

OUR LADY OF DOLOURS CATHOLIC CHURCH

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REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 233699

From Fr Tim Edgar
Rector & Parish Priest

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION

March 2019

Before you minister:

Please understand that an E.M. should be in a state of grace (not conscious of an unconfessed mortal sin) and fully initiated into the sacramental life of the Church. (i.e. having received the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Eucharist) and not prevented by law (in a marriage not recognized by the Church, for example.)

Before Mass:

Know your schedule in advance and find a replacement if necessary.

Dress in a manner conducive to the ministry you are undertaking. You will be in contact with The Body and Blood of Jesus – His True Presence. Appropriate attire should be modest and not draw attention to you – so, in the summer months no shorts or flip-flops for example..

At Mass:

After exchanging the Sign of Peace with your immediate neighbours, Extraordinary Ministers (EMs) should come up to the front of the church, bow as they enter the sanctuary and should come to stand at the right hand side of the Altar as viewed from the Nave. Do not cross in front of the altar without genuflecting. Do not stand on the left hand side where the servers normally are. In most cases we will need three people to distribute Communion. The Priest is the ordinary minister. If you notice we are short and are able to volunteer, please come up and stand on the right of the Altar as quickly and reverently as you can. EMs are to wait until the priest has received Holy Communion; he will then bring Holy Communion to you.

The Priest, after distributing the Body and Blood of Christ to the EM's, will distribute the Ciborium and Chalices to the EM's. The ministers will then go forth to distribute to Communion.

If there are people unable to come forward because of disability distribute to them first if they are in the front pew, or at the end if they towards the back or side of the Church.

Distributing Communion: say "The Body of Christ" or "The Blood of Christ". Nothing else!

Do not use people's names "Jane... the Body of Christ". It's not about making a connection with the individual. It is about that person encountering Christ... Therefore anything that a minister does that is different or unusual distracts from the communicant's reception of Jesus.

EM's distributing the Body of Christ:

The priest and one EM stand at the edge of the chancel step, or on the floor below it.

If the Body of Christ drops to the floor, pick it up and either hold it in the palm of the hand holding the ciborium, or give it to the priest, or simply consume it yourself.

If someone presents a pyx:

If someone has a pyx and would like to bring communion to someone, they should go to the priest's line. Please ask them to see Father after Mass if they have a question. If they come to an EM, the EM should instruct them to go to the priest.

For those who come forward for a blessing:

Blessings during the communion line have become a custom, but in this context the Church really only gives the authority to offer blessings to her priests. Therefore if someone comes forward to an EM with their arms crossed (a child or adult) I would ask the EM's to say: "**May Jesus be in your heart**", or "**Jesus loves you.**" Please do not put out your hand or touch

the individuals. Do not make any signs of the cross over them or on them. When we are distributing communion we should not touch people because of the particles of the Eucharist that may be on the fingers. Also, putting out your hand or making the sign of the cross denotes a formal blessing... these are not appropriate for a lay person to do in this circumstance. Parents have authority to bless their children or their family members, but that is in a different setting. In the communion line only clergy should give a blessing. If someone wants a blessing they should go to the priest or deacon.

There are occasions when many non-Catholics are present for Mass, (funerals, weddings, Christmas, Easter) in those cases the priest will make an announcement helping these people to know what to do during communion. If EM's are distributing communion and someone approaches for a blessing, simply say: "May Jesus be in your heart", or "Jesus loves you."

EM's distributing the Blood of Christ:

Offer the chalice to the recipient and let the individual hold it.

Note: Do not allow people to dip the host into the blood (intinction.) Simply explain, "It is not our tradition to dip the host." Try not to make a scene. We don't want any drops of the precious blood to fall on the ground.

Receive the Chalice back and wipe it with the purificator after each individual receives the Blood of Christ. Always keep the Cross on the foot of the Chalice facing the communicant. Wipe only the outside of the chalice and not inside the rim.

If the Blood of Christ spills, stop distributing, cover the spill with the purificator. Put your chalice back on the corporal on the altar and go stand by the spill so that no one steps on the spot. Once communion is over, let Father know. We will either clean it then or after Mass. Do not place the soiled purificator back on the altar as it may stain the altar cloth. If the Blood spills on a person, ask them to talk to Father after mass for instructions on proper cleaning. After Communion, if there is any remaining Precious Blood, please consume it reverently you're your back to the people. Place the chalice on the corporal on the Altar and cover it with the purificator (The corporal is a square white cloth spread out in the center of the altar.)

After Communion:

If you distributed the Body of Christ, return the Ciborium to the altar – placing it on the corporal or handing it to the priest, then purify your fingers in the Ablution bowl on the credence table (not necessary for those who distribute the Precious Blood.) Please return chalices to the Corporal and do not just put them anywhere on the Altar.

Often those distributing the precious blood will run out before then end of communion. In that case, simply place the purificator over the chalice and stay where you are. When Holy Communion has finished return to the Sanctuary with the other ministers

Sometimes, however, you may find that you are going to the altar with the Chalice or Ciborium at the same time as the priest. In such cases, leave your items on the altar as described above and stand off to the (right hand) side for a moment. (Be sure you are out of the way of the servers so that they may do their jobs). The priest will combine what remains of the Body of Christ into one ciborium and return the remaining Body of Christ to the tabernacle. Please turn toward the tabernacle as he goes to it as a sign of reverence for the Holy Eucharist, genuflecting in time with the priest

When the priest closes the tabernacle door, you may then turn and return to your places, remembering to bow to the altar when you reach the bottom steps of the sanctuary. Always remember to bow when entering or leaving the sanctuary.

General Norms:

- No self-Communicating (Do not give yourself the body or blood of Christ)
- Reverence for the Eucharist is the ultimate goal of all the practices we do.
- There is a difference between ordinary and extra-ordinary, that is, non-ordinary ministers of communion (church distinguishes.) We are trying to keep these distinctions clear.
- Dress for the occasion, in a non-distracting way.
- This ministry is done for the people not for ourselves.