

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION

GUIDELINES; CHANGES WILL BE TYPED IN *ITALIC*

Hygiene:

Clean your hands and fingernails just as you would if you were preparing food and serving guests at your table. When the Presider washes his hands during the Eucharistic Liturgical Rite, it is a symbolic gesture and not necessary or recommended for Lay Ministers. It is recommended that you physically wash your hands in the sacristy before mass or before you set up for mass. You would not wash your hands with alcohol based hand sanitizer and then handle food before served at your table, and therefore it should not be used before you serve consecrated hosts to parishioners. If you have a cold or flu, you should ask someone to replace you for that mass.

Dress:

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion should be dressed in a way that expresses the respect and dignity proper to the Eucharist and the assembly. Do not dress to draw attention to yourself. Dress appropriately, clean and neatly.

Before mass; (In some churches, much of this is done by a sacristan, but you should always check.)

1. Report to the Presider and indicate that you are the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion for that celebration.
2. Fill the ciborium and communion plate with hosts, enough for that celebration. Use your hands to transfer the hosts from the container to avoid crumbs at the bottom.
3. Fill the flagon with wine or a wine decanter if you are distributing the consecrated wine to the community. Fill the water container with fresh water.
4. Make sure you have a purificator for each chalice used, and that a corporal is with the main chalice for consecration. *Place a corporal on the credence table for the purification of sacred vessels and an extra purificator in case of an accidental spill.*
5. Check the tabernacle to see how many consecrated hosts are on reserve. **You should try to consecrate just enough hosts for that Eucharistic celebration.**

6. Make sure everything needed for the mass is on the credence table and / or the table of offerings.

During mass:

1. *When the congregation has begun the sign of peace, you should move without delay, to the sanctuary. You should sit towards the front of the church and when you arrive in the sanctuary, you should stand off to either side of the sanctuary.*
2. *Do not genuflect or bow to the altar or Tabernacle, but move directly to the sanctuary.*
3. *When the sign of peace is concluded, the choir sings the “Lamb of God” and you should be in the sanctuary before the singing begins.*
4. *Only the priest or deacon can go to the tabernacle*
5. *Once the Presider, Celebrants and deacon have received, move to the corner of the altar to receive communion.*
6. *Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion must receive the Sacred Vessels from the Presider; never take them from the altar yourself.*
7. *If any consecrated wine or hosts remain after communion, return them to the corporal on the altar. Only the priest (deacon) can consume the remaining consecrated wine, and return the host to the Tabernacle.*
8. *The sacred vessels are moved from the corporal on the altar to a corporal on the credence table where the priest or deacon will purify them.*

Sharing the Eucharistic Bread and Wine:

1. *Eye contact is very important. The parishioner will bow slightly before receiving Eucharistic Bread and Wine, but wait for them to lift their head, and make eye contact as you offer communion. (they bow the head only once when they receive the host, not the chalice--- one ritual action for communion)*
2. *If a host is accidentally dropped, pick it up and consume immediately.*
3. *When serving the chalice, use the purificator to wipe the rim. Open the purificator fully. Demonstrate*
4. *When the chalice is empty, return to the sanctuary, *place the chalice on the corporal on the altar.* Never serve an empty cup!*
5. *If consecrated wine remains after communion, it should be placed on the corporal on the altar for the priest (deacon) to consume.*

6. *The priest may require help to move the Sacred Vessels to the credence table where he will purify them. If not, move back into the assembly.*

After mass:

If the church has no sacristan to transfer the sacred vessels back to the sacristy, the Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion should take all the used sacred vessels (chalice, ciborium, communion plate), wash with hot water in the sacristy and place them back where they are stored.

Sacrarium: is a special sink found in the sacristy of most Catholic churches. They are often made of stone and fitted with a drain, and are in some cases used to dispose of materials used in the sacraments and water from liturgical ablutions. Churches do not have to be retrofitted, but new churches or renovations must include a sacrarium.