Extraordinary Ministers For
The Administration Of
Holy Communion

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Beatissime Pater,

Exc. mus Praeses Conferentiae Episcopalis Canaden., ad pedes S.V. provolutus, nomine etiam Ordinarius praefatae Ditionis, humiliter postulat:

1) Facultatem permittendi personae idoneae administrationem SS.mae Communionis in ecclesiis vel publicis oratoriiis, inter Missarum solemnia, quoties protractio nimis longa distributionis SS.mae Eucharistiae alio modo, praesertim ob penuriam cleri, devitari nequeat;

2) Facultatem permittendi ut persona idonea, in ecclesiis et publicis oratoriiis, absente sacerdote vel diacono vel iisdem impeditis ratione proiectae aetatis, adversae valetudinis, aut pastoralis ministerii, SS.mam Communionem per se ipsa sumere Eamque ibidem ceteris fidelibus distribuere atque aegrotis deferre valeat.


Praesentibus valituris ad triennium.

ANTONIO CARDINAL SAMORE
Praeses
JOS. CASORIA
A Secretis
Commentary on Instruction

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS FOR HOLY COMMUNION

By stressing active participation of the faithful at Mass, particularly by sacramental communion, the liturgical renewal has brought about a considerable increase in the number of communions; consequently, it is felt there is a need to increase the number of ministers for the distribution of Holy Communion. Since the priests, whose numbers are diminishing and who are occupied with other tasks, can no longer take care of this ministry alone, it is hoped that they may be helped by laymen when this is necessary.

The fact that laymen give Holy Communion is not altogether new in our country; this method has existed for a number of years in religious houses where there are no priests.

Conditions of life have changed, and new pastoral needs have come before us: as a result, Pope Paul VI deemed it advisable to dispense Canada from the former discipline which stated that only priests and deacons could distribute Holy Communion.

NEW DISCIPLINE FOR CANADIAN DIOCESES

Therefore, on June 7, 1969, the Congregation of Sacraments, in response to a request made by the Canadian Episcopate, granted to each of the Ordinaries of our country:

1. The right to permit a qualified person to distribute communion in churches and in public oratories during Mass when it would otherwise take too long to distribute communion, especially if there is a lack of clergy;

2. The right to permit a qualified person in churches and public oratories, in the absence of the priest or the deacon, or if the latter is unable to fulfill this ministry because of old age, illness or by the demands of the pastoral ministry, to give himself Holy Communion, to distribute it to the faithful and to bring it to the sick.

This permission is not accorded to the country at large: it is given to local Ordinaries who will decide whether the indult will be used in their diocese, and determine the ways in which it will be used. The aim of this document is to help those who will prepare directives for each diocese where the indult will be put into effect. The document is derived from Canadian experiences and from those of other lands as well.
Document "Fidei Custos"

The use of this permission must be made in accordance with the Instruction "Fidei Custos" of the Congregation of Sacraments, April 30, 1969. (The complete translation of "Fidei Custos" follows this Note.)

The document was expanded by the provisions of No. 6A on January 10, 1970. It envisages two ways of designating auxiliary ministers:

--- permanent designation: The auxiliary minister is chosen and nominated by the bishop; he receives his mandate by a liturgical blessing given according to the ritual affixed to the Instruction (appendix 4);

--- "ad actum" designation: The auxiliary minister is delegated by the priest for a specific occasion ("ad actum"); his temporary ministry is indicated, in the course of Mass itself, by a brief rite (appendix 1).

Along with the Instruction, the ritual that the auxiliary minister will follow in ministering Holy Communion in the absence or in the presence of a priest, is also given.

Three Different Situations

The different situations wherein the services of auxiliary ministers may be needed for communion may be grouped under three headings:

1. communion at large assemblies;
2. communion for the sick;
3. communion in communities without priests.

Each of these situations requires specific consideration.

1. Communion at Large Assemblies

A more active participation by the faithful at Mass has greatly increased the number of communions: It would be useful for the priests to have the help of auxiliary ministers whenever the communion procession would be otherwise unduly prolonged, with the risk of breaking the rhythm of the celebration, thus bringing on boredom and weariness. In some parishes or communities, this need will be felt only during major feasts and in special circumstances; at other places where there are few clergy, such needs will be evident every Sunday.

Choice of Ministers, when occasioned by large numbers of communicants.

The service of ministering the Holy Eucharist to the assembly of the faithful at the parish Mass is undertaken in union with the Bishop and pastor. Both in the inauguration of the work and during its continuance, it is important that this principle of unity with the Bishop and the pastor be made evident. WHEN POSSIBLE, THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN CHOSEN TO DO THIS WORK SHOULD BE CALLED TO A PLACE AGREED UPON BY A DEANERY OR SIMILAR REGION; AND HAVING BEEN DULY INSTRUCTED ABOUT THEIR FUTURE WORK, THEY SHOULD RECEIVE THEIR AUTHORIZATION DIRECTLY FROM THE BISHOP OR FROM HIS DELEGATE. The families of those who will help the priests in the administering of the Eucharist should also
be invited to this ceremony, because the proven spiritual worth of the chosen ministers is the starting point for their involvement in the Eucharistic ministry.

