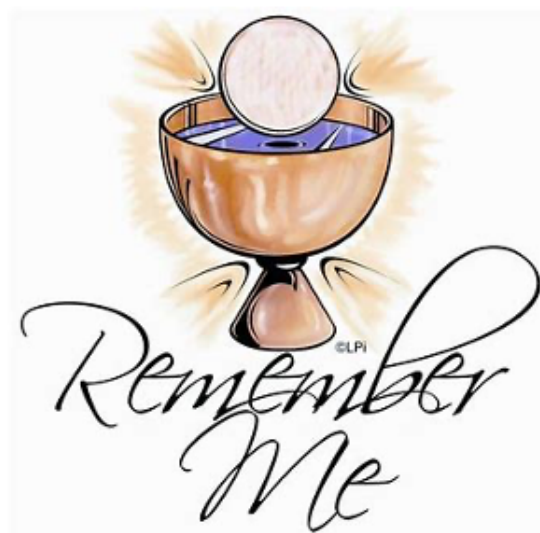


**HANDBOOK  
FOR  
EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS  
OF HOLY COMMUNION**



**OUR LADY OF THE ASSUMPTION CHURCH  
CARMICHAEL, CALIFORNIA**

**UPDATED JULY 2023**

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**SERVING AS EXTRAORDINARY MINISTER  
OF HOLY COMMUNION AT SUNDAY MASS  
OUR LADY OF THE ASSUMPTION CHURCH**

Thank you for your service as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion (EMHC). Through your role, God is present to his people in every celebration of the Eucharist.

Because your ministry is so important, here are some basic expectations for all EMHCs:

- **Please try to serve as scheduled.** If you are unable to serve on your scheduled day, please request a substitute through the online Ministry Scheduler Pro. If you are not assigned to serve but are present at Mass, be willing to serve if a substitute is needed.
- **Please prepare yourself inwardly** for ministry through prayer and reflection on the Sacrament of the Eucharist and how God reveals Himself to us.
- **Please model the greatest reverence for the Most Holy Eucharist** by your demeanor, your attire, and the way in which you handle the consecrated bread or wine.



## BEFORE MASS

Please arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the start of Mass to sign or initial the roster at the back of the church, and prepare for service. Ensure that all vessels and linens needed for Mass are in their proper places:

### Altar

- 4 purificators on the right side of the altar.
- Light altar candles if needed.

Credence table *(Please follow the paragraph in the Sacristy for placement of items on the credence table. The altar servers are trained to recognize the specific placement in the photograph.)*

- Chalice with purificator, paten with large presider host, pall, and two large, folded corporals
- Four cups with purificators; two ciboria
- Pitcher of water, bowl, and hand towel
- Cruet of water

### Tabernacle

- Ensure that the tabernacle key is in the tabernacle lock.
- Check to see how many hosts are in the ciborium. Generally, it is about one-third full.

### Gifts (Processional) table

- Wine Cruet filled approximately one-third full or wine pitcher filled approximately one-half full, covered with a purificator  
*(Check with presiding Priest or Mass Captain for special needs. Please note examples in the binder in the Sacristy.)*
- Covered ciborium with unconsecrated hosts  
*(See estimated amounts based on Mass in the binder in the Sacristy.)*
- Book of Intentions

*Being hospitable and creating a welcoming atmosphere belongs to all ministers, not just the greeters and ushers. When you have ensured that everything is in place, please greet people.*

## DURING MASS

All EMHCs are encouraged to join the assembly in sung and spoken responses, as examples of participation for the people.

St. Augustine said: "The one who sings prays twice."

### LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

- EMHCs approach the sanctuary during the Lamb of God. Stop at the foot of the sanctuary steps, then bow reverencing the Altar and the Eucharist present there. Hand sanitizer is provided at the credence table. Please stand behind the Presider at the altar, facing the congregation **while not blocking the tabernacle**. If another Priest or Deacon is present, they stand closest to the Presider.
- When another Priest or Deacon is present, the Presider will typically minister the consecrated bread (Body of Christ) to them first, and then minister the consecrated wine (Precious Blood.) The Presider will then continue ministering the Body of Christ to each EMHC and the Altar Servers or he will have the Deacon or concelebrating Priest do it. Then, during most Masses, Father Eduino will use four cups (one each) to serve the Precious Blood to the first, third, fifth, and seventh EMHC at the altar. Each of them will then serve the Precious Blood to the EMHC next to them, (second, fourth, sixth, and eighth EMHC respectively). The second, fourth, sixth, and eighth EMHC will retain the cup and purificator and wait for location assignments for serving those in the pews. The last or eighth EMHC should ensure Altar Servers are able to receive the Precious Blood before moving to her/his assigned location. **When a Deacon is present, he will retain the cup by his ordination as "Minister of the Cup."**
- Those ministering the Precious Blood should stand at a sufficient distance from those ministering the Body of Christ so the flow of Holy Communion is not blocked. A good rule of thumb is to stand at the end of the pew furthest from those ministering the Body of Christ.

