

Archdiocese of Atlanta Manual For Parish Trainers of Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

Archdiocese of Atlanta

April 2022





THE MOST REVEREND
GREGORY J. HARTMAYER, OFM CONV.

Holy Thursday, 14 April, 2022

My Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus,

Peace and all good!

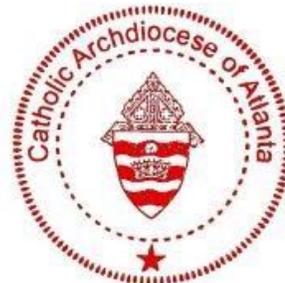
I want to present to you the most recent version of the Archdiocesan Manual for Parish Instructors of Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, in both English and Spanish. Since arriving in Atlanta in 2020, I have been edified with the emphasis given to the reverence of the Eucharist in our Archdiocese and in its many parishes. The love and reverence with which the Eucharist is celebrated helps to bring us together as one people who can truly say, “We are one” This manual presents the most recent norms of the Church for the distribution of Holy Communion, together with pastoral applications for our own situation in the Archdiocese of Atlanta. It is my hope that it will be of assistance throughout the Archdiocese as we work to make our worship ever more fruitful and efficacious, so that when we all come to the Lord’s Table we may know that we are truly God’s sons and daughters, brought together into the one family of His Church.

Assuring you of my prayers, esteem, and best wishes and with kind personal regards,

I am Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ *Gregory J. Hartmayer OFM Conv.*
Gregory J. Hartmayer, OFM Conv.

Archbishop of Atlanta



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Table of Contents

Table of Contents	3
Guidelines for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion	5
Introduction	6
What is an Extraordinary Minister?	6
Why the Church Regulates the Liturgy	7
When Extraordinary Ministers may be called upon	7
Qualifications to Serve as an Extraordinary Minister	8
Selection of Extraordinary Ministers	9
Way of Life of an Extraordinary Minister	9
Training of Extraordinary Ministers	9
Terminology for the Blessed Sacrament	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Certification of Extraordinary Ministers	10
Commissioning for an Extended Period	10
Commissioning for a Single Occasion	11
Preparation for Serving as an Extraordinary Minister	11
Dress	11
Actions During the Mass	11
Approaching the Altar	11
Receiving Communion	12

Receiving a Vessel	12
Manner of Distributing and Receiving Holy Communion	12
Communion in the Hand	12
Both Species	133
Communion for Individuals with disabilities	13
Intinction	144
Communion-Plate	14
Those Unable to Receive Communion	14
Blessings	14
Denying Holy Communion	14
Returning the Blessed Sacrament to the Altar	15
Accidents Involving the Blessed Sacrament	15
Purification of Vessels	15
Cleansing of Linens	16
Service to the Sick and Homebound	16
Receiving the Blessed Sacrament	16
Traveling to the Sick or Homebound	16
Distributing Communion to the Homebound	17
Communion Services	17
Reference Documents	18
Appendix 1 – Rejoice in the Lord, Always!	19
Appendix 2 – Extraordinary Minister Interview Form	22

Appendix 3 – Procedure to Request Certification
23

Appendix 4 – Blessings at the Time of Holy Communion
24

Resource List
25

Guidelines for the Reception of Communion
26

For Catholics
26

For our fellow Christians
26

For those not receiving Holy Communion
26

For non-Christians
26

Glossary
27

Guidelines for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

The extraordinary minister of Holy Communion 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. It is an honor and a privilege to serve the Church in this capacity, and of course, requires careful preparation on the part of the extraordinary minister.

In each parish that makes use of extraordinary ministers, training and preparation is either done by the pastor, or, commonly, by an individual that he designates for that task. It is the purpose of this booklet to assist those individuals by providing some insight on the theological principles behind the Eucharist and the role of the extraordinary minister, the teaching and discipline of the Universal Church on that subject, the local norms for the Archdiocese of Atlanta, and some suggestions that may prove useful in their service to the Church. This booklet, however, is not a complete compendium on any of these topics, and, of course, the individual charged with preparing extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion will want to familiarize himself or herself in greater depth with these topics, especially through study and the cultivation of a strong personal devotion to the Most Holy Eucharist.

This manual supersedes all previous versions.