To minister the Eucharist to one's fellow pilgrims and to proclaim the Word of God in the midst of the assembly are among the most honored offices in the service of the Eucharist. Every care should be taken in the choice of the persons who will fulfill these offices, and in the spiritual guidance which will be given them by the pastor and the Bishop. Therefore, the priest will carefully examine his need for lay assistants at the Communion stations, keeping in mind the natural rhythm of the celebration, the responsibility being entrusted to lay persons by sharing a hitherto clerical role, and the need for evident spiritual maturity in the lives of the designated ministers. The priest will consult the parish community discreetly, the Parish Council and the Worship Committee being included in this consultation. He would be well advised to avoid both his own arbitrary designations and the "volunteering" of parishioners: both such methods could bring forward undesirable candidates. His goal should be to enlist those Christians who have the respect and esteem of the worshipping community; he should look for persons whose faith conforms to the true meaning of the service they are being asked to undertake. It is most important to choose adults only: children should not be allowed to do this work, even within the school milieu. The Instruction proposes an order of preference, without imposing it, namely: a cleric, a lay brother or religious woman, a layman or a laywoman; the priest may choose differently, according to his needs.

The pastor who chooses the auxiliary ministers also has the responsibility of preparing them: he should see that they know how to fulfill their duties correctly and with dignity (according to the ritual given in appendix 1); further, he should make them fully aware of the spiritual significance of their work.

A brief address to be given by the Bishop or the Bishop's delegate when the auxiliary ministers are designated for their service at the Communion stations is given in Appendix 4, No. 7.

2. Communion for the Sick

Until now, only the priest could bring communion to the homes of the sick. It frequently happens that the same priest has to visit a considerable number of sick, with the unfortunate result that these sick persons cannot receive communion often — almost never on Sundays or on feast days — and the distribution of communion sometimes takes place very hurriedly. From now on, the priest may, whenever it is useful or necessary, receive help from the laity for distribution of communion to the sick.

This help does not relieve him of his responsibility toward the sick, but it helps him to fulfill it more effectively. He always remains responsible for the pastoral care of the sick; this care is not limited to distribution of Communion, but it also includes visits to the sick, confession, and the Anointing of the sick.

The help of auxiliary ministers may afford these pastoral advantages:

— the sick could receive communion more frequently, especially on Sundays and feast days;
— the communion of the sick will be more closely connected to the Eucharistic celebration of the parish community;

— it will be possible to enhance communion to the sick with a more prolonged celebration — something which cannot presently be done by priests who have to bring communion to many sick persons;

— finally, this help will allow the priest more time to perform his own proper ministry.

CHOICE:

Here again, it is preferable that the pastor of the parish choose the person for this ministry (according to No. 6a of the Instruction); he will do so by following the aforementioned criteria. He should seek out only serious and responsible persons endowed with those qualities which will bring genuine spiritual help to the sick. When such a person is found among those regularly associated with the sick person, the priest will choose this person in preference to any others.

PREPARATION OF THE MINISTER:

It is imperative that this person be well prepared. The priest will see to it that the person knows how to carry the Eucharist with respect, to prepare and direct the celebration by adapting it to the particular situation of the sick person (according to the ritual given in appendix 3), to administer communion according to the aforesaid ritual, and to bring spiritual comfort to the afflicted with tact and discretion.

PROCEDURE TO FOLLOW:

The administration of communion in the home will always be done under the guidance of the priest, who, in each case, will make himself informed about the particular circumstances. So that there may be a link between the communion of the sick and the Eucharistic celebration of the community, the auxiliary minister will take the Eucharist from the altar during the Mass which he attends, after the communion of the faithful. The priest will hand him the consecrated Bread in a small pyx or container; these containers should be genuinely suitable, without being expensive. Immediately after Mass, the auxiliary minister, respectfully carrying the pyx, will proceed to the home of the sick person; he will give communion according to the ritual of appendix 3. When communion is brought to the sick, others in the house may also receive it.

IN THE HOSPITALS:

The priest may also seek help, whenever warranted, for distributing communion to the sick in the hospitals. Here also, one should try to bring about the best way of distributing communion: for example, by giving it more of a communal aspect, and by surrounding it with some of the signs of celebration, namely, prayers and readings.

