

Para Hills Modbury Catholic Parish



Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion Handbook



Welcome to the Ministry of Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion!

Assisting at the celebration of the Holy Eucharist is always a privilege. Your service enhances the worship of God for the people of Para Hills Modbury Catholic Parish. Thank you for the time and preparation you put into the Ministry as Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. This parish handbook may serve as a guide for new Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion and as a refresher for those with experience in the ministry as Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. 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 Extraordinary Minister. As we go through this handbook let us 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.

God bless your efforts!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Fr Manu Kumbidiyamackal'.

Fr Manu Kumbidiyamackal MSFS
Parish Priest

Introduction

The Eucharist constitutes the very life of the Church, for the Lord said, "I am the bread of life. No one who comes to me shall ever be hungry, no one who believes in me shall ever thirst." (John 6:35)

This booklet is designed to assist you in your participation in the Liturgical Ministry of Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (more commonly known as Extraordinary Ministers), here in our Parish of Para Hills Modbury. It includes information for those who bring Holy Communion to the sick and / or housebound. The shorthand term EMs will be used to refer to Extraordinary Ministers on future pages this handbook.

Your willingness to serve as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion, reflects not only a response to your Baptismal call to serve the people of God, but a commitment to Christ as you share in the preaching, teaching and leading aspects of the church.

Your willingness to commit to being on the schedule, to prepare properly for your service and to arrive on time dressed appropriately for Mass, further reflects that commitment.

Prayers Before Service for the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

It is highly recommended that we pray before serving, either individually or as a group of Extraordinary Ministers.

Blessed are you, God of all creation!

I thank you for calling me to serve your holy people.

May I see you in them.

May they see you in me.

Grant this through Christ our Lord. Amen

God of Love and Mercy.

With reverence and humility,

I approach the Eucharist and this ministry.

Grant me the grace to help others encounter you in this sacrament.

I ask through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

O You who clothe the lilies,

Who feed the birds of the sky,

And lead the lambs to pasture

And the deer to the waterside,

Who multiplied loaves and fishes,

Who said: "I am the bread of life.

No one who comes to me shall be hungry;

No one who believes in me shall ever thirst."

Do come to us now and feed our minds and hearts

Canon Law

Can. 230 §3 - When the need of the Church warrants it and ministers are lacking, lay persons, even if they are not lectors (Proclaimers of the Word) or acolytes, can also supply certain of their duties, namely, to exercise the ministry of the word, to preside over liturgical prayers, to confer baptism, and to distribute holy communion, according to the prescripts of the law.

Can. 910 §1 - The ordinary minister of Holy Communion is a bishop, presbyter, or deacon.

Can. 910 §2 - The extraordinary minister of Holy Communion is an acolyte or another member of the Christian faithful designated according to the norm of can. 230 §3

Norms for the Distribution and Reception of Holy Communion

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

In case of necessity, the Priest may also commission suitable members of the faithful for the occasion." Extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion should receive sufficient spiritual, theological, and practical preparation to fulfil their role with knowledge and reverence. (GIRM 2014)

Holy Communion under both Kinds (Species)

From the first days of the Church's celebration of the Eucharist, Holy Communion consisted of the reception of both species in fulfillment of the Lord's command to "take and eat ... take and drink."

The practice of Holy Communion under both kinds at Mass continued until the late 11th century, when the custom of distributing the Eucharist to the faithful under the form of bread alone began to grow.

By the 12th century, theologians speak of Communion under one kind as a "custom" of the Church. The practice spread until the Council of Constance in 1415 decreed that Holy Communion under the form of bread alone would be distributed to the faithful.

In 1963, the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council authorized the extension of the faculty for Holy Communion under both kinds ... at the Bishop's discretion. (See Norms 18,19 & 20)

Holy Communion has a more complete form as a sign when it is received under both kinds. For in this manner of reception a fuller sign of the Eucharistic banquet shines forth. Clearly, there are some pastoral circumstances that require Eucharistic sharing in one species. (Norms 15)

The Church has always taught the doctrine of concomitance, by which we know that under each species alone, the whole Christ is sacramentally present and we “receive all the fruit of Eucharistic grace.” (GIRM 281 & CCC 1390)

Qualifications

From time to time the Pastoral Associate will invite parishioners to apply to take up various ministries to serve the needs of our parish. The names of those who have applied to be Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion will be forwarded to the parish Priest who, on his recommendation and following their training, will submit their names to the Archbishop for his approval.

