



EXTRAORDINARY MINISTRY OF HOLY COMMUNION (EMHC) HANDBOOK

Resurrection and St. Clare Parishes

Serving the Lord

Handling the body and blood of Jesus Christ is serious business for serious people.

Dear EMHC,

Our parish is deeply grateful for your decision to be an EMHC. Your service and dedication are important parts of our parish life. It is a privilege to be in the sanctuary as our Savior, Jesus Christ, becomes truly present, body, blood, soul, and divinity, just as He was at the Last Supper and Calvary, and therefore EMHCs are chosen from those who display a desire for a more intimate union with Our Lord and God, Jesus Christ.

Saint Thomas Aquinas said, "The celebration of the Holy Mass is as valuable as the death of Jesus on the Cross." The primary duty of an EMHC is to assist Father and Deacon, as a representative of the people of the parish, in a visible manner, as the mystery of Calvary unfolds on the Altar and to extend His presence in distribution of holy communion to those at mass and those who are unable to attend in person. What an honor to serve our Lord at this most praiseworthy gift of love.

The place of the Extraordinary Minister in liturgical celebrations, and with those who are unable to join us in person, remains one of prominence and distinction. All actions of the EMHC are woven from signs and symbols whose meaning is rooted in the works of creation and in human culture, specified by events in the Old Testament and fully revealed in the person and work of Jesus Christ in the Gospels. Accordingly, Extraordinary Ministers have a solemn responsibility to do their assigned duties with dignity and reverence.

The purpose for this manual is to give you direction for distributing communion during our parish masses, and to be a guide to help you in taking communion to those who are unable to be with us in person. Along the way, you will learn most matters concerning the Rite of Communion and many matters concerning liturgical worship. We pray that you will do all you can to grasp their spiritual meaning.

We remain yours in Christ,

Fr. George Gulash

Rev. George M. Gulash
Pastor

Dcn. Nelson Lowes

Dcn. Nelson E. Lowes Jr.
Deacon

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Guidelines for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

The Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion (EMHC) performs a great service to the Church, by distributing Holy Communion to God's people on those occasions where there are an insufficient number of priests and deacons to distribute Holy Communion to the people present at the mass, and to the homebound. It is an honor and a privilege to serve the Church in this capacity and requires careful preparation on the part of the EMHC.

Introduction

The Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown is blessed with many large, thriving parishes where the great number of communicants at Sunday mass, coupled with a limited number of priests and deacons, presents a real need for EMHCs. For that reason, when the permission to employ extraordinary ministers was first given in 1971, the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown made use of it almost immediately. Thus, when the permission to use EMHC was made universal with the instruction *Immensae Caritatis* of 1973. In that year, Pope Paul VI noted that in some places there was a shortage of ordinary ministers of Holy Communion, (priests and deacons) and provided for the institution of extraordinary ministers in certain circumstances. Indeed, since that time, extraordinary ministers have been of great service in many parishes of the diocese. The presence of extraordinary ministers in the Church is a very new one in terms of the history of the Catholic Church and is accommodated to circumstances of the modern world and can be expected to develop as the Church has an opportunity to reflect upon this particular service offered to the Church. This document presents the guidelines of the Catholic Church for the use of EMHC, together with those norms specific to the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown.

Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion Defined

In short, an EMHC is a lay person or religious who has been deputed by the bishop for a period of time, or by a priest or deacon for a single occasion, to assist Father and deacon in distributing Holy Communion to the faithful on those occasions where a shortage of ordained clergy makes it impossible for them to distribute Holy Communion to all the faithful in a reasonable way. It is thus a privilege to which the Church invites certain individuals under given circumstances, and not a right.

The proper term for laypeople delegated to distribute Holy Communion at mass is "Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion" here often abbreviated to extraordinary minister. The preference for this term is noted in *Redemptionis Sacramentum* 156, which states "This function is to be understood strictly according to the name by which it is known, that is to say, that of extraordinary minister of Holy Communion, and not "special minister of Holy Communion" nor "extraordinary minister of the Eucharist", nor "special minister of the Eucharist," by which names the meaning of this function is unnecessarily and improperly broadened." The term "Extraordinary Minister" which had been commonly used, is likewise inappropriate, and should be avoided. Thus, the use of extraordinary minister of Holy Communion (EMHC) must be considered a sign of the shortage of priests and deacons and should be an encouragement to pray for an increase in holy vocations to the priesthood and diaconate. Extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion perform a very valuable service to the Church in supplying for this temporary need, but it is important to recognize that this service corresponds to an extraordinary situation in the life of the Church.

Qualifications to Serve as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion

It is important that those individuals selected to serve as extraordinary ministers are chosen carefully. The instruction *Immensae Caritatis* describes them in the following manner: The faithful who are special ministers of communion must be persons whose good qualities of Christian life, faith, and morals recommend them. Let them strive to be worthy of this great office, foster their own devotion to the

Eucharist, and show an example to the rest of the faithful by their own devotion and reverence toward the most august sacrament of the altar. No one is to be chosen whose appointment the faithful might find disquieting.