KINDLY NOTE

It is to be clearly understood that the sick and their relatives are to be informed of the use of auxiliary ministers, and that they will have given their consent. The sick will also be assured that they will not be left without the ministry of a priest.
3. Communion in Communities without Priests

The third circumstance where one would seek the services of an auxiliary minister to distribute communion is in communities where the Holy Eucharist is reserved, but where there is no priest available; this situation may come about because the priest is absent, or his ministry is impeded by old age, ill health or pastoral duties. The most frequent case would be that of religious communities that have no priests at their service, and cannot attend Mass because of distance or other circumstances.

In this case, it is advisable that the appropriate designation be made under the supervision of the local Ordinary (according to No. 6a of the Instruction), and for a renewable period of time (1 or 2 years). The liturgical blessing outlined in appendix 4, could be given to this person by the bishop or by a delegated priest. No. 4 of the Instruction provides supplementary details dealing with the choice of an auxiliary minister in religious communities.

What was said above (No. 2) concerning preparation is to be applied here also, because in the absence of the priest, these ministers will, of necessity, be presiding over the celebration during which Holy Communion will be distributed. This preparation should be undertaken in special instructional sessions.

The auxiliary minister will observe the ritual given in appendix 2 for the distribution of Communion.

Instructing the Faithful

Where the auxiliary ministers are authorized to give communion, it is important that the faithful be informed well ahead of time; they must also be told of the serious reasons which have brought about this change. In these explanations, it would be well to mention the following points:

— It is not a matter of privilege or honor granted to any individual; rather, it is a service to the worshipping community, similar to other services the laity is called upon to perform in the liturgy: readings, serving at the altar, ushering, etc.

— This practice has its origin in the early life of the Church; during the first hundred years, Christians brought the Eucharistic Bread to their own homes for communion; this has also taken place in our time: during wartime, and in certain countries where there is a shortage of priests.

— We should not be surprised that the laity is invited to help distribute communion, since the faithful are now permitted to receive communion in their hand.

To Pastors

Pastors who have been authorized to enlist auxiliary ministers will be conscious of how important it is to prepare both the persons selected for the exercise of this ministry, and the community itself; in this way, confusion will be avoided and a valuable pastoral advantage will be derived.

Pastors are asked to observe the directives received from their local Ordinary and their Diocesan Liturgical Commission; from time to time, pastors should inform their Commission about the value and effectiveness of this new practice.
Sacred Congregation for the Sacraments

INSTRUCTION
EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION
“FIDEI CUSTOS”

As guardian of the faith the Church carefully preserves the essence of that faith unchanged throughout the ages. It has established canonical norms to help in this task, but, when special circumstances and new demands arise, it changes these laws prudently and sometimes generously. The prescriptions of canon law must always be adapted to serve the Church’s purpose, the salvation of souls, so that as times and conditions change, these laws may continue to regulate the energies of the entire Church effectively.

Today the conditions of human life are changing faster than ever before. The Church, actively engaged in the care of souls, is well aware of the hardships and difficulties caused in some places by a shortage of sacred ministers. The work of the pastoral ministry continues to grow, as do the urgent demands increasingly made upon it.

Pope Paul VI, in his pastoral concern and in response to the desires of the faithful, has decided to amend the existing law concerning the ministers of communion. Because of present needs, in addition to the ministers already specified in canon 845, extraordinary ministers may now be appointed to give holy communion to themselves and to the faithful.

Therefore, by the authority of the Pope, the following norms are established concerning the administration of holy communion in the Latin rite:

1. The following authorities, who are called “pastors” in this instruction, may ask the Sacred Congregation for the Discipline of the Sacraments or the Sacred Congregation for the Evangelization of the Nations or the Propagation of the Faith for the faculty to permit suitable persons under their jurisdiction to administer communion to themselves and to the faithful: residential bishops, coadjutors who have been given all the episcopal rights and duties, abbots with jurisdiction, prelates who are local ordinaries, vicars capitular, apostolic administrators, vicars and prefects apostolic, even if they do not have episcopal orders. The faculty may be used:

   a) whenever a minister specified by canon 845 of the Code of Canon Law is not available;

   b) whenever the usual minister is unable to administer communion conveniently because of poor health, advanced age, or the demands of the pastoral ministry;

   c) whenever the number of faithful who wish to receive communion is so great that the celebration of Mass would be unduly prolonged.
2. The pastors specified in no. 1, once they have been given this faculty, may delegate it to auxiliary bishops, vicars general, episcopal vicars and delegates.

3. A suitable person, as specified in no. 1, is to be chosen in this order of preference: subdeacons, clerics in minor orders, those who have received tonsure, men religious, women religious, male catechists (unless, in the prudent judgment of the pastor, a woman catechist is preferable), lay men and lay women.

4. Special circumstances:

   a) Oratories of religious communities of men or women.

