



ROMAN CATHOLIC
DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER

POLICIES
FOR THE
ADMINISTRATION
OF THE
SACRAMENTS

2. THE MOST HOLY EUCHARIST AND THE CELEBRATION OF HOLY MASS

“The most august Sacrament is the Most Holy Eucharist in which Christ the Lord himself is contained, offered and received, and by which the Church continually lives and grows. The Eucharistic sacrifice, the memorial of the death and resurrection of the Lord, in which the sacrifice of the cross is perpetuated through the ages, is the summit and source of all worship and Christian life, which signifies and effects the unity of the people of God and brings about the building up of the body of Christ. Indeed, the other sacraments and all the ecclesiastical works of the apostolate are closely connected with the Most Holy Eucharist and ordered to it.” (*CIC*, c. 897).

2.1 GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- “The Christian faithful are to hold the Most Holy Eucharist in highest honor, taking an active part in the celebration of the most august sacrifice, receiving this Sacrament most devoutly and frequently, and worshipping it with the highest adoration. In explaining the doctrine about this Sacrament, pastors of souls are to teach the faithful diligently about this obligation.” (*CIC*, c. 898).
- “The Eucharistic celebration is the action of Christ himself and the Church. In it, Christ the Lord, through the ministry of the priest, offers himself, substantially present under the species of bread and wine, to God the Father and gives himself as spiritual food to the faithful united with his offering.” (*CIC*, c. 899, §1).
- “In the Eucharistic gathering the people of God are called together with the Bishop or, under his authority, a presbyter presiding and acting in the person of Christ. All the faithful who are present, whether clerics or laity, unite together by participating in their own way according to the diversity of orders and liturgical functions.” (*CIC*, c. 899, §2).
- “The Eucharistic celebration is to be organized in such a way that all those participating receive from it the many fruits for which Christ the Lord instituted the Eucharistic sacrifice.” (*CIC*, c. 899, §3).
- Hierarchical roles must be acknowledged so no confusion about proper function ensues. (Cf. *Sacramentum Caritatis*, no. 53).
- The conciliar Constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium* encourages the faithful to take part in the Eucharistic liturgy not “as strangers or silent spectators,” but as participants “in the sacred action, conscious of what they are doing, actively and devoutly.” (no. 156). Active participation by the laity is to be encouraged.

- At the same time, it should be noted that: “Active participation in the Eucharistic liturgy can hardly be expected if one approaches it superficially, without an examination of his or her life. This inner disposition can be fostered, for example, by recollection and silence for at least a few moments before the beginning of the liturgy, by fasting, and when necessary, by Sacramental confession. A heart reconciled to God makes genuine participation possible.” (*Sacramentum Caritatis*, 55).
- The Church teaches that the faithful have a serious obligation to participate in the celebration of the Mass on all Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation. (Cf. *CIC*, cc. 1246-1248; *CCC*, nos. 1389, 2180-2182).
- “The Eucharistic celebration is to be carried out in a sacred place, unless in a particular case necessity requires otherwise; in which case the celebration must be in a fitting place.” (*CIC*, c. 932, §1).
 - o To celebrate Mass in a private chapel, outdoors or in any public place, the permission of the Bishop is required. (Cf. *CIC*, c. 1228).
 - o With the approval of the proper pastor, in consultation with the Vicar General or Chancellor, Mass may be celebrated in a private home for a family or small group.
- Bishops, priests, deacons, religious, catechists, teachers and parents all share a sacred responsibility of leading the faithful and themselves to a deeper awareness of the importance of the Eucharist in the life of the People of God. This responsibility includes instruction in the prayers and rubrics of the Mass; training of those who serve as acolytes, lectors, gift-bearers, ushers, musicians, etc; encouragement of Eucharistic devotion, e.g. exposition of the Most Holy Sacrament, Eucharistic Benediction, Forty Hours Devotion, visits to the Blessed Sacrament, devotion to the Sacred Heart; and catechesis on the importance of God’s word in the liturgy. (Cf. *CIC*, c. 942-44; *Sacramentum Caritatis*, 67-68).