Introduction

The Archdiocese of Atlanta 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 extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion. For that reason, when the permission to employ extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion was first given in 1971, the Archdiocese of Atlanta made use of it almost immediately. Thus, when the permission to use extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion was made universal with the instruction [*Immensae Caritatis*](#) of 1973, the practice was already established in Atlanta. 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 Archdiocese. 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 particular 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 extraordinary ministers, together with those norms specific to the Archdiocese of Atlanta.¹

What is an Extraordinary Minister?

In short, an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion² 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 the priest 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 distribution of Holy Communion should not be seen as a more complete exercise of the priesthood that belongs to all believers in virtue of their baptism, as that priesthood is ordered to the sanctification of the world through the public life of the individual, together with their private prayer and sacrifice, and not to conducting public worship in the name of the Church. Rather, it is to be looked at as the exercise of a function that is proper to the ordained priesthood, but which, of necessity, must be carried out by others. This highlights the *extraordinary* nature of this service, which, rather than being part of the structure of the Church, is instead tied to particular needs arising from the limited number of clergy.

Pope St John Paul II points this out in his instruction [*Domenicae Cena*](#): “To touch the sacred species and to distribute them with their own hands is a privilege of the ordained, one which indicates an active participation in the ministry of the Eucharist. It is obvious that the Church can grant this faculty to those who are neither priests nor deacons, as is the case with acolytes in the exercise of their ministry, especially if they are destined for future ordination, or with other lay

¹ It is thus useful for the diocesan bishop to issue particular norms concerning extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion which, in complete harmony with the universal law of the Church, should regulate the exercise of this function in his diocese. Such norms should provide, amongst other things, for matters such as the instruction in Eucharistic doctrine of those chosen to be extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion, the meaning of the service they provide, the rubrics to be observed, the reverence to be shown for such an august Sacrament and instruction concerning the discipline on admission to Holy Communion. (Instruction on Certain Questions, 8)

² 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 “Eucharistic Minister” which had been commonly used, is likewise inappropriate, and should be avoided by those who coordinate Extraordinary Ministers. (Norms for the Archdiocese of Atlanta)

people who are chosen for this to meet a just need, but always after an adequate preparation.”
(Pope St John Paul II, *Domenicae Cenae*, 11)

Thus, the use of extraordinary ministers 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 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.

Why the Church Regulates the Liturgy

In any document that addresses the norms provided by the Church for the regulation of the liturgy, the question may naturally arise of why the Church places certain requirements and guidelines on liturgical actions. It has to be recognized that this regulation may sometimes provoke an impression of legalism or excessive control, especially in a culture that values individual expression and autonomy. To begin to understand this phenomenon, it is important to remember that the Church is not primarily an institution or an association of individuals, but is more fundamentally a communion with Christ, and established by Him, which exists through the sacred bonds of the sacraments, and which is expressed in certain concrete forms. Thus the activity of the Church, and especially her sacred liturgy, is an expression of that communion and of the inheritance that she has received from the Lord. While recent times have amply demonstrated the human dimension of the liturgy, and the many ways in that it can be adapted to different concrete circumstances, it remains, in essence, a sign of that communion, something shared by believers throughout the world. As such, it is not the property of any individual, priest, or local community, but belongs to the whole Church. To change those elements of the liturgy that express its universal character would be to isolate the local community from the broader communion of the Catholic Church, and, ultimately, to make its worship inward focused and arbitrary. The Church provides certain guidelines and regulations to express the universal character of Catholic worship, showing that the essential character of her public prayer is shared throughout the world, and is received as part of a dynamic tradition reaching back to Christ’s own action, while at the same time providing sufficient flexibility to be at home in local situations all over the world. The regulations discussed in this document should be understood with that spirit – not simply as rules to be followed, but as expressions of the unity of the Church throughout the world in her common worship of Christ.