Way of Life of an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion

It is not sufficient for an individual to demonstrate an exemplary Catholic life before becoming an extraordinary minister: it is also important that they cultivate those virtues after they have been chosen for that position of service to the Church. Again, a bare minimum below which an individual should recuse himself would consist in anything that would prevent him from receiving Holy Communion—grave sin, failure to attend Sunday mass, or a choice not to maintain communion with the teachings and life of the Church. Positively put, however, an extraordinary minister should seek, like all Christians, to cultivate holiness, especially through frequent confession, personal prayer, especially before the Blessed Sacrament, and attendance at daily mass if possible. They should seek to have a good knowledge and appreciation for the thought and beliefs of the Church, especially through study of scripture and Church teaching. If an extraordinary minister finds it difficult to live a life appropriate to his function, he might recuse himself for a time from the distribution of Holy Communion, or, if necessary, a pastor might ask him not to continue his service.

Training of Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

It is important that each parish that employs extraordinary ministers to have a formal program of preparation, so that extraordinary ministers can understand the nature of their service, be well prepared to carry it out, and properly understand the Church's teaching, especially as regards the Blessed Sacrament and Holy Communion. While each parish's program will differ according to local needs, the Diocese has given some guidelines that should be included in all training programs. The training requirement for extraordinary ministers at Resurrection and St. Clare of Assisi includes:

1. View:
 - a. [Serving as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion](#)
 - b. [The Catholic Mass Revealed-Thy Kingdom Come](#) (optional).
2. Read:
 - a. "Rejoice in the Lord Always!" by Archbishop Donoghue's. (Appendix 1)
 - b. [The Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Sacrament of the Eucharist: Basic Q&A](#).
 - c. Resurrection and St. Clare Parishes Extraordinary Minister Training Manual
3. Complete:
 - a. Resurrection and St. Clare EMHC Self-Knowledge Assessment (Appendix 4)
 - b. Resurrection and St. Clare Parishes EMHC Application form (Appendix 5)
 - c. Two shadow sessions (at mass and in homebound location).
4. Attend:
 - a. Resurrection and St. Clare EMHC hands-on training program, annually.
 - b. Resurrection and St. Clare Annual Commissioning Mass, annually.
5. Purchase:
 - a. Pyx, burse on a cord, and Communion of the Sick book.
 - b. Extraordinary cross to wear when visiting the homebound.

Terminology for the Blessed Sacrament

The way we speak both reflects and shapes the way we believe, and so it is important that our language regarding the Blessed Sacrament reflect our understanding of its nature, and our faith in the real presence of Christ. Although all of Christ is present under each species, it is customary to refer to the host after consecration as either simply “the host,” or “the sacred body.” Likewise, the chalice may be referred to simply as “the chalice” or as “the precious blood.” The terms “bread” and “wine” should be used to refer to the bread and wine brought forward as gifts, but not to the consecrated species, which are no longer bread or wine, but the body and blood of Christ.

Commissioning for a Single Occasion

In some cases, enough commissioned extraordinary ministers may be unavailable. In this case, if need requires, the priest presiding at the liturgy can commission extraordinary ministers for a single occasion, following the rite given in the Roman Missal, Appendix III, p 1457.

Dress

Extraordinary ministers should dress in a way that is dignified and shows respect for the Blessed Sacrament and the function they are carrying out. Clothes should be clean and neat, and reflect the importance of the Blessed Sacrament, generally by being more formal. Any clothing that exposes the legs, upper arms, or other inappropriate parts of the anatomy should not be worn, nor should any clothing bear prominent logos or slogans. Clothing should not be distracting; the focus of the communicant should be on the Blessed Sacrament, not on the person or his/her dress.

Actions before Mass

The exact number of ordinary ministers of Holy Communion (i.e. priest and deacons) celebrating mass determines the number of extraordinary ministers that are needed for each mass. For most masses, a priest and a deacon serve as ordinary ministers; therefore four (4) EMHCs are need for all weekend masses. Five (5) when the Deacon is not present.

Upon arrival to the church (20 minutes early), all extraordinary ministers attending mass should review the EMHC check-in sheet to determine if they are needed to serve. The Sacristan will review the check-in sheet 5 minutes prior to the start of mass and (in what should be rare situations) enlist available EMHCs to fill in. The intent is to prevent the need for the usher to signal the need for extraordinary ministers during the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

Actions during the Mass

During the mass, the extraordinary minister sits with their family and the rest of the faithful, and should participate fully in the mass, listening to the readings, and joining the community in prayer. If possible, extraordinary ministers should sit in the front pews and close to the aisle as a way to easily move to position prior to approaching the altar.

Approaching the Altar

EMHCs should approach the altar (just after the offering of peace and before the Lamb of God). They will reverence the altar with a profound bow (30 degree bending of the torso) and walk to their position by the altar. After obtaining hand sanitizer from the tables near the altar, extraordinary ministers should stand shoulder-to-shoulder as assigned.