       The pastors specified above may, with due precautions, permit men superiors who are not in sacred orders and women superiors and their substitutes to give the eucharistic bread to themselves, members of their communities, and the faithful who may be present; and to bring communion to the sick who live in their religious house.

   b) Orphanages, hospitals, colleges and other institutions of any kind directed by religious.

       The pastors specified above may permit men superiors and rectors who are not in sacred orders and women superiors, as well as their substitutes, and any devout member of the faithful to give communion to themselves, members of the institution, and the faithful who are present, and to bring communion to the sick.

5. The extraordinary ministers of communion should be mature Christians, persons of excellent character, who take their faith seriously and live a Christian life. Once chosen, they should be properly instructed to perform this important service for their fellow Christians. Women so appointed should be devout Christians and should be chosen only in cases of need and when other suitable persons cannot be found.

6. A qualified person who has been chosen by the bishop by name to administer communion must receive a mandate from him, as specified in the accompanying Rite for Commissioning a Minister. Those chosen for this office should distribute communion according to the liturgical norms.

6a. The pastors specified in no. 1 may also obtain from the Congregations mentioned the faculty to permit that parish priests, pastors of quasi-parishes, parochial vicars, rectors of churches and other priests who have the care of souls may depute a qualified person, according to the order determined in no. 3, to distribute holy communion on a particular occasion [ad actum] in cases of necessity.

7. It is the duty of the minister to see that during the distribution of communion the greatest respect is shown the Blessed Sacrament and any danger of irreverence avoided.

8. The pastors specified above, who for a just cause petition the Congregation for the Discipline of the Sacraments or the Congregation for the Evangelization of the Nations or the Propagation of the Faith for the faculty, will be granted it for a period of three years.

9. These pastors, after three years, should prepare for the above mentioned congregations an evaluation of progress and of the effectiveness of the practice in the care of souls.

Vatican City, April 30, 1969
RITE TO BE USED WHEN A MINISTER IS DESIGNATED "AD ACTUM" TO HELP THE PRIEST DISTRIBUTE HOLY COMMUNION DURING MASS

1. During the breaking of the Bread, the auxiliary minister, suitably dressed for the office to be fulfilled, proceeds to the sanctuary and places himself near the altar.

2. The designation of this person will be made evident by one of the following rites:
   — The priest, having received communion as usual and having given communion to the minister, blessed him in these or similar words:
     "May the Lord bless you, as you serve your brothers (and) (sisters) by giving them the Bread of life."

   Then the priest hands him a ciborium and together they give communion to the faithful.

   OR

   The priest, having personally received communion and having given communion to the minister, hands him the ciborium without saying anything. And together they give communion to the faithful.

3. When he is distributing communion, the minister says to each one, "Body of Christ", and the communicant answers: "Amen"; this is said regardless of the manner of distribution (whether on the tongue or in the hand).

4. When the distribution of communion is finished, the minister, after washing his fingers if need be, returns to his place in the assembly of the faithful.

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1. If there are many ministers, the priest says the formula only once for everyone; then he hands a ciborium to each.

2. Since it is by handing the ciborium to the minister that the priest expresses the importance of the responsibility entrusted the minister, he will make this gesture in a clearly visible manner.
Appendix 2

RITE TO BE USED WHEN AN AUXILIARY MINISTER GIVES COMMUNION IN A CHURCH OR CHAPEL IN THE ABSENCE OF THE PRIEST OR DEACON

1. At the altar, at least two candles should be lit and a corporal should be arranged. (Where custom demands, there should be a dish of water and finger towel for post-communion ablutions, at the credence table).

2. The auxiliary minister who will be giving communion must make certain that he is suitably dressed and that his hands are clean. Ordinarily, the auxiliary minister will preside over the celebration.

3. Before the distribution of communion, especially on Sundays and feast days, there is a celebration of the Word, following the pattern of the Liturgy of the Word at Mass.

   A. Opening of the Celebration

4. The celebration will open, whenever possible, with singing. Then the minister welcomes the assembly by saying:

   “The grace and peace of God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.”

The assembly answers:

   “Blessed be God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

5. Then the minister invites those present to acknowledge their sinful condition in these words:

   “As we prepare to share in the Holy Eucharist, let us admit that we are sinners.”

   There is a brief pause, in silence.

   Then one of the following formulas is chosen:

   1

   All together:

   “I confess to almighty God, and to you my brothers and sisters, that I have sinned through my own fault

   (all strike their breast once)

   in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done, and in what I have failed to do;

   and I ask blessed Mary, ever virgin, all the angels and saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.”
Then the auxiliary minister says the prayer of forgiveness:

"May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life."

All answer:

"Amen".

II

Minister:

Lord, grant us pardon.

All:

We have sinned against you.

Minister:

Show us your mercy.

