directly to the person intended to receive the Holy Eucharist constitutes a grave abuse of the Holy Eucharist.
  + o Carrying the Holy Eucharist and making superfluous stops is a grave abuse of the Holy Eucharist.
  + Leaving the Holy Eucharist unattended in a car is a grave abuse of the Holy Eucharist.
  + Keeping the Holy Eucharist overnight or longer is a grave abuse of the Holy Eucharist.
* If an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion commissioned for the Parish of St.Theresa is guilty of any of these abuses, given the aforementioned specific nature of the sacrilege, they must be referred to the Diocesan Bishop for determination.

The Discipline for Ministering to Sick and Homebound following a Weekend Mass

* The Parish of St. Theresa provides a small paten on the Gift Table which holds unconsecrated host at every Weekend Mass.
* If an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion is going directly to the sick or homebound person immediately after Mass, they are to place the number of hosts needed in their Pyx and leave it on the adjacent tray.
* The Hosts in the Pyx on this tray and brought to the Altar are consecrated during Mass.
* At the end of the Mass, the Priest Presider calls forth the Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion to take their Pyx.
* The Priest Presider offers a special blessing and dismisses the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion to bring the Eucharist to the sick. In this gesture, the worshipping assembly is sending the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion forth on behalf of the whole parish community.
* Remember, as the Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion is sent forth, they are to go directly to the person’s home, hospital or nursing home.

The Discipline for Ministering to Sick and Homebound following a Weekday Mass

* The Parish of St. Theresa provides a small paten in the Day Chapel Sacristy which holds unconsecrated host at every Weekday Mass.
* If an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion is going directly to the sick or homebound person immediately after Mass, they are to place the number of hosts needed in their Pyx and leave it on the adjacent tray.
* The Hosts in the Pyx on this tray and brought to the Altar are consecrated during Mass.
* At the end of the Mass, the Priest Presider calls forth the Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion to take their Pyx.
* The Priest Presider offers a special blessing and dismisses the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion to bring the Eucharist to the sick. In this gesture, the worshipping assembly is sending the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion forth on behalf of the whole parish community.
* Remember, as the Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion is sent forth, they are to go directly to the person’s home, hospital or nursing home.
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The Discipline for Ministering to Sick and Homebound at a Time Other than immediately following Mass

* If an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion is going to bring the Holy Communion to a person’s home, hospital or nursing home at a time other than immediately following mass, they must come to the Parish Offices, sign out the Tabernacle Key, go to the tabernacle and reverently remove the number of hosts they anticipate using, and return the Tabernacle Key to the Parish Office.
* Therefore, if an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion is going to bring the Holy Communion to a person’s home, hospital or nursing home at a time other than immediately following mass, they will have to schedule this visit to the sick or homebound at a time when they will have access to the Parish Offices.
* An Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion then follows the same guidelines noted above regarding going directly to the person at home or at the hospital.
* An Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion is never allowed to go into the Tabernacle and place Consecrated Hosts in their pyx and then leave it outside the Tabernacle until they are ready to take the Blessed Sacrament to the sick. This is considered a **grave abuse** of the Holy Eucharist.
* If an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion foresees having Consecrated Host which are not distributed, they must insure that their schedule allows them to return the Consecrated Hosts to the Tabernacle.