

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTER OF HOLY COMMUNION Policies and Procedures

The Eucharist is the “source and the summit of the Christian life” (*Lumen Gentium* 11). In order to ensure a faithful and reverent celebration of the Eucharist, this document sets forth the policies and procedures for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion at St. Margaret Mary Catholic Church. We ask all participants in this ministry to read them carefully and follow them.

1. Requirements¹

- a. Candidates for Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion must be “fully initiated in the Church², persons of genuine Eucharistic faith, living exemplary Catholic lives and have sound psychological maturity. The person must have no impediment to sacramental reception³.”
- b. All ministry volunteers are required to complete an Application for Ministry AND are required to attend an EIM workshop every three years. See the Diocese of Austin website (<http://www.austindiocese.org>) for more information.

2. Attire

- a. All ministers should dress neatly when serving at the Altar.
- b. The following are *prohibited*: short, low-cut or sleeveless dresses or blouses, Capri’s, shorts, or other revealing attire for women, jeans, denim of any kind, sneakers, tennis shoes or flip-flop style sandals.
- c. Men must wear a collared shirt.
- d. Keep jewelry/accessories to a minimum in order to focus attention on Christ.
- e. Do not ask the Priest or Deacon to serve if you are not appropriately attired – the answer will always be in the negative.
- f. Always come to Mass ready to serve if called upon, i.e. appropriately attired and able to receive Holy Communion.

3. Importance of Meeting Schedule Commitments and Finding Substitutes

- a. Please check the schedule and serve at your assigned Mass.
- b. Arrange for a substitute as soon as you are aware that you cannot serve. *It is not the responsibility of the coordinator to provide a substitute for you. A list of ministers will be provided with the monthly schedules.*
- c. Inform the EM coordinator if you cannot serve and cannot find a substitute. This is a last resort and should not be necessary under ordinary circumstances.

¹ See Diocese of Austin Policy Manual, Section K “Policy on the Eucharist, Effective 2005”.

² i.e. having celebrated Baptism, Confirmation, and First Eucharist.

³ i.e. living a life in harmony with the Church’s teaching and if married, in a valid Catholic marriage.

4. Arrival and Check-In

- a. Please arrive at least **30 minutes prior to Mass** when you are scheduled to serve. If you arrive later than 15 minutes before the beginning of Mass you may not serve.
- b. Complete setup no later than 15 minutes prior to the beginning of Mass. Ministers designated for setup on the schedule are required to ensure there are enough Ministers to serve at the Mass. If you are substituting for one of these ministers, please perform this task as well.
- c. Select a cross from the wall in the Ministry Room.
- d. Sign in using the white notebook on the counter in the Ministry Room. Initial by your name and indicate the position you will be serving. Crosses are labeled on the back.
- e. Deacons are *Ordinary* Ministers of Holy Communion – if they are participating in Mass but not serving on the altar it is appropriate for them to distribute communion. Please don't be alarmed or irritated if a Deacon has signed in and taken one of the EM positions.

5. Preparing for Mass

Table 1. Mass Setup

Item	Mass			
	5:00 PM	8:30 AM	10:30 AM	12:30 PM
Small Hosts	400	500	600	400
Ciboria	3	5	5	5
Cups	6	8	8	8
¾ Filled Cups	0	4	4	4
Purificators	6	8	8	8

- a. The Gifts
 - i. Place the number of small hosts in the large communion plate according to **Table 1. Mass Setup**. **Do not** adjust for the number of consecrated hosts in the Tabernacle; the celebrant and/or Deacon will adjust the number of hosts immediately prior to Mass.
 - ii. Place a large host on top.
 - iii. Fill the decanter with wine to the bottom of the neck of the decanter.
 - iv. Place hosts and wine on the table at the back of the church.
- b. The Credence Table:
 - i. Place chalices on a wooden tray with the cup cutouts (see **Table 1. Mass Setup** for quantity)
 - ii. Pre-fill chalices half full as indicated in Table 1.
- c. Place ciboria (see Table 1 for quantity), main chalice with a purificator over top, and additional purificators on plain bottom tray.

- d. Fill cruet $\frac{3}{4}$ full with water (use bottled water if available).
- e. Prepare celebrant's hand washing ewer, basin and colored (liturgically-correct) towel.

6. Prepare EM/Deacon Hand Washing Vessels:

- a. Fill 3 ewers (pitchers) with water from bathroom sink using the plastic container provided.
- b. Prepare 3 hand washing stations on the stone wall behind altar, each with ewer, basin and colored (liturgically-correct) towel.

7. During Mass:

- a. Sit with your family close to the altar (i.e. within the first 3 to 5 rows).
- b. Move to the foot of the altar following the Sign of Peace, bow to the altar, proceed to the back of the altar to wash hands.
- c. After washing hands, host ministers proceed to the left side of the altar between the statue of Mary and the pillar, leaving space for the Deacon to return to the altar from the chapel with the reserved Blessed Sacrament. Cup ministers proceed through the Sacristy to the right side of the altar between the statue of Joseph and the pillar.
- d. Proceed to the main level of the altar after the Priest has consumed the Body and Blood of Christ, forming a half circle with the altar servers around the back of the altar.
 - i. Cup Ministers proceed in a single file, with the minister closest to the statue of Joseph leading. The leading minister should stop at the edge of the Altar, and the final minister should complete the half-circle with the Altar servers to their right.
 - ii. Host Ministers proceed in a single file, with the minister closest to the statue of Mary leading. The leading minister should stop at the edge of the Altar, and the final minister should complete the half-circle with the Altar servers to their left.