All:

And we will be set free.

Then the auxiliary minister says the words of forgiveness:

"May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life."

All:

"Amen".

III

The minister says the following or similar invocations, concluding with the petition: Have mercy on us.

Minister:

"Lord Jesus, sent by the Father to heal and to save men, have mercy on us."

All:

Have mercy on us.

Minister:

Christ, you came into the world to call all sinners, have mercy on us.

All:

Have mercy on us.
Minister:

Lord, enthroned in the glory of the Father where you intercede
for us, have mercy on us.

All:

Have mercy on us.

Then the minister says the prayer of forgiveness:

"May almighty God have mercy on us,
forgive us our sins,
and bring us to everlasting life."

IV

The Act of Contrition may also be used.

6. Then the minister says the Collect which is proper to the day, or one taken
from the missal.

B. Celebration of the Word

7. Two or three readings now take place. The texts will be those assigned in the
Lectionary, with their responses.

8. Then the minister may read the homily which the bishop or the pastor has
arranged, or he may offer a few thoughts for everyone's reflexion.

9. He then introduces the Prayer of the Faithful, if he has been asked to do so.

C. Communion Celebration

10. The Prayer of the Faithful concluded, the minister goes to the tabernacle. After
having genuflected, he takes the ciborium and places it on the altar. Everyone
adores in silence. This silence may be followed by a hymn or psalm which has a
eucharistic theme.

11. Then the minister begins the "Our Father":

"Let us pray with confidence to the Father
in the words our Savior gave us:"

All sing or say:

"Our Father . . ."

The "Our Father" may be concluded with the usual acclamation:

"For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,
now and for ever."

12. If it is fitting, the minister now invites the assembly to exchange the sign of
peace and fraternal charity.

13. Then the priest, having uncovered the ciborium, genuflects, takes the con­
secrated Bread and, holding it a little above the ciborium, turns toward the
assembly and says in an audible voice:

“This is the Lamb of God
who takes away the sins of the world.
Happy are those who are called to his supper.”

All say together, once only:

“Lord, I am not worthy to receive you,
but only say the word and I shall be healed.”

14. The minister, before giving the communion to others, may receive communion himself, saying in a low voice:

“May the body of Christ bring me to everlasting life.”

Then he gives communion to the others. The faithful may receive communion upon the tongue, in the hand, or by serving themselves; the minister says to each one: “Body of Christ”, and the communicant answers: “Amen.”

While the minister offers the Eucharist to those present, a Psalm or an appropriate hymn may be sung or recited.

15. When the distribution of communion is finished, the minister replaces the Eucharist in the tabernacle. (Then, if need be, he purifies his fingers.) He returns to his seat and all may remain silent for a short time. A Psalm or an appropriate hymn may be sung.

16. The silence or the hymn may be concluded by the Prayer after Communion of the Mass of day, or by another appropriate prayer.

17. After this prayer, the minister concludes the celebration by saying:

“May almighty God bless you, keep you from all evil, and bring you to life everlasting.”

All:

Amen

SHORTER RITE

If circumstances require that the rite be shortened, this outline may be followed:

— Before the distribution of communion, the celebration of the Word may be replaced by a reading from the Gospel of John, 6:56-58, or by another brief reading taken from the Holy Scripture. Then all would say the “Our Father” and do as outlined in Nos. 11-17.

— If circumstances require it, the rite may start by the “Our Father”.
Appendix 3

RITE TO USE WHEN AN AUXILIARY MINISTER GIVES COMMUNION IN THE HOME OF THE SICK

1. A table covered with a cloth is placed near the sick person; the arrangements should be convenient for both the sick person, the family and associates. A festive and sacred atmosphere should be maintained for the celebration which is to take place (beauty of the cloth, lighting, flowers, etc.).

A. Opening of Celebration

2. Upon entering the sick person's room, the minister gives the evangelical blessing to him and to all present.

"Peace to this house and to all who dwell within it."

3. He then places the Pyx upon the table and everyone, either bowed or kneeling, worships in silence for a few moments.

4. The minister may then say the following or similar prayer:

"Lord Jesus, you are the comforter of your faithful people: in your great love, you come to visit your sick (aged), (infirm) brother (sister) who wishes to receive you. Strengthen him (her) by your Word and your Eucharist, may he (she) rejoice in your coming: may he (she) find in you the source of all healing the protector and savior of our body and soul:
You who lives and reign with the Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever."

All:

Amen.

5. Then, if he judges it opportune, the minister invites the invalid and his relatives to take part in a brief penitential rite, by saying:

"In the presence of the Lord, we who believe in him admit that we are sinners".

There is a brief pause, in silence.

