

I. INTRODUCTION – (Note: This Procedure Applies Only to St. Charles Borromeo Church Weekend Liturgies)

Your willingness to serve as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion (EMHC), reflects your commitment to Christ as you share in the preaching, teaching and leading aspects of the church. Your willingness to prepare properly for this service further reflects that commitment.

As a fully commissioned EMHC you are appointed to the parish community of St. Charles Borromeo to aid in the distribution of Holy Communion at Mass and to the homebound when ordinary ministers of Holy Communion are unavailable.

Participation in our parish ministry requires training and ongoing theological and ministerial formation in the following:

- Theology of the Eucharist and understanding of the Mass
- Theology and spirituality of ministry
- Universal church, diocese, and parish guidelines and procedures for their ministry

II. GENERAL

1. EMHC schedules are published for 3 month periods. The Sunday Bulletin also publishes the following Sunday's ministers. Weekly bulletins and EMHC schedules can also be viewed on our parish website.
2. You are responsible for keeping track of your assignments and arranging a substitute when needed. Repeated absences may warrant removal from the ministry schedule.
3. One EMHC will be designated (via the schedule) to serve as the "LEAD" EMHC for each Liturgy. There is a Sacristan guide for this responsibility on the parish website, and a simple checklist of duties in the Sacristy and Minister's Room at the back of the Church, which entails:
 - a. arriving at church early enough to ensure that the preparations for the altar and sacred vessels are in place
 - b. seeing that the host and wine are at the entrance of the church.
 - c. distributing the Eucharist to the faithful as an extraordinary minister.
 - d. ensuring the sacred vessels are properly washed and stored, or set up for the next Mass of the day
 - e. The number of EMHC ministers for a typical weekend liturgy will fluctuate depending on whether a deacon is present. St. Charles requires a total of six ministers to distribute the Body and Blood of Christ
4. It is preferable that EMHCs do not perform any other liturgical ministry at the Mass at which they serve.

III. BEFORE THE LITURGY

1. EMHC's should arrive at the church at least 15 minutes before the scheduled Mass to both check in, and prepare themselves interiorly for their ministry.
2. There is hand sanitizer in the Minister's Room. Also, there is water and soap available in the public & sacristy restroom.
3. EMHCs should sit within the assembly of believers and are not part of the opening or closing procession. It is preferable for EMHC's to sit on the right (choir) side of the aisle. This will minimize having to cross the altar when walking to and from the altar during the Communion Rite. It is a powerful sign of unity seeing EMHC's come from the assembly and returning to it after having served.

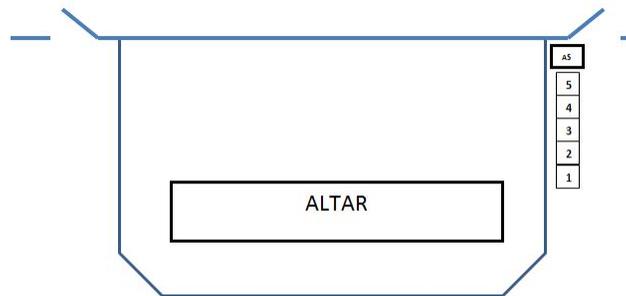
IV. DURING THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

The mass will proceed through the readings, the homily, the Lord's Prayer and the Sign of Peace.

1. After the Priest has concluded his own Communion, the EMHC's approach the right side of the altar, preferably by using the ramp (no bow to the altar during this service).
2. The ministers should line up at the right side of the altar and await communion from the celebrant/deacon.
3. Distribution – (*Note: Although we are diagramming a pattern for the EMHC, it is important to remain flexible and go with the flow no matter how events play out.*)
 - a. When there is no deacon, (typically) the first, third, and fifth minister will receive the cup from the celebrant and distribute to the person on their right. Once all are handed the sacred vessels move to your respective

stations. EMHC 4 & 5 will distribute first to the Holy Family Chapel then move to the north transept. After the transepts has been covered, the cup bearer will return to the right side of the altar holding the cup until handing it back to the clergy along with the water cruet. The EMHC distributing the consecrated host to the side transepts will walk to the entrance (back) of the church to offer communion to anyone who may have been unable to make the procession to the altar. After this route has been completed, return to the EMHC line-up.

- b. When a deacon is present, the cup recipients will typically be EMHC 1 & 2 & 4. Ministers 3 & 4 will serve the transepts.



4. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has stated "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" (GIRM, 161; 284-287).
5. **Purification and Washing of Sacred Vessels**
- a. Ordinarily, the priest or deacon will purify the vessels either at the altar or credence table before returning to his chair. After the priest or deacon completes the purification he will give the sacred vessels to an EMHC to return to the proper place in the sacristy for final washing after Mass.
- b. When the priest and/or deacon releases the EMHC's to return to their seats, do not pause again along the way to give another reverence to the altar. It is preferable to use the ramp to exit the sanctuary.
6. After the Mass has ended, the Lead EMHC is to ensure that the final washing and securing of the sacred vessels is complete. (Note: After the Saturday vigil and Sunday 7:30am Mass, this step will entail making (Eucharistic) preparations for the next liturgy.