2.2 FIRST EUCHARIST

2.2.1 Candidates

- Ordinarily, candidates for First Penance and First Eucharist have participated in regular religious education or attend Catholic School for the year preceding enrollment for preparation for First Eucharist. (In other words, these children were part of a formal first grade faith formation experience.)
- Candidates for First Eucharist will have made sacramental confession before receiving this Sacrament in accordance with canon 914 of the *Code of Canon Law* which states: “It is primarily the duty of parents, and those who take the place of parents, as well as the duty of the pastors, to take care that children who have reached the use of reason are prepared properly and, after they have made sacramental confession, are refreshed with this divine food as soon as possible.” (*CIC*, c. 914; *CCC*, no. 1457).
- Candidates are to have the use of reason, which is canonically presumed at age seven. (Cf. *CIC*, c. 97, §2; c. 913).

2.2.2 Parents

- Parents are to be carefully instructed on the meaning and theology of the Most Holy Eucharist.

- Parents, having chosen to begin the process of Christian initiation in the lives of their children through Baptism, are the primary teachers in the preparation of the celebration of First Communion.

2.2.3 Preparation for the Sacrament

- The catechesis and celebration of First Eucharist is to be separated from that of First Penance, and these Sacraments shall ordinarily take place when a child is in grade two.
- The administration of the Eucharist to children requires that they have sufficient knowledge and careful preparation so that they understand the mystery of Christ according to their capacity and are able to receive the Body of Christ with faith and devotion. (Cf. *CIC*, c. 913, §1).
- In danger of death, the minimal requirements for the reception of First Eucharist are present when a child expresses the desire for the Eucharist and is able to distinguish it from ordinary bread. (Cf. *CIC*, c. 913, §2).
- An interview to help determine readiness to prepare for First Eucharist is desirable. This interview establishes a desire for the Eucharist and an understanding of the reality of the Real Presence: Jesus Christ is present body, blood, soul and divinity in the Most Holy Eucharist.
- The immediate preparation for First Eucharist is distinct, in programming and content, from the catechesis for First Penance; and separate from both Catholic schools and religious education programs.
 - o The careful preparation required is more than the intellectual preparation; it includes formative experiences in faith such as are promoted by attendance at weekly Mass even before the children receive the Most Holy Eucharist.
 - o Every parish has the responsibility of assisting the parents in this role by providing parish programs that include both the theological understanding of the Eucharist and the practical preparation of children to participate in the celebration of it.
 - o Texts for First Eucharist must be on the USCCB *Conformity Listing of Catechetical Texts and Series* to be used to assist in this preparation process.
- Immediate preparation (of four to six weeks) for full participation in the Eucharist should include:
 - o Familiarity with, and opportunities to participate in, the whole Eucharistic rite as the central act of worship;
 - o Instruction in the options permitted by the Church for the reverent reception of the consecrated hosts and precious blood;
 - o A deepening awareness of the activity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit in our lives;
 - o The gifts of Jesus in his life, death and resurrection; and
 - o An understanding of the Church's faith in Christ's continued presence in the Eucharist, as well as in the Christian assembly and his Word.
- Any fee charged for preparation for First Eucharist should not exceed the cost of consumable materials and/or the cost of retreats. No person can be denied the opportunity to prepare for the Sacrament because of an inability to pay.

2.2.4 Celebration of the Sacrament

- It is recommended that reception of First Eucharist take place within a family context within one of the Lord's Day celebrations of the Mass.

- The First Communion of children must always be preceded by sacramental Confession and absolution. “Moreover First Communion should always be administered by a Priest and never outside the celebration of Mass.” (*Redemptionis Sacramentum*, 86).
- Apart from exceptional cases, it is not particularly appropriate for First Communion to be administered on Holy Thursday of the Lord’s Supper. Another day should be chosen instead, such as a Sunday between the Second and the Sixth Sunday of Easter, or the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ, or the Sundays of Ordinary Time, since Sunday is rightly regarded as the day of the Eucharist.
- “Children who have not attained the age of reason, or those whom the parish priest has determined to be insufficiently prepared should not come forward to receive the Holy Eucharist.” (*Redemptionis Sacramentum*, 87).
- The parish should provide continued formation in the Eucharistic mystery, and opportunities for children and families to celebrate the Eucharist often together.