## MINISTERING THE BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST

- Distribute Holy Communion from your station. Communicants may receive the Body of Christ in the hand or on the tongue, at their discretion. **If someone who is physically challenged is nearby, you may minister to them first.** A minister of the Precious Blood should accompany the minister of the Body of Christ in taking Holy Communion to the physically challenged. Typically, the choir will line up at the beginning of Holy Communion distribution.
- For those distributing the Body of Christ, take a consecrated host and hold it so the person can see it, saying: **“The Body of Christ.”** No other words or names should be added. Then, place the consecrated host in the person’s hand or on his/her tongue. The communicant must say “Amen” after receipt. If they do not, you say it for them. Make sure they consume the consecrated host.
- For those ministering the Precious Blood, hold the cup so the communicant can see it, saying: **“The Blood of Christ.”** No other words or names should be added. Then hand the cup to the person. The communicant must say “Amen” after receipt. If they do not, you say it for them. **When the cup is handed back after the Communicant’s reception, please carefully wipe the rim with a small portion of the purificator, ensuring it does not drape into the Precious Blood. Then, before ministering to the next person, turn the cup a quarter turn or so.** If the minister does not wish to consume the remaining Precious Blood after Holy Communion, they may ask the last person in line if they will consume it. If they do not, they should take the cup to the credence table, and ask another EMHC to consume the Precious Blood. Please place purificators on the table and not inside the empty cups.
- Those ministering the Body of Christ and the Precious Blood, who finish their distribution first, should immediately move to the back of the church to distribute to those who are physically challenged. Ideally, this responsibility should not fall upon the minister who will serve the choir.

## WHAT IF...?

- ⇒ **an EMHC runs out of consecrated hosts:** He or she should go to the closest EMHC with the Body of Christ to obtain more.
- ⇒ **the Holy Communion procession is close to the end:** It is appropriate to break a few remaining hosts in halves or quarters in order to accommodate all communicants.
- ⇒ **a communicant comes forward with a pyx for carrying a host to a homebound person:** It is not customary to place a consecrated host into the pyx while distributing Holy Communion. Without being disruptive, ask the person to come to you after Mass. At that time it can be explained to the person that those designated to bring Holy Communion to the sick and homebound should place their pyx on the altar before Mass and retrieve the pyx from the altar before leaving the church. If the communicant persists, place a host in the pyx.
- ⇒ **a host is dropped:** It is the EMHC's responsibility to pick it up and consume it immediately.
- ⇒ **there is a request for consecrated gluten-free host:** Ask them to step aside until all have received and then see the Priest or Deacon to retrieve the consecrated host from the tabernacle.
- ⇒ **a communicant approaches a minister of the Precious Blood with the consecrated host in his or her hand with the intention of dipping it into the cup (intinction):** On the rare occasion when this happens, please inform the person that intinction is reserved for ordained clergy, and they can discuss this with the Priest after Mass, if they like. However, if the person insists, you can offer to dip the Body of Christ in the cup and place it on their tongue.
- ⇒ **a person approaches requesting a blessing, usually by placing his/her arms across the chest:** As a lay person, the EMHC may bless the person by holding a hand over the head and saying, "Bless you" There should be NO Sign of the Cross or touching the person because this can be misleading and possibly indicate a blessing given by ordained clergy.

## AFTER HOLY COMMUNION

- Return to the credence table. No bow is necessary because you are completing your ministry and the original bow will suffice. Extraordinary Ministers of the Precious Body should take their ciboria to the tabernacle and hand it to the Priest or Deacon. When the Priest or Deacon hands back the empty ciborium, please place it on the credence table.
- As noted earlier, those with the Precious Blood should take their empty cups and place them on the credence table immediately. When Precious Blood is remaining, they should go to the credence table and consume the Precious Blood at the credence table or ask another EMHC to consume the Precious Blood. **Please put the purificators on the credence table and not inside the cups.** This is especially important because the purificators are used in purifying the vessels in the Sacristy after Mass, and this also helps prevent excessive staining of the purificators. Wait at the credence table until all Extraordinary Ministers of the Precious Blood have returned, and the precious blood is consumed.
- When you leave the sanctuary after distributing Holy Communion and returning the vessels, please go together as a group to the bottom of the stairs (one group of Extraordinary Ministers of the Precious Body, and one group of Extraordinary Ministers of the Precious Blood), bow, and return to your seats. ***Important: Please stop immediately and reverence the tabernacle when the Priest or Deacon places the consecrated hosts inside.***
- **The sacred vessels will be purified in the Sacristy after the Mass.**

## **AFTER MASS**

After the end of the recessional song, **all EMHCs should assist Altar Servers in removing vessels and linens from the credence table and taking them into the Sacristy.**

**EMHCs should purify the sacred vessels, using the following procedure:**

- If the Priest does not purify his vessels, begin with the chalice and paten – make sure any remnants on the paten are brushed into the chalice with your thumb.
- Pour water over the paten into the chalice, then swish it around. Pour that water from the chalice into each of the remaining vessels, swishing the water around each time to remove all consecrated remnants.
- Drink the water from the final vessel, and then wipe all vessels with a purificator.

