



EXTRAORDINARY MINISTER OF HOLY COMMUNION HANDBOOK



HOLY NAME OF JESUS ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

245 PROSPECT PARK WEST, BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11215

Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion Handbook



Assisting at the celebration of the Holy Eucharist is always a privilege. Your service enhances the worship of God for the people of Holy Name of Jesus Parish. Thank you for the time and preparation you put into the Ministry of Reader.

This parish handbook may serve as a guide for new Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (EM) and as a refresher for those with experience in the EM ministry. For either group, proficiency in the ministry is not just about the mechanics of delivery (e.g. serving, etc.), but about the prayerful consideration of the Holy Eucharist.

For some parishioners, this new guidebook may also help in the process of discerning whether one is called by God to be an EM. Discerners are encouraged to reflect deeply about this liturgical ministry, especially in view of the necessary preparation that makes it a spiritually rewarding activity for oneself and for the assembled.

Anyone discerning service as either a Lector or Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion must meet with the Pastor to discuss the respective ministry. The Diocese of Brooklyn has the following requirements for lay faithful who serve in either of these ministries:

- Be a practicing Catholic who has received all the sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation).
- Live his or her life in accordance with the teachings of our Catholic Faith.
- Consent to training (new and ongoing) and be willing participate in the ministry with respect, knowledge and reverence.
- Be at least 16 years old (High School training for Lectors and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion is available through the diocesan Office of Liturgy.)

The Diocese of Brooklyn offers periodic training sessions that are required before entering into service as a liturgical minister. If a member of the lay faithful has prior certification in another parish or diocese, he or she must provide certification credentials to the Pastor.

This hand book is divided into the following sections:

- Preparing at Home
- Readiness before Mass
- Sunday Mass (and Saturday 5:30PM Mass)
- After Mass
- In case of accident

Preparing at Home:

At Holy Name, the Lay Liturgical schedule is based upon a three month schedule (Fall, Winter, Spring and Summer). Holy Days and other special Masses are schedule via email to allow Lay Liturgical Ministers to serve the Mass of their choice. The schedule is emailed to all active Lay Liturgical Ministers approximately one month prior to the quarter start. Weekly schedule reminders are sent every Monday evening. The schedule can also be found posted in the Holy Name Sacristy and the on Holy Name Website (<http://www.holynamebrooklyn.com/> - Select the "Worship" button on the homepage and then Lay Liturgical Ministers page). If you need printed copies, we suggest you ask another minister or contact the Holy Name Rectory for one. We ask for your flexibility in serving. We do the best we can to schedule ministers for their primary Mass preference but ask at least once a month you cover a different Mass (i.e. Sunday 7:30AM and Noon). It is important to serve the entire Holy Name Parish community at all the scheduled Masses especially Holy Days and other special Masses. Your prompt response to these schedule request emails is greatly appreciated.

Please be mindful that if you are unable to serve at your scheduled Mass, please arrange for a replacement with another minister. We suggest you do this via the email contacts from the schedule distribution. It is the Lay Liturgical Minister's responsibility to find a replacement. This is vitally important. Your service will be missed if you can't be at Mass at your scheduled time. Please read the complete schedule as soon as you receive it and note your assigned Masses.

A note about dress; please be mindful that your dress should be in line with serving at the Sacred Liturgy. Lay Liturgical Ministers represent God and his Universal Church and are seen as leaders. The Parish looks to you as an example.

If you are unable to serve for an extended period of time (i.e. extended vacation) please let the Holy Name Lay Liturgical Minister Coordinator know so the long term schedule adjustment can be made. If you are no longer able to serve as an

Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion, please let the Holy Name Pastor know. Please also let the Lay Liturgical Minister Coordinator know so that you can be removed from active service.

Readiness before Mass:

Please arrive at least 15 to 20 minutes before the scheduled start time for Mass (20 to 30 minutes prior to special days such as Palm Sunday, Holy Week services, etc.). You are free to hang your coat(s) in the Altar Server Alb closet in the Reconciliation Room Sacristy (hangers are provided).

For a normal weekend Mass, there are eight (8) total Communion and the Most Precious Blood stations at Holy Name. Eight stations is the optimal number of stations for a Holy Name weekend Mass. These are:

- Two Communion stations, main center aisle of Church.
- One Communion station, side aisle - Rectory side of Church.
- One Communion station, side aisle – Prospect Ave side of Church.

There are a total of four stations for the Most Precious Blood. They line up in front the “return aisle” on each side of Church (this is the aisle between the main center aisle and each side aisle). The EMs serving the Most Precious Blood line up “back to back” in front of the “return aisle” leaving enough room so there is not “queuing” that interferes with the distribution of Holy Communion.