2.3 RECEPTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

- “A person who has already received the Most Holy Eucharist can receive it a second time on the same day only within the Eucharistic celebration in which the person participates, without prejudice to the prescript of canon 921, §2 concerning Viaticum.” (*CIC*, c. 917).
- “A person who is to receive the Most Holy Eucharist is to abstain for at least one hour before Holy Communion from any food and drink, except for only water and medicine.” (*CIC*, c. 919, §1).
 - o “The elderly, the infirm and those who care for them can receive the Most Holy Eucharist even if they have eaten something within the preceding hour.” (*CIC*, c. 919, §3).
- Catholics conscious of mortal sin must celebrate the Sacrament of Penance before receiving Holy Communion. (Cf. *CIC*, c. 916; *CCC*, no. 1385).
- Particular attention is to be given to **canon 844** which establishes the norms for the *communicatio in sacris*, participation in liturgical worship or in the administration of the Sacraments by persons belonging to different Christian denominations that are not in full communion with the Catholic Church. A general principal is established (§1) that considers three situations of fact (§§ 2-4) and regulates the lawful exercise of the normative activity in a particular area (§5). The canon reads as follows:
 - o “§1. Catholic ministers administer the Sacraments licitly to Catholic members of the Christian faithful alone, who likewise receive them licitly from Catholic ministers alone, without prejudice to the prescripts of §2, §3, and §4 of canon 844, and canon 861, §2.”
 - o “§2. Whenever necessity requires it or true spiritual advantage suggests it, and provided that danger of error or of indifferentism is avoided, the Christian faithful for whom it is physically or morally impossible to approach a Catholic minister are permitted to receive the Sacraments of Penance, Eucharist, and anointing of the sick from non-Catholic ministers in whose Churches these Sacraments are valid.” (*CIC*, c. 844).
 - o “§3. Catholic ministers administer the Sacraments of Penance, Eucharist, and Anointing of the Sick licitly to members of Eastern Churches which do not have full communion with the Catholic Church if they seek such on their own accord and are properly disposed. This is also valid for members of other Churches which in the judgment of the

Apostolic See are in the same condition in regard to the Sacraments as these Eastern Churches.” (*CIC*, c. 844).

- o “§4. If the danger of death is present or if, in the judgment of the diocesan bishop or conference of bishops, some other grave necessity urges it, Catholic ministers administer these same Sacraments licitly also to other Christians not having full communion with the Catholic Church, who cannot approach a minister of their own community and who seek such on their own accord, provided that they manifest Catholic faith in respect to these Sacraments and are properly disposed.” (*CIC*, c. 844).
- o “§5. For the cases mentioned in §2, §3, and §4, the diocesan bishop or conference of bishops is not to issue general norms except after consultation at least with the local competent authority of the interested non-Catholic Church or community.” (*CIC*, c. 844).
- Communion under both species may be permitted when there is no danger of the sacred species being profaned. However, “the chalice should not be ministered to lay members of Christ’s faithful where there is such a large number of communicants that it is difficult to gauge the amount of wine for the Eucharist.... The same is true wherever access to the chalice would be difficult to arrange..., or wherever there is not an adequate number of sacred ministers or extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion with proper formation, or where a notable part of the people continues to prefer not to approach the chalice for various reasons, so that the sign of unity would in some sense be negated.” (*Redemptionis Sacramentum*, 102).
 - o Christ’s faithful may wish to receive the Eucharist kneeling or standing. (Cf. *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, 91).
 - o The option of receiving the Eucharist on the tongue or in the hand is the choice of the communicant, except when pastoral necessity requires that Holy Communion be given on the tongue. Also, one must be conscious of preserving the Blessed Sacrament from profanation. (Cf. *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, 92).
 - o Consuming the Precious Blood from the chalice is also an option and must never be forced upon the people.
 - o If Holy Communion is to be administered by intinction, “...The Priest takes a host, dips it partly into the chalice, and showing it, says, *Corpus et Sanguis Christi (the Body and Blood of Christ)*. The communicant responds *Amen* and receives the Sacrament in the mouth from the priest and then withdraws.” (*GIRM*, 287). Holy Communion by intinction requires the use of a communion plate (paten). (Cf. *GIRM*, 287).
 - o “The communicant, including the extraordinary minister of Holy Communion, is never allowed to self-communicate, even by means of intinction.” (*USCCB Norms for Distribution and Reception of Holy Communion Under Both Kinds in the USA*, no. 50).

2.4 THE EXTRAORDINARY MINISTER OF HOLY COMMUNION

An extraordinary minister of Holy Communion may be used only when pastoral necessity and insufficiency of ordained ministers require that help be obtained for distribution of Holy Communion. (Cf. *CIC*, c. 910, §2; c. 230, §3; ADDENDUM 1).

- “‘The only minister who can confect the Sacrament of the Eucharist *in persona Christi* is a validly ordained Priest.’ Hence, the name ‘minister of the Eucharist’ belongs properly to the Priest alone. Moreover, also by reason of their sacred Ordination, the ordinary ministers of Holy Communion are the Bishop, the Priest and the Deacon, to whom it belongs therefore to administer Holy Communion to the lay members of Christ’s faithful during the celebration of Mass. In this way their ministerial office in the Church is fully and accurately brought to light, and the sign value of the Sacrament is made complete.” (*Redemptionis Sacramentum*, 154).

