

# **Sacred Heart Cathedral: Procedures for the Extraordinary Minister of Communion (EMC), and the Reader**

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this document is to provide each EMC and reader with an up-to-date reference of procedures.

## **Introduction**

1. Each individual is responsible for serving as scheduled, and for requesting a substitute through the cloud-based ministry scheduling program when they will not be able to serve as scheduled.
2. All EMCs and readers scheduled for a given mass are to check-in the sacristy no later than 15 minutes prior to the beginning of the mass. Each EMC and reader are to place a check mark next to their name (or the person they are substituting for) on the schedule posted on a clipboard in the sacristy. EMCs and readers remain in the sacristy to pray prior to the mass. Persons not checked in 15 minutes before mass will be considered unavailable to serve.
3. An individual may be commissioned to participate in more than one ministry (EMC, reader, usher) at the mass, however, they should only participate in one of these ministries per mass.
4. Be flexible. Remember that when there is a visiting priest, he will do things differently.
5. Remember that in your service, you are meeting Christ the Lord, in person. Attire should be formal and modest. For men, a coat and tie are preferred; short pants or tee shirts are inappropriate. For ladies, formal restraint is the key; mini skirts, shorts, low cut or strapless tops are inappropriate.

## **Extraordinary Minister of Communion (EMC) Procedures**

6. The correct term used for the lay person serving in this capacity is Extraordinary Minister of Communion (EMC).
7. An EMC is commissioned for a period of three years. To renew your commission, attend another EMC training session. These sessions are given at least twice a year and are announced in the weekly bulletin several weeks prior. You will receive a dated commission certificate from the bishop which you may use to determine when you need to renew your commission.

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8. Approach the sanctuary during the Lamb of God. Upon entering the sanctuary space, proceed to either side of the altar and stand behind the kneeling servers. Since Christ is present on the altar at this time, do not reverence (bow to) the altar. Do not exchange the sign of peace after the congregation starts singing the Lamb of God, and do not exchange the sign of peace with other EMCs when you are on the altar.
9. The number of chalices and bowl patens used is as follows: 7:30 am Sunday: 2 bowl patens and 4 chalices. All other weekend masses: 4 bowl patens and 4 chalices. To determine the number of EMCs needed at 7:30 am Sunday, start with the number 6, and subtract the number of priests and deacons present. To determine the number of EMCs needed at all other masses, start with the number 8, and subtract the number of priests and deacons present.
10. Immediately after the priest has consumed the Precious Blood, step up and stand behind the altar.
11. Receive the Body of Christ from a priest or deacon.
12. Receive your vessel (chalice or bowl paten) from a priest or deacon. If you receive a chalice, immediately communicate with another EMC who did not receive the Precious Blood.
13. Proceed to your designated station, communicating the altar servers and the handicapped on your way.
14. If you run out of Precious Blood, return your chalice to the credence table and cover it with your purificator, then return to your seat. If you run out of the Precious Body, go to the altar, exchange your empty bowl patten for the ciborium. On your way back to your station, check with other EMCs to see if they are running low and need replenishment.
15. Offer the prayer, "may God bless you" for those not able to receive communion who come forward for a blessing. Do not touch the person, and do not make the sign of the cross or gesture to the person.
16. After communion, those distributing the Precious Body step up into the **sanctuary** and hand their bowl paten to a priest or deacon, then return to their seat. Those distributing the Precious Blood proceed to the credence table and consume what remains, then place the Chalice on the credence table. A deacon, priest or a server will cover the vessels to be purified after Mass. Thus there is no need for anyone to go to the sacristy following Communion.
17. As you return to your seat, reverence (bow to) the altar only if the ciborium has been returned to the tabernacle.

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18. Altar servers, not EMCs, assist in clearing the altar. The ciborium is returned to the tabernacle by a priest or deacon.
19. Special cases: (a) Dropped Body: Consume it yourself, hand it back to the communicant for them to consume, or place it in the palm of your hand, and after communion, set it on a purificator in the sacristy to be dissolved in a bowl of water and disposed of down the sacrarium by a priest. (b) Spilled Precious Blood: For small spill, place your purificator over the spill area, tell the person next in line to remain in front of the spill area, and go to the sacristy to get a clean purificator. Stand in front of the spill and continue distribution. In case of a large or total spill which may or may not involve a dropped chalice, cover the area as best possible with your purificator, instruct specific persons to guard spill area, go to sacristy and get several clean purificators to blot up spilled Precious Blood. Remain at spill area until communion is over. After mass work with the clergy to clean up remainder of spill. (c) Use common sense to never embarrass the communicant. If they do not verbally respond with the usual, "Amen," give them the Body anyway. If they do not consume the Body immediately, do not chase them (note where they sit and inform a priest or deacon immediately after mass). You are acting in service to the Lord Jesus, not as a "communion cop."

### **Reader Procedures**

20. Prepare. Praying with the scriptures is your first and most important preparation. Begin preparing your reading early in the week. Your goal is to be living your reading before you deliver it at mass. Consult your reader workbook. Read all of the workbook's supporting material, and practice out loud. Practice builds confidence and avoids nervousness.
21. The goal of the reader is to proclaim the word with authenticity, understanding, and appropriate enthusiasm.
22. A natural tendency is to read too fast. Be aware of this when you practice your reading.
23. Immediately upon arriving at the church and before reporting to the sacristy, ensure that the lectionary is on the ambo and open to the correct page.
24. If there is no deacon, the 1<sup>st</sup> reader carries in the gold-bound book of gospels during the opening procession. The book is heavy (approximately 5 pounds) so carry it at a level that is comfortable for you; shoulder height is as high as it needs to be held. Without waiting for the priest, enter the sanctuary and place the book of gospels flat on the altar stone. Return to your seat in the congregation.

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25. When it is time to read, approach the sanctuary and bow to the altar (do not genuflect) before going to the ambo. On exiting after the first reading, the reader meets the cantor in front of the altar where they bow together. The second reader approaches the altar so that they meet the cantor in front of the altar where they bow together.
26. Make eye contact with the assembly as often as you can. It is suggested that you make eye contact at the beginning just after the reading's salutation, and at the end while saying, "The word of the Lord."
27. Pause for several seconds at the end of the reading before saying, "The word of the Lord." Do not bow to either the ambo or the lectionary after your reading. Remember to bow to the altar as you exit the sanctuary.
28. Speak deliberately into the microphone, and pay particular attention to proper enunciation and pronunciation (your workbook should always be consulted). Remember that there are members of the assembly that do not have perfect hearing. Your delivery should be clear and inviting so that the assembly will not need (or want) to follow along in their book.
29. When the second reader finishes reading, close the lectionary and place it on the ambo shelf to make room for the book of gospels.
30. If there is no deacon, the second reader reads the prayers of the faithful from the ambo. Before the mass, the second reader should verify whether or not a deacon is going to be present at the mass, and if not, review the prayers of the faithful. When finished, stay at the ambo and turn to face the priest so he knows you are finished so he can finish the prayer. Note that when the second reader is to read the prayers of the faithful, they return to their seat in the congregation after they finish the second reading, then return to the ambo when it is time to read the prayers of the faithful.
31. Never process out following the Mass.