When Extraordinary Ministers may be called upon

Having spoken of the extraordinary nature of extraordinary minister of Holy Communion, it is important to speak about what constitutes a sufficient need to call for their use. The General Instruction of the Roman Missal provides a basic description of the occasion when extraordinary ministers should be called upon:

“The priest may be assisted in the distribution of Communion by other Priests who happen to be present. If such Priests are not present and there is a truly large number of communicants, the Priest may call upon extraordinary ministers to assist him, that is, duly instituted acolytes or even other faithful who have been duly deputed for this purpose. In case of necessity, the Priest may depute suitable faithful for this single occasion. These ministers should not approach the altar before the Priest has received Communion, and they are always to receive from the hands of the

Priest Celebrant the vessel containing the species of the Most Holy Eucharist for the distribution to the faithful.” ([GIRM](#) 162)

While the Church has avoided giving a precise definition of the term “truly large number” of communicants, in order to allow flexibility for diverse local situations, the [Instruction on Certain Questions Regarding the Collaboration of the Non Ordained Faithful in the Sacred Ministry of the Priest](#) does give a more precise expression of this requirement:

“Extraordinary ministers may distribute Holy Communion at Eucharistic celebrations only when there are no ordained ministers present or when those ordained ministers present at a liturgical celebration are truly unable to distribute Holy Communion. They may also exercise this function at eucharistic celebrations where there are particularly large numbers of the faithful and which would be excessively prolonged because of an insufficient number of ordained ministers to distribute Holy Communion. ... To avoid creating confusion, certain practices are to be avoided and eliminated where such have emerged in particular Churches: ... the habitual use of extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion at Mass thus arbitrarily extending the concept of "a great number of the faithful". (Instruction on Certain Questions, Art. 8, Sec. 2)

The Instruction, [Immense Caritatis](#) adds a fourth reason – to bring communion to the sick when no priest or deacon is available, or when they are impeded by other ministries.

Thus we see four basic occasions when the Church calls upon the service of extraordinary ministers: At mass, when the presider is physically unable to distribute Holy Communion; at communion services when no ordained minister is available; at masses where the great number of faithful prevents the priests and deacons from distributing Holy Communion to all of them; and to the sick when they are unable to be visited by a priest or deacon. We will examine the procedures for distributing Holy Communion on each of these occasions later in this document.

Qualifications to Serve as an Extraordinary Minister

It is important that those individuals selected to serve as extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion are chosen carefully. The instruction [Immense 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.” ([Immense Caritatis](#), 1, VI)

The Archdiocese of Atlanta has given some concrete expressions of these norms, namely that an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion, if married, be married within the Church, have received the sacrament of Confirmation, and be at least 16 years of age. In addition, it is necessary that the individual receive the certification of their pastor that they are properly qualified and trained.

As an extraordinary minister may serve at a parish or remote location (taking the Eucharist to the infirm) each minister must complete the Safe Environment training program in which clergy, employees and volunteers who work in the Archdiocese of Atlanta participate. This includes, but is not limited to bishops, priests, religious, seminarians, deacons, school personnel, parish

employees, Chancery employees. Also included are volunteers who work or have contact with children, youth, and/or vulnerable individuals.

To be Safe Environment compliant a person must have passed a background screening through the Archdiocese of Atlanta and attended a live three (3) hour VIRTUS Protecting God's Children (PGC) training session.

Additional expectations may be added by the individual parish.

Selection of Extraordinary Ministers

Parishes in the Archdiocese are strongly encouraged to actively select individuals who are particularly well qualified to serve as extraordinary ministers, and not to simply ask for volunteers. Pastors are encouraged to develop their own additional criteria for selecting extraordinary ministers, which might consist of participation in Eucharistic Adoration or in being active in stewardship programs. The goal is to choose individuals whose exemplary Catholic life and morals will reflect well upon the Church and show the dignity and importance of Holy Communion. The instruction [*Immensae Caritatis*](#) gives some additional guidance on the selection of individuals:

"The fit person referred to in nos. I and II will be designated according to the order of this listing (which may be changed at the prudent discretion of the local Ordinary): [instituted] reader, major seminarian, man religious, woman religious, catechist, one of the faithful—a man or a woman."
([*Immensae Caritatis*](#), 1, IV)

Thus, it seems advisable that a parish that is blessed with the presence of a seminarian or religious make use of them if extraordinary ministers are called for. It would also be very fitting for candidates for the diaconate to serve as extraordinary ministers.

Way of Life of an Extraordinary Minister

Obviously, 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 themselves would consist in anything that would prevent them 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 also 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 their function, they might recuse themselves for a time from the distribution of Holy Communion, or, if necessary, a pastor might find it necessary to ask them not to continue their service.