Then, one of the following formulas is chosen:

I

Together, everyone acknowledges their sins:

"I confess to almighty God, and to you my brothers and sisters,
that I have sinned through my own fault
*(all strike their breast once)*
- in my thoughts and in my words,
- in what I have done,
- and in what I have failed to do;
and I ask blessed Mary, ever virgin,
- all the angels and saints,
- and you, my brothers and sisters,
to pray for me to the Lord our God."

*Then the minister says the following prayer:*

"May almighty God have mercy on us,
forgive us our sins,
and bring us to everlasting life."

All:
"Amen".

**II**

The minister says:

"Lord, grant us pardon."

All:

We have sinned against you.

Minister:

Show us your mercy.

All:

And we will be set free.

*The Minister then says the prayer for forgiveness:*

"May almighty God have mercy on us,
forgive us our sins,
and bring us to everlasting life."

All:

"Amen"

**III**

*The minister says these or other invocations concluding with the petition:*

"Have mercy on us":

"Lord Jesus, sent by the Father to heal and save men, have mercy on us."
All:

**Have mercy on us.**

Minister:

“Christ, you came into the world to call all sinners, have mercy on us.”

All:

**Have mercy on us.**

Minister:

Lord, enthroned in the glory of the Father where you intercede for us, have mercy on us.

All:

**Have mercy on us.**

*Then the minister says the prayer for forgiveness:*

“May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.”

All:

**Amen.**

IV

*The Act of Contrition may be used.*

**B. Celebration of the Word**

6. *The reading of the Word of God usually follows: The choice of the Reading or Readings will be determined in each case according to circumstances. A text from the liturgy of the day or another text from the Bible may be chosen.*

7. *After the reading, a few moments of silence may be observed. If need be, the minister may give a resumé of the homily that he heard at Mass, or propose a few thoughts for reflection. This resumé may be prepared for him by the priest.*

8. *The Prayer of the Faithful may then be said. The minister could repeat the intentions proposed at the community Mass, and insert one or two intentions proper to the needs of the sick person.*

9. *In certain cases (if a person followed the mass on the radio or on the television; if the sick person is too tired, etc.), this ritual may be shortened by reading one of the following brief passages of the Scripture.*
Gospel according to John

III, 16-17:  
Yes, God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not be lost but may have eternal life.

VI, 54-55: At that time, Jesus said:  
Anyone who does eat my flesh and drink my blood has eternal life, and I shall raise him up on the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink.

VI, 54-58: At that time, Jesus said:  
Anyone who does eat my flesh and drink my blood has eternal life, and I shall raise him up on the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood lives in me and I live in him. As I, who am sent by the living Father, myself draw life from the Father, so whoever eats me will draw life from me.

XIV, 6: At that time, Jesus said:  
‘I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one can come to the Father except through me.

XIV, 23: At that time, Jesus said:  
‘If anyone loves me he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we shall come to him and make our home with him.

XIV, 27: At that time, Jesus said:  
Peace I bequeath to you, my own peace I give you, a peace the world cannot give, this is my gift to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid.

First letter of Saint Paul to Corinthians

XI, 26:  
Until the Lord comes, therefore, every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you are proclaiming his death.

First letter of Saint John

IV, 16:  
We ourselves have known and put our faith in God’s love towards ourselves. God is love and anyone who lives in love lives in God, and God lives in him.

This reading may be omitted completely, if necessary.
C. Communion Celebration

10. *The minister then introduces the “Our Father”:*

   “Let us pray with confidence to the Father in the words our Savior gave us:”

All sing or recite:

“Our Father ...”

The “Our Father” may be concluded with the usual acclamation:

“For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever.”

11. *If the minister considers it opportune, he may invite the participants to express the sign of peace and charity to the sick person and to each other.*

12. *After opening the pyx, the minister genuflects, takes the consecrated Bread and, holding it above the pyx, raises his voice and says:*

   “This is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Happy are those who are called to his supper.”

All say together once only:

“Lord, I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the word and I shall be healed.”


14. *If others wish to receive communion, and the pastor has given his approval, they in turn, receive communion in the usual manner. The priest then closes the pyx.*

15. *It is desirable that all pray for a moment in silence. The minister invites everyone to do so by saying: “Let us pray.” He may also suggest a theme for the prayer.*

*The minister concludes this prayer by saying either the Prayer after Communion for that day, or another prayer. For example:*

“Holy Father, almighty and eternal God, we pray to you with faith: may the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ be, for our brother (sister)* who has received it, an everlasting remedy for both body and soul. We pray in the name of Jesus your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.”

All:

“Amen”.

OR:

“Heavenly Father, we ask you to give your abiding protection to those whom you renew by this holy food: you never cease

*If it is more opportune, the words “Your servant” may be used.*
to give them comfort; give them also eternal life. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord.”

All:
“Amén”.

