

St. Bon's EMHC Duties

Updated August, 2023

Role of EMHC

Your ministry is of great assistance to the priest and the community. Reserved seating will be available for EMHCs/Lectors.

- Arrive 15 minutes before Mass begins.
- Dress appropriately because Mass is a special event. Conservative casual dress is suitable.
 - Men: Button down shirts, polo shirts, slacks, khakis, dress shoes.
No t-shirts, shorts, blue jeans, flip-flops or sandals.
 - Women: Blouse with sleeves, slacks, dress, dress shoes.
No tank tops or spaghetti straps, no shorts, or short skirts or flip-flops.
- Anything you wear that draws attention is inappropriate.
- If you aren't able to attend the Mass you are scheduled, **PLEASE** request a substitute. Take responsibility.

Deacons

St. Bon's will normally have a Deacon at each of its weekend Masses. Only three EMHCs are needed at these times. If no Deacon is present, we need four EMHCs. If you notice that there are only one or two EMHCs, please come forward to assist.

EMHCs do not need to check in and will not process in to the church. It is appreciated if you would be seated in the first few rows.

Protocol for coming up to distribute Holy Communion

Once the "Sign of Peace" has been completed, please stand in front of the first step below the sanctuary, on the ambo side (in front of the piano). **As soon as the main celebrant consumes the Precious Blood**, enter the sanctuary and stand in front of the altar. Then, **bow together to the altar** and proceed to the side of the altar on the ambo side (to your left).

Where to stand when distributing

All ministers stand at one of the four Holy Communion stations.

EMHCs are not to physically touch those who are just receiving a blessing, such as young children and non-Catholics who have their arms crossed. Just say "God Bless You."

After Distribution of Holy Communion

Please bring your individual ciborium to the Tabernacle. If there is no priest or deacon when you arrive at the Tabernacle, please stand there until one of them arrives. Once the priest or deacon is at the Tabernacle, hand the ciborium to them and please return to your original position, on the ambo side. When the priest or deacon closes the Tabernacle door and genuflects, at the same time, please bow together facing the Tabernacle, then return to your pew. **No need to bow again at the altar** as you depart.

COMMUNION TO THE SICK/HOMEBOUND/NURSING FACILITIES

The Normative Way

- Those taking Communion should come to the sacristy before Mass and let the Presider/Deacon know how many hosts to put in the pyx. The pyx, with hosts to be consecrated, will be placed on the chalice or credence table to be consecrated.
- When EMHCs finish distributing Communion and return to the sanctuary, those distributing Communion to the sick/homebound/nursing facilities, will come forward into the sanctuary on the ambo side, facing the sacristy door. The Presider/Deacon will distribute the pyx, say a prayer and send you on your way.
- The Eucharist should be taken to the sick/homebound/nursing facilities immediately, with little time between receiving the pyx of hosts and taking it to the infirm. In other words, receiving the pyx after the 7:00 a.m. Mass, for example, and distributing at the predetermined site at 10:00 a.m., is not acceptable.

Optional Ways

- Get the number of hosts needed out of tabernacle before or after Mass. EMHC should not have the pyx with consecrated hosts inside it during Mass. Go immediately to sick/homebound/nursing facilities.
- Stand in the sacristy doorway when the EMHCs come up at the “*Lamb of God*”. When the Presider distributes Communion to the EMHCs, step out of the doorway and tell the Presider how many hosts are needed, and he will put them in the pyx and send you on your way.
- If you are at a particular Mass and will distribute Communion to the infirm immediately following (if Mass is running long or some other circumstance, and you can’t wait until the end of Mass), come up at the “*Lamb of God*” with the other EMHCs. Receive Communion, display your pyx, tell the Presider/Deacon how many hosts you need, then immediately leave Mass through the sacristy door to distribute to the infirm. This gives the EMHC the opportunity to leave immediately after receiving Communion.

EMHC SOLUTIONS FOR COMMUNION

- **Lickers, snappers, biters, takers**—Just be aware that you’ll encounter them. Communicants should not *take*. They should *receive*.
- **Catholics who probably shouldn’t receive Communion**—EMHCs are present to distribute, not to judge. Only a priest can refuse Communion.
- **People who take the Eucharist, but walk away without consuming**—**Approach the person immediately and ask them to return the Eucharist to you or consume the host.**
- **Non-Catholics**—The priest usually instructs the congregation at weddings and funerals that those who are Catholic, but cannot receive Communion, and those not of our faith tradition may come up for a blessing. They are to place their arms across their chest, and the EMHC should simply hold up the Eucharist and say, “God bless you.” **An EMHC cannot touch or give a blessing.**
- **Children in the Communion line that cannot receive the Eucharist**—see Non-Catholics above.
- **If a host falls on the floor**—The EMHC should pick it up, and give another to the communicant. The EMHC can either consume the host or hold it in their hand until the end of Communion and then give it to

the priest. He will place it in water to dissolve and pour into the sacrarium (the little basin in the sacristy which has a pipe that goes straight into the ground, rather than into the sewer).

- **If the Precious Blood spills on the floor**—Immediately place the purificator over the spot, press down, and soak up as much as possible. Know where the purificator drawer is in the sacristy, in case more purificators are needed to soak up the Precious Blood. Servers can help. Inform the priest after Communion.
- **How to give Communion to an adult holding a child**—It's best to place the host on the adult's tongue. But if reception is in the hand, place the host on the tips of the middle fingers for ease of receiving.
- **Gluten-free**--At times, you may be asked to distribute a few hosts from a pyx. The priest will instruct you.
- **Home or Hospital Communion**
There are times in which a patient may have difficulty consuming the Eucharist. Do one or more of these:
 - Give a cup of water with the Eucharist
 - Break the host into a smaller piece
 - If communicant spits out Eucharist, it's possible the person thinks it is a pill. Remind the communicant that it is Jesus, and try to give Communion.
 - If the communicant still spits out the host, dispose of it by dissolving it in a cup of water and pour it down the Sacrarium in the Sacristy.
 - Inform the priest, especially if a host is dissolved.