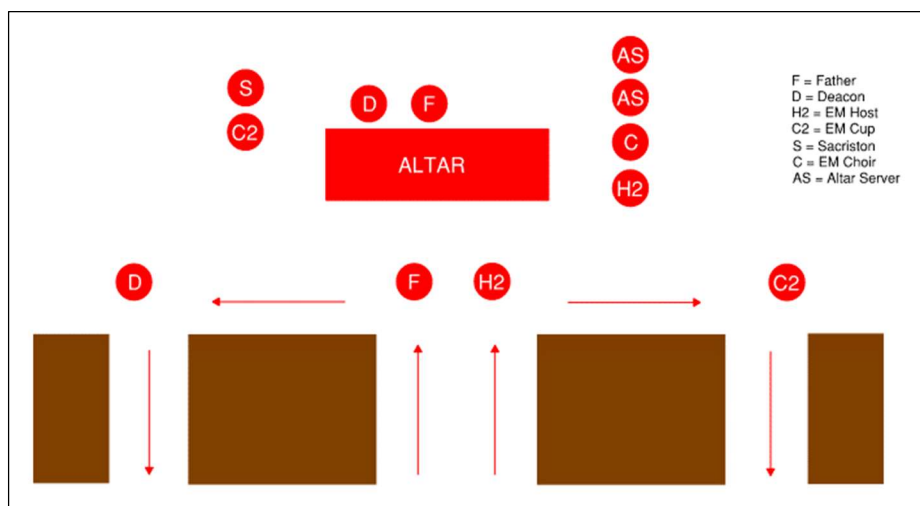
Receiving Holy Communion when 2 Species are offered.

After approaching the altar and obtaining hand sanitizer from the side tables near the altar, extraordinary ministers should remain in a line standing shoulder-to-shoulder to receive Holy Communion. The priest will distribute Holy Communion by starting with position S. When both species are offered then the deacon will follow the priest and offer the precious blood to the extraordinary ministers in position S and C2. EMHC assigned to position C2 will then immediately follow Father and distribute the precious blood to the other EMHC and Altar Servers on the other side of the Altar.

Receiving a Vessel when 2 Species are Offered.

Once the distribution of the sacred body and precious blood, the priest and deacon and each of the extraordinary ministers should go to their designated positions and areas of responsibility (figure 2).

Figure 2: Positions for EMHCs when 2 species are offered.



Notes:

1. When both species are distributed and only 1 priest is celebrating mass, and the deacon is absent, then a 5th extraordinary minister is needed. The extraordinary minister in position C2 assumes the location normally occupied by the deacon to distribute the precious blood and is now position C1. The 5th EMHC now occupies position C2.
2. When both species are distributed AND 2 priest are celebrating mass, the extraordinary ministers assigned to H2 remains seated in the pew.
3. Every effort should be made prior to mass to make the necessary adjustments to the number of EMHCs needed based on the number of ordinary ministers celebrating the mass.
4. The precious blood should never leave the sanctuary. Do not take the cup to those seated in the pews. Communicants must approach the altar to receive the precious blood.
5. It is never appropriate for an extraordinary minister to obtain the sacred body from the tabernacle.

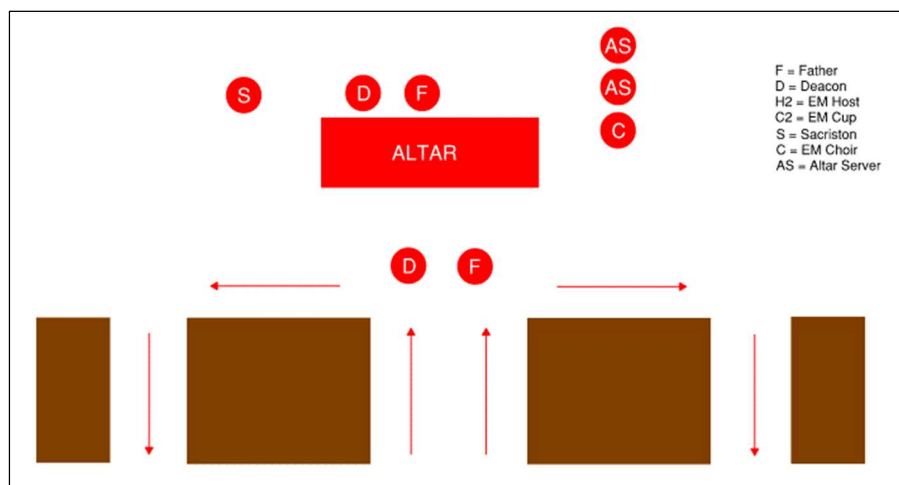
Receiving Holy Communion when 1 Species is offered.

Extraordinary ministers should remain in a line standing shoulder-to-shoulder to receive Holy Communion. The priest will distribute Holy Communion by starting on his left (EMHC position #1) while facing the line of 4 or (in the absence of a deacon) 5 extraordinary ministers.

Receiving a Vessel when 1 Species is Offered

Once Father finishes distributing the sacred body and Deacon has handed each pyx off to the EMHCs. They should move in unison to their areas of responsibility, Father and Deacon should position themselves at the front edge of the sanctuary (figure 1). Extraordinary ministers should know where their area of responsibility is before mass. Extraordinary ministers should only step down off the sanctuary (to distribute Holy Communion) when Father steps down to administer Holy Communion. The figures below illustrate the locations where Father, Deacon, and EMHCs should stand to distribute Holy Communion when 1 species is offered.