- “In addition to the ordinary ministers there is the formally instituted acolyte, who by virtue of his institution is an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion even outside the celebration of Mass. If, moreover, reasons of real necessity prompt it, another lay member of Christ’s faithful may also be delegated by the diocesan bishop, in accordance with the norm of law, for one occasion or for a specified time, and an appropriate formula of blessing may be used for the occasion. This act of appointment, however, does not necessarily take a liturgical form, nor, if it does take a liturgical form, should it resemble sacred Ordination in any way. Finally, in special cases of an unforeseen nature, permission can be given for a single occasion by the Priest who presides at the celebration of the Eucharist.” (*Redemptionis Sacramentum*, 155).
- “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.” (*Redemptionis Sacramentum*, 156).
- “If there is usually present a sufficient number of sacred ministers for the distribution of Holy Communion, extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion may not be appointed. Indeed, in such circumstances, those who may have already been appointed to this ministry should not exercise it. The practice of those priests is reprobated who, even though present at the celebration, abstain from distributing Communion and hand this function over to laypersons.” (*Redemptionis Sacramentum*, 157).
- “Indeed, the extraordinary minister of Holy Communion may administer Communion only when the priest and deacon are lacking, when the priest is prevented by weakness or advanced age or some other genuine reason, or when the number of faithful coming to Communion is so great that the very celebration of Mass would be unduly prolonged. This, however, is to be understood in such a way that a brief prolongation, considering the circumstances and culture of the place, is not at all a sufficient reason.” (*Redemptionis Sacramentum*, 158).
- “It is never allowed for the extraordinary minister of Holy Communion to assign anyone else to administer the Eucharist, as for example a parent or spouse or child of the sick person who is the communicant.” (*Redemptionis Sacramentum*, 159).
- “Let the diocesan bishop give renewed consideration to the practice in recent years regarding this matter, and if circumstances call for it, let him correct it or define it more precisely. Where such extraordinary ministers are appointed in a widespread manner out of true necessity, the diocesan bishop should issue special norms by which he determines the manner in which this function is to be carried out in accordance with the law, bearing in mind the tradition of the Church.” (*Redemptionis Sacramentum*, 160).
- The need for such extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion should be presented to the Bishop through the Chancellor by the local pastor/administrator or by the chaplain of an institution.
 - o The Bishop’s permission is to be sought to select and prepare a definite number of extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion. (Cf. ADDENDUM 1).
 - o An excessive number of extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion should not be requested.
- The invitation to serve as an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion must not be offered until a pastor/administrator/chaplain has received permission to invite a definite number of extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion.

- Training for the extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion will consist of at least two sessions, consisting of spiritual, theological and practical preparation. (Cf. ADDENDUM 1).
- At the completion of training, candidates complete the biographical data and sign the Profession of Faith in the presence of his or her pastor/administrator. These are submitted by the pastor/administrator with a request that the candidates be officially missioned by the Bishop. (Cf. ADDENDUM 1).
- A letter is sent by the Bishop to the pastor/administrator/chaplain and accompanied by individual cards of authorization for each extraordinary minister of Holy Communion.
 - o Extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion, designated for either the parish or institution are appointed for renewable terms of three years.

2.4.1 Requirements for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

- These men and women must:
 - o have completed their sixteenth year, be fully initiated, lead a life of faith in keeping with the function to be undertaken, and if married, be validly married within the Church and not be bound by any canonical penalty legitimately imposed or declared;
 - o sign the *Profession of Faith for an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion*, (cf. ADDENDUM 1) renewing his/her belief in the real presence of Jesus Christ in the Most Holy Eucharist. A copy of this *Profession of Faith for an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion* is to be filed at the Chancery Office;
 - o participate in training which includes a theological discussion of the Sacrament of Holy Communion as well as training on the appropriate posture and deportment of the extraordinary minister of Holy Communion during the Mass; and
 - o have a letter of authorization from the Bishop.