Those invited to serve in this ministry are designated only for service in the parish of Para Hills Modbury. EMs should not take it upon themselves to bring Communion to a parent, family member, friend or neighbour, unless permission is given by the parish Priest (or his designate) of the parish in which the person resides.

Invitations to serve as an EM should be a reflection of the diversity of our parish. An invitation to join the ministry does not mean that one is “better or holier than another”, nor is an invitation indicative of a reward of some sort.

The Adelaide Archdiocesan guidelines for this ministry clearly indicate that it is an invitation and indeed a call to serve the church of the faithful.

To be an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion you must:

- be a fully initiated Catholic (have received the sacrament of Confirmation)
- be in good standing with The Church
- be a member of Para Hills Modbury Catholic Parish worshipping community
- be of good morale standing and cultivate devotion to the Holy Eucharist and distinguish yourself by Christian life, faith and morals; striving to be worthy of this great office
- participate regularly in the sacramental life of the church
- act as an example to the other faithful by piety and reverence for this Most Holy sacrament of the altar
- be at least 16 years old
- be duly instructed

Extraordinary Ministers should live the Sacrament of Life

Practice your Catholic faith through a prayerful relationship with God. Take advantage of the sacraments regularly. If you have not been to confession in a while, go before you start the process of becoming an Extraordinary Minister and continue to go regularly.

To accomplish so great a work, Christ is always present in his Church, especially in her liturgical celebrations.

By His power Christ is present

- not only in the person of the minister, but especially under the Eucharistic species.

Christ is present in His word ...

- since it is He who speaks when the Holy Scriptures are read in the Church.

He is present lastly, when the Church prays and sings...

- for He promised: "Where two or three are gathered in my name, then I am in the midst of them." (*Matthew 18:20*)

Extraordinary Minister Scheduling

The schedule for EMs will be updated every three months. Schedules will be e-mailed, posted on the parish website and posted on the bulletin boards in each Church.

If you are scheduled to serve and cannot, **you** are responsible for arranging for a substitute. The Liturgy Assistants Contact List will be attached to the schedule to facilitate making contact when necessary.

A Liturgical Minister may perform only one liturgical ministry at a time, thus if you are performing the function of Extraordinary Minister, you may not also perform the function of Proclaimer of the Word at the same Mass.

Schedules for Holy days will be by Volunteer Sign-up sheets posted on the board in either Church. Examples are: The Triduum (Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday), Easter, Christmas, etc.

Occasionally, a request for EMs at other services is received. At those time we will either telephone or e-mail you seeking volunteers.

Attire

"Bodily demeanour (gestures, clothing) ought to convey the respect, solemnity and joy of the moment when Christ becomes our guest." (*Catechism of the Catholic Church 1387b*)

Your respect for the Ministry should be reflected in your appearance and attire. Appropriate attire includes being properly groomed, wearing your "Sunday Best". Jewellery or clothing which would be distracting to the congregation should not be worn.

Extraordinary Ministers Duties before Mass

If you are scheduled, please arrive no later than ten (10) minutes before the Mass starts. EMs are to take responsibility to check that those scheduled are in attendance and find a replacement for any who are missing.

While gathering before Mass, you are encouraged to be “Ministers of Hospitality” to those who come to worship. Offer friendly greetings to people as they come in.

It is recommended that you read one of the prayers for EMs from the front of the book at home or with other EMs before Mass as part of your preparation for service.

Processions

Ordinarily EMs participate in four processions.

1. With the celebrant at the commencement of the Mass. Process at a normal pace up to the first step of the altar and then move left and right far enough so that everyone has room. Face the altar and bow when the celebrant does and then proceed to your seat.
2. Gathering in front of the altar coinciding with the praying of the “Lamb of God”. Move left and right far enough so that everyone will have room facing the altar and bow when all are in position. Then move to the credence table.
3. Following distribution of Holy Communion and the purification of the sacred vessels, gather again in front of the altar, again spreading out evenly facing the altar and bowing when all are in position. Leave and return to your seats.
4. At the recessional hymn join other ministries for the exit procession. Bow when the Priest does, turn around and process out at a normal pace.

