



GUIDELINES FOR THE EXTRAORDINARY MINISTER OF HOLY COMMUNION

***He broke the bread,
gave it to his disciples, and said:
“Take this, all of you, and eat it:
this is my body which will be given up for you.”***



PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY

1. Prayerful advanced planning for Eucharistic Minister (EM) assignment is necessary. Preparation includes prayer, study of the life of Jesus, study of Scripture, the Liturgy of the Word (for the specific Mass) and the prayers of the Eucharist as well as development of pastoral skills to minister to the sick, aged and infirmed. Since the role of the EM includes service at Mass, and to provide the opportunity for the faithful to celebrate the Eucharist outside of the Mass, the Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharist has been called to the ministry of service to all the faithful. This ministry touches the lives of all in our parish and these ministers fully function in their baptismal role as priest (leader), prophet (teacher), and king (servant) as they bring Christ our LORD to nourish and heal all who receive.
2. The celebration of the Eucharist is the center of the entire Christian life, both for the church universal and for the local community of the church. “The other sacraments, all the ministries of the Church, and the works of the apostolate are united with Eucharist and directed toward it. For the Holy Eucharist contains the entire spiritual treasure of the Church, that is, Christ himself, our Passover and living bread. Through his flesh, made living and life-giving by the Holy Spirit, he offers life to men and women, who are thus invited and led to offer themselves, their work, and all creation together with Him.”
3. The principle reason for reserving the sacrament after mass is to unite, through the sacramental communion, the faithful who are unable to participate in the Mass, especially the sick and aged, with Christ and the offering of his sacrifice. Serving these people is the special ministry assigned to Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharist who assists the priest and deacon to serve the needs of the faithful during and outside of Mass. In this parish, those who participate in the taking of the Eucharist to the aged, ill and those in care/nursing homes and hospitals belong to Pastoral Care ministry and training for that is separate from that for those of us who function at daily and Sunday Masses only.
4. The EM’s are responsible for preparation of the tables and gifts before Mass and purification of the chalice and ciboria and other vessels after the celebration of Eucharist.
5. All lay ministers trained as EM’s must make an annual commitment to serve the community of St. John’s, function as minister when assigned, study and prepare for the ministry, participate in the annual ‘Day of Recollection’ and become fully knowledgeable in the functions and responsibilities of the ministry and within the following guidelines. Only those who make an annual commitment will be scheduled.
6. The word “liturgy” originally meant a “public work” or a “service in the name of, or on behalf of, the people.” In Christian tradition it means the participation of the People of God in the Work of God.
7. Extraordinary Eucharistic Ministers serve the gathered Christian assembly by assisting with the distribution of the Body and Blood of Christ, so that all may be strengthened and nourished to carry on the work of Jesus in the world. They also bring communion to the sick, homebound, and hospitalized.
8. Requirements
 - A. Be a practicing Catholic (faithful attendance at weekend and holy day liturgies).
 - B. Be a fully initiated Catholic (having received Baptism, First Communion, and Confirmation) and be at least 18 years of age.
 - C. A prayerful demeanor and reverence for the Eucharist
 - D. A willingness to commit to 1 or 2 Masses per month, follow the given schedule or find a substitute.
 - E. Arrive for Mass at least 20 minutes early to prepare to serve and/or to meditate before our Mass celebration and stay after Mass to clean the holy vessels, etc. as needed.

Ministers of the Eucharist should in every way demonstrate by their reverence for the Eucharist that they truly believe that this is not just bread and wine, but the very Body and Blood of the risen Lord. Their manner of dress, respectful silence, grace-filled movement, and care with the Sacred Species are observed by all the people and by the Lord. One should not accept this kind of responsibility unless he or she is willing to carry it out with deep faith and a deep and awesome sense of God's presence.

9. Training is provided

The theological foundation and "how-to's" are explained during scheduled training sessions. Ministers are updated when any changes are made to the liturgy. Schedules are posted, emailed and left on the Sacristy table.

