

## **Eucharistic Ministers' Guidelines**

### *Parish of the Precious Blood*

If the Eucharistic bread or some particle of it falls, it should be picked up reverently by the minister. The consecrated bread may be consumed or completely dissolved in water before being poured down the sacrarium.

Should there be any mishap, for example, if the consecrated wine is spilled from the chalice, the area should be washed and the water poured into the sacrarium.

In those instances when there remains more consecrated wine than was necessary, if needs dictate, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion may consume what remains of the Precious Blood from their cup of distribution with the permission of the diocesan bishop. When a sufficient number of priests or deacons are not available, subject to the approval of the diocesan bishop, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion may purify the vessels. The amount of wine to be consecrated should be carefully measured before the celebration so that none remains afterward. It is strictly forbidden to pour the Precious Blood into the ground or into the sacrarium.

#### **Helpful reminders:**

\*Even before the celebration itself, it is commendable that silence be observed in the church, in the sacristy, in the vesting room, and in the adjacent areas..."

\* Vessels for Communion are made from solid materials that do not break easily.

\*A cross with the figure of Christ crucified is placed on or near the altar.

\* All stand after the invitation "Pray my brothers and sisters" and before the response "May the Lord accept the sacrifice."

\* Unless it is a special occasion, the priest exchanges the sign of peace only with those near him in the sanctuary.

\* The distribution of the elements into vessels is reserved to priests and deacons.

\* All kneel at the conclusion of the Lamb of God.

\*Extraordinary ministers come to the altar only after the priest celebrant has received communion.

\*Extraordinary ministers receive their vessels from the hands of the priest or deacon.

\*If extraordinary ministers consume Precious Blood, they do so at the altar.

#### **At the Rite of Communion:**

1. During the Lamb of God, the Eucharistic Ministers line up at the bottom level of the sanctuary. After the priest has consumed communion (both species). All the Eucharistic Ministers will go and stand off to the side of the altar; Ministers of the Cup to the right and Ministers of the Eucharist to the left of the Altar.
2. The Eucharistic Ministers will receive the Eucharist from Father.
3. Father will give the ciboria and the cups to the other Eucharistic Ministers.
4. Distribute Communion to the faithful making sure that those who are unable to come forward receive. It is proper for the communicant to bow before receiving. Present the Eucharist with these words, "THE BODY OF CHRIST". Do not address them by name. The communicant responds "AMEN". Place the Eucharist either on the tongue or in the hand of the communicant. If the host should fall, inconspicuously pick it up. You may offer it to the communicant, consume it or place it in the ciborium to the side and care for it after Mass.
5. If you are distributing the Precious Blood, present the cup to the communicant with these words: "THE BLOOD OF CHRIST". The communicant will respond "AMEN". When the communicant returns the cup to you, receive it with both hands and with the purificator, wipe in one direction slightly turning the cup a quarter turn.
6. When the cup is empty, place your hand over the cup to indicate that the cup is empty.
7. If the communicant is a child, keep your hands on the cup while they receive.
8. If the cup should accidentally spill, place the purificator over the spot where the Precious Blood was spilled. The important thing to remember is to treat the spill with reverence. Prevent people from walking over the spill. The area will be properly purified after Mass.

9. After the last person has received, both Ministers of the cup consume the remaining Precious Blood AT THE ALTAR (not on the bottom level and not as you are walking towards the altar). If you are unable to consume the remainder, share the cup with another Eucharistic Minister or the Priest may also assist in consuming the Precious Blood. Place the cups on the Altar with a purificator draped over the top of the cup. Ministers of the Body of Christ will bring the ciboria to the principle Ciborium. Eucharistic Ministers should remain at the Altar until the Blessed Sacrament has been placed back in the Tabernacle. Then return to your seat. The Priest will return the ciborium to the tabernacle, genuflect while the door is open and lock the tabernacle.
10. Father will purify all sacred vessels at the altar.

USCCB Committee on the Liturgy  
Extraordinary Ministers of Holy  
Communion at Mass  
General Principles

In every celebration of the Eucharist, there should be a sufficient number of ministers of Holy Communion so that it may be distributed in a reverent and orderly manner. Bishops, priests and deacons distribute Holy Communion in virtue of their office as ordinary ministers of the Body and Blood of the Lord.

When the size of the congregation or the incapacity of the bishop, priest, or deacon requires it, the celebrant may be assisted by other bishops, priests, or deacons. If such ordinary ministers of Holy Communion are not present, “the priest may call upon extraordinary ministers to assist him, i.e., formally instituted acolytes or even some of the faithful who have been commissioned according to the prescribed rite.” In case of necessity, the priest may also commission suitable members of the faithful for the occasion. (GIRM 162).”

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion should receive sufficient spiritual, theological, and practical preparation to fulfill their role with knowledge and reverence. Eucharistic Ministers need to be fully initiated, practicing Catholics whose lives witness to the ministry they perform.

In all matters they should follow the guidance of the diocesan bishop. When recourse is had to Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion, especially in the distribution of Holy Communion under both kinds, their number should not be increased beyond what is required for the orderly and reverent distribution of the Body and Blood of the Lord. In all matters such Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion should follow the guidance of the diocesan bishop.

All ministers of Holy Communion should show the greatest reverence for the Most Holy Eucharist by their demeanor, their attire, and the manner in which they handle the consecrated bread or wine. Should there be any mishap—as when, for example, the consecrated wine is spilled from the chalice—then the affected “area... should be washed and the water poured into the sacrarium (GIRM 280).”

If extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion are required by pastoral need, they approach the altar after the priest receives communion. He then distributes communion to the extraordinary ministers, assisted by the deacon, and then hands the sacred vessels to them for distribution of Holy Communion to the people.

Neither deacons nor lay ministers may ever receive Holy Communion in the manner of a concelebrating priest. The practice of Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion waiting to receive Holy Communion until after the distribution of Holy Communion is not in accord with liturgical law. (GIRM, 160)

After all Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion have received the Eucharist, the bishop or priest celebrant reverently hands vessels containing the Body or the Blood of the Lord to the deacons or extraordinary ministers who will assist with the distribution of Holy Communion. The deacon may assist the priest in handling the vessels containing the Body and Blood of the Lord to the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion.

The proper and only permissible form for distributing Holy Communion is to offer the consecrated bread by saying, “The Body of Christ” and to offer the consecrated wine by saying, “The Blood of Christ.” No other words or names should be added; and the formula should not be edited in any way. (Cf. GIRM, 161.)