Extraordinary Ministers Duties during Mass

The Mass will proceed through the readings, the homily, the Lord’s Prayer and the Sign of Peace. After you have greeted the people around you with “Peace Be with You”, EMs move to the credence table during the “Lamb of God” and must cleanse their hands with the hand sanitizer provided. Please use only enough to clean your hands.

Normally, the hosts consecrated at that Mass will be what is distributed a Communion time. However, it is usual that one EM goes to the tabernacle and reverently brings the ciborium containing previously consecrated Body of Christ to the altar. The ciborium is given to the Priest once he has concluded his own Communion. At that point the other EMs step up and behind the altar ready to receive communion.

The Priest will distribute the blessed host, and then the chalice to the EMs at the altar. As the church has asked us to do, bow reverently before you receive the host and chalice.

The Priest will distribute the sacred vessels to the EMs. When all sacred vessels have been distributed by the Priest and he has moved off, EMs should then move to their respective stations.

The Priest (or EM designated by the Priest) and a chalice bearer will dispense communion to any parishioner unable to come forward to receive Communion.

Distribution of the Body of Christ

General Instructions of The Roman Missal states “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” (Cf. GIRM, 161; 284-287).

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 the tip of 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, hold your hand out (palm down) over them and say one of the following blessings: “Christ’s blessing on you” or “May Jesus bless you” or “God bless you”.

When giving a blessing, do not place your hand on the head of a child or an adult. This can be offensive to some people and it is a health concern.

EMs should not make the sign of the cross as part of the blessing, as they (EMs) are not ordained ministers.

Use this same practice of giving a blessing rather than distributing Communion for any adult or child who appears not to know what is expected of them at this time. This can occur when numbers of uninitiated people attend services. For example, at Sacraments of Baptism, Holy Communion or during Christmas and Easter services.

If you run out of consecrated hosts, tell the person who is the next in line to wait a moment, then go to the ciborium which will be on the altar to get more.

If you have consecrated hosts left over after your line has run out and there are still people lining up, we recommend that you place yourself strategically near the EM at that other line to assist.

After the entire congregation has received communion, place your ciborium / paten on the altar, then go to the credence table and rinse your fingers in the finger bowl.

At Holy Trinity EMs will remain at the credence table and purify the sacred vessels before moving off.

At John XXIII EMs move to the credence table in the Meeting Room to purify the vessels.

Note: Following the distribution of Holy Communion

The paten/s are to be wiped with a purificator to brush the crumbs into the ciborium to which we then add a small quantity of water which is consumed along with any crumbs of consecrated Hosts. The ciborium is then wiped dry with the purificator ready for cleaning.

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 young 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.

If you run out of Precious Blood, proceed back to the credence table and commence purifying the chalice.

If you have Precious Blood remaining after all parishioners have received Communion, proceed to the credence table and consume the remainder of the Precious Blood. If you prefer not to consume the remaining Precious Blood, offer it to another EM.

Communion by Intinction

While communicants are not supposed to intinct the host in the chalice, nor to receive the intincted host in the hand (Redemptionist Sacramentum 104), it is **not** up to EMs to preclude anyone from Communion, or to tell people who they must receive Communion. Should there be numbers of people seeking to intinct the host, mention it to the Priest following Mass and he may choose to ensure that the congregation is properly catechised.

Accidents

If you or a communicant drops the Consecrated Host, maintain a calm demeanour at this moment to reassure an anxious and embarrassed communicant. Pick up the Host and consume it yourself. If you feel uncomfortable consuming it, hold it in the palm of your hand until after Communion is complete and take it directly to the sacristy. Either give it to the Priest or place the Consecrated host in a cup of water. After the Host has dissolved in the water dispose of it in the Piscina at Holy Trinity or in the garden at John XXIII.

If you drop or spill the Precious Blood - DO NOT PANIC! Stop what you are doing. Again, your demeanour will reassure those communicants in line, and especially the person who may have caused the spill. Stop serving and place the purificator over the spill and use it to clean up the spill immediately.

Responsibilities following The Mass

After Mass is complete, help with the clean-up of the ciboria and chalices used in the Mass and set up for the next celebration, if applicable.

Go to the credence and take the chalices, the paten, the water and wine pitchers and finger bowls into the sacristy.