OR:
“Strengthen our weaknesses, O Father, and show us your mercy: give us new life, by your grace, so that we will strive with all fervor to please you in all things. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.”

All:
“Amén”.

OR:
“Our brother (sister)* has been strengthened by this sacrament of our redemption: may this holy food of eternal life, O Father, keep him (her) always in the household of the true faith: we pray in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.”

All:
“Amén”.

OR:
“Almighty Father, you support us in our human failings: show forth your mighty power now, and give strength to our brother (sister)* who has been burdened by sickness: May he (she) receive the gifts of your mercy. In the fullness of health, may he (she) return to the assembly of your faithful people. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord.”

All:
“Amén”.

16. *After this prayer, the minister concludes the celebration by saying:*
“May our heavenly Father bless us, keep us from all evil, and lead us to eternal life.”

All:
“Amén”.

**SHORTENED RITE**

If circumstances require that the rite be shortened, the following guidelines should be followed:

— Before the distribution of communion, the celebration of the Word may be replaced by a reading from the Gospel according to John, 6:56-58, or by another brief reading taken from the Holy Scriptures. Then the “Our Father” is recited; and the rite proceeds as outlined in Nos. 10-16.

— If conditions demand it, the rite may be begun by the “Our Father”.


Appendix 4

RITE OF APPOINTMENT OF A PERMANENT EXTRAORDINARY MINISTER OF THE EUCHARIST

1. The rite of appointment may be celebrated by the local Ordinary, by the pastor or by a priest delegated by him, in the presence of the people, either at Mass or outside of Mass.

I. When the rite is performed during Mass

2. After the homily, wherein the priest instructs the faithful concerning the pastoral background for what is taking place, he introduces the person chosen for the eucharistic ministry. These or similar words are used:

“Our bishop has given N. the important work of distributing holy communion to the faithful, of bringing it to the sick, and of giving this holy sacrament to the dying, as they begin their final journey to the Father.

May you to whom this holy work is confided, show forth in your faith and in your conduct a life which is worthy of praise: may your life be a sign of your close unity with the church, the unity which this holy Sacrament so admirably brings into being and makes known to all mankind.\(^1\)

Since you know that by your sharing in the Body and Blood of the Lord, you proclaim his death until he returns in glory,\(^2\) make of your life a spiritual offering, acceptable to God through Christ Jesus.\(^3\)

As you know so well, we who share one bread, form but one body.

Since you will be bringing the Holy Eucharist to your brothers and sisters, always show forth the kindest love and concern, as Jesus himself commanded. For as he fed his disciples with his own Sacred Body, he said to them, “This is my commandment, that you love one another”; then, on his knees, he humbly washed their feet.\(^4\)
3. At this point, the persons (or person) chosen for permanent extraordinary ministry comes before the celebrant, who questions them in these words:

Celebrant:

Do you wish to accept this work which is being entrusted to you for the service and growth of the Church — to give the Body of Christ to your brothers and sisters?

R. I do.

Celebrant:

Do you wish to draw ever greater strength from this Bread of Life, and pattern your life to the sacrifice of Christ?

R. I do.

Celebrant:

Do you intend to fulfill your service of the Eucharist with utmost care and reverence?

R. I do.

The chosen ministers kneel, and the celebrant pronounces this blessing:

“May almighty God, source of grace and goodness, bless you, as you take upon yourselves (yourself) the responsibility of ministering the Body of Christ: In faithfully sharing the bread of life with your brothers, may you draw strength from this holy sacrament, so that you may become worthy to share in the eternal banquet which the Father has prepared for his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with him in the unity of the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever.”

All:

“Amen”.

4. There will be an intention for the new auxiliary ministers of the Eucharist in the Prayer of the Faithful.

At the time for the preparation of gifts, this minister brings the ciborium which contains the bread for the Eucharist. At communion, he receives the Eucharist under both species.

II When the rite is performed outside the Mass

5. Once the people are assembled, an appropriate hymn or psalm is sung. Whoever is presiding over the celebration then delivers a brief allocution, as above (no. 2) in which he instructs the people about the pastoral reasons for what is taking place at this assembly; he introduces the persons chosen as auxiliary ministers of the
Eucharist in these or similar words:

"Our bishop has given N . . ." as in No. 2, above.

The questioning and blessing then follow, as in No. 3.

6. There will be an intention for the newly designated ministers in the prayer of the Faithful. The blessing is given according to the usual formula, and the celebration ends with an appropriate hymn or psalm.

* * *

7. Those who are to be designated as Extraordinary Ministers will be gathered at the front of the nave: if they are not too numerous, they may come forward to the sanctuary area. They will remain standing for the Bishop's welcome and address.

