

June 27, 2019

Dear Lectors and Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist,

With this letter you'll find a **ministry schedule** for now through the beginning of November. Also included is an updated **phone list** of ministers for contacting substitutes.

For the **holy days** on **Thursday August 15th** and **Friday November 1st**, we need volunteers to jump in and help out. Please call me in advance so we can arrange to make those Masses go smoothly.

If you can't find your copy of the schedule, you can find it easily on the parish web site, www.stmarygr.org. It's logically found by starting with the main menu, following **Calendar/Events > Liturgical Ministry Schedules**. The direct link is www.stmarygr.org/Ministry-Schedule. Of course, if you have any difficulty finding or viewing that schedule, let me know!

If you find that you have health issues that will affect your ability to serve in our liturgical ministries, please talk with me! I would like not only to be aware of what you're going through but also to help with the practical issues of finding substitutes or writing the next schedule with these things in mind.

I'll be drafting **the next schedule** in September (for November through March). When you see the notice in the schedule, don't forget to tell me about any dates for which you will be unavailable during that time! And, if you take time to travel south during those months/for the winter, please confirm what dates you'll be away.

SPECIAL NOTES FOR EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF THE EUCHARIST:

- There is some confusion about the choreography with the new expectations. Here are some clarifications:

When I go forward, where do I stop and wait? Wait on the main floor by the ambo or priest's chair (on either side of the sanctuary). Form a line with the other extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist (EMs).

When do we step up into the sanctuary? As soon as the priest consumes the Body of Christ, bow to the altar (together) and reverently step up into the sanctuary. (You don't have to wait until after he takes the Blood of Christ.)

So, we don't wait until the priest signals? No, don't wait for a signal.

When I'm done distributing Communion, do I stay in the sanctuary? Yes. Remain in the sanctuary facing the Eucharist *until the tabernacle is closed*. Then, all EMs are to

A.) step down out of the sanctuary together,

B.) line up together along the front step,

C.) bow to the altar together, and then return to your seats reverently to spend time in prayer.

Why did our routine change? Our expectations for lay ministers of the Eucharist are changing because of a request by the bishop to all parishes in the diocese that we bring our practices up to date with his expectations. In some cases, these are expectations that have always been there but we've been lax. In other cases, this bishop's appreciation for order and reverence gives us some motivation.

What we're doing is important. Therefore, it's worth doing well. The way we act expresses our reverence for the Eucharist. When we move together, act with reverence, and carry out our ministry with joy, we're subtly preaching the good news by our actions.

- **A copy** of our current guidelines/procedures/expectations for extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist are included with this letter for those who serve in this ministry.
- **Thank you** to all who have been so good about going to the sacristy after Mass to cleanse the vessels and put everything away. And yes, put everything away, and leave nothing out on the tables or countertops.
- We could really use **more people** in this ministry! There are so few it creates some scheduling issues. Ask your upstanding friends, relatives and acquaintances of the parish about serving in this ministry.
- **When cleaning up**, please be very gentle with the vessels. The finishes on the metal weren't made to withstand heavy-duty washing. In truth, very little water is necessary, and only a touch of soap on the end of your finger. You don't ever need to fill the sink with water, and *don't submerge the priest's chalice*. Those chalices are built to be gently wiped clean, but not inundated with water.

SPECIAL NOTES FOR LECTORS:

- Sometimes there seems to be a little confusion about **when to start the announcements**. The official cue is: right after the priest's Prayer after Communion. That's the prayer from the priest's big red book (The *Missal*) which ends "Through Christ our Lord." "Amen!" You don't have to wait for a cue from the priest. (That *amen* was your cue, actually.) Of course, this depends on you getting in place at the microphone while the priest is purifying the vessels. Please don't wait until after the priest's prayer to walk up there. If a priest jumps in before you can start speaking, then wait until it's time to announce the final song and then slip the announcements in first.
- Make sure to **use your *Workbook for Lectors*** to its full potential. Don't skip over the sidebar points, the pronunciation guidance, the "TO KEEP IN MIND" boxes and the commentaries below the readings. You could even take advantage of the boxes that show up labeled "THE 4 STEPS OF *LECTIO DIVINA* OR PRAYERFUL READING". And did you actually read the introduction? (pp. iv-ix)

Thank you all for stepping up for these ministries. These things don't get done without you.

Peace,

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