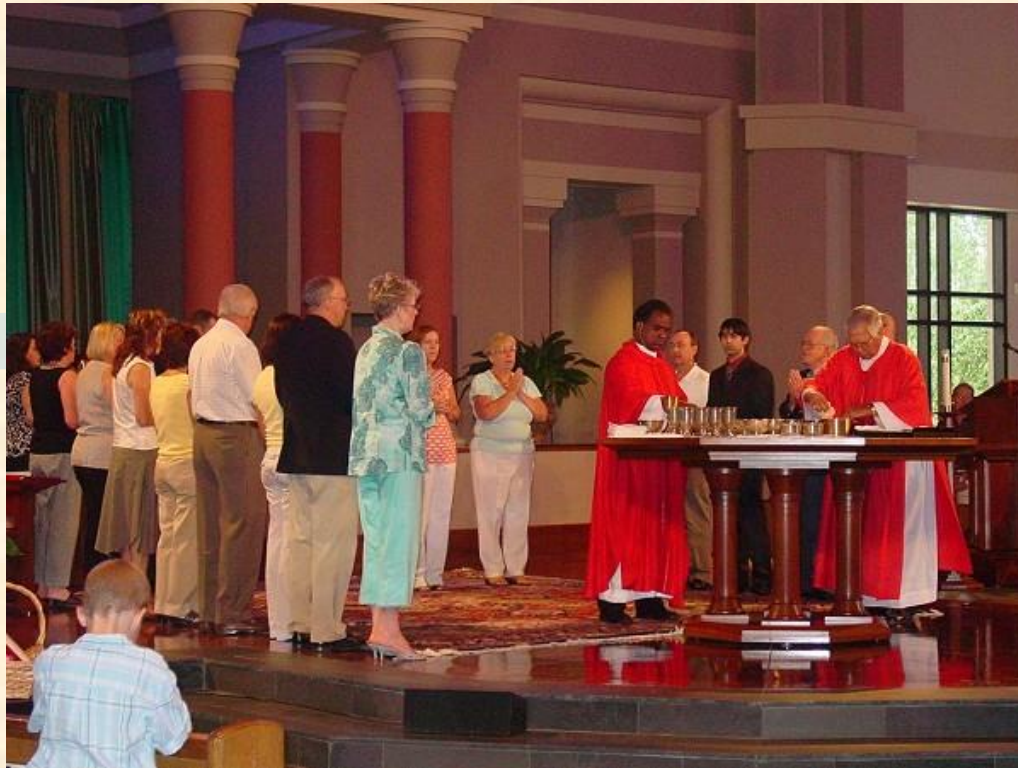
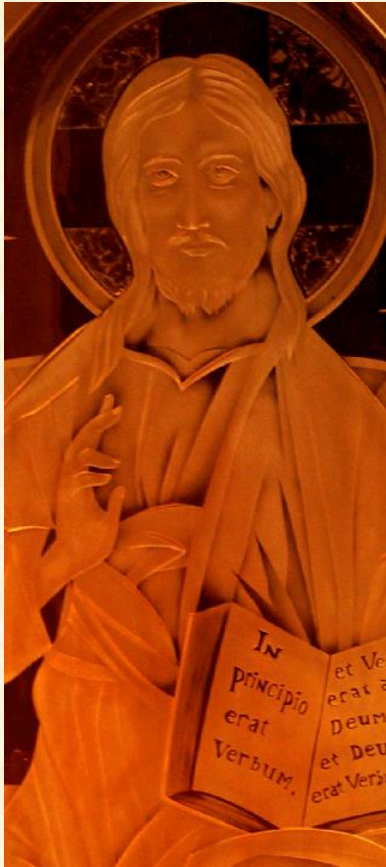


Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion Training



ARCHDIOCESE OF DENVER

“Who are Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (aka EMHC)?”



They are men and women mandated by the Archbishop of Denver to share in the apostolic work of the Church when a true pastoral need exists as determined by the pastor, administrator or chaplain of a parish or institution.

“Why do we even have EMHCs?”

A genuine pastoral need may arise when:

- the number of faithful receiving Holy Communion at Mass is so great that the liturgy would be unduly prolonged.**
- ordinary ministers are unable to administer Holy Communion conveniently because of poor health or advanced age, or when they are not available because they are fulfilling other duties.**
- the need has arisen to bring the Eucharist to the sick, to the homebound, and especially as viaticum, to the dying.**

“How long can I be an EMHC?”