**EMHCs should then clean purified vessels using the following procedure:**

- Wash all vessels using soap and water, except the two ciboria that have reliefs of the apostles, as the water gets in between the two pieces. Use the “Sacrarium” which is a special sink in the Sacristy that has a drain directly to the ground to ensure the proper disposal of sacred elements. The Sacrarium has a lid with a cross on top.
- Thoroughly dry the vessels before preparing them for the next Mass or placing them in the cabinet.

**Prepare the credence table for the next Mass as follows:**

- Priest’s Chalice with clean purificator draped over the mouth of the chalice, paten with presider host placed on top of the chalice, pall placed on the paten, and two large, folded corporals on the pall
- Four cups and purificators; two ciboria
- Pitcher of water, bowl, and hand towel



## **AFTER MASS (*continued*)**

- Cruet of water approximately one-third full

*(Please follow the photograph in the Sacristy for placement of items on the credence table. The altar servers are trained to recognize the specific placement in the photograph.)*

### **Prepare the gift table for the next Mass as follows:**

- As a general rule, Wine Cruet is filled approximately one-third full, and wine pitcher is filled approximately half-full (covered with a purificator). Check with presiding Priest or Mass Captain for special needs. (Please note the examples in the photographs in the binder in the Sacristy.)
- Fill the large ciborium with hosts for the next Mass. If the ciborium in the tabernacle is full, which is roughly 200 hosts, then fill the ciborium for the gift table about a third to half full. If the ciborium in the tabernacle is half full, then the ciborium for the gift table should be two-thirds to full.
- Place cloths to be laundered in the bin; drape wet cloths over the side to allow some drying and to prevent mold.

*PLEASE NOTE: After 5:00 pm Saturday and 11:00 am Sunday Masses, put the vessels in the drawer located below the linen cabinet in the Sacristy. Leave all vessels empty. After 7:30 pm Sunday Mass, place empty vessels in the cupboard above the sink.*

## **GROWING AS AN EXTRAORDINARY MINISTER OF HOLY COMMUNION**

Being an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion is more than serving at Mass. As God uses you to bring his sacred presence to his people through the Sacrament of the Eucharist, please continue to discern on how you reflect this love and presence in your daily life.

## GLOSSARY

- Chalice:** The large cup used at Mass to hold the wine that becomes the Blood of Christ. A chalice does not have a lid.
- Ciborium:** A cup-like vessel with a lid that is used to distribute the Body of Christ to the people. It is also used to reserve the Blessed Sacrament in the Tabernacle.
- Communion Cup:** A cup, usually of semi-precious metal, used to minister the Precious Blood to the people.
- Corporal:** A square white linen napkin on which are set the vessels containing the bread and wine during Mass. It is folded into a small square. When unfolded, it is placed on top of the altar cloth.
- Credence Table:** The credence table is situated directly behind the Tabernacle. This table serves as a staging area for vessels and linens for Mass.
- Finger Towel:** A white terrycloth towel used by the Priest as he washes his hands before the Eucharistic Prayer.
- Pall:** A square of stiffened linen which serves as a cover for the chalice.
- Paten:** The small plate that holds the Presider's host, the visible symbol of the bread being broken in the Eucharist.

## GLOSSARY (*continued*)

- Purificator:** A white cloth used to cleanse the chalice and/or Communion cups after each person drinks. Also used to dry the chalice and Communion cups after cleaning. The Priest's purificator has a double fold in the center.
- Pyx:** A pocket watch-shaped case in which a consecrated host is carried to the sick.
- Sacrarium:** A special sink, with a lid, in the Sacristy that drains into the ground under the building, not into the sewer system. Used to dispose of Holy Water, to rinse linens still containing Precious Blood, etc.
- Sacristy:** A room located off the sanctuary, where Communion vessels, linens, ritual books, vestments, etc. are kept.
- Sanctuary:** The area of the church where the Altar, Ambo and Presider's Chair are located.
- Tabernacle:** The small storage cabinet where the reserved Blessed Sacrament is stored.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

(Accessed 7/22/2023)

**Diocese of Sacramento:**

<https://www.scd.org/worship/extraordinary-minister-holy-communion-mass>

**United States Conference of Catholic Bishops:**

<https://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/the-mass/order-of-mass/liturgy-of-the-eucharist/extraordinary-ministers-of-holy-communion-at-mass>



## Extraordinary Minister's Prayer

Soul of Christ, sanctify me;

Body of Christ, save me;

Blood of Christ, inebriate me;

Water from the side of Christ, wash me;

Passion of Christ, strengthen me;

O good Jesus, hear me;

Within your wounds hide me;

Separated from you, let me never be;

From the evil one protect me;

At the hour of my death, call me;

And close to you bid me;

That with your saints, I may be,

Praising you forever and ever. Amen.

(Anima Christi)