

Good Shepherd Parish
Guidelines and Instructions for
Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (EMHC)

In the absence of an ordinary minister of Holy Communion (bishop, priest, and/or deacon), the Church permits Extraordinary Ministers to distribute the Body and Blood of the Lord. Such ministers may also be deputed to bring Holy Communion to the sick. Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion should possess a deep love of the Eucharist.

General

- You may be scheduled as an EMHC for the Sacred Host or Precious Blood. Please check the on-line (goodshepherdtn.com) or bulletin schedules regularly.
- EMHCs should take care to dress in a manner befitting this ministry.
- As one who is given the privilege to distribute our Lord's precious Body and Blood, it is encouraged that all EMHCs spend an hour in prayer before the tabernacle of the Blessed Sacrament once per week.

Before Mass

- Please arrive at least 15 minutes prior to Mass and report to the Sacristan.
- **Sit toward the front of the Church so you can enter the sanctuary promptly.**
- Spend time in prayer, asking the Lord to prepare you for the sacred duty of ministering His Body and Blood.

During Mass

- After the Sign of Peace IMMEDIATELY come forward and enter the sanctuary, assuming your position at the altar before the celebrant begins the Lamb of God.
- Wait until the celebrant / deacon have received both the Body and Blood before ascending the altar to receive Communion.
- After you have received Holy Communion and received the sacred vessel (ciborium or chalice), wait for the priest-celebrant to begin to move and then proceed to your assigned position.

Distributing Holy Communion

- **Sacred Host**
 - Ministers giving the Sacred Host will hold up the Host, say "The Body of Christ" and gently place the Host in the palm or on the tongue of the communicant.
 - If the Sacred Host or some particle of it falls, it should be picked up reverently by the minister. The Sacred Host may be consumed by the minister or returned to the priest, deacon, or acolyte for proper handling.
 - If approached for a "blessing," EMHCs may say "May the blessings of Jesus be upon you." In addition, the EMHC uses the hand not used for dispensing the Sacred Host to either touch the head or shoulder of the person seeking "blessing" when these words are spoken. No other words or gestures are used.
 - If all the Sacred Hosts in your ciborium are consumed and there are still communicants in line, ask the next communicant to wait and approach the

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priest or deacon for additional Hosts. Similarly, the priest or deacon may approach you for additional Hosts.

- When all communicants have received, wait for the priest or deacon to return to the altar before doing the same.
 - Place the ciborium on the altar return to your seat (see section entitled “After Communion”, below).
- **Precious Blood**
 - Ministers giving the Precious Blood will present the chalice, say “The Blood of Christ” and hand the chalice to the communicant.
 - ◆ Note Regarding Intinction: A communicant may attempt to "intinct," or "dip," the host into the chalice. Intinction is not permitted except by the priest-celebrant, who may elect to do so, at his discretion, at the altar. If a communicant attempts intinction, cover the top of the chalice with the purificator and wait until the communicant consumes the Sacred Host before offering the Precious Blood again.
 - After the communicant has received, use two hands to take the chalice back, wipe the rim and rotate the chalice slightly.
 - If all of the Precious Blood in your chalice has been consumed, place the purificator on the top of the chalice and cover it with your right hand. Notify a minister of the Precious Blood on the other side of the priest or deacon if you are the last EMHC with the Precious Blood on your side before returning to the altar credence table.
 - When all communicants have received, return to the credence table. If any of the Precious blood remains, you may consume it or leave it for the deacon or acolyte to consume. Place the chalice on the tray with the purificator covering it. Please DO NOT stuff the purificator inside the chalice.

After Communion

- After returning to the credence table or other designated spot, return to your seat by descending the steps of the sanctuary and bowing to the altar before returning to your seat.

Special Note on Distributing Holy Communion to the Handicapped

The Sacred Host may be taken to handicapped communicants sitting in the pews. Because of the risk of spillage, the Precious Blood is NOT to be taken except to communicants sitting in the first row.

Safety and Accidents

- Besides distributing Holy Communion to the faithful, your most grave responsibility is to protect our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament from any profanation. If any accidents or concerns arise, do not be embarrassed and DO NOT DELAY in notifying the nearest priest, deacon, or acolyte.

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- Ministers distributing the Sacred Host should carefully watch each communicant to ensure they have placed the Host in their mouth. If you believe anyone has not received the Sacred Host and is attempting to walk away with it, IMMEDIATELY but discreetly notify the nearest priest, deacon, or acolyte.
- Ministers distributing the Precious Blood should ensure that none of the species is dropped on the floor or the clothing of communicants. If any of the Precious Blood is spilled on the floor, immediately cover the spilled Precious Blood with the purificator and notify the nearest priest, deacon, or acolyte, who will follow the procedures laid out in the rubrics for handling accidents. Do not panic or embarrass the communicant. Immediately after Mass the area of floor containing the spilled Precious Blood will be blotted with water using the purificator. The purificator will be wrung out on soil away from any potential foot traffic.
- Our Blessed Lord is fully and substantially present in each crumb of the Sacred Host and each drop of the Precious Blood. Please be extremely diligent in ensuring each and every fragment of the Eucharistic species is protected.

Cleaning Up After Mass

- The EMHCs distributing the Precious Blood (positions 2 and 3) are responsible for removing the chalice, ciborium(s), paten, pitcher containing Holy Water, corporals, and purificators from the altar credence table and bringing them to the Sacristry.
- Altar Servers will have placed the Alter Server Patens on the credence table. Carefully wipe these off over a ciborium using one of the purificators and place the patens back in their place to the far right of the credence table at the edge of the sanctuary steps.
- Place all other items on the tray provided for this purpose (located on the shelf below the credence table).
- If, due to lack of space on the tray, the ciboriums must be stacked, place a corporal or purificator in the lower ciborium before stacking to prevent scratching of the ciboriums (do not use the lavabo - hand towel used by the celebrant to dry his hands after washing at the altar).
- Place the lavabo beside the vessels (do not place on top of paten or ciboriums to avoid getting small pieces of the Sacred Host on it).
- Carrying the tray, descend the steps of the sanctuary and bow to the altar. Reverently remove the items to the Sacristry being careful to avoid being bumped or jostled by parishioners leaving the church.
- Place the tray and items to the left of the sink in the Sacristry. The Sacristan will purify and clean the vessels.

Thank you so very much for serving the Lord in His Sanctuary in this very important ministry!

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Further Reading

- USCCB guide for EMHCS: <http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/the-mass/order-of-mass/liturgy-of-the-eucharist/extraordinary-ministers-of-holy-communion-at-mass.cfm>
- Norms for the Distribution and Reception of Holy Communion Under Both Kinds In the Dioceses of the United States of America: <http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/the-mass/norms-for-holy-communion-under-both-kinds/index.cfm>

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Chalice and Dish Paten



Ciborium



Altar Server's Paten