Figure 1: Positions for EMHCs when 1 species is offered



Note:

1. When only 1 priest is celebrating mass and there is no deacon present, a 3rd extraordinary minister will be needed. This EMHC, position H2 will assume the location normally occupied by the deacon to distribute communion.
2. When 1 species is distributed AND 2 priest are celebrating the mass, the deacon will not distribute the Eucharist.
3. Every effort should be made prior to mass to make the necessary adjustments to the number of EMHCs needed based on the number of ordinary ministers celebrating the mass.
4. It is never appropriate for an extraordinary minister to obtain hosts from the tabernacle.

Manner of Distributing and Receiving Holy Communion

While the norm for the distribution of communion in the Roman Rite remains under one species and on the tongue, specific permissions have allowed communion under both species and communion on the hand to take place. It is important to consider each of these methods of receiving communion, because they each place particular burdens on the extraordinary minister.

First, we will consider communion under one species on the tongue. The communicant will generally make a sign of reverence (a bow is the norm in the United States), and then approach the minister standing. While standing is the norm in the United States, communion is not to be denied to those who prefer to approach by kneeling. The extraordinary minister takes the host and shows it to the communicant, saying "The Body of Christ." Other words are not appropriate. It is best if the minister take the host between the thumb and the forefinger in such a way that they may place the host on the tongue by pressing down with the forefinger from above. This makes it easier to avoid contact with the tongue of the communicant. The extraordinary minister should pay attention that no small fragments of the host fall to the ground. For this reason, the instruction *Redemptionis Sacramentum* states that "the Communion-plate for the communion of the faithful should be retained, in order to avoid the danger of the Sacred Host or some fragment of it falling" (*Redemptionis Sacramentum*, 93), however, the communion-plate is currently not used at Resurrection and St. Clare Parishes. If the communion-plate is used, it is generally held by the server in such a way that it is under the Host at all times. Since it is not routinely used, it may be helpful to keep the host over the ciborium when possible.

Communion in the Hand

The practice of receiving communion in the hand, which is permitted in the United States by a special indult from the Holy See, places additional requirements on the extraordinary minister, because it is now necessary that they make sure that the Sacred Host is properly consumed, and that it is treated with reverence by the communicant. Pope John Paul II describes this difficulty: "In some countries the practice of receiving Communion in the hand has been introduced. This practice has been requested by individual Episcopal conferences and has received approval from the Apostolic See. However, cases of a deplorable lack of respect towards the Eucharistic species have been reported. This is in no way meant to refer to those who, receiving the Lord Jesus in the hand, do so with profound reverence and devotion, in those countries where this practice has been authorized." Thus, it is necessary for the extraordinary minister to observe the person receiving communion until he consumes the host. If they begin to walk off without receiving communion (as is sometimes the case with children who have not received proper catechesis or non-Catholic adults), it is important that the extraordinary minister follow that individual and either ask him to consume the host, or to retrieve it so that nothing untoward happens. It is important to note that the decision to receive communion on the hand is on the part of the communicant, and no one can compel them to receive on the hand or on the tongue.

Both Species

The permission to distribute communion under both species in certain cases was granted by Pope Paul VI in 1970. The responsibility for determining when it is appropriate to permit communion under both species rests with the diocesan bishop. In the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown, communion under both species is permitted at all masses, meaning that the individual priest celebrant may decide whether to offer communion under one or both species. If communion is offered under both species, the ordinary minister of the chalice is the deacon; however, especially large celebrations may require the use of extraordinary ministers (i.e. Sunday 10:30am mass) here, also. The only words used in distributing the Precious Blood are "The Blood of Christ." In distributing the Precious Blood, it is important to avoid any danger of spillage. Care should be taken to make sure that the communicant has taken the chalice firmly

before releasing it, but the extraordinary minister should, in ordinary circumstances, not hold on to the chalice while an individual receives communion. After distributing communion, the extraordinary minister should take the chalice, wipe the lip of it with the purificator, and rotate it slightly. If Holy Communion is offered under both species, then the decision to receive the precious blood from the chalice or not belongs to the individual communicant.

Communion from the Chalice Alone

Some individuals, for medical reasons, are unable to receive even a small particle of the Sacred Host. For this reason, it is permitted for individuals to receive Holy Communion only under the species (appearance) of wine. Thus, "In case of necessity, depending on the judgment of the bishop, it is permitted to give the Eucharist under the species of wine alone to those who are unable to receive it under the species of bread." In such cases, communion from the chalice is distributed just as when the communicant receives under both species.