Acceptable Practices for Distribution of the Body of Christ

- Reverently hold up the consecrated host between you and the receiver and looking the receiver in the eye, smile and say "The Body of Christ." Wait for the person receiving communion to say "Amen" and then place it in their hand or on their tongue, depending on which method they prefer. If an adult or child comes up for communion and they have their hands crossed over their chest, place the palm side of your hand on their upper arm or shoulder and say "Christ's blessing on you." Placing your hand on someone's head can be offensive and is a health concern. EMHC should not make the sign of the cross as part of the blessing, as EMHC's are not ordained ministers.
- While giving communion, be alert for anyone who does not seem to know what to do. Gently ask: "Have you made your First Communion?" If they reply "No"; then say, "Let me give you a blessing," then follow the manner of blessing as described above.
- If a person comes to receive communion and you see them chewing gum, ask them "please remove the gum from your mouth" before giving them communion.
- If you give someone the host and the person begins to walk off without putting it into his/her mouth, call the person back (without making a scene) and ask them to "please, consume the host, or return it to you."
- EMHC's whose line has run out can return to the EMHC line at the right side of the altar.

- After the entire congregation has received communion, return your ciboria to the minister who is collecting consecrated host back to the tabernacle, then once again line up to the right of the altar waiting for all the EMHC's to return.
- If you drop the Consecrated Host, your calm demeanor at this moment can assure an anxious and embarrassed communicant. Pick up the host. You may bring the dropped host to the altar and place it on the corporal, or you may hold the host in the same hand as the vessel. *The host that is dropped is never to be replaced in the vessel, given to the next communicant, or consumed by the Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion at that time.* When distribution is finished and the minister returns to the altar, then the host may be consumed.

Acceptable Practices for Distribution of the Precious Blood

- Reverently hold up the chalice between you and the receiver and looking the receiver in the eye, smile and say "The Blood of Christ". Wait for the person receiving to say "Amen" and then hand them the chalice.
- Make sure the person has a good grip on the chalice before releasing it. Be especially careful when the person hands the chalice back to you. The exchange should be firm but gentle; not forceful enough to cause a "splash" or a spill. Be even more vigilant when the communicant is a younger child.
- After the person has handed the chalice back to you, wipe the place on the chalice where they drank, and turn the chalice a quarter turn.
- After all parishioners have received, The EMHC is to return to the altar and be prepared to hand the chalice to the priest/deacon for purification. Any of the remaining Precious Blood may be consumed once the EMHC has returned in line. If you prefer not to consume the remaining Precious Blood, offer it to another EMHC or the Deacon.
- An EMHC may assist the priest/ deacon by serving him the water cruet and once the purification is complete receiving and securing the chalice to its proper place.
- If you drop or spill the Precious Blood - **DO NOT PANIC!** Stop what you are doing. Your demeanor will reassure those communicants in line or, in particular, the person who may have caused the spill. Stop serving and ask the communicant to proceed to another minister of the cup. Place the purificator over the spill and position yourself over the spill. Notify the Deacon or Priest. They will arrange the clean-up.

V. MINISTRY TO THE SICK AND HOMEBOUND

When one member of the Body of Christ is unable to celebrate fully at Sunday liturgy due to sickness or advanced age, the entire community should be informed so that prayers and works of charity can be done on their behalf. The EMHC becomes a vital link between the parish community and the member who is hospitalized or homebound.

The EMHC to the sick and homebound should be empathetic and compassionate. It is important they are sensitive to the communicant's needs, i.e., spiritual, emotional, and material, as they may have to inform the parish staff if the person is in need of sacramental anointing, reconciliation or a pastoral visit. They should always maintain the confidentiality and dignity of the individual. It is desirable that visits to the sick and homebound occur after the liturgical celebration so the link between the parish celebration and the sick person is maintained.

To fill your pyx, approach the communion minister with an open pyx and gesture with your finger how many consecrated host you are requesting. The minister will deposit the host in the pyx. After this, you may receive Communion for yourself.

Extraordinary Ministers of Communion who are taking Holy Communion to the sick, homebound or to those in hospitals are to present the host in a prayerful manner. They are not to make judgments regarding the suitability of the person to receive Eucharist. It is improper to ask such questions that can be construed as interrogating one's Catholicity or worthiness to receive Christ.

Do:

- Make an appointment to visit. Ask how the person is feeling and if there will be others present.
- Use the ritual "Communion of the Sick" (Chapter 3) from *Pastoral Care of the Sick*.
- Begin informally. Introduce yourself to those who are present and briefly explain what you have come to do. Pay attention to how the sick/homebound person is feeling.
- Invite those who are present to participate in the prayers. If they feel comfortable, enlist the help of family or friends to do the readings.
- Have a cup of water ready if the person has difficulty swallowing.
- Create links to the parish, e.g., bring a parish bulletin, share news from the parish, ask if there is anything the parish can do for them.
- Thank the person for the opportunity to pray with them and for their hospitality.
- Return any unconsumed hosts to the tabernacle at your parish after your visit.

Don't:

- *Don't* visit a sick person if you are not feeling well yourself.
- *Don't* stay too long or take the role of a counselor or confidant.
- *Don't* compete with a television or radio. Politely ask if these can be turned off during the service.
- *Don't* carry the consecrated host in a plastic bag or other unsuitable container. Instead, use a pyx to carry the Consecrated host.
- *Don't* leave the consecrated host if the person cannot receive it. Instead, return at a later date to see the sick person.