Training of Extraordinary Ministers

It is important that each parish that employs extraordinary ministers 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 archdiocese has given some guidelines that should be included in all training programs.

First of all, if the pastor chooses not to conduct the training himself or have it conducted by one of his priests, it is important that he choose an individual or team to organize the training of extraordinary ministers. These individuals should seek to take part in the Archdiocesan training program in order to assure some uniformity of training across the Archdiocese.

Certain materials have been selected by the Archdiocese, and should be part of the training process for extraordinary ministers:

A Video: [The Catholic Mass...Revealed](#) (Thy Kingdom Come: www.catholicmass.org) or Dr. Scott Hahn, ([Understanding the Eucharist Part 1](#)) or [Dr. Scott Hahn, Fourth Cup](#);

Archbishop Donoghue's Pastoral Letter on the Eucharist, "[Rejoice in the Lord Always!](#)" (1993) (Appendix 1);

[The pamphlet, The Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Sacrament of the Eucharist: Basic Questions and Answers \(USCCB2001\)](#)

While a pastor is free to accept individuals trained at another parish for service in his own, he may also require them to attend the training program at the local parish, in order to make sure that they are familiar with local customs and procedures. These individuals, however, do not need to be recertified by the Archdiocese.

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 the Lord.

Certification of Extraordinary Ministers

Because Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion serve the Church in a public capacity, it is necessary that an individual be certified before beginning service as an Extraordinary Minister. While instituted acolytes (usually seminarians and men preparing for the diaconate) become extraordinary ministers by virtue of their institution, other individuals require a specific commissioning.

Commissioning for an Extended Period

In most cases, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are certified for an extended period of up to three years. This is done by the Archbishop, upon request by the pastor of the parish. The pastor is responsible for selecting the individuals designated to serve and for verifying that they are in good standing with the Church (not in an invalid marriage or a situation of cohabitation, not an ex-priest³, etc.), and that their selection would not scandalize the faithful. (see *Qualifications to Serve as an Extraordinary Minister* (above)). A form is supplied to aid in this process (Appendix 2). After the individuals have been selected and trained, the pastor then submits a list to the Office of Divine Worship. When they receive their certification, they are able to begin functioning as Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion until their certification expires. It is advisable that, once the commission is granted, that they receive it through the *Order for the Commissioning of Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion*.⁴ (Book of Blessings, Chapter 63)

Commissioning for a Single Occasion

In some cases, a sufficient number of 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*.

Preparation for Serving as an Extraordinary Minister

There are two types of preparation for serving as an extraordinary minister – remote preparation and proximate preparation. Remote preparation includes the prayer and study that aid in appreciating the great gift of the Eucharist and in its distribution with proper care. This is described above in the section entitled *Way of Life of an Extraordinary Minister*. Immediately before serving, however, it is also important that an extraordinary minister take some steps to prepare. First of all, the minister should make sure that he/she is prepared to receive communion – that is in a state of grace, and having fasted before mass according to the norms of the Church. Secondly, it is important to arrive at the church early, not only to sign in and find the assigned station, but also to take time in prayer before mass to prepare for service. It may be helpful to visit the Blessed Sacrament chapel, if separate from the main body of the church, in order to pray to our Lord present in the Blessed Sacrament.

Dress

While each parish will determine its own guidelines for the dress of extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion, 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 (ie: shorts or short skirts), upper arms or chest (ie: tank or low cut tops), or other inappropriate parts of the anatomy should not be worn, nor should any clothing bearing prominent logos or slogans. Clothing should not be distracting; the focus of the communicant should be on the Blessed Sacrament, not on the person distributing communion or his/her dress.

³ See Redemptionis Sacramentum 168

⁴ Immensae Caritatis, 1, VI.

Actions During the Mass

During the mass, the extraordinary minister sits with the rest of the faithful, and should participate fully in the mass, listening to the readings, and joining the community in prayer.