Blessings

Although they are not a part of the approved rite of the mass, it has become customary in many parts of the United States for individuals who are not receiving Holy Communion to come forward and ask for a blessing. Often this is indicated by hands crossed across the chest. It is recommended that the extraordinary minister say, "Receive the Lord Jesus into your heart," or "May God bless you", while raising his hand **without a host**. Alternatively, the extraordinary minister may say "May God Bless you". It is important that he not touch the person with the fingers he has used for distributing Holy Communion, lest some particles be rubbed onto the individual. *See the statement on Blessing found in Appendix 2 for the concerns associated with giving blessing.*

Note:

1. *Regarding local customs - the "crossing of arms" indicating the person isn't receiving the Host must not be taken for granted. Byzantine Catholics (Eastern) receive with arms crossed and some continue that when attending a Latin liturgy. When Father sees this, his mind tells him, "They are Byzantine..." and he offers the Host in their customary way.*

Denying Holy Communion

There are practically no situations when Holy Communion should be denied by an extraordinary minister. Church norms state that: "Any baptized Catholic who is not prevented by law must be admitted to Holy Communion". The extraordinary minister should not make a judgment on the worthiness of any individual to receive Holy Communion. In the case of individuals clearly living a life in discrepancy with church teachings, the decision is to be made by the pastor, in consultation with the bishop, and he will then inform the extraordinary ministers involved. If the extraordinary minister is unsure whether an individual is Catholic or has received their first communion, he should ask them or their parent, and if they reply that they are not, the extraordinary minister should let them return to their pew without receiving communion.

Returning the Blessed Sacrament to the Altar

After distributing communion, the extraordinary minister who distributed the precious blood should turn to face the altar and consume whatever remains of the precious blood. Extraordinary ministers may ask the Deacon or one of the other EMHCs to consume the precious blood if large amounts remain. After completing communion, all extraordinary ministers should hand the cup (or ciboria) to the priest or deacon.

Note:

1. The purificator should lie across the top of the cup and be handed to the deacon (or priest).
2. If necessary, the cup or ciboria may be placed on the altar. In doing so, be sure to place the vessel on the corporal in an organized manner.
3. Do not stuff the purificator into the cup.
4. If the extraordinary minister has been distributing the Sacred Host, he should take the opportunity to purify his fingers of any particles that may have clung to them. For this purpose, a small bowl of water is often provided at the credence table. Alternatively, the EMHC may touch his fingers to his tongue or a purificator.

After returning the ciborium or cup, the extraordinary ministers should exit the sanctuary to the left by walking behind the ambo and proceeding to the left side of the altar and wait for the priest to place any remaining hosts in the tabernacle.

Note:

1. At the time that the priest genuflects before the tabernacle, all extraordinary ministers should perform a profound bow (30-degree bend at the torso), and then return to their pew once the priest stands. There is no need to reverence the altar a second time upon returning to the pew.

Accidents Involving the Blessed Sacrament

While every care should be taken to avoid accidents involving the Blessed Sacrament, the extraordinary minister should be prepared to respond to them should they occur. The most common sort of accidents involves a particle of the host or a portion of the precious blood falling on the ground or another object. If a particle of the host falls on the ground, it should be picked up and consumed. If for some reason it cannot be consumed (for example, if it has already been in an individual's mouth who is unable to consume it), it may be dissolved in water and the water later poured down the sacrarium, however, it is best to contact a priest or deacon should this be necessary. A greater difficulty is presented if some of the precious blood should fall to the ground. The extraordinary minister should insure that no one steps on the spot, perhaps by delegating an individual to guard it. A clean purificator should be used to cover and mark the spot. Then, with the priest or deacon's assistance, water should be brought and poured over the spot. It is important to note that when it is diluted with water to the point where it loses the appearance of wine, the Precious Blood ceases to be the Eucharist. The resulting water, however, should still be treated with respect, and, collected in a non-consecrated vessel (a lavabo bowl, for example) through the use of purificators; it should then be poured down the sacrarium. If some of the precious blood should drop on an individual's clothing or possessions, it should be treated in the same way, with due respect for the individual involved.

Purification of Vessels

The purification should be carried out by Father, Deacon, or instituted acolyte (usually a seminarian or deacon candidate) either after communion or immediately following mass. The purification can take place on the altar or at the credence table, but not in the sacristy (Unless the Bishop is presiding). This requirement helps to Emphasize that the purification of vessels is not simply "doing the dishes" but a part of the ritual of the mass, by which respect is shown to our Guest: Christ as present in the Blessed Sacrament. Lay ministers may still assist in any cleaning or washing of the vessels that take place after

the ritual purification is complete. The most important principle at stake in the purification of vessels is respect for the Blessed Sacrament. It must be emphasized that all the Blessed Sacrament must be consumed, and that none of it may be disposed of in any way. The Church emphasizes this fact by excommunicating anyone who disposes of the Blessed Sacrament (for example, by pouring the Precious Blood down the sacrarium.) This excommunication can only be lifted by the Holy See.

Cleaning of Linens

The individuals, who clean altar linens, particularly purificators, need to act with respect for the Blessed Sacrament. It is customary to soak all the linens in water, so that any particles of the host or precious blood might be dissolved, and then pour this water down the sacrarium. It is not necessary to consume this water. After this process, they may then be washed normally, apart from other linens.

Service to the Sick and Homebound

EMHCs are also frequently employed in bringing communion to those who are sick or homebound on those occasions when it is impossible for a priest or deacon to bring them communion in a regular fashion. It is important that extraordinary ministers to the homebound have a copy of the booklet titled [Communion of the Sick](#), which contains the appropriate ritual that should be followed when distributing Holy Communion to the homebound. These are available from the parishes for your use in this ministry.

