

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion Notes and Suggestions

- Dress Guideline
 - Pants/Skirts (avoid jeans)
 - Shirt/Blouse (with collar and sleeves)
- Scheduling
 - Each Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion (EMHC) is scheduled with a number.
 - At Mass, the number of ministers needed is determined by how many communion stations would be vacant after the priests, deacon and seminarian have taken a position.
 - If only one EMHC is needed, the minister numbered one serves. If two EMHCs are needed, ministers numbered one and two serve. If three EMHCs are needed, ministers one, two and three serve.
- Communion Stations (Current, June 2013)
 - St Patrick, 4 Stations (2 Hosts, 2 Chalices)
 - St Hyacinth, 4 Stations (4 Hosts)

Instruction for the Distribution of Holy Communion

- The needed number of EMHCs should come to the altar as soon as the priest drinks from the chalice.
- Communion is offered to all Catholics who are disposed (free from grave sin, grave scandal, and having fasted for an hour). A communicant who properly presents himself is presumed disposed.
- If you are uncertain if a person is Catholic or if a young person is of age, offer a prayer of blessing.
- When offering a prayer of blessing, simply say clearly and audibly (but not necessarily loudly), "May the Lord bless and keep you. Amen." (cf. *Numbers 6:22*). Do not invoke the Trinity or make the Sign of the Cross. If the person does not move at this point, nod and say "Amen" again. Avoid touching the person. It is important to be conscious of small particles of the Sacred Host that may be on your fingers.
- After Communion return the ciborium or chalice to the altar, placing it on the corporal. Approaching the altar from the front may be the most convenient. If distributing the host, purify your fingers in an ablution cup. You may return immediately to your pew.

The Distribution of the Host

1. When distributing Communion say audibly (but not necessarily loudly), "The Body of Christ."
2. Wait for the communicant to reply "Amen" and extend his or her hands or tongue.
3. Only after point 2 is present should you carefully and slowly distribute the Host. Your reverence here is a great way to communicate and reinforce our belief in the Real Presence.
4. If point 2 is not present, wait for a moment, and then ask in a clear and audible voice (but not necessarily loudly) if the person is Catholic. If not, give a prayer of blessing.
5. When distributing Communion on the tongue, it is often helpful to have your index finger on top of the Host and thumb below in order to angle the Host most effectively.
6. Standing on the stair to the sanctuary is recommended to provide a better angle for communion on the tongue and to avoid contact between the ciborium and the server's communion paten.
7. Between communicants, lightly "dust" your thumb and index fingers together over the ciborium in order to allow any particles to fall into the ciborium and not onto the floor.

8. Be sure that each Host is consumed. If you see someone walk away without consuming the Host, follow and stop the person. If they are Catholic, ask them to consume the host, if not, retrieve the Host.
9. If a Host should fall to the floor, pick it up very carefully, being sure that there are no particles left on the floor.

The Distribution of the Precious Blood

10. Be ready to steady the chalice for our younger and older parishioners, especially when the chalice is full.
11. Please do not unfold the purificator. The final half-fold can be opened, but the tri-fold should remain. The purificator should never be stuffed into the chalice.
12. Wipe and rotate the chalice after each communicant.
13. Consume any of the remaining Precious Blood before returning the chalice to the altar.
14. If any of the Precious Blood should fall to the floor, place your purificator immediately over that place. Take another purificator from the altar and continue distributing Communion. Leave the purificator on the floor over the place where the Blood was spilled until a priest purifies the area after Mass. Be sure no one steps on or removes the purificator from the floor.

The Distributions of Holy Communion outside of Mass

15. When the Sacred Host is brought to the sick outside of Mass, the Host is carried in a small gold container called a pyx. The Pyx itself should be carried in a cloth or leather pouch called a burse that is generally worn around the neck. It is inappropriate to place the pyx into a pocket or into a bag with other items.
16. Please be sure to keep your pyx and burse in good and worthy condition. Pyxes can be purchased and repaired at religious supply businesses such as Lagron-Miller in Peoria. New pyxes or repaired/replated pyxes should be blessed before use.
17. When taking Communion to the sick, place your pyx on the altar with the necessary amount of bread before Mass begins. If you know that some of the sick cannot receive a full Host, it is best to fracture the bread before Mass. Wipe the broken edges to remove crumbs of bread before placing the bread in the pyx. After consecration this prevents there being small fragments of Jesus' Body that may be lost.
18. When taking the Host from the church it is important that the extraordinary minister go immediately to the persons who are waiting for Communion. While carrying the Host, one should not stop to chat with people or run other errands on the way. It is best to avoid any irreverence or distraction during this time with the Lord (like car radios).
19. Follow the Rite of Communion Outside of Mass for the communicants. Those who are sick are not bound by the one hour fast. After distributing Communion, check your fingers to be sure no particles remain on your thumb or forefinger. If you need to fraction a Consecrated Host, do so very carefully over the pyx.
20. After the last communicant, be sure that your pyx is completely empty. You may give more than one host to your final communicants to empty the pyx if need be. Any particles remaining in the pyx should be purified by a priest or deacon or completely consumed.
21. If a the sick communicant becomes unable to swallow the Host even after taking water, wrap the Host carefully in a cloth or tissue to be brought back to the church to be purified.
22. Please remember that your presence to the sick is often their main connection to our community. Bring them a parish bulletin and check on occasion if they have received the Sacrament of Anointing or if they would like a priest to make a Confession.