THE WELCOME, ADDRESS AND BLESSING TO BE GIVEN BY THE BISHOP ON THE OCCASION OF THE DESIGNATION OF EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS FOR LARGE ASSEMBLIES OF THE FAITHFUL.

Fellow pilgrims on our long journey to the Father: I greet you in the name of Jesus Christ, who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. May the important work that we are now undertaking be a blessing upon all of us present at this gathering (this Mass), upon our assemblies of the faithful and our diocese.

When Jesus fed the crowds, His Apostles served them, too, showing both their love for the Master and their concern for the people who had gathered for the Word of life. In the same spirit of generous service, you have presented yourselves for the work of ministering the food of Life to your brothers and sisters.

The worship of the people living in a diocese is of utmost personal concern to the Bishop: of all his cares, the praise of God and the community's growth in holiness are paramount. I welcome this expression of your faith, and I am edified by your desire to be of service at the Eucharistic assembly.

My friends, I have but one main wish for you, and it is this: may the conduct of your lives be equal to the noble work you now begin. May you always keep in mind that your fellow pilgrims
need not only the Food of Eternal Life, Jesus, the Son of the Eternal Father: they also need your exemplary life, your spiritual insights, your hope and your basic honesty. Just as he who preaches the Word of God must confirm it by his life, so you who will minister the Bread of Life should endeavor to follow the Master ever more closely. May you and all of us who serve at the altar keep our eyes turned toward Jesus, the humble Servant of the Father, whose Body we share and whose life we live. Thus, your service will be no mere convenience for others: it will be a clear sign of your faith.

As your Bishop, I welcome you to the new work. I bless you as you begin it, and I ask God's special guidance on your family and your home. May all of us, Bishop, Priests and auxiliary ministers of the Eucharist, serve one another with utmost kindness and faith.

That you may be able to publicly proclaim your faith at this important moment in your life, I will ask you now to declare your intentions before the faithful here assembled:

Bishop:
Do you wish to accept this work which is being entrusted to you for the service and growth of the Church — to give the Body of Christ to your brothers and sisters?

R. I do.

Bishop:
Do you wish to draw ever greater strength from this Bread of Life, and pattern your life to the sacrifice of Christ?

R. I do.

Bishop:
Do you intend to fulfill your service of the Eucharist with utmost care and reverence?

R. I do.

The chosen ministers kneel, and the Bishop pronounces this blessing:
"May almighty God, source of grace and goodness, + bless you, as you take upon yourselves (yourself) the responsibility of ministering the Body of Christ:
In faithfully sharing the bread of life with your brothers, may you draw strength from this holy sacrament, so that you may become worthy to share in the eternal banquet which the Father has prepared for his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with him in the unity of the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever.

All:

“Amen”.

* * *
A BISHOP’S LETTER TO THE SICK

The Belgian Hierarchy agreed to present a letter to each of the sick who would be receiving Holy Communion from lay ministers. It was felt that the sick persons should know that their Bishop was concerned for their health and spiritual welfare, and that the new pastoral directives involving religious and laity in a role formerly reserved to priests and deacons were endorsed by the local Bishop, and were being implemented under his guidance.

The letter was prepared for presentation by the priest who would visit the sick person to explain the changes which were taking place in the parish’s care for the chronically ill and bedridden.

Their letter, which was published January 28, 1970*, is reproduced as a type of what might be presented: local Canadian churches could adapt the Belgian pastoral concept to their own areas, if the rite is used. A note of caution: it is important that the priest assure the sick person that other pastoral concerns, such as the Sacraments of Penance and the Anointing of the Sick, will be personally taken care of by the priest.

A BISHOP’S LETTER TO A SICK PERSON IN THE DIOCESE

BISHOPS’ CONFERENCE OF BELGIUM, 1970

This is a letter from your Bishop:

You know that Jesus, in the Gospel, showed great concern for the sick, for the infirm and for all those in deep distress. Today, the Church wishes to continue Our Lord’s kindness toward those who, like you, find themselves burdened with suffering and unable to take an active part in the community. Most of all, the Church wishes to offer you God’s forgiveness, and an easy access to the holy Eucharist.

I greet you by letter, since it is not possible for me to meet each one of you personally; I would like to assure you of my sympathy and my prayers.

I wish to inform you of certain new arrangements made by the Belgian Bishops, in accordance with our Holy Father, Pope Paul VI. Until very recently, only priests and deacons were allowed to give Holy Communion to the faithful. From now on, other Christian men and women, both those in religious life and members of the laity, may be authorized to take Communion to the sick and handicapped; they will do this especially on Sundays and feast days, in conjunction with the parish Mass. By introducing this new method of procedure, the Church re-establishes a very ancient tradition.

*SERVICE DU SEIGNEUR, No. 3, pp. 14-16, February, 1970
It is very clear that only the priest can consecrate the bread into the Body of Christ; but