



**ARCHDIOCESE OF SAINT PAUL AND MINNEAPOLIS**  
**CLERGY BULLETIN**

**April 9, 2013**

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**EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION**

Reverend and dear Fathers,

This document is meant to clarify the procedure for designating Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. The development of this policy has been several years in the making, and it is my belief that these provisions are most suited to provide Pastors of parishes and other particular communities with the discretion necessary to care for their flock, while at the same time demonstrating the necessary reverence for and importance of the Eucharist in the sacramental life of our Church.

Therefore, effective immediately, the provisions for designating and appointing Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion in the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis are as follows.

Given at Saint Paul, Minnesota, this 9<sup>th</sup> day of April, in the year of Our Lord 2013. All things to the contrary notwithstanding.

The Most Reverend John C. Nienstedt  
Archbishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis

Jennifer Haselberger  
Chancellor for Canonical Affairs

PROCEDURE FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY  
COMMUNION

1. The ordinary minister of Holy Communion is a bishop, priest, or deacon (canon 910, §1).
2. When the needs of the Church require it, and when ordinary ministers are lacking<sup>1</sup>, those who have been formally instituted as acolytes, in addition to other qualified persons, may be appointed to distribute Communion. Distribution of Holy Communion by non-ordained members of the faithful may occur during or outside of liturgical celebrations (canon 910, §2).
3. Pastors of parishes are delegated to appoint, without reference to the Archbishop, suitable persons from their own parishes to serve as Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. Individuals selected for this ministry are to complete a period of appropriate formation prior to being commissioned according to the *Rite of Commissioning Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion* (*Book of Blessings*, chapter 63).
4. The faculty to appoint Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, without reference to the Archbishop, is also extended to priest-administrators of parishes and priest-chaplains of particular communities.
5. Individuals who wish to be appointed an Extraordinary Minister in order to serve in a ministry outside of their parish (e.g. in a hospital or a prison) should still seek appointment through their pastor, as he is in the best position to see that the individual is properly trained and disposed.
6. In either case, the appointment as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion should not exceed three years, renewable.
7. In order to be considered for appointment as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion, the individual must be a fully-initiated Catholic, a member of the parish or particular community, and not bound by any penalties or censures or otherwise restricted from full sacramental participation in the Catholic Church<sup>2</sup>. The list of qualifications for

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<sup>1</sup> For guidelines as to when Extraordinary Ministers may be used in accord with the norm of law, as well as practices to be avoided, see the Instruction *Redemptionis Sacramentum: On certain matters to be observed or to be avoided regarding the Most Holy Eucharist*, nn. 154-160, see also the *Instruction on Certain Questions Regarding the Collaboration of the Non-Ordained Faithful in the Sacred Ministry of Priests*, article 8.

<sup>2</sup> Examples of individuals who are restricted from full sacramental participation would include those who are in a marriage not recognized by the Church, as well as those who have incurred an automatic excommunication. However, even one who is able to participate fully in the sacramental life of the parish may not always be a prudent choice to assist in the regular distribution of Holy Communion. The Extraordinary Minister should be a respected member of the parish community, known for their

this ministry can be found in the Instruction of Pope Paul VI *Immensae caritatis*. A 'Christian life, faith, and morals' along with 'piety and reverence for this Most Holy Sacrament' are amongst the most important attributes.

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commitment to the Blessed Sacrament, the parish community, and the poor. Because the role is a public one, pastors should exercise loving care and discretion as to who is invited to assist.