After rinsing all the sacred vessels, wash these items and all the other items brought down from the altar in hot soapy water. Use the special bowl in the sink in the kitchen to wash these items. The necessary washing items will be found in the kitchen.

After washing these items, dry them and put them away ready for the next celebration. At Holy Trinity, tip the water from the washing bowl into the Piscina. John XXIII does not have a piscina so the water from the washing up should be returned to the earth via the garden.

The purificator used during communion and the lavabo used to wipe the Priest's hands during the washing are to be placed in the drawer ready for cleaning at Holy Trinity and in the cupboard at John XXIII.

Bringing Communion to the Sick or those who are Housebound

Those who take Communion to the sick represent Christ whose minister they are in this activity. They also represent the whole community of faith who send them to the sick so that the sick can share the communion with Christ that makes the community of faith the Church of Christ.

In Australia it is the custom to take only the consecrated bread to the sick. If the sick person is unable to swallow the consecrated bread, it is possible for them to receive just a tiny portion of it in a spoonful of water. Or if necessary they can take Communion in the form of wine. The parish Priest will need to give permission for this and will provide a safe means of carrying the Blood of Christ so that you can share it with someone who cannot sit up to receive it.

Before Taking Communion to the Sick

The host is always carried in a pyx which is then placed in a cover or purse. Check how and when to collect Communion. In our parish this is usually done following Mass. If you have not met the person try to find out something about them from the parish, their relatives or hospital staff.

Personal Preparation

Remind yourself about the sacred service that you are about to undertake. Ask God to be with you and to bless you as you make your visits. The following prayer will help you to prepare:

*Dear God,
Be with me as I take Holy Communion to this sick person.
Holy Spirit, guide me so that my words will be words of comfort and healing.
Jesus, my Lord, give me the compassion you showed to the sick and dying.
May the sufferings which you endured be source of strength for those who suffer.
Amen*

Preparing the place for distribution of Communion

Many of the people you visit at home will be familiar with what is required and will have prepared. However it would be useful for you to develop a "Communion Kit" to take along with you on these visits. Your kit would consist of a small white cloth, a candle (don't forget the matches) and a small crucifix. Setting these out can be a signal that we are entering a sacred time and so conversation should cease as Communion is about to be offered. It is also a good idea to have a glass of water at hand in case the sick person has any difficulty swallowing the consecrated bread. Be aware that it isn't necessary that the person receive a complete host – a small portion is sufficient. You can consume what is left over or give it to another family member who is present.

After taking Communion to the Sick

After taking Communion to the sick any remaining consecrated bread is to be consumed or returned to the tabernacle and the Pyx should be purified.

Ash Wednesday

You may be asked to assist with the distribution of ashes on Ash Wednesday. If you are assigned to assist in one of the Ash Wednesday services, you should check in at the sacristy and determine from the Celebrant, where you will be located to distribute the ashes and what script you will use: "Turn away from sin and be faithful to the gospel", or "Remember, you are dust and to dust you will return." You mark each person's forehead with the sign of the cross with your thumb while saying one of the scripts. Be sure to wash your hands after administering the ashes.

Definitions

CHALICE

The cup-shaped vessel or goblet used at Mass to contain the Precious Blood. For centuries it was made of precious material; if it was not of gold, the interior of the cup was gold-plated. Since the Second Vatican Council, chalices may be of other materials. A chalice is consecrated with holy chrism by a bishop. Regarding the inside does not destroy the consecration. Sometimes the word chalice designates its contents. (Etym. Latin calix, cup, goblet, drinking vessel, chalice.)

CIBORIUM

A covered container used to hold the consecrated small Hosts. It is similar to a chalice but covered and larger, used for small Communion hosts of the faithful. It is made of various precious metals, and the interior is commonly gold or goldplated. (Etym. Latin ciborium; from Greek kib_rion, cup.)

CORPORAL

A square white linen cloth with a cross in the middle on which the Host and Chalice are placed during Mass. When not in use it may be kept in a burse. It is also used under the monstrance at Benediction or under the Blessed Sacrament at any time. (Etym. Latin corporalis, bodily; from corpus, body.)