GUIDELINES FOR SERVICE AT MASS

Scheduled Assignment:

1. Check weekly/monthly schedule for Mass assignment. There can be anywhere from eight (8) to twelve (12) EM's assigned to any given weekend Mass. Additional EM's are used during special holidays such as Christmas and Easter.
2. For scheduled assignments, check in 20 minutes before Mass and sign the register, remember your number and check out the numbered diagrams (Figures 1 and 2) for your altar assignment so you will know your serving location.

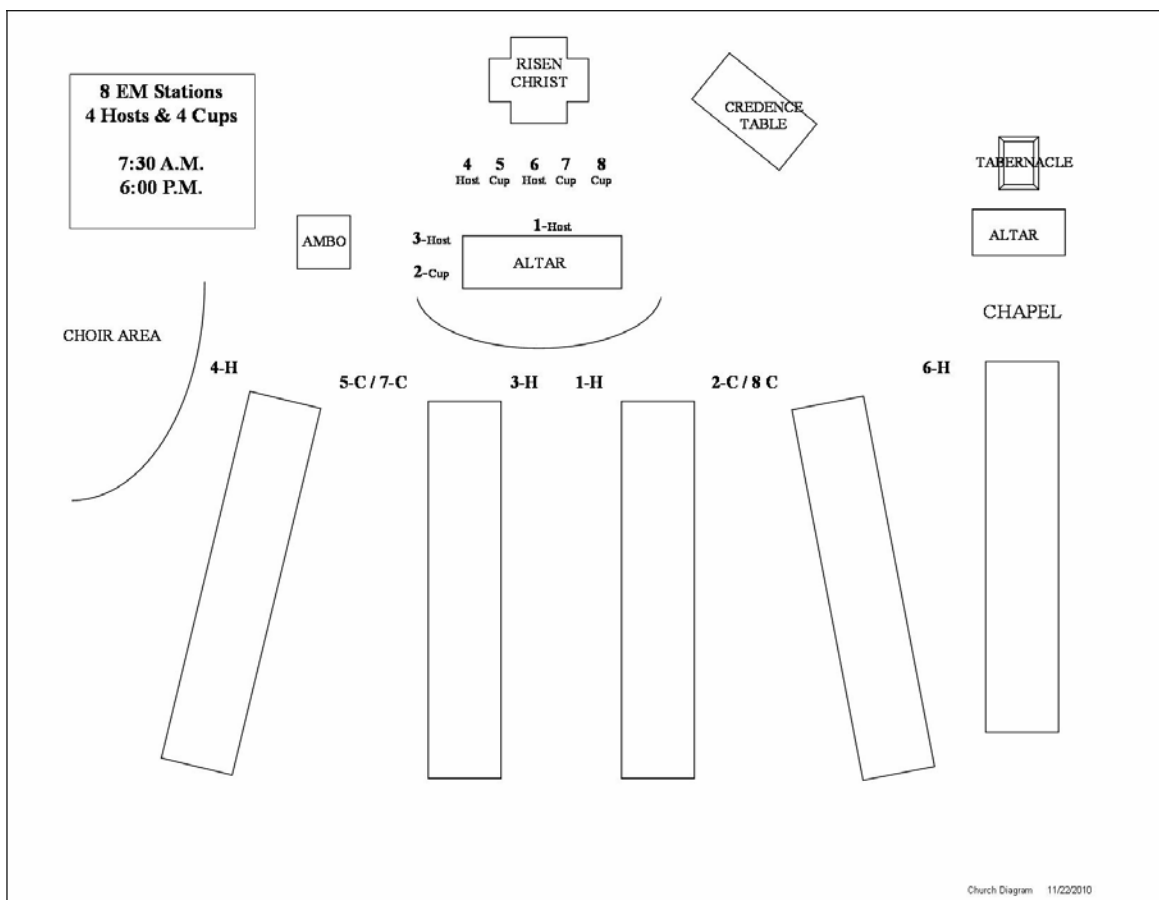


Figure 1. EM Stations for 7:30 A.M. and 6:00 P.M Masses

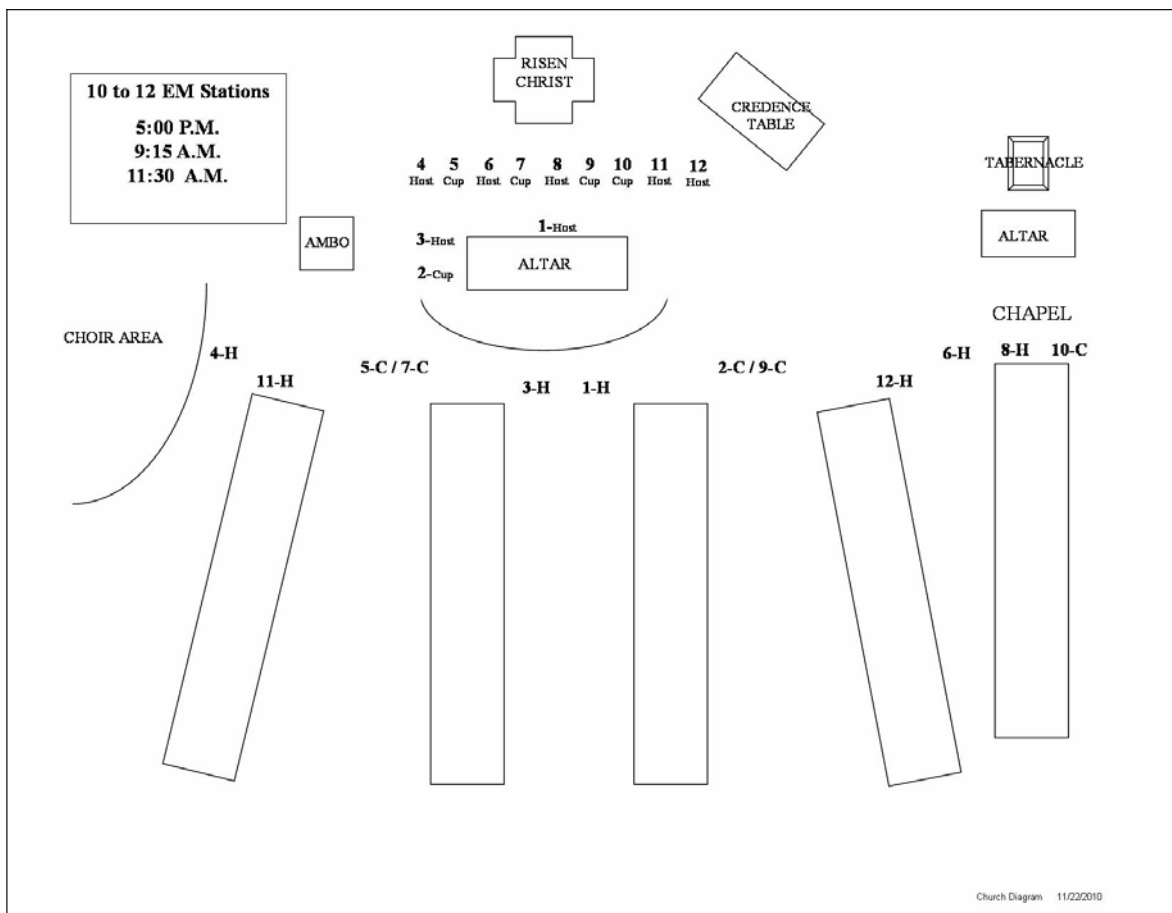


Figure 2. EM Stations for 5:00 P.M., 9:15 A.M. and 11:30 A.M Masses

3. After signing in and before the start of Mass, please leave the Sacristy, go into the Narthex area and extend a friendly greeting to those around you. The Sacristy is for prayerful preparation and only those preparing for the Mass should remain. All EM's should gather by the tree in the Narthex and confirm your number and serving location on the altar. Take the initiative to pray in a circle with all EM's, lectors, deacon, and altar servers before lining up to process. The last 5 minutes, please end conversation and change to prayerful mode. NO TALKING. There should be silence before the procession begins. All lectors and EM's are to process in with the celebrant. (There are 2 rows behind the altar servers' seats reserved for the EM's and their families.)
4. If an EM cannot function at the assigned Mass, it is the duty and responsibility of the EM to arrange for a substitute. If you cannot arrange for a substitute, please contact the Mass Coordinator.
5. EM's should be properly attired and ready to function as a substitute EM at any Mass that they might attend. Check in before Mass and sign in as a standby. Be sure and contact the Mass Coordinator so that he/she knows where they can find you if you are needed at the last minute. You are expected to process in with the rest of the EM's. If the scheduled EM arrives late, they should check in to see if their services are still required.
6. If the EM is late checking in and another EM has filled in assuming the EM to be late or absent, please remember that a full compliment of ministers is needed and the Mass Coordinator has taken responsibility to assure that full coverage has been achieved. It is expected that the substitute will function with your blessing.