One receives mandation to serve in this capacity for up to a four-year period. Continuation of service should not be presumed, but rather specifically determined by the pastor prior to renewal.

“If I sing in the choir or help usher/lector can I also be an EMHC at the same Mass?”

Pastors and chaplains should develop the full complement of ministries that function in the celebration of the Eucharist. Therefore, it is preferable that EMHCs do not serve as lectors, ushers, altar servers or choir members at the same Mass.

“It is getting harder for me to help EMHC because of my physical condition, what should I do?”

When an individual's capability to function well as an EMHC is inhibited due to illness or age, mandation is not to be requested. They might be invited to serve the parish in some other way.

“I just received the pyx at Mass to take Holy Communion to the homebound. Oh, but there is Mary Agnes and I have to know how her grandson did at the ball game. Should I stop and chat with her or go directly to the homebound person?”

EMHCs should immediately go from the parish Mass to the communion call. It is a beautiful connection between the Eucharist that just has taken place in the parish and the reception of Holy Communion by the homebound parishioner.

“How am I suppose to distribute Holy Communion to those with gluten intolerance?”

Each parish has its own way of handling this situation. A common norm is for the EMHC to either wash their hands with a sanitizer or wipe their fingers with a purificator before distributing the low-gluten host to the communicant so that there is no cross-contamination.

Preparing For Ministry

- **On ministry days, begin the day in prayer and quiet. Avoid distractions such as TV, radio, or anything that would discourage a recollected manner.**
- **Care should be taken against casual actions, attitudes and language that distract from the celebration. Care should also be taken regarding appropriate dress.**

- **It is recommended that you arrive early to your parish liturgy at which you are scheduled to serve, allowing you to be informed of any special circumstances that might occur. This also ensures that the priest, deacon, servers, musicians, and EMHCs conduct their roles with style and grace because all are aware of their specific responsibilities for the celebration. Additionally, some parishes might have you assist in sacristan duties as well.**

Communion Rite

EMHCs approach the altar as the priest receives Communion. After the priest has concluded his own Communion, he distributes Communion to the extraordinary ministers, assisted by the deacon, and then hands the sacred vessels to them for distribution of Holy Communion to the people.

How to Administer the Body and Blood of Christ

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).

Considerations in ministering the Blood of Christ

- **After the communicant returns the chalice, the rim is wiped inside and out with a purificator. The chalice is rotated slightly; the purificator is adjusted to an unused part of the linen, and then the chalice is presented to the next communicant.**

Considerations in ministering the Blood of Christ

- ❑ **A communicant is never allowed to self-communicate by intincting the host in the chalice. Intinction, can only be ministered by a priest or bishop. An EMHC, may stand next to the priest or bishop and hold the chalice from which intinction is distributed.**
- ❑ **While distributing the Precious Blood, never pour the Blood from one chalice to another, so as to fill an empty chalice with Precious Blood at a communion station.**

The Reception of Holy Communion by the Faithful

- **Those who receive Communion may receive either in the hand or on the tongue, and the decision should be that of the individual receiving, not of the person distributing Communion.**
- **They may receive standing or kneeling.**

Following the Distribution of Holy Communion

- **EMHCs return the ciborium/chalices to the altar or credence table.**
- **Any remaining Precious Blood must be consumed at the end of the distribution of Holy Communion by the ordinary ministers, who may be assisted by the EMHCs.**

“Do we purify the dishes?”

- These are sacred vessels - NOT ordinary “dishes.”**
- The purification of the sacred vessels may occur at the altar by the priest, or at the credence table by the deacon or cleansed immediately after Mass.**
- Purification is ordinarily done by the priest or deacon, an EMHC may conduct a more complete hygienic washing after the vessels are purified.**

Differences between parishes in being an EMHC

- Each parish of the Archdiocese is different and has varying approaches in how an EMHC ministers, e.g. wearing a ministry cross on a chain, being in the liturgical procession for Mass, etc.
- Your pastor/deacon/EMHC coordinator will show you where you stand, where to receive the vessels from in the sanctuary, how to sign in before Mass, etc.

Please refer to the *EMHC
Training Booklet* created by the
Archdiocese for more
information.

Thank you for your ministry!