

## Practical Guidelines for Special Ministers of the Eucharist

(Issued at Incarnate Word Catholic Church November 21, 1998)

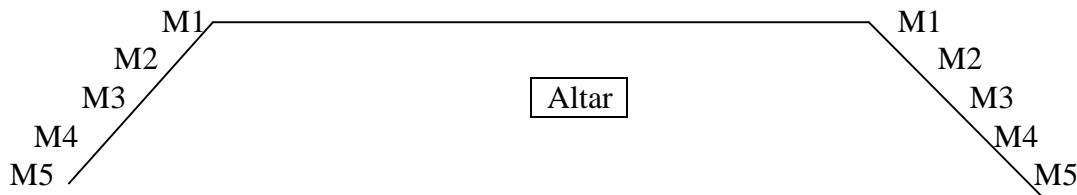
(Last Updated May 15, 2011)

The following guidelines provide an overview of the expectations for Eucharistic Ministers.

1. Proper dress for distribution of Holy Communion is business attire, e.g., suit or coat & tie for men, skirt, dress, or other office-appropriate attire for women preferred. Exception: if you are needed as a last minute fill-in without prior notice.
2. You are responsible for finding a substitute if you cannot serve when scheduled.
3. Before Mass check the Eucharistic Minister schedule located in the vestibule sacristy to verify that you are scheduled. Place a check by your name to let others know you are present. If you are a substitute, please check the name of the person for whom you are substituting. Wash your hands at this time using the sink and paper towels provided.
4. Check to see that the required number of chalices and purificators are present on the credence table. The following are the number that should be used for the weekend Masses:

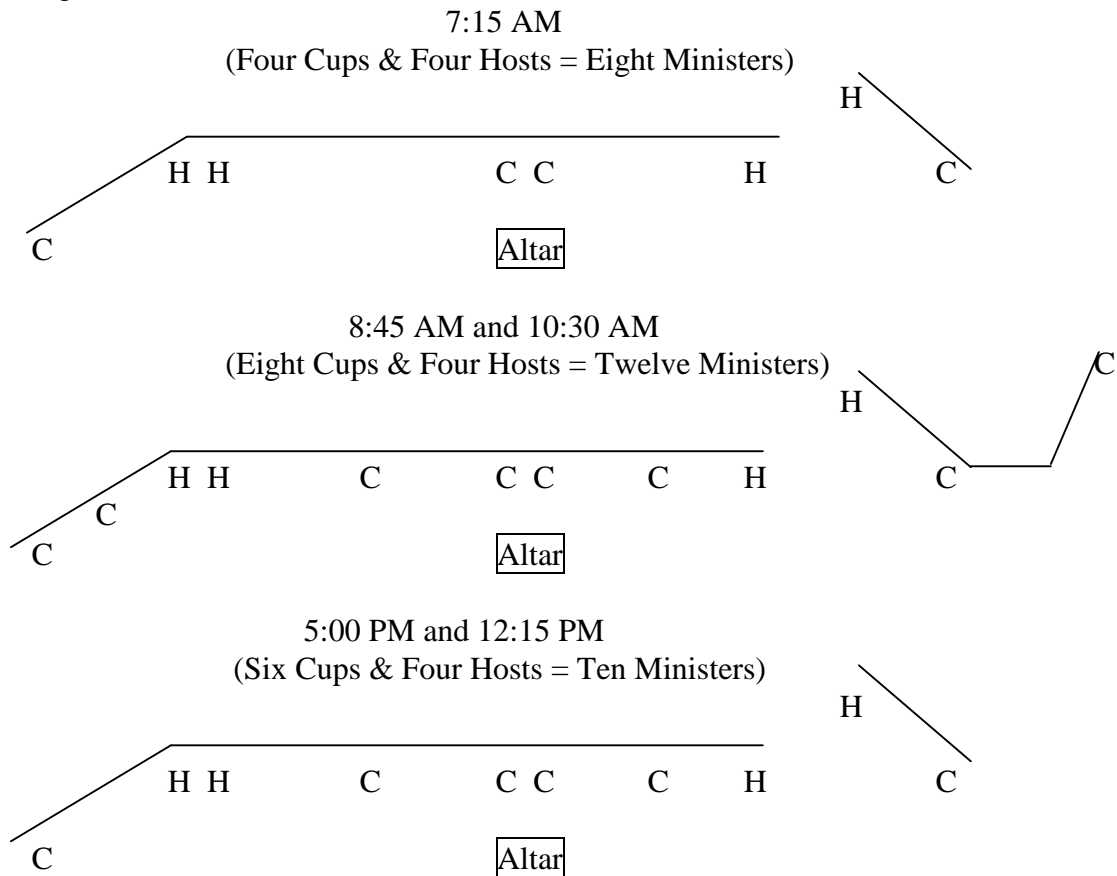
<u>Mass</u>	<u>Chalices</u>	<u>Mass</u>	<u>Chalices</u>
5:00 PM	6	10:30 AM	8
7:15AM	4	12:15 PM	6
8:45AM	8	6:00 PM	8

