



ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL PARISH  
Bunbury, W.A.

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## EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION (EMHC)

The following matters were discussed and agreed upon by those who attended the in-service last Saturday, 16 August 2025. The in-service was facilitated by Helen Brown and Liz Lomax of the Worship Steward Pillar of the Parish Pastoral Council. The Dean of the Cathedral, Rev. Fr Pierre Repuyan VG, was in attendance.

These matters will be implemented starting the weekend of 30-31 August 2025. We seek your cooperation in this regard.

### 1. NUMBER OF EMHC AT EACH MASS IN THE CATHEDRAL

- 1.1. Three (3) Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion will be rostered at each Mass in the Cathedral.
  - 1.1.1. Two (2) Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion will distribute Holy Communion from the right and left sides of the Cathedral aisle. The main aisle will be the distribution points for the Priest-Celebrant and the Acolyte.
  - 1.1.2. To enable Acolytes to fulfil their role of clearing the altar after Holy Communion, one (1) EMHC will be assigned to distribute Holy Communion at the choir loft.
- 1.2. The Worship Pillar of the Parish Pastoral Council will invite more parishioners to the ministry in view of the growing pastoral requirement.

### 2. PROTOCOLS TO BE FOLLOWED BY EMHC AT EACH MASS

- 2.1. Arrive 15 minutes before Mass is due to start.
- 2.2. Initial the sign-in sheet. This is to indicate to the rostered Acolyte that you are present for your roster. As a courtesy, you may wish to let the Acolyte know that you have arrived.
- 2.3. At 5 minutes to the commencement of Mass, proceed to the vesting sacristy to pray with the Priest-Celebrant and those fulfilling a ministry at the Mass.
- 2.4. EMHC will now form a part of the entrance and recessional procession.
  - 2.4.1. **Entrance Procession.** EMHC walk behind the Readers/Lectors. Led by the cross bearer and altar servers holding the processional candles, all ministers process towards the sanctuary where they will form one line at the base of the sanctuary and will make a head bow together with the Priest-Celebrant. After bowing, EMHC go to wherever they are seated in the Cathedral.



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- 2.4.2. **Recessional Procession.** Follow the lead of the Priest-Celebrant in proceeding to the base of the sanctuary for a head bow and the recessional procession back to the vesting sacristy. Once in the vesting sacristy, together with the Priest-Celebrant, ministers bow before the crucifix.
- 2.5. EMHC to approach the sanctuary only after the Priest-Celebrant has received communion of the Precious Body and Blood of Christ. This is to give due reverence to the solemn elevation (**Ecce Agnus Dei / Behold the Lamb of God**) of the Blessed Sacrament before Holy Communion.
- General Instruction of the Roman Missal no. 162: 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 very large number of communicants, the priest may call upon extraordinary ministers to assist him, i.e., duly instituted acolytes or even other faithful who have been 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 either species of the Most Holy Eucharist for distribution to the faithful.
- 2.5.1. EMHC to proceed to the side closest to where they are seated. Make a head bow towards the altar before stepping onto the Sanctuary.
- 2.5.2. Proceed to the credence table to sanitise one's hands. Stand with the rest of the ministers on the sanctuary for ease of Holy Communion distribution. (Hand sanitisers must not be placed and left on the Altar.)
- 2.5.3. Re-sanitise hands before Holy Communion. Move off the sanctuary when the Priest-Celebrant leads off.
- 2.5.4. Be aware of anyone in the congregation indicating that a parishioner requires EMHC to bring Holy Communion to him or her. Parishioners will be reminded by the Commentator at the beginning of each Mass to stand where they are seated to indicate that they need the EMHC to come over.
- 2.5.5. When distributing Holy Communion, only say: "The Body of Christ." Names of parishioners should not be said.
- 2.6. After distributing Holy Communion, place the ciborium holding the Consecrated Hosts back on the Altar. Please ensure that you place the ciborium on where the corporal is (white square cloth placed in the middle of the altar).
- 2.7. Proceed to the credence table to wash your hands in the wash bowl provided (the wash bowl used by the Priest-Celebrant when he washes his hands). Dry



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off your hands with the provided towel. Then, return to your seat.

- 2.8. Make a head bow towards the Altar once off the sanctuary.
- 2.9. Join the procession at the conclusion of Mass for the Recessional.

### **3. WHAT TO DO TO THOSE WHO ASK FOR A BLESSING DURING COMMUNION TIME**

For those wanting a blessing, offer the following words: "May God bless you." Do this without any hand gesture nor holding a Consecrated Host in your hand. When you are doing this, remember that Christ is present (Real Presence of Christ) between you and the person who is asking for a blessing.

### **4. WHAT TO DO WHEN THE BODY OF CHRIST IS ACCIDENTALLY DROPPED**

In the event of the Precious Body of Christ being dropped, pick up immediately and if comfortable consume. Otherwise excuse yourself and place on the paten on the altar for the Priest-Celebrant to consume. Return to position to continue distribution. Please be guided by the Priest-Celebrant in this situation.

### **5. WHAT TO DO WHEN THE BLOOD OF CHRIST IS ACCIDENTALLY SPILT**

In the event of the Precious Blood of Christ is spilt, immediately safeguard the area where the Precious Blood of Christ is spilt. Seek assistance from the Priest-Celebrant, Acolyte and fellow EMHC. According to the General Instruction of the Roman Missal: "If any of the precious blood spills, the area should be washed and the water poured into the *sacracrium*" (280). The liturgical directive therefore states that the spill should never be left to dry. Please be guided by the Priest-Celebrant in this situation.

**It should be seriously adhered to that it is not permissible to pour the Precious Blood of Christ itself into the sacarium; only the water that was used to wash and dissolve the species under which the precious blood was present may be poured into it.**

Canon Law no. 1367: Once who throws away the consecrated species or, for a sacrilegious purpose, takes them away or keeps them, incurs a *latae sententiae* excommunication reserved to the Apostolic See; a cleric, moreover, may be punished with some other penalty, not excluding dismissal from the clerical state.

### **6. DRESS CODE**

Although no specific form of dress is required of Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, the dignity of the liturgy and the seriousness of the ministry should be reflected in the way they present themselves.

### **7. WHEN YOU ARE TAKING HOLY COMMUNION TO THE HOMEBOUND**

- 7.1. If taking the Precious Body to the sick or infirmed, hand your pyx to the Acolyte on arrival and inform of the quantity required.
- 7.2. Please ask only for the number of Consecrated Hosts you require for Holy



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Communion. Should there be Consecrated Hosts left over, please return them to the Cathedral Tabernacle. At no instance should Consecrated Hosts remain in one's home or elsewhere other than the Cathedral Tabernacle.

- 7.3. EMHC will be called to the front of the Cathedral after the Prayer after Communion. Here EMHC will be blessed and sent off to our sisters and brothers who are unable to be with the Mass congregation for the Vigil or Sunday worship. By providing the Blessed Sacrament consecrated during our Vigil or Sunday Mass, we profoundly convey the message that though they are unable to be in the church or cathedral, they are one with us in the Holy Eucharist.