

St. Eugene's Cathedral
Instructions for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion
(Sunday Mass)

“Another moment of the celebration needing to be mentioned is the distribution and reception of Holy Communion. I ask everyone, especially ordained ministers and those who, after adequate preparation and in cases of genuine need, are authorized to exercise the ministry of distributing the Eucharist, to make every effort to ensure that this simple act preserves its importance as a personal encounter with the Lord Jesus in the sacrament...All Christian communities are to observe the current norms faithfully, seeing in them an expression of the faith and love with which we all must regard this sublime sacrament.” Pope Benedict XVI—“*Sacramentum Caritatis on the Eucharist as the source and summit of the Church's life and mission.*” (2007)

Ongoing Preparation for your ministry:

Two crucial elements of the personal ongoing preparation of any minister of Holy Communion, whether ordinary (ordained) or extraordinary (lay), are:

1. A profound and ever-deepening personal faith in the Real Presence of our Savior Jesus Christ in the sacred species of His body and blood, and
2. Regular personal prayer at times outside the celebration of Mass in front of the Blessed Sacrament, whether in the tabernacle or in the adoration chapel.

These two elements help us to deepen our reverence for the Eucharist and our awareness that what we do when we distribute the Body and Blood of Christ to our fellow parishioners is not a merely human act but a participation in God's saving action in the world, one Christian at a time.

The old Latin adage, *Nemo dat quod non habet* (No one can give what they don't possess), is very relevant here. We cannot effectively give Christ to others if we do not already have him in our own hearts.

Finally, no one should participate in the ministry of the Eucharist who is aware of being in a state of serious sin.

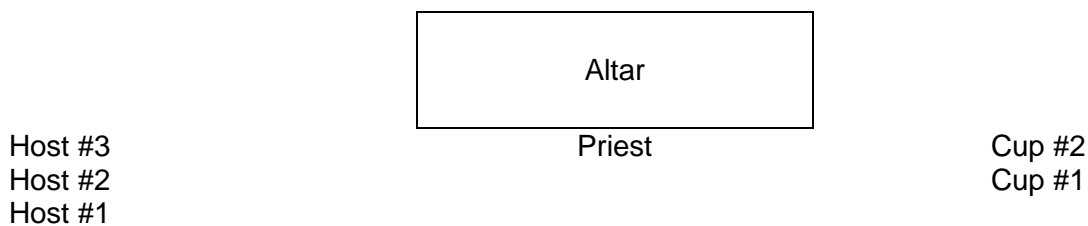
Before Mass:

- Come to the priests' sacristy before Mass and check your specific assignment on the list posted there.
- Return to your pew, which should be no more than ten rows back from the altar.
- Spend time in quiet prayer thanking God for the gift of your ministry and asking God for the grace to carry it out in a manner that reflects God's unconditional love and acceptance for those who approach the Eucharistic table.

Prior to distributing communion:

- Note: in all cases the deacon, if present, replaces Host #3. If there is no deacon present, Host #3 is always a volunteer from the congregation.
- After you have exchanged the sign of peace with those who are close to you in the church, proceed to the position indicated on the diagram below based on your scheduled assignment.
- Special Note: If there are fewer than two ministers of the Precious Blood, one of the ministers of the Body of Christ should cross to that side and become a cup minister. The priest will give the remaining ministers of the Body their assignments.

Layout for Reception of Communion by Ministers



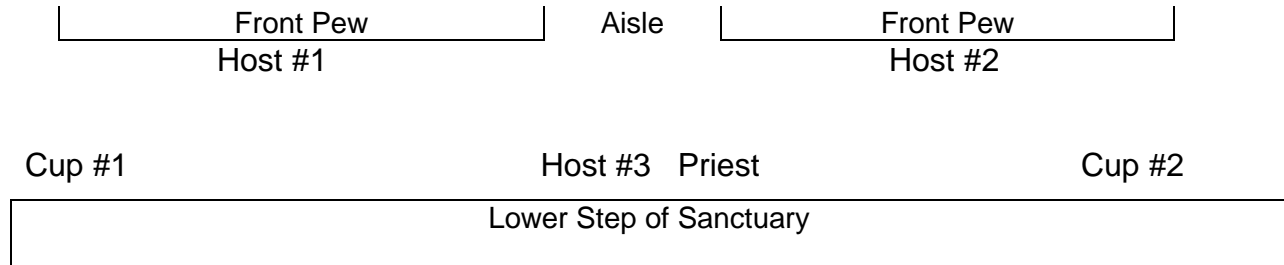
- Eucharistic ministers remain standing prior to their reception of communion. It is not our procedure for the ministers to kneel during the Lamb of God and uniformity of practice in this regard is important.
- When the priest shows you the sacred species and says, “The Body of Christ”, bow your head briefly and then say, “Amen” and receive on the tongue or in the hand. Similarly with the Precious Blood.
- If you do not wish to receive from the Precious Blood, simply hold the cup in your hand and then return it to the priest.
- Wait until the priest/deacon hands you the bowl or cup for distribution of communion. Do not take either from the altar at any time.
- The priest will then bring the Body of Christ to the altar servers before going down the steps. Once the priest has moved forward to distribute to the congregation you should move to your distribution position.