Receiving the Blessed Sacrament

Upon receipt, the extraordinary minister should place the pyx in a burse (a small pouch) on a cord. The cord should be placed around the neck, and then the burse (with the pyx inside) may be placed in a shirt pocket, or left hanging around the neck. The burse and pyx should not be placed in a purse, pants pocket, or other location. Extraordinary ministers at Resurrection and St. Clare Parishes who do not currently have a pyx (burse and cord), and an extraordinary minister cross, for their own use in this ministry, they may borrow the ones available from the parish. It is never appropriate for an extraordinary minister to obtain the sacred body from the tabernacle. If there is a need for the sacred body (outside of mass), extraordinary ministers should contact the priest or deacon.

Traveling to the Sick or Homebound

Once the extraordinary minister has received the Blessed Sacrament, it is important that she go directly to the place where she is to distribute Holy Communion. It is never appropriate to take the Blessed Sacrament home for later distribution. These are considered grave matters by the Church. While on the way to distribute Holy Communion, it is important that the extraordinary minister avoid anything that might diminish his focus on the Blessed Sacrament, for example, engaging in unnecessary conversations or listening to the radio in the car.

Distributing Communion to the Homebound

When the extraordinary minister has reached the location where they are to distribute Holy Communion, it is good that they move directly into the rite, as they are in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. Socializing is best postponed until afterwards. Leave behind a copy of the weekly church bulletin and a current Missalette.

Extraordinary Ministers Ministry

The extraordinary minister ministry at Resurrection and St. Clare Parishes is a parochial program and seeks individuals who have a strong desire to serve the parishes and grow closer to Christ. The program requires a commitment on the part of the EMHC and clergy. The goals of the program are threefold: (1) provide support for the priest, and deacons during all masses, (2) to provide appropriate training for all extraordinary ministers, and (3) to extend the presence of Christ to those who are unable to participate in the celebration of the Eucharist at the altar.

Ministry Meetings

The extraordinary ministers will meet as needed. The purpose for meeting will be to: (1) ensure that the basic actions needed to sustain the program are clearly defined and achieved, and (2) ensure that an appropriate amount of time and resources are dedicated to advancing the program. There will be no standing meetings for extraordinary ministers.

Annual Training

All Extraordinary Ministers are expected to attend one of three refresher training session offered each year. New extraordinary ministers are required to attend at least one in-person training session to become certified. To this end, specific training dates will be communicated via emailed and church bulletin/Pulpit. All extraordinary ministers should attend the Commissioning Mass which will be held in November of each year. Additional training and commissioning may be available throughout the year based on interest and need.

Annual Calendar (TBD)

Activity	Date
Bulletin/Pulpit Announcement: for new EMHCs and training dates	Last 3 weekends of September
Three training dates offered: new & existing EMHC to attend 1 of 3	Last 3 weeks of October
Commissioning/special blessing of all (new and existing EMHCs)	All Masses on 2nd weekend of Nov.
Update master list of active and inactive EMHCs	Last two weeks of November
Additional training and commission available based on interest and need.	

Scheduling

There is formal scheduling for extraordinary ministers who serve during weekend masses. This is handled by George Pisula.

Glossary

Ablution Cup: A small glass cup with a lid placed next to the tabernacle to purify the fingers of the priest or deacon who removes the Blessed Sacrament outside of mass.

Altar: Place of Sacrifice; central location for the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

Ambo: Place where the readings from sacred scripture are proclaimed during mass. May also be used for the homily.

Blessed Sacrament: The consecrated hosts and precious blood, in which Catholics believe that Jesus Christ is truly present.

Burse: 1. Square cloth envelope of the liturgical color of the day, in which the corporal may be placed when not in use. 2. A small pouch for carrying a pyx, with a cord which goes around the neck.

Ciborium Plural, ciboria: Sacred vessel with a lid for holding consecrated or unconsecrated hosts.

Chalice: Sacred vessel in which wine, after Consecration, becomes the Precious Blood.

Chalice Veil: A cloth in the liturgical color of the day which may be placed over the chalice and paten. The burse may then be placed on top.

Communion-Plate: A metal plate, sometimes with a handle, which is held by an altar server to catch any fragments of the host that might fall during Holy Communion. Also called a communion paten.

Corporal: Linen square which is unfolded on the altar during the Liturgy of the Eucharist. The chalice and paten are placed on the corporal. It is folded in a way that captures any fragments of the host that might have fallen. Before being placed in the laundry, it is soaked, with the water being poured down the sacarium.

Credence Table: Table near the altar on which are located the various sacred vessels, the lavabo bowl and towel, the water and wine cruets, etc., used during the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

Cruets: Glass vessels that hold water and wine for the mass.

Evangelary: A book which holds the gospel readings for mass. Often called the Book of the Gospels.

Extraordinary Minister⁴: Either an instituted acolyte or a lay person who meets criteria of CIC can.230.

Communion Host: A small wafer of unleavened bread, which is consecrated in the mass so as to become the Body of Christ.

Instituted Acolyte: A man who has been permanently commissioned to assist at the altar, and who, by virtue of his office, is an extraordinary minister of holy communion. Usually, he is a seminarian or deacon candidate.