Approaching the Altar

Each parish will have slightly different norms for how the extraordinary ministers are to approach the altar to receive communion and their vessels. The general norm, however, is that they not

approach the altar until after the priest has received communion. (GIRM 162)

Receiving Communion

The precise arrangement for extraordinary ministers to receive communion will vary from parish to parish. However, it should keep in mind the norms given by the Congregation for Divine Worship:

“To avoid creating confusion, certain practices are to be avoided and eliminated where such have emerged in particular Churches, in particular extraordinary ministers should not receive Holy Communion apart from the other faithful as though concelebrants... (Instruction on Certain Questions, Article 8, Sec. 2)”

Receiving a Vessel

After receiving Holy Communion, the extraordinary minister will need to receive a vessel and proceed to the location where they will distribute Holy Communion. They are always to receive the vessel containing the Sacred Body or Precious Blood from the priest celebrant. (GIRM 162) It is important that they know where their station is, and, if extraordinary ministers need to pass to the rear of the church, that the ushers do not permit the aisles to become crowded until the extraordinary ministers are at their stations.

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.⁴ The extraordinary minister takes the host and shows it to the communicant, saying “The Body of Christ.”⁵ 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.

⁴ Redemptionis Sacramentum 91

⁵ GIRM 161

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 Communionplate 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). Where 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. If it is not 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 St 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.” (Pope St John Paul II, [Dominicae Cenae](#), 11)

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 them 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 St Paul VI with the instruction [Sacramentali Communionem](#) in 1970, and with the publication of the revised GIRM in 2001. The responsibility for determining when it is appropriate to permit communion under both species rests with the diocesan bishop.⁶ In the Archdiocese of Atlanta, 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 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,

⁶ cf. Norms for the Distribution and Reception of Holy Communion Under Both Kinds in the Dioceses of the United States of America, 52

wipe the lip of it with the purificator, and rotate it slightly. If communion is offered under both species, the decision to receive from the chalice or not belongs to the individual communicant.

Communion for individuals with disabilities

The USCCB has issued *guidelines* ([Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities](#)) to be used when administering the Eucharist to those with disabilities, including Catholics with Celiac Sprue Disease⁷, require the use of feeding tubes or have mental conditions (Alzheimer's) that may prevent the Catholic from recognizing Holy Communion. In all cases, consultation with a priest is advised to ensure that the dignity of the Sacrament is maintained.

Intinction

Although it is not customary in the Archdiocese of Atlanta, the Church also permits communion under both species by intinction. This decision is to be made by the priest celebrant – individual members of the faithful cannot choose to receive communion by intinction when it is not offered. In any case, “The communicant must not be permitted to intinct the host themselves in the chalice, nor to receive the intincted host in the hand.” ([Redemptionis Sacramentum](#), 104)

Communion-Plate

Some parishes in the Archdiocese of Atlanta have the custom of using communion-plates, which are held under the host as the communicant receives, usually by an altar server. This practice is recommended in number 93 of the instruction [Redemptionis Sacramentum](#), which reads:

The Communion-plate for the Communion of the faithful should be retained, so as to avoid the danger of the sacred host or some fragment of it falling. ([Redemptionis Sacramentum](#), 93). When these plates are used, they are purified in the same way as the other sacred vessels.

Those Unable to Receive Communion

In most churches there will be some people who are unable to receive Holy Communion, or who choose not to. Someone might not be able to receive communion because they have not yet made their first communion, are not prepared through fasting, are not in communion with the Catholic Church, or are in a state of serious sin. There can also be many valid personal reasons why a person who is otherwise disposed might choose to abstain from Holy Communion. It is important not to judge the motivation for an individual not receiving Holy Communion.

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, although in some cultures, particularly Latin ones, people desiring to receive Holy Communion on the tongue may also come forward with crossed arms. If the extraordinary minister determines that a person is seeking a blessing, it is appropriate that he respond with a prayer that is clearly distinct from the

⁷ For sources of Low Gluten and Gluten-free hosts see <http://www.archatl.com/offices/chancellor/norms/wine.html>

blessing given by a priest. It is recommended that he say, “May God bless you,” possibly while raising his hand. It is important that he not use the host in giving a blessing, and 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 4](#).

Denying Holy Communion

There are practically no situations when Holy Communion should be denied by an extraordinary minister (EM). Church norms state that: “Any baptized Catholic who is not prevented by law must be admitted to Holy Communion” ([Redemptionis Sacramentum](#) 91). The EM 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 Archbishop, 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 should return to the altar and hand the vessel to the priest or deacon. If the extraordinary minister is distributing the precious blood, it is permitted in the Archdiocese of Atlanta to consume whatever remains of the precious blood before returning to the altar. If the vessel is empty, the priest celebrant may determine that the vessel be placed on the credence table, rather than the altar, for purification immediately or following mass. 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.