Line up as close to the Altar on both sides as possible.

- e. The Priest distributes the Body of Christ to all and the Deacon (or the 1st Host minister if there is no Deacon) distributes the Precious Blood to the Host ministers and altar servers. The Priest will then distribute the cups to the cup ministers.
 - i. Cup Ministers: After you receive your cup, move away from the altar, stop in front of the Ambo, consume the Precious Blood, and then move from the altar to your designated position.

1. Cup Hosts C-1, C-2, C-3 and C-4 proceed directly to your designated spots after consuming the Precious Blood. *Do not cover the cup with your purificator as you walk.*
 2. Cup Hosts C-5, C-6, C-7 and C-8 proceed to your designated spots after consuming the Precious Blood by walking to the right of the Ambo and around the **back** of the Altar. *Do not cover the cup with your purificator as you walk.*
 3. Continue to move to the altar until the last minister has received the cup. Do not make the Priest come to you, rather approach the altar.
 - ii. Host Ministers: The Deacon or Priest will give you a ciborium. After you have received the ciborium, move directly to your station.
- f. Do not move from your assigned station or “make up “ other stations unless
- i. Your line is empty and you are moving to assist at another station or
 - ii. You are moving to the back of the church to distribute the Eucharist to those whose who are unable to come forward.

8. Distributing the Body of Christ

- a. Hold the host a little below eye level to draw the communicants attention to the Host and say **“The Body of Christ”** (not *“This is the Body of Christ”*).
- b. The communicant should respond **“Amen”**. If they do not respond, repeat **“The Body of Christ”**. If they do not respond **“Amen”**, ask if they are Catholic and have received First Holy Communion. Do not distribute the Body of Christ if they are not Catholic and/or have not received First Holy Communion.
- c. **Always ensure that the communicant consumes the Precious Body in your presence!** On occasion someone will try to walk away prior to consuming the Host - **do not let this happen**. If you must, leave your position and quietly ask them to consume the Host in your presence. Follow them as far as you must to get them to consume the Body of Christ or return it to you if they do not understand what they are doing.
- d. If anyone (child or adult) comes to receive the Eucharist and you are unsure whether to give it or not, ask them if they have made their First Holy Communion. If they indicate that they have not or don’t know what you mean, bless them only. See 8.e below.
- e. Those not able to receive the Eucharist may approach you with arms crossed over their chest to receive a blessing. In this case, place your right

hand on their shoulder and say "God bless you". Do not bless them with the Sign of the Cross – this is reserved to the ordained.

- f. After you have distributed the Eucharist to the last person in your line, proceed to the altar and place the ciborium on the corporal or give it to the Priest or Deacon. Proceed to the Eucharistic Chapel and wait for the other ministers.
- g. If you are the last Host minister, wait at the altar for the Priest (or Deacon) to give you the covered ciborium to return to the Tabernacle. Return the ciborium to the Tabernacle, carrying it at your midsection and walking carefully with one hand over the cover; remember that you are holding Jesus in your hands. Do not hold the ciborium over your head.
- h. After the reserved Blessed Sacrament has been returned to the Tabernacle, the Host Minister who returned the ciborium leads all ministers from the Eucharistic Chapel to the front of the Altar, where all bow together then return to their seats. The last Minister to leave the Eucharistic Chapel closes the Chapel door.

9. Distributing the Blood of Christ

- a. When the communicant presents him/herself, take the chalice and hold it a little below eye level. Look the communicant in the eye (*this gets their attention as they are about to receive the Precious Blood*), say "**The Blood of Christ**" (not "*This is the Blood of Christ*"). The communicant should respond "**Amen**". If they do not, repeat "**The Blood of Christ**". If they still do not respond with "Amen", you may ask them if they are Catholic.
- b. After the communicant responds, carefully hand them the cup.
- c. When the communicant returns the cup to you, wipe the cup with the purificator and give it a quarter turn, ready for the next communicant. Continue in this manner until your line has ended or you run out of Precious Blood.
- d. If you run out of Precious Blood, leave your station, place the empty cup on the tray at the credence table, place purificator over the top (not inside) and proceed to the Eucharistic Chapel. Wait for the other ministers in the chapel. Do not stand at your station with an empty cup.
- e. If there is Precious Blood remaining in your cup after all communicants have received, consume the remaining Precious Blood. If there is more than you can finish, ask one of your fellow EM's to help you. Do not leave any of the Precious Blood in any of the cups to consume later.
- f. After all cup ministers have returned from their stations, **the last cup minister to return carries the tray of cups to the Sacristy and places it on**

the counter near the sink. The Deacon will purify the cups during the announcements.

10. After Mass

- a. Return your cross to the Ministry Room.
- b. Clean up or set up for the next Mass:
 - i. 8:30 AM ministers set up for 10:30 Mass
 - ii. 10:30 AM ministers set up for 12:30 PM Mass
 - iii. 5:00 PM Saturday and 12:30 PM ministers clean up, put everything away and lock cabinets.

Please make sure there are enough ministers to clean up, and assist even if you are not scheduled as clean-up for that Mass.

Questions or Problems?

If you have any questions, problems or can no longer serve, please contact Theresa Cruz at (512) 528-1234. Thank you for your faithfulness and consistency as Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion.