

Guidelines for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

Church of the Epiphany
Revised June, 2026

Introduction

The Communion rite is the heart and center of the entire Eucharistic liturgy. The gathering of the community, the proclamation of God's Word, the Eucharistic Prayer, all are directed toward the moment of Communion in which we, fed with His own Body and Blood, are made one in the Lord.

Extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion are called to a most beautiful ministry. Therefore, they should exemplify all that is encompassed in Christian virtues and should lend to this service the dignity and respect it requires.

The following are a few basic guidelines to make this task easier and uniform for all extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion at Epiphany. These basic rules are intended to better prepare you to serve. When observed, your service will be both more meaningful to you and to the community. Please read them carefully and put them into practice.

Dress

Men:	Jacket and tie
Women:	Dress or skirt (no low cut, sleeveless or short dresses, no pant suits)
Both:	Always wear your medallion from the beginning of the Mass to the end.

Seating

When scheduled to serve at a Mass, please sit either in the main transept on the gospel/Blessed Mother's side, or in the gospel transept, in the first few pews.

For all Masses:

- Arrive at least 10 minutes before Mass begins.
- Proceed to the sacristy and put a check mark by your name on the schedule. If you don't, a substitute might be placed in your stead inadvertently. If you are substituting for someone, cross out that person's name and add your name.
- If there is an additional priest or deacon, #1 drops out, but should be available to substitute should there be an absence.
- There are extra medallions in the sacristy if you forget yours. They are kept inside the cabinet just above the clipboard that holds the schedules. Please return them after Mass.

- Genuflect once (if you can, if not bow) when you approach your pew.
- At the sign of peace, go up to the sanctuary and stand where indicated on the church map to receive Communion.
- Bow reverently before you receive Communion. This should be done as the person before you receives Communion.
- Once everyone has received his/her ciborium, proceed to your assigned station.
- When you distribute Communion, look the communicant in the eye thinking about what you are saying: "The Body of Christ".
- If you finish distributing Communion before others, please do help out elsewhere where needed, otherwise return to the sanctuary. The celebrant or deacon will take your ciborium and return it to the tabernacle. Do not place the ciborium on the altar or take it to the tabernacle area.
- Bow or genuflect as the tabernacle door closes, then return to your seat.

Communion to the sick

Only certain authorized extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion who are VIRTUS compliant and have received special spiritual, theological, as well as practical training, may take Communion to the sick. All cases are initiated by having the parishioner wishing to receive Communion at home call the rectory and make the request.

Absenteeism

If you are unable to fulfill your commitment for your assigned Mass, please call a substitute in advance. If you have an emergency the day you are assigned to serve and cannot find a replacement, please call the coordinator as soon as you can so that he or she can try to get a replacement for you from the congregation.

If there is an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion missing at Mass, you may substitute but only if you are properly dressed.

Thank you for your service

Thank you for making the liturgies at Epiphany something very special. Your service is vitally important to the people of our parish and we rely upon your meeting the requirements of the schedule for the good of the community.