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 accident 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 could be used to mark the spot. Then, (perhaps with the 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

Following the publication of the most recent edition of the GIRM, which stated that the sacred vessels are purified by a priest, deacon, or instituted acolyte⁸ the American bishops requested and received permission to allow extraordinary ministers to assist in the purification of vessels for a period of three years.⁹ That permission was granted, “as an experiment,” but expired on March 28, 2005. The American bishops requested a renewal of the indult, but Pope Benedict XVI determined that it was appropriate for the United States to have the same norms as the rest of the Church, and so the indult was not renewed. Therefore, Archbishop Gregory requested that, beginning with the first Sunday of Advent, 2006, extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion no longer assist in the ritual purification of the sacred vessels used in Holy Communion. The purification should be carried out by a priest, deacon, or instituted acolyte (usually a seminarian or deacon candidate) either after communion or immediately following mass.¹⁰ The purification can take place on the altar or at the credence table, but not in the sacristy. 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 of 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.¹¹

Cleansing of Linens

The individuals who clean altar linens, in particular purificators, need to act with respect for the Blessed Sacrament. It is customary to soak all of 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

While this document primarily deals with the service of extraordinary ministers at mass, it should also be noted that extraordinary ministers 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 encouraged that trainers of

⁸ GIRM 279

⁹ Prot. 1382/01/L

¹⁰ Letter of Oct 26, 2006. Available at: http://www.archatl.com/liturgy/docs/Purification_Vessels.pdf

¹¹ In accordance with what is laid down by the canons, “one who throws away the consecrated species or takes them away or keeps them for a sacrilegious purpose, incurs a *latae sententiae* excommunication reserved to the Apostolic See; a cleric, moreover, may be punished by another penalty, not excluding dismissal from the clerical state”. To be regarded as pertaining to this case is any action that is voluntarily and gravely disrespectful of the sacred species. Anyone, therefore, who acts contrary to these norms, for example casting the sacred species into the sacrarium or in an unworthy **(SENTENCE ENDS WITHOUT COMPLETION)**

extraordinary ministers hold a separate training session for those who will be bringing communion to the homebound with individuals who have already completed the regular training session, so that the specific issues involved in this service may be presented with greater depth. It is important that extraordinary ministers to the homebound become acquainted with the approved rites for communion in such circumstances, and that they have a copy of that ritual that they may use when distributing Holy Communion.

Receiving the Blessed Sacrament

The extraordinary minister will receive the Blessed Sacrament from the priest or deacon, sometimes within the context of mass. They should have a metal pyx in which to place the host(s), and a burse (a small pouch) on a cord in which to place the pyx. 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.

Traveling to the Sick or Homebound

Once the extraordinary minister has received the Blessed Sacrament, it is important that he go

directly to the place where he is to distribute Holy Communion.¹² It is never appropriate to take the Blessed Sacrament home for later distribution.¹³ These are considered grave matters by the Church.¹⁴ 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. If they are met at the door with a candle for the Blessed Sacrament, they should be accompanied to the place where they will distribute communion. If a table has been prepared with a white cloth and a crucifix, they should place the pyx on the table and genuflect in adoration. They may want to bring a small white cloth and crucifix in the event that such preparations have not been made. They should follow the rite given for the distribution of Holy Communion in all cases. After they have finished, they should be sure to purify the pyx in the usual way.

Communion Services

While conditions calling for Sunday celebrations in the absence of a priest are not present in the Archdiocese of Atlanta, there are some occasions when an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion might be called upon to perform a communion service. These are to be conducted in

¹² Redemptionis Sacramentum 133

¹³ Redemptionis Sacramentum 132

¹⁴ Redemptionis Sacramentum 173

accord with the *Rite of Distributing Holy Communion outside Mass with the Celebration of the Word*, revised edition,

1983.¹⁵ It may be used when a priest is unable to celebrate a regularly scheduled mass, or on days when no priest is available to celebrate mass in a parish. A deacon or instituted acolyte would normally conduct the service, but in their absence, an extraordinary minister might be called upon to perform this function. They should follow the norms given in the Rite, and what is said elsewhere in this document.