CREDENCE

A small table or shelf in the wall at one side of the altar. On it are usually placed the cruets, basin, and finger towel. The chalice, paten, corporal, and veil used in the Mass may also be placed there until the Offertory of the Mass. (Etym. Latin credere, to believe.)

CRUETS

One of two small bottles or vessels to contain the water and wine used at the Consecration of the Mass. They are presented as offerings of the faithful at the Offertory. The cruets are also used for the ablution of the chalice after Communion.

HOST

A victim of sacrifice, and therefore the consecrated Bread of the Eucharist considered as the sacrifice of the Body of Christ. The word is also used of the round wafers used for consecration. (Etym. Latin hostia, sacrificial offering.)

INTINCTION

The Eucharistic practice of partly dipping the consecrated bread, or host, into the consecrated wine before consumption by the communicant.

LAVABO

The lavabo or finger towel: a linen cloth that is used by the Priest to dry his hands at the Offertory after he has washed his hands.

PATEN

A saucer like dish of the same material as the chalice--gold-plated and consecrated by a bishop or his delegate with holy chrism. It must be large enough to cover the chalice. On it rests the bread to be consecrated, and later on the Sacred Host. (Etym. Latin patena, a broad, shallow dish or pan.)

PISCINA

An excavation or basin, provided with a drain directly to the earth, for the disposal of water that has been used for some sacred purpose and is no longer needed. The name is also given to the baptismal font or cistern. A sacrarium, synonymous with piscina, receives the water from the washing of the sacred vessels and linens. It is generally located in the sacristy of a church. (Etym. Latin piscis, fish.)

PURIFICATOR

A small piece of white linen, marked with a cross in the centre, used by the Priest in the celebration of Mass. It is folded in three layers and used by the Priest to purify his fingers and the chalice and paten after Holy Communion.

PYX

Any metal box or vessel in which the Blessed Sacrament is kept or carried. The term is more aptly applied to the small round metal case (usually gold-plated) used to carry a few hosts on visitation to the sick but the larger ciborium is also called a pyx. (Etym. Greek puxis, box.)

SACRISTY or VESTRY

The room or rooms near the front of a church where the sacred vessels and vestments are kept, and where the Priest and ministers at the altar vest for liturgical functions. It may also be the place where parochial meetings are held. In Catholic tradition the vestry is more commonly called the sacristy. (Etym. Latin *vestarium* "wardrobe, place for clothes, or dressing room" .)

TABERNACLE

A cupboard or boxlike receptacle for the exclusive reservation of the Blessed Sacrament. In early Christian times the sacred species was reserved in the home because of possible persecution. Later, dove shaped tabernacles were suspended by chains before the altar. Nowadays tabernacles may be round or rectangular and made of wood, stone, or metal. They are covered with a veil and lined with precious metal or silk, with a corporal beneath the ciborium or other sacred vessels. According to the directive of the Holy See, since the Second Vatican Council, tabernacles are always solid and inviolable and located in the middle of the main altar or on a side altar, but always in a truly prominent place (Eucharisticum Myserium, May 25, 1967, II C). (Etym. Latin *tabernaculum*, tent, diminutive of *taberna*, hut, perhaps from Etruscan.)

Resources

Available from the Adelaide Office of Worship – Archdiocese of Adelaide:

Whenever you do this ...Guidelines for Extraordinary Ministers, Archdiocese of Adelaide 1994

Used with kind permission of Fr Joe Lee, Parish Priest, Holy Spirit Parish, Duncanville, Texas:

Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion: Training Manual
<https://holyspiritcatholic.com/documents/2011/EMManual.pdf>

Available on the web:

Revised General Instruction of the Roman Missal
http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccdds/documents/rc_con_ccdds_doc_20030317_ordinamento-messale_en.html#III._PARTICULAR_MINISTRIES

Redemptionis Sacramentum (On certain matters to be observed or to be avoided regarding the Most Holy Eucharist)
http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccdds/documents/rc_con_ccdds_doc_20040423_redemptionis-sacramentum_en.html

Catechism of the Catholic Church 1993
http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_P44.HTM

Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (Sacrosanctum Concilium) from Vatican Council II
http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat_ii_const_19631204_sacrosanctum-concilium_en.html

Immensae Caritatis – On Facilitating Reception of communion in Certain Circumstances <http://www.ewtn.com/library/CURIA/CDWIMCAR.html>