2.4.2 Missioning

- A formal recognition of this ministry may be celebrated according to the rite found in the *Book of Blessings*. This ceremony may be held in each parish after candidates complete the training.
 - o Extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion are assigned for their own parish and are normally not to exercise this ministry outside their parish.
 - o In particular and singular instances (such as on the occasion of a family wedding or funeral), when a true need exists, extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion may exercise their ministry at other parishes within the Diocese with the approval of the pastor/administrator. The extraordinary minister of Holy Communion should identify himself or herself to the pastor/administrator before Mass by showing the Diocesan issued card.
 - o When an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion discontinues this ministry for whatever reason, the Diocesan Chancery Office is to be notified.

2.4.3 Responsibilities

- The extraordinary minister of Holy Communion at Mass:
 - o Approaches the altar *only after* the priest receives Communion. (Cf. *GIRM*, 162).
 - o First receives Communion from the celebrant, or concelebrant, or deacon and then receives the sacred vessel from the celebrant, or concelebrant, or deacon for distribution to the people.

- o Holds the host or chalice before the communicant at a level that makes eye contact between the communicant and extraordinary minister of Holy Communion, if possible.
 - o Offers the Body of Christ to the communicant in the hand or on the tongue, as the communicant indicates.
 - o Says only, “*The Body of Christ*” if offering the host, or only “*The Blood of Christ*” if offering the chalice.
 - o Wipes the rim of the chalice with a purificator after each communicant and turns the chalice slightly for the next communicant.
 - o Properly consumes any remaining Precious Blood at the altar.
 - o Reverently handles and consumes any dropped hosts – spilled Precious Blood must be attended to with water which is then poured in the sacrarium.
 - o Is attentive to the presence of persons in the congregation who have special needs and adapts accordingly to give them access to Holy Communion.
 - o Returns the ciborium/chalice to the altar for purification by the priest/deacon either at the altar or credence table. The priest or deacon brings the Blessed Sacrament to the tabernacle.
 - o Participates in ongoing training throughout their service as an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion.
- Some extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion may serve the homebound, ill or those in the hospital. (Cf. ADDENDUM 1). These extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion:
 - o Receive a pyx containing the Body of Christ for distribution to the home or hospital bound, maintaining reverence for the Blessed Sacrament which is brought to the sick without interruption or unnecessary conversation en route to the person’s residence.
 - o Makes himself or herself aware of the situation of each of the sick persons to be visited and is prepared for any special needs or circumstances.
 - o Receive a copy of *The Pastoral Care of the Sick*, an orientation for its usage, and follows the appropriate ritual depending on the circumstances of the sick person(s).
 - o Receive a theological context for the significance of this ministry.
 - o Have a period of mentoring with a minister experienced in this care.

2.5 PREACHING

- Ordinarily, the celebrant should preach the homily which immediately follows after the Gospel. (Cf. *GIRM*, 66).
 - o Particular attention and proper preparation must be given to the homily.
 - o Among the forms of preaching, the homily, which is part of the liturgy itself and is reserved to a priest or deacon, is preeminent. (Cf. *CIC*, c. 767, §1).
 - o “...the homily on account of its importance and its nature is reserved to the Priest or Deacon during Mass. As regards other forms of preaching, if necessity demands it in particular circumstances, or if usefulness suggests it in special cases, lay members of Christ’s faithful may be allowed to preach in a church or in an oratory outside Mass in accordance with the norm of law. (Cf. *CIC*, c. 766, 767, §1). This may be done only on account of a scarcity of sacred ministers in certain places, in order to meet the need, and it may not be transformed from an exceptional measure into an ordinary practice, nor may it be understood as an authentic form of the advancement of the laity.” (*Redemptionis Sacramentum*, 161; Cf. ADDENDUM 3).

- o “All must remember besides that the faculty for giving such permission belongs to the local Ordinary, and this as regards individual instances; this permission is not the competence of anyone else....” (*Redemptionis Sacramentum*, 161).
- o In Masses during which the children are dismissed for the Liturgy of the Word, a competent adult may address the children after the reading of the Gospel in a separate, but not distant room. (Cf. *Directory of Masses with Children*, CDW, no. 17).