We schedule a total of four (4) EMs for the weekend Masses. Often, there are four priests who cover the distribution of Communion and the Most Precious Blood (main celebrant, combination of deacon(s), and priests who come out from the Rectory) serving with the four (4) EMs. It is important to be flexible and attentive, especially if you are an EM not scheduled and attending Mass. All those serving at Mass will gather at the middle interior doors of the Gathering Space. If you an EM at Mass not scheduled to serve and see less than four (4) EMs gathered, please consider getting up and speaking to the main celebrant and volunteering to serve. Also, the main celebrant might approach an EM(s) in the pews and ask you to serve. Again, please be flexible (ask the main celebrant even if you feel you are not dressed to serve, he will decide).

The time before Mass is an opportunity to reflect on your service as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion and the Sacred Liturgy you are about to participate in.

Sunday Mass (and Saturday 5:30PM Mass):

All those serving at Mass will gather at the middle interior doors of the Gathering Space. You should line up as follows (and as present):

- Altar Server – Cross Bearer
- Altar Server – Candle Bearers
- Altar Server – Others
- Lector (Two Lectors for Sunday 10:30AM Family Mass – with Junior Lector if serving)
- Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion
- Deacon
- Main Celebrant

Before you line up in the Gathering Space, please take a Missalette and Hymnal from the EM assigned seating (the first pew, main aisle right side is designated for Lay Liturgical Ministers). All Lay Liturgical Ministers are strongly encouraged to participate in all aspects of the Mass especially as you process in and out of Church. Please return it to the pew after Mass.

At the scheduled time, as singled by the main celebrant in the Gathering Space, the Sacristan will ring the wall bells to signify the start of Mass. The Music Mistry will start to play. The procession will start as the Music Mistry starts to sing the Opening Hymn. Please leave enough room between each participant, walking slowing and reverently. As the EM approaches the steps of the Sanctuary, please bow to the Tabernacle. All EMs sit in the first pew, center aisle on the right side of Church. The pew is designated with a sign "*Reserved for Lay Liturgical Ministers*". Please participate in the Mass as normal. Please remember Lay Liturgical Ministers represent God and his Universal Church and are seen as leaders. The Parish looks to you as an example.

After the Lamb of God and just after the main celebrant receives the Eucharist and **lifts** the Chalice to consume the Most Precious Blood, all EMs should stand and leave the pew, moving to the center aisle. Walk one in front of the other in a single line. Walk reverently towards the Sanctuary and bow in reverence to the Tabernacle as you enter the Sanctuary.

- **Important Note** - Eight (8) total Communion and the Most Precious Blood stations is the optimal number of serving positions for a Holy Name weekend Mass. Between the “Our Father” and the “Sign of Peace”, a number of priests may be coming in from the Rectory and will enter the Sanctuary through the Sacristy. If there are less than four (priests and deacons) and four EMs, one of the priest might motion to EMs in the pews to come up and serve. Please pay attention to this. If in the end, if you see less than eight total people serving and there is time for you to come up from your seat please do knowing you may not be needed. If that is the case, please quietly return to your seat.

Please form a line along the right side (as facing) the “Altar of Sacrifice”. The first position will normally be the lector who has come over from their seat.

The main celebrant will offer you Communion. After Communion, potentially a different priest or a serving deacon will offer you the Most Precious Blood. If you are not able to receive the Most Precious Blood, please mention it to the priest(s) before Mass so you don’t have to refuse it on the altar. If you offered the Most Precious Blood and are given a “Purificator” (the towel used for wiping the Chalice after each communicant has drunk from it) you will be serving the Most Precious Blood. Please offer the Most Precious Blood to the lector, EM(s) closest to you if they have not received it.

Please note that the “General Instruction of the Roman Missal” indicates that the faithful are to make a sign of reverence before receiving Holy Communion. The Bishops Conference of the United States (USCCB) has determined that the faithful should bow their heads before receiving Holy Communion and the Most Precious Blood.

The priest will then give the Ciborium (the Sacred Vessel holding the Consecrated Hosts) to other EMs. The priest will decide what each EM will serve, please accept what he gives you willingly. There are no serving stations pre-assigned, the priest may ask each EM to serve at any one of the eight (8) stations. If not, please go to the station nearest to you depending upon what you are serving. Please move carefully and purposely, mindful not to spill anything. When walking with the Ciborium, please keep your hand covering the top to ensure none of the Consecrated Hosts fall out. Please reserve the main center aisle for priests/deacon unless a priest assigns it to you.

- **Serving Holy Communion** – Offer Holy Communion to each person by saying “*The Body of Christ*”; no other words are said such as “receive this” or the

communicant's name. Hold up the Consecrated Hosts slightly above the top of the Ciborium. Try to look at each person in the eye during this intimate encounter. The communicant can receive in the hand or on the tongue. Please do your best to anticipate what the person in front of you is seeking at that time.

- Please note that no member of the congregation who receives the Body of Christ in the hand should walk away without consuming it immediately. **Please be mindful of this and pay attention each person you serve.** You are to challenge a person if they don't consume it right away. One of the duties of the EM is to protect the Body of Christ and you don't know intention of that person if they don't immediately consume it. If the person reacts negatively, please notify them that these are the Pastor's instructions. Please notify the main celebrant after Mass.