5. Scheduled ministers should proceed to the foot of the sanctuary immediately at the beginning of the Lamb of God. Use the hand sanitizer provided. Stand on the main floor in the positions shown below. Do not kneel on the first carpeted step.



6. When unscheduled, please be ready to fill in for absent ministers. Count the number of cups on the altar plus four for the hosts, subtract the priests & deacons celebrating Mass, and promptly respond to complete the number of ministers needed.
7. As the priest starts to consume the Blood of Christ, move up the steps into the sanctuary starting with the minister closest to the altar (M1). If a deacon is present, wait until the priest starts giving the deacon communion.
8. Spread out evenly on both sides of the tabernacle.

9. If there is a single celebrant, you may be asked to help distribute Communion to the Eucharistic Ministers on the altar.
10. The priest or deacon gives the Eucharistic Ministers and servers the Body of Christ.
11. The priest or deacon then distributes the Precious Blood to the Eucharistic Ministers. Please take the chalice even if you do not wish to consume the Precious Blood.
12. If the Eucharistic Minister next to you does not have a chalice, offer them the Precious Blood.
13. The Eucharistic Minister with the Precious Blood nearest the servers offers them the chalice.
14. The priest or deacon gives the ciboria to the Eucharistic Ministers without a chalice.
15. If an extra priest or deacon joined the celebration and there are too many ministers, remember that priests and deacons take precedence over extraordinary ministers.
16. If you are on the north side (near Olive) and there are physically challenged parishioners in the seats behind the rail and they do not approach the altar, offer them communion first.
17. Positioning of Eucharistic Ministers.



18. Eucharistic Ministers on the far south side (by the choir) should stand on the carpet. On the south side, the minister with the first chalice should stand in the bow the piano. At Masses where a second chalice is present, the second chalice should be positioned in the aisle at the second last row of the choir with your back to the brick wall. The Annunciation sculpture will be to your right. All other Ministers should stand on the first step to provide maximum aisle space.
19. If an adult or child approaches with arms crossed over chest you may give a simple blessing such as “May the peace and love of Christ be with you” or, for small children “Lord bless this child.” It is not permissible to make the sign of the cross while giving a blessing.
20. If distributing Hosts, look at the communicant and say "The Body of Christ". Place host in hand or on tongue. Eye contact is important. **DO NOT RUSH.** We are there to serve.
21. Eucharistic Ministers serving shut-ins will approach you with a pyx (a round, gold-plated metal container with a hinged lid). They will ask for the number of hosts required to complete their visits. Place the requested number of hosts in the pyx, allow the communicant to close the lid and offer them the Precious Body. If anyone without a pyx asks for additional hosts, politely refuse and tell them they need to obtain a pyx from a priest or deacon after Mass.
22. If you drop a Host - pick up and palm in hand. After communion, either consume the Host or, if the Host cannot be consumed, present it to the priest or deacon and ask them to properly dispose of the Host.
23. When you have finished giving the Body of Christ to those in your aisle, check to see if there are any physically challenged people in the rear pews desiring to receive Holy Communion. Usually a hospitality minister will alert you. If you have a ciborium and are next to a priest or deacon, go to the tabernacle. If there are two extraordinary ministers on the same side with ciboria, one of you should return to the tabernacle with both ciboria and wait for the priest or deacon. Do not combine the consecrated hosts on the way. The priest or deacon combines the consecrated hosts into one ciborium, covers it with a lid, and places it in the tabernacle.
24. One of the Eucharistic Ministers at the tabernacle should place the lids on the empty ciboria, stack them one on top of another, return to the sacristy behind the altar for purification. To purify the ciboria, run a small amount of water in each vessel, swish it around to pick up any remaining fragments of hosts and pour the water into the next ciborium. Pour the water from the last ciborium into a chalice and consume the water. Dry the ciboria with a purificator. The captains are responsible for returning the ciboria and wine flagon to the vestibule sacristy after Mass.
25. If distributing the Precious Blood, look at the communicant and say "The Blood of Christ", hand the chalice to the communicant. Wipe the inside and outside of the rim and rotate ¼ turn. Eye contact is important. **DO NOT RUSH.** Be especially sensitive to the elderly and small children who may need help steadying the cup. Remember, we are there to serve.