Distributing Communion:

- Once the priest has given the Body of Christ to the altar servers, Host #3 proceed to the position indicated in the diagram below.
- Host #1 and Host #2 should bring the Body of Christ to people in the handicapped pew on their side and then proceed to their positions.
- Cup #1 should offer the Precious Blood to the adult altar server in the sanctuary if there is one. Do not offer the Precious Blood to the youth altar servers in the sanctuary—if they have parental permission to receive from the cup, they will join the regular line.

- Cups #1 and #2 should offer the Blood of Christ to the people in the handicapped pews on their side and then go to their positions as indicated below.

Layout for Distribution of Communion



- The ministers of the Body of Christ show the sacred species to the communicant by holding up the host and saying, “The Body of Christ” (nothing else) and then placing the host on the person’s hand or tongue after the communicant has said, “Amen”.
- The ministers of the Blood of Christ show the cup to the communicant by holding it slightly and saying, “The Blood of Christ” (nothing else) and then handing the cup to the communicant after he/she has said, “Amen”. The communicant drinks from the cup and hands it back to the minister who then wipes the cup with the purificator at the place from which the communicant drank. The minister then turns the cup a quarter–turn before offering it to the next communicant.
- Diocesan policy prohibits communicants from intincting (dipping) the host into the cup. If someone attempts to do so, cover the cup with your hand and tell them it is not allowed.
- If a consecrated host drops to the ground, pick it up and hold it in your hand until giving it to the priest after the distribution of communion is completed indicating that it had fallen. Also, be sure to mention to the priest if the host had already been in someone’s mouth.
- If the precious blood is spilled, immediately unfold and place your purificator over the spot where it spilled and return the cup to the altar. Return to the location of the spill to ensure no one walks on the purificator or moves it. After communion tell the presider what happened so that he can arrange for the spill to be cleaned up.
- If your cup is empty, simply return it to the credence table, place the purificator on top of it and return to your pew.
- If your host bowl is empty, direct the communicants to another line, place the empty bowl on the corporal in the middle of the altar and return to your pew.
- If any other unusual situation for either the Body or Blood of Christ arises, immediately stop distributing communion and return to the sanctuary. Ask the priest for direction after he has returned to the altar. Please note: Because circumstances vary so much, nothing is ever to be put into the sacrarium (special sink in the closet) in the sacristy by anyone other than a priest or deacon.

- If someone comes forward with their arms crossed, reach out your empty hand and say “May the Lord bless you with his peace” or similar words. Do not hold up the host. Do not refer to the Holy Trinity and do not make the sign of the cross—these are both sacramental elements reserved to ordained ministers in the Catholic Church.

After communion:

- Ministers of the Body of Christ should bring their bowls (whether empty or not) to the presider at the altar and then return to their pews.
- Ministers of the Precious Blood should do as follows—
 - If some of the Precious Blood remains in your cup bring it to the presider or deacon to consume; then bring the empty cup to the credence table, place the purificator on top of the cup and return to your pew.
 - If your cup is empty, bring it directly to the credence table and place the purificator on top of it before returning to your pew.
- None of the sacred vessels is to be purified by anyone other than an ordained minister or an acolyte instituted as such by the Bishop.

Dress Code for Extraordinary Ministers:

All clothing should be—

- Modest
- Intact
- Clean
- Appropriate for one carrying out a ministry in a formal liturgical setting.

The presiding priest is the arbiter on these issues.

Substitutions:

- Always do all you can to find a substitute if you cannot be at your assigned Mass. Do not assume that someone will volunteer as sometimes there are not enough volunteer extraordinary ministers in the congregation.

Questions:

Regarding scheduling—contact the office staff at office@steugenes.com.

Regarding any other relevant issues—contact Fr. Frank Epperson at feinroma@yahoo.com.

Revised: 7/30/2014