Procession and Recession

1. There should be silence before the procession begins.
2. All EM's will process to the altar and recess from the altar with the celebrant and other ministers at the beginning and conclusion of the Mass.

3. The position of the EM's during the procession is immediately following the altar servers and before the lectors.
4. All ministers in the procession will stop at the foot of the altar, moving right and left to make room in the center for the celebrant and/or deacon. The deacon will place the Book of The Gospel on the altar.. All will bow in unison to the altar. All EM's will move to their place in the community after the celebrant kisses the altar.
5. At the recession, all ministers will approach the altar, bowing when the celebrant bows and then exit. All EMs except #3 and #4 will recess out. Eucharistic Ministers #3 and #4 will approach the altar, pick up all vessels which are on the credence table and carry them to the daily sacristy for washing.
6. There should be nothing on the altar until the consecration. Only the pyx with unconsecrated hosts are placed on the altar to be consecrated. The silver tray is used to carry the pyx to the altar and returned to the credence table.

Preparation for Eucharist:

1. EM's assemble with grace and dignity at the altar during the "Kiss of Peace". This must be said as, "The peace of the Lord be with you." The response is, "And also with you". Also, do not cross aisles to give the sign of peace. When approaching, bow to the altar (not the risen Christ), purify your hands and line up behind the altar according to your sign-in number.
2. The Priest or Deacon will open the tabernacle and take the ciboria containing the consecrated hosts to the altar, placing them next to the newly consecrated hosts on the altar. They will also return the remaining consecrated hosts to the tabernacle after serving everyone.
3. The Minister of the Host and Minister of the Cup will stand next to the altar, approximately three (3) feet away from the carpet area, to receive Communion in both species and then to function as Minister of the Cup and assist the priest in distributing the blood to the remainder of the EM's and altar servers. Leave the remaining blood in the celebrant's chalice. The priest will hand the chalice/cup to the EM's. As a gesture of reverence, EM's are to bow when in view of the celebrant before receiving the body and blood. The altar servers receive Communion from the priest. If this is not done by the priest, then EM # 11 is assigned this function and EM #10 is assigned the cup.
4. The remaining EM's will assemble before the "Lamb of God", standing a few feet behind the celebrant's carpet.
5. The deacon or priest will hand the ciboria and the cups to the EM's who will proceed in unison with the celebrant to serve the community. EM's are to serve the choir last.
6. Dignity, reverence and order are key ingredients necessary in the function of EM's. Move slowly to the locations designated and proceed to distribute Holy Communion. Remember to walk behind the altar when heading to the designated place for distribution.
7. If you drop a host, please pick it up and tuck it in your hand and continue serving. When you are finished, make sure you consume the dropped host or ask another EM or the celebrant.
8. If you spill the blood of Christ, please put your purificator over the spill. Get a clean purificator from the altar. After Mass, go back with a wet towel and sop up the wine, same as you would at home. Take the towel and rinse it in the separate sink in the front Sacristy, not the main drain.
9. If you finish and you still have hosts in your ciboria, please do not leave it unattended on the altar. Wait for the next ciboria, condense the Hosts, leave the empty ciboria on the altar and be seated.
10. If you still have blood in your cup, please consume it or have another EM consume it. Place the empty cup on the altar and be seated.
11. If your line is completed and other lines still have people waiting to receive communion, you may go to assist other EMs or the priest.

12. If you have questions of a liturgical nature or about procedures, please ask Father or ask your Mass Coordinator.
13. When holidays near, please check in the sacristy for special sign ups. When we have special Masses for the holidays, we always need people to sign up as EM's.
14. You may serve only one ministry at a Mass.