Lavabo Bowl and Pitcher: A bowl and pitcher used to wash the priest's hand during mass.

Lectionary: Book which rests on the ambo, containing the Scripture readings for mass.

Luna: Round glass case within which is kept a large, consecrated host so that it may be inserted into the center of the monstrance.

Monstrance: Sacred Vessel which holds the luna with the consecrated host for adoration and benediction.

Ordinary Minister of Holy Communion: A bishop, priest or deacon who by virtue of their office ordinarily distributes Holy Communion.

Pall: Square of stiff material covered by linen which is used to cover the chalice and paten.

Paten: Small metal plate on which hosts are consecrated during the mass.

Precious Blood: A term for the real presence of Jesus Christ under the appearance of wine.

Purificator: Small linen cloth folded three ways, which is used to purify a chalice when communion is received. Before being placed in the laundry, it is soaked, with the water being poured down the sacrarium.

Pyx: Small metal container used to carry sacred hosts when communion is taken to the sick or homebound; it is carried in the burse with cord around neck.

Ritual Books: Any official book approved by the Church, containing the rites used in the liturgy and the administration of the sacraments.

Roman Missal (Sacramentary): Ritual book containing the prayers recited at mass by the priest. Tabernacle. Locked and secured place of reservation of the Blessed Sacrament.

Sacrarium: A sink-like receptacle in the sacristy, which drains directly into the ground, rather than into a sewage system. It is used for disposing of water which may have come into contact with sacred things.

Sacred Vessels: Any vessel which is used to hold the Blessed Sacrament. Sacred vessels must be made out of certain materials and are to be blessed according to the rites of the Church.

Sacristy: Room where sacred vessels are kept and where the priest and deacon vest when there is not a separate vestry.

Sanctuary: Area of the church building set aside for the celebration of the sacred rites. The altar and ambo are placed within the sanctuary.

Sanctuary Lamp: A fixture containing a candle or an oil lamp, usually suspended by a chain or affixed to the wall. It is located near the tabernacle. When lit, it indicates the presence of the Blessed Sacrament in the Tabernacle.

Appendix 1

"Rejoice in the Lord always: again, I say, rejoice! The Lord is near."

Brothers and sisters in Christ, "Rejoice in the Lord always: again, I say, rejoice! The Lord is near." Truly, we celebrate through the liturgy, the nearness of the Lord. We look to the future, to the day when Jesus Christ will return, Judge and Savior, when "all who want it may have the water of life, and have it free." (Revelation 22:17) Jesus Christ has given the Church as the wellspring of our salvation and the ultimate meaning of our individual lives, the Holy Eucharist. This belief has been reasserted for our times in the words of the Second Vatican Council: the Eucharist is the source and summit of the whole Christian life. (Lumen Gentium, 11) For we believe, that at every offering of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the very Body and Blood of Jesus Christ is placed on the altar before us. Not just a sign, or a symbol, not just indication or illustration - but the very Body and Blood. Christ's words were these: "This is my body. . . this is my blood." Why should we doubt this, or try to explain it, or attempt to qualify it in any way at all? Do we question the miracle by which life is created, or suppose that life is less miraculous because science has the expertise to describe it? Do we question the feelings that well up inside us when we see a mother nursing her baby, or a father placing his life on the line for the sake of his child? It is the same kind of profound reaction with which we must greet the miraculous words of our Savior, those words which daily bring to life a sacrifice and a triumph enacted in the past but "represented" daily in the Holy Mass. Under the signs of bread and wine, signs that recall the goodness of creation, we are able to enter into the deep and wide mystery of God's presence in humankind.

Many events come to mind - the unleavened bread of the Passover, the Manna in the desert, the multiplication of the loaves, the transformation of water into wine at the wedding feast of Cana - these events and others reawaken in us some grasp of the pervasive influence of our God. For by partaking in the banquet of this mystery, we are also enabled by the mercy of the Everlasting Father to escape the Angel of Death - to be fed the bread of heaven in the arid desert of our hungering human natures - to be granted the refreshing wine of Love's inspirited libation, our "cup of blessing." In this way, the Eucharist reawakens in us a sense of the fundamental agreement made between God and mankind - that a woman would bear a child who would erase the sin of Adam and Eve, and restore the flow of grace between the Creator and the created. In the wisdom which is fed to us by the living Word of God, we come to understand that the Eucharist is first a sign of redemption - a sign of God's forgiveness extended to the entire human race.