26. If a communicant approaches with a host and wants to dip it in the Precious Blood (intinction), place your free hand over the chalice and inform the person that intinction is not allowed in this archdiocese. There is also the practical consideration that Precious Body and Blood have the potential to be scattered across the church.
27. If you spill the Precious Blood. On carpet, cover spill with a purificator and leave for cleanup by a priest. On tile floor, wipe up with purificator and take soiled purificator to the sacristy behind the altar. In either case, stop distributing unless a clean purificator is readily available. In the altar sacristy, rinse the stained purificator thoroughly in the sacrarium (the right-hand sink with the lid), until the appearance of wine is removed.
28. If the Precious Blood becomes unfit for consumption, e.g., a communicant accidentally expectorates or sneezes into the chalice, return to the sacristy behind the altar. Using the sacrarium, dilute the remaining Precious Blood in the chalice so that the appearance of wine is removed, and rinse down the sacrarium.
29. When you have finished distributing the Blood of Christ, return to the sacristy behind the altar. One of the ministers on the south side (by the choir) should retrieve the wine flagon from the credence table, run some water in it and pour in the sink (this wine has not been consecrated and does not need to be poured in the sacrarium). Consume any remaining Precious Blood, run cold water in cup, swish water around, and consume. Leave cup on counter. Shake the purificator open. Place the purificator in the laundry bag and return to your pew for the final blessing. **DO NOT USE PURIFICATOR TO DRY INSIDE OF CUP.**
30. If you cannot consume the remaining Precious Blood yourself, ask another Eucharistic Minister for assistance, do not pour the Precious Blood down the sacrarium.
31. Additional duties for Captains:
  - a. Wash cups after Mass. Use soap and warm water in left basin. Dry with towel, not purificators. Please **DO NOT** clean the cups while Mass is still being celebrated.
  - b. After washing and drying cups, place clean cups and purificators for the next Mass on the credence table. Place unused clean cups in cupboard over sink. Place washed cups in the cupboard after 5:00 PM and 12:15 PM Masses.
  - c. Return the purified ciboria and wine flagon to the vestibule sacristy. The ciboria should be placed in the rightmost wall cabinet on the north (near Olive) side of the vestibule sacristy. The wine flagon is placed on the counter next to the sink by the sign-in sheet.
  - d. Prior to Mass, set out the required number of cups and purificators for your Mass or make sure captain(s) from previous Mass have done so.

## POSTSCRIPT

Adhere to the basics yet don't get hung up on formality. If the cup count is off or we have a visiting priest, adjust your numbers accordingly without a big scene. If you are on the altar and there isn't a cup or ciborium for you, wait until the other ministers begin distribution and blend in with the natural flow of communicants returning to their pews.

If at any time you have a question or suggestions regarding any of the above points of procedure, please call Larry Westermeyer, (314) 275-8171. The email address for this ministry is: incwordem@sbcglobal.net and is checked daily. You should receive a response within one day.

The above guidelines refer to the bare minimum. Beyond these guidelines, we need to deepen our understanding of and reverence for the Holy Eucharist. Our awareness of His Presence communicates itself powerfully to the recipients.

These guidelines are subject to additions and revisions.

## SCHEDULING and SCHEDULES

Schedules are produced quarterly in February (covers March-May), May (June-August), August (September-November), and October (December-February). If there are times you do not wish to be scheduled, e.g., vacations, please send the days you are unavailable to the above email address by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month in which the current schedule expires.

Schedules are distributed in three ways: 1) for those requesting printed schedules, copies are mailed approximately ten days before the current schedule expires; 2) electronically as a PDF attachment to an email message if you provide an email address; and 3) on the Parish web site at the following URL:

[http://www.incarnate-word.org/schedules/cat\\_view/168-schedules/170-eucharistic-ministers](http://www.incarnate-word.org/schedules/cat_view/168-schedules/170-eucharistic-ministers)