Distribution of the Eucharist:

1. Ministers of both the Body and Blood of Christ will observe the needs of the elderly and handicapped and will offer them Holy Communion in both species before they proceed to their assigned stations.
2. For proper distribution of the Body of Christ, raise the host to your eye level and say, "The Body of Christ". The person will respond, "Amen". Place the host firmly in the palm of the hand, making physical contact with the person or place the host gently on the tongue. If any person or child not receiving Holy Communion wishes a special blessing, the EM of the host is to bless the person by extending his/her arm over their head and saying, "God Bless You" or "May God Bless You."
DO NOT MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.
4. For proper distribution of the Blood of Christ, present the cup to them saying, "The Blood of Christ." After receiving the cup back, wipe the rim of the cup with the linen purificator; rotate the cup in preparation for distribution to the next person. If a Minister of the Body of Christ runs out of hosts, obtain additional hosts from another minister if needed and return to your station to continue distribution. When finished, return to the altar and place your ciborium on the altar or combine into another ciborium and then take your empty vessel to the altar and return to your seat. Do not leave your ciborium on the altar unattended.
5. Should you run out of the Blood of Christ before finishing your line of people, step next to the nearest Minister of the Cup and tell him/her you are leaving and they should center themselves to be available for both lines and you should return to the altar and place your vessel on the altar and return to your seat. **NEVER REPLENISH YOUR EMPTY CUP FROM ANOTHER CUP.**
6. When you are leaving the altar, never pass in front of the altar, and always pass behind the altar when in the sanctuary area. After you have left the sanctuary area, it is **not necessary** to bow to the altar again.
7. If your line is completed and other lines still have people waiting to receive communion, you may go to assist.

Miscellaneous:

All lectors, EM's and parents are not to encroach upon the duties of the altar servers. If a problem arises, the priest, deacon or Mass Coordinator will assist them. The Coordinator is responsible to have the altar servers hang up their cassock and surplice.

Appropriate Dress/Attire:

1. **Women** - Dresses, skirts and blouses, pantsuits and sweaters are appropriate. No shorts or short skirts. No low-cut necklines or uncovered shoulders or backs. Obviously, denim or casual pants are not acceptable. Also, please leave your purses locked in the your cars or in the pews with your family members.
2. **Men** - Coat and tie are preferable, but if you cannot wear a coat, then at least wear a dress shirt, dress pants and a tie with maybe a sweater or sports coat.

Guidelines for Purification and Washing of Vessels

- Two (2) EM's shall return to the sacristy during the recessional and wash all vessels.
- **It is not the function of the altar servers to clear the credence table.**
- **The Ministers of the Cup and Host should be the ones to wash the sacred vessels.** (If for some reason you cannot stay, please secure a replacement minister.)
- Purification begins at the altar by the priest or at the credence table by the deacon.
- In the sacristy, the two (2) EM's use soap and hot water to wash all vessels.
- **DO NOT POUR ANY PURIFICATION LIQUID INTO THE REGULAR SINK - EITHER MINISTER MUST CONSUME IT.**
- Water from the bowl that the priest washes his fingers in may go into the regular sink.
- After all vessels have been washed and rinsed, please dry them out completely with a terry towel and store in cabinets if no Mass follows. After 7:30 a.m. and 9:15 a.m. Masses, the vessels (wine cups, small clean purificators with green cross, ciboria, chalice with paten and large host, a clean purificator, large water bowl, small water carafe and clean terry towel) should be placed on the credence table. The filled wine carafe and a large ciborium containing unconsecrated hosts should be placed on the counter top next to the sink in the sacristy. This ciborium should have a lid. Other ciboria filled with unconsecrated hosts are to be placed directly on the credence table but without a lid. There should always be one extra purificator with the green cross laced on the credence table to allow the possibility of spillage while distributing the precious Blood. Do not attempt to clean that spot until after Mass.
- After the 5:00 p.m., 11:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Masses, the chalice should be reset and all vessels should be put in the cupboard above the sink.
- Always cover the altar with the white cloth after 5:00 p.m., 11:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Masses.
- After all the vessels have been put away, the soiled purificators and terry towel may be placed in the basket. (Take care to drape the towels and purificators, which may be wet, over the side of the basket to prevent mildew.)