



ST. BENEDICT CATHEDRAL

Rooted in Tradition, Growing in Faith

Guide for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

August 2018

This guide is to assist all new and continuing Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (EMHC). How blessed we are to be able to assist others in receiving the Body and Blood of Christ. Just an awesome task requires appropriate decorum and reverence. The following guidelines will help you in your performance of this most important ministry:

KEY STEPS IN YOUR SERVICE AT MASS

BEFORE MASS

1. Check the **schedule** for your time of service.
2. **Dress appropriately** for this ministry: nice pants, shirts, dresses, skirts, blouses suggested. Please no shorts or t-shirts.
3. **Sit in one of the front 10 pews** to prevent confusion of others coming forward to serve.

DURING MASS

4. **Show reverence** for the Eucharist in full, conscious, and active participation at Mass and the manner in which you handle the Blessed Sacrament.
5. **Approach the altar during the Sign of Peace**, and stop on the **baptismal font level**. A total of EIGHT ministers is needed, including the priest and deacon. Typically, the EMHC's stand three and three, near the font and in front of the ambo (lectern).
6. **As the priest drinks from the chalice**, proceed to your side of the altar, remaining on the carpet.
7. **Receive Holy Communion reverently**. EMHC's only receive Holy Communion from another minister; they never "self-communicate."
8. **Receive chalice and purificator or bowl** and proceed to your distribution location: large bowls to the center aisle, small bowls to the side aisles, one chalice paired with each bowl.
9. **Distribute Holy Communion**. When you proceed to your serving position (chalices against the outside wall of the church for the side aisles and even with the ends of the center pews for the center sections / hosts at the head of each aisle), notice any parishioners with limited ambulatory capacity sitting near the front. These individuals should be served first. The hosts minister should approach and distribute, followed by the chalice minister. After distributing to these individuals, you should continue to your normal serving positions. The parishioners will then begin to line up to receive.

The EMHC who is distributing the Body of Christ holds the Eucharistic bread slightly above the

paten or bowl looks at the communicant and says in a clear voice **only these words: “The Body of Christ.”** After the communicant has responded “Amen,” the consecrated bread is placed in the communicant’s hand or on the tongue. Should an EMHC believe that a communicant has not consumed the Body of Christ, this should be brought to the attention of the priest celebrating the Mass at an opportune time (i.e., after the distribution of Holy Communion or immediately following the Mass).

The EMHC who is administering the Blood of Christ holds the chalice up slightly, looks at the communicant and says in a clear voice **only these words, “The Blood of Christ,”** to which the communicant responds, “Amen.” Generally, the communicant should hold the chalice and drink from it, but the extraordinary minister should be prepared to assist in holding the chalice in the case of physical infirmity or weakness. After each communicant receives the Blood of Christ, the extraordinary minister should wipe the rim of the chalice with the purificator (inside and out) and turn the chalice slightly before presenting it to the next communicant.

If a non-communicant approaches (child or adult), EMHC’s may trace the cross on the forehead with the thumb, while saying **“Live forever with Christ.”** Often, the person in line will respond, “Amen.”

If the Consecrated Host or some particle falls during distribution, the Host or particle should be picked up reverently and consumed by the minister. If it cannot be consumed due to dirt or some other reason, it should be placed at the side of the bowl until it can be handled properly by the priest. If the consecrated wine should spill from the chalice, wipe up the spill with the purificator.

10. **Return unconsumed consecrated hosts to the tabernacle.** The presider will open the tabernacle to deposit the unconsumed consecrated hosts.

Ordinarily, only the priest genuflects during the liturgy and then, only at specified times.

11. **Chalice ministers consume the remaining precious blood near the altar.** If a particular minister cannot consume the remaining precious blood at all or without assistance, that minister invites another minister to do so. Then the chalices and purificators and empty bowls are delivered to the credence table for purification by the priest and deacon. **Purificators are laid flat on the table** since the priest and deacon will be purifying the vessels immediately.

12. **Return to your seat in the congregation.** When leaving the altar, exit down the steps near the baptismal font, bowing to the altar if you pass in front of it.

AFTER MASS

13. At the end of Mass, collect ciboria, *lavabo* bowl, chalices, bowls, cruets, keys, and purificators from the credence table and take them into the sacristy.

14. **Clean the vessels in the sacarium sink** with the anti-bacterial detergent provided and a soft sponge. Towels for drying are located in the drawer under the drying rack. **All vessels** (including the low-gluten pyx), once dried, are returned to their place in the right-side locked cabinet on the south wall of the sacristy.

15. Place the **used purificators** in the soak-box near the sacarium. **Finger towels** are hung on the black towel bar, along with the dish towels. Place the tabernacle key and the cabinet keys in their place.

PLACEMENT FOR MINISTERS

C=Chalice / H=Hosts. This way, there is the most room for a line to form for the chalice without clogging the line for hosts.