Reference Documents

General Instruction of the Roman Missal (Liturgy Documentary Series 2, USCCB 2003.) USCCB Norms for the Distribution and Reception of Holy Communion under Both Kinds in the

Dioceses of the United States (Liturgy Documentary Series 13, USCCB 2002.)

Instruction on the Eucharist *Redemptionis Sacramentum* (Liturgy Documentary Series 15, USCCB 2004.)

Catechism of the Catholic Church, Numbers 1322-1419

Instruction on Certain Questions Regarding the Collaboration of the Non Ordained Faithful in the *Sacred Ministry of the Priest* (Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1997.)

Pope St. John Paul II, *Letter Dominicæ Cenæ*, (February 24, 1980)

Pope St. John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* (17 April 2003)

¹⁵ Norms for the Archdiocese of Atlanta

Appendix 1 – Rejoice in the Lord, Always!

A Pastoral Letter on the Eucharist, Gaudete Sunday, December 12, 1993

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

On the third Sunday of Advent the Church proclaims our joyful expectation of the fulfillment of God's promise in the prophetic antiphon: "Rejoice in the Lord always: again I say, rejoice! The Lord is near."

Truly, at this time of year, we celebrate through the liturgy, the nearness of the Lord in a twofold way. The approaching feast of Christmas reminds us of all the wonder and glory associated with the coming of the Son of God, through the gentle love of the Virgin Mary. And peering into the wider lens of the Advent season, we also look into 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)

In the midst of this season of sacred memory and hopeful awaiting, I write to you in praise of that singular miracle which 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 "re-presented" 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 are able to unite themselves to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, so that the Church may be drawn together in all places and at all times, through the abiding source of her unity, the Eucharist.

In the Eucharist, the sacrifice of Christ becomes also 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 of the Archdiocese of Atlanta against this tendency exhibited both within and without the Church that I now write. 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.

As a faithful reflection of this vision, and in order to offer a strong and visible witness to the world, particularly to the people of North Georgia, I will establish at the Cathedral Parish of this Archdiocese Perpetual Adoration of Jesus Christ in His most holy Eucharistic Presence, and I encourage all parishes to promote Eucharistic devotions. This initiative is taken in union with and inspired by the example of our Holy Father, Pope John Paul II, who has written:

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.)

In the tradition of our Holy Church, we call upon the Mother of God to aid us in this undertaking, inspiring us by her maternal example. For 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, through participation in Perpetual Adoration of the Eucharist, 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.

Given, with my blessing, on Gaudete Sunday, December 12, 1993.

+ John F. Donoghue
Archbishop of Atlanta

Appendix 2 – 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 _____s

Home Phone _____

Work Phone _____

E-mail _____

Are you 18 or more years old?

if under 18, how old?

Which sacraments have you received? (circle)

Baptism	yes	no
First Penance & Reconciliation	yes	no
First Communion	yes	no
Confirmation	yes	no

Marital Status:

Single__	Engaged	Married_____
Separated_____	Widowed_____	Divorced_____

If married or engaged, is this or will it be your first marriage? _____

If married or engaged, is this or will it be your spouse/fiancée's first marriage? _____

If married or engaged, were you or will you be married by a Catholic bishop, priest, or deacon in a Catholic Church?

Appendix 3 – Procedure to Request Certification

Certificates for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are now being generated electronically. Hard copy lists of names will no longer be accepted. Once training has been completed please enter the names of the candidate for certification on an Excel spreadsheet as outlined below. After you have saved the file, please e-mail it as an attachment to rponce1@archatl.com. This will ensure prompt and proper handling of your completed certificates.

Please enter the names of the Extraordinary Ministers on the Excel spreadsheet in the format indicated by the column headings. If the minister is under 18, type TRUE in the “Under 18” column. If the minister is over 18, the cell may be left blank. The certificate date should also be left blank.

An example of the spreadsheet is below:

Complete Name	Under 18	Certificate Date
Steve Cook		

If Steve is under 18 the sheet would look as follows:

Complete Name	Under 18	Certificate Date
Steve Cook	True	

Please contact the chancellor’s office (emhc@archatl.com; 404.920.7335) with any questions.

Appendix 4 – Blessings at the Time of Holy Communion

In the Archdiocese of Atlanta, 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 Mystero, 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 Archdiocese 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.

Resource List

This is a partial and unverified list of resources that some individuals have found useful in their programs for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion.