2.6 GUIDELINES FOR THE EXTRAORDINARY FORM OF THE MASS

- Within the Diocese of Rochester, Mass in the Extraordinary Form of the Roman Rite, that is, using the liturgical rites in force prior to the post-conciliar liturgical reforms, namely the *Missale Romanum* of 1962, has occurred for several years in various parishes, with guidance and vigilance, previously according to the instructions of the *Apostolic Letter, Summorum Pontificum*, promulgated by His Holiness, Pope Benedict XVI, on July 7, 2007, and most recently under the norms of Pope Francis’ *Apostolic Letter, Traditionis Custodes*, issued *motu proprio* on July 16th, 2021, effective the same day. Please refer to ADDENDUM 4, which contains the text of *Traditionis Custodes*.
- Eucharistic celebrations in the Extraordinary Form must conform to the norms of *Traditionis Custodes* regarding the priest, the location and the day(s) of the Masses and in consultation with the Office of the Bishop and his delegate in this matter.
- In accordance with article 5 of *Traditionis Custodes*, priests are to have authorization from the diocesan Bishop to enjoy this faculty, with strict adherence to the norms set forth in the *motu proprio*, while also safeguarding against the dangers that Pope Francis has rightly identified through his consultation with the bishops of the world.
- It is always permissible for parts of the Mass according to the *Roman Missal* promulgated by Pope Paul VI to be sung in Latin, such as the Gloria, Creed, Sanctus, Agnus Dei, as well as appropriate Latin hymns from the Church’s vast treasury of liturgical music and Gregorian Chant. This use of the Latin language in the Sacred Liturgy can provide an appropriate setting for celebrating the Divine Mysteries of our Redemption in Christ.

ADDENDUM 1

THE SELECTION, PREPARATION AND MISSIONING OF EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION

- Step 1:** The Bishop's permission is to be sought by the pastor/administrator to select and prepare a definite number of extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion. *Selection should not precede this step.* An excessive number of extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion should not be requested. The number should be in proportion to the number of communicants. When ordinary ministers of Holy Communion (priests, deacons) and/or instituted acolytes (seminarians) are available, they should distribute Holy Communion. (Cf. *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, 160).
- Step 2:** Parishes are strongly encouraged to actively select individuals who are particularly well qualified to serve in this capacity, not simply asking for volunteers. The faithful who become extraordinary ministers of Holy 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." (*Immensae Caritatis*, 1, IV, 1973). They must be sixteen years of age and, if married, must be validly married within the Church. Daily communicants usually are excellent candidates.
- Step 3:** The preparation of extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion is to consist of at least two sessions dealing with the Church's teaching on the Eucharist and dealing also with the practical applications in the parish, institution, or residence for the homebound. (Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*; *The General Instruction of the Roman Missal, Third Edition*; *Sacramentum Caritatis*; *Redemptionis Sacramentum*; *USCCB Liturgy Guide: Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion at Mass*; *USCCB Norms for the Distribution and Reception of Holy Communion Under Both Kinds in the Dioceses of the United States of America*.)
- Step 4:** At the completion of the training sessions, the candidates are to complete the *biographical data* requested by the Diocese and all candidates for extraordinary minister of Holy Communion are required to sign the *Profession of Faith for an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion*. These are submitted by the pastor/administrator/chaplain with a request that the candidates be officially approved by the Bishop.
- Step 5:** A letter of appointment is sent by the Bishop to the pastor/administrator and is accompanied by individual identification cards for each extraordinary minister of Holy Communion.
- Step 6:** A formal missioning ceremony may be held in the parish, according to the Rite found in the *Book of Blessings*.

Final Notations:

- Extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion are missioned for a three-year term which may be renewed at the discretion of the pastor/administrator/chaplain.
- Extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion are missioned for their parish only and are not to exercise this ministry outside of their parish.
- When an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion discontinues this ministry, for whatever purpose, the Diocesan Chancery Office is to be notified.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION FOR EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION

The love and care with which the Most Holy Eucharist is handled helps to bring together the faithful so we can truly know “It is the Lord.” (John 21:7). The privilege of distributing Holy Communion, whether the Sacred Host or the Precious Blood, is not simply a ministry among many others, as important as others may be – distributing Holy Communion is a great service to the Church and our brothers and sisters in the family of God. For this reason, since participation in this ministry is a privilege and not a right, prayer and preparation are required, and the selection process is a bit more intentional and thorough. The questions asked below, similar to those asked on parish registration forms, help the Diocese know better those to whom this privilege is extended.

Extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion must fulfill requirements listed in the *Code of Canon Law* for sacramental sponsors. (Cf. *CIC*, c. 874 §1, nn. 2-4). Additionally, they must have completed their sixteenth year; be a Catholic who has received the Sacrament of Confirmation and leads a life of faith in keeping with the function to be undertaken; not bound by any canonical penalty legitimately imposed or declared; be reverential, respectful of his or her Catholic faith and the Most Blessed Sacrament; and of good moral character.