The Eucharist is also sign of remembrance by which is fulfilled the direct commandment of our Lord to His Apostles: "Do this in memory of me." Thus, sustained by uninterrupted generations of the ordained priesthood, the sacrifice of the Last Supper and the Cross is made alive and present to the Faithful in their celebration of the Mass. In turn, the Faithful can unite themselves to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, so that the Church may be always drawn together in all places and, through the abiding source of her unity, the Eucharist. In the Eucharist, the sacrifice of Christ also becomes the sacrifice of the members of his body. The lives of the faithful, their praise, sufferings, prayers and works, are united with those of Christ and with his total offering, and so acquire a new worth. (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1368, trans. from original) It is this "new worth" which transforms the Church from simply a human gathering into a living temple inhabited by the actual, real, and true presence of Jesus Christ. And where the Son of God dwells, there dwells also His Father whose love offers the Son, and the Holy Spirit, who is Christ present in word and power. It is not irreverent to declare that in the Eucharist, we "have" God, for His presence is true and real. We call this presence real "because it is a presence par excellence,

since it is substantial, in the sense that Christ, whole and entire, God and man, becomes present." (Council of Trent, 1551) In a time such as ours, with the deposit of our faith questioned by many and rejected by some, it is sad to think that the immense wonder of the principal source of God's love should be questioned and rejected as well. It is to arouse the Faithful against this tendency exhibited both within and without the Church. At such times, when the central mystery of God's redemptive act is assailed, then the Faithful must meet the doubters with renewed conviction and visible witness. God has given us everything by giving us the life and death and Resurrection of His Son - now we must respond by giving ourselves devotedly to His real Presence. For who does not desire to sit in the company of a best friend, and to know in advance the joy of heaven, where friends will gather forever around the throne of God - singing, feasting, rejoicing and remembering in such a way as will suffice for eternity. Saint Pope John Paul II, wrote: The Church and the world have a great need for eucharistic worship. Jesus awaits us in the sacrament of love. Let us not refuse the time to go to meet him in adoration, in contemplation full of faith and open to making amends for the serious offenses and crimes of the world. May our adoration never cease. (Dominicae cenae, 3.)

After the Annunciation, Mary waited upon the coming of the Lord, protected by the fostering love of her husband Joseph. When He was born, she cared for His childly wants, remaining with her Son as He grew to maturity and wisdom. When His destiny was revealed, there stood the Mother at the foot of the Cross, broken by sorrow, but steadfast in faith. And when finally the Holy Spirit was given to bring life to the Church, Mary, the first model of all Christians was there, always ready to take her place in the meaning of what her Son came to reveal. Brothers and sisters, may we hope to fashion in ourselves the example of Mary, who by accepting the will of God, attained for herself and for all people the "new worth" of the Son of God, and "the merciful and redeeming transformation of the world in the human heart." (Dominicae cenae, 7.) By receiving the Body and Blood of our Lord at Mass, and by adoring His presence in the tabernacle, may we also entreat the Father, "Be it done unto me according to thy word," thus uniting our lives forever to the birth, death and rising of Jesus Christ.

Appendix 2

Blessings at the Time of Holy Communion

In the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown, the practice of giving blessings in lieu of Holy Communion has become quite commonplace. While motivated by significant pastoral concerns, it is important to note that it is not an approved liturgical rite. Several concerns have been voiced about the practice that suggests it may receive a negative judgment from the Holy See. These concerns include the following:

1. The liturgical blessing of the Holy Mass is properly given to each and to all at the conclusion of the Mass, just a few moments subsequent to the distribution of Holy Communion.
2. Lay People, within the context of Holy Mass, are unable to confer blessings. These blessings, rather, are the competence of the priest (cf. *Ecclesia de Mysterio*, *Notitae* 34 (15 Aug. 1997) art 6, & 2; can. 1169, & 2; and Roman Ritual *De Benedictionibus* (1985) n. 18)
3. Furthermore, the laying on of a hand or hands-which has its own sacramental significance, inappropriate here-by those distributing Holy Communion, in substitution for its reception, is to be explicitly discouraged.
4. The Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio*, n. 84, “forbids any pastor, for whatever reason or pretext even of a pastoral nature, to perform ceremonies of any kind for divorced people who remarry.” To be feared is that any form of blessing in substitution for communion would give the impression that the divorced and remarried have been returned, in some sense, to the status of Catholics in good standing.
5. In a similar way, for others who are not to be admitted to Holy Communion in accord with the norm of law, the Church’s discipline has already made clear that they should not approach Holy Communion nor receive a blessing. This would include non-Catholics and those envisaged in can. 915 (i.e., those under penalty of excommunication or interdict, and others who obstinately persist in manifest grave sin). For those reasons, while the Diocese has no policy prohibiting the use of blessings at the time of Holy Communion, it may be appropriate to avoid promoting the practice until a more definitive judgment regarding its value in the liturgical celebration can be obtained.

Appendix 3

Extraordinary Minister Interview Form This form is provided as a sample to assist parishes in interviewing candidates to become Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

Name

Address

Home Phone Work Phone

E-mail

Are you 18 or more years old? if under 18, how old? _____

Circle which settings you wish to serve as an EMHC.

1. During Mass
2. To the homebound
3. Both 1 & 2

Circle which sacraments have you received.

1. Baptism
2. First Penance & Reconciliation
3. First Communion
4. Confirmation

Marital Status (circle)

1. Single
2. Separated
3. Engaged
4. Widowed
5. Married
6. Divorced

If married or engaged

1. is this or will it be your first marriage? Yes___ NO___
2. is this or will it be your spouse/fiancée's first marriage? Yes___ No___
3. Is this/will you be married by a Catholic bishop/priest/deacon in a Catholic Church? Yes__No___

Circle the weekend mass that you routinely attend:

Saturday 4:00pm - Sunday: 8:00am, 10:30am.