If you start to feel that you will run out of Consecrated Hosts before you finish serving, you can break Consecrated Hosts inside the Ciborium into half pieces. If you feel you will still run out of Consecrated Hosts before your finish, please ask the next communicant quietly to wait and walk over to the closest priest to obtain more Consecrated Hosts. When you are finished distributing Holy Communion at your station, please look to your side of the main center aisle. If you still have Consecrated Hosts, you can assist distributing Holy Communion on "your side" of the main center aisle between the server there and the Most Precious Blood station.

When you are done, return the Ciborium to the Altar of Sacrifice and return to your pew, remembering to bow in reverence to the Tabernacle.

- **Serving the Most Precious Blood** – Offer the Most Precious Blood to each person by saying "*The Blood of Christ*"; no other words are said such as "receive this" or the communicant's name. Try to look at each person in the eye during this intimate encounter. The EM of the Most Precious Blood holds the Chalice in the right hand and the Purificator with the left, wiping the inner and outer rims of the Chalice with the Purificator. After each person receives the Most Precious Blood, rotate the Chalice one-quarter turn before offering it to the next person. Be especially careful when handling the Chalice to and from the very young or a person whose hands are unsteady.

Please note that the practice of receiving Holy Communion by "Intention" (dipping the Consecrated Host into Most Precious Blood) is not permitted. If you

are faced with that, please cover the top of the Chalice with your hand and instruct the communicant to consume the host. If the person reacts negatively, please notify them that these are the Pastor's instructions. Please notify the main celebrant after Mass.

When you are finished distributing the Most Precious Blood at your station and you have some left, you can turn to face the main center aisle and assist the EM distributing the Most Precious Blood to main center aisle communicants.

- **For the 10:30AM Family Mass** – If you are an EM serving either Holy Communion or the Most Precious Blood on the Rectory side of Church, before you return to the Sanctuary, the Ensemble needs to receive. Quietly wait in front of them until they finish playing. If they have already received, they will motion to you. After you finish serving the Ensemble, complete your serving as per the instructions.

When you are done and if you have some Most Precious Blood left, please consume it fully at your station. If you are unable to, return the Chalice to the Sacristy carefully as not to spill any contents and ask another EM to consume it for you. If no one can consume it, leave it covered with the Purificator on the counter next to the water machine for a priest or deacon to consume. **The Most Precious Blood cannot be poured into the Sacramentum.** The Sacramentum is the covered sink, designated with a Cross next to the regular sink. The Sacramentum is directly connected to the earth. The Most Precious Blood must not be disposed of in any other way, most importantly not poured down the regular sink. If the Chalice is empty, leave it on the counter next to the water machine covered by a Purificator. Please do not "purify" the Chalice. That is to be done by a priest or deacon. When all other Most Precious Blood serving EMs are finished, please process out of the Sacristy together. Line up alongside each other at floor level, return to your pew, remembering to bow in reverence to the Tabernacle.

Please note, whenever you are carrying Holy Communion and the Most Precious Blood you need not to bow, you are carrying Jesus.

Please participate in the Mass as normal. Just after the main celebrant closes Mass with his Final Blessing, the Altar Servers (Cross Bearer, Candle Bearers as applicable) will move to the center aisle of Church. The EM should follow them out in the same order as the entrance (Altar Servers, Lector, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, etc.). Face the Sanctuary and as the main celebrant bows, all Lay

Liturgical Ministers should bow, turn and process out of Church into the Gathering Space to disperse.

After Mass:

At this point, the duties of the EM are now over. If you want to wash your hands after serving, feel free to do so in the bathroom in the rear of the Church.

In case of accident:

If an accident happens, please don't panic:

- **An accident with Holy Communion** – If a Consecrated Host is dropped on the floor, the EM should pick it up immediately consume it. It is never to be replaced in the Ciborium or given to the next communicate. If for some reason the EM cannot consume the Consecrated Host, it should be returned to a priest as soon as possible.
- **An accident with Most Precious Blood** – If the Most Precious Blood is spilled, the EM should ask the waiting communication to proceed to the next EM station with the Most Precious Blood. The EM should cover the spillage with the Purificator and clean up the area as best you can. The area should be re-cleaned (by the EM or the Sacristan) with a new, clean and damp Purificator where the Most Precious Blood spilled. A clean then damp Purificator can be taken from the drawer in the Sacristy. Both Purificators should be returned to the Sacristy and placed with the other Purificators from Mass. All will be cleaned in the liturgically appropriate manor.

Thank you for you service to Holy Name Roman Catholic Church.

If you have any questions about this handbook, please contact the Holy Name Lay Liturgical Minister Coordinator, Nick Sisto at nasisto@verizon.net.

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