Josef Cardinal Ratzinger	<u>Gods Near Us</u> Ignatius Press
Francis Cardinal Arinze	<u>The Holy Eucharist</u>
O.S.V Thy Kingdom Come, Inc.	<u>The CatholicMass.Revealed</u> www.catholicmass.org
Raniero Cantalamessa	<u>This Is My Body</u> Pauline Media
Raniero Cantalamessa	<u>Ave Verum.</u> Pauline Media
Conroy/Groeschel	<u>Praying in the Presence of Our Lord</u> Our Sunday Visitor
Sheen/Dubruie	<u>Praying in the Presence of Our Lord</u> Our Sunday Visitor
Abbott Vonier	A Key to the Doctrine of Eucharist Ignatius Preface – P. Kreeft Forward: Avery Cardinal Dulles
U.S.C.C.B	<u>General Instruction of the Roman Missal</u> Liturgy Document
Fr. M. Dubruiel	How to Get Most out of Eucharist O.S.V.
D Rosage <u>Bread of Life</u>	Word Among Us Press
William Cardinal Keeler	<u>Real People/Real Presence</u> Word Among Us Press

	Forward: B. Groeschel
Vaccari Mysel	<u>Beauty of the Eucharist</u> Pauline Press
Fr. A. McBride	<u>The Holy Eucharist (Prayer Book)</u> O.S.V.
Curley	Life for the World, A Way of Pauline Press Eucharistic Adoration for Today
Fr. Randolph	Know Him in the Breaking of The Bread Ignatius Press
Fr. J. Harden	<u>With Us Today</u> Ave Maria U.
Aiden Nichols	<u>The Holy Eucharist</u> Veritas
Curley	The Eucharistic Spirituality of Blessed Alberione
Fr. John Hampsch	The Healing Power of the Eucharist Charis Servant Publication

Guidelines for the Reception of Communion

On November 14, 1996, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops approved the following guidelines on the reception of communion. These guidelines replace the guidelines approved by the Administrative Committee of the NCCB in November 1986. The guidelines, which are to be included in missalettes and other participation aids published in the United States, seek to remind all those who may attend Catholic liturgies of the present discipline of the Church with regard to the sharing of eucharistic communion.

For Catholics

As Catholics, we fully participate in the celebration of the Eucharist when we receive Holy Communion. We are encouraged to receive Communion devoutly and frequently. In order to be properly disposed to receive Communion, participants should not be conscious of grave sin and normally should have fasted for one hour. A person who is conscious of grave sin is not to receive the Body and Blood of the Lord without prior sacramental confession except for a grave reason where there is no opportunity for confession. In this case, the person is to be mindful of the obligation to make an act of perfect contrition, including the intention of confessing as soon as possible (canon 916). A frequent reception of the Sacrament of Penance is encouraged for all.

For our fellow Christians

We welcome our fellow Christians to this celebration of the Eucharist as our brothers and sisters. We pray that our common baptism and the action of the Holy Spirit in this Eucharist will draw us closer to one another and begin to dispel the sad divisions which separate us. We pray that these will lessen and finally disappear, in keeping with Christ's prayer for us "that they may all be one" (Jn 17:21).

Because Catholics believe that the celebration of the Eucharist is a sign of the reality of the oneness of faith, life, and worship, members of those churches with whom we are not yet fully united are ordinarily not admitted to Holy Communion. Eucharistic sharing in exceptional circumstances by other Christians requires permission according to the directives of the diocesan bishop and the provisions of canon law (canon 844 § 4). Members of the Orthodox Churches, the Assyrian Church of the East, and the Polish National Catholic Church are urged to respect the discipline of their own Churches. According to Roman Catholic discipline, the Code of Canon Law does not object to the reception of communion by Christians of these Churches (canon 844 § 3).

For those not receiving Holy Communion

All who are not receiving Holy Communion are encouraged to express in their hearts a prayerful desire for unity with the Lord Jesus and with one another.

For non-Christians

We also welcome to this celebration those who do not share our faith in Jesus Christ. While we cannot admit them to Holy Communion, we ask them to offer their prayers for the peace and the unity of the human family.

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 *sacrarium*.

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 Minister of Holy Communion 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.

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.

Tabernacle. Locked and secured place of reservation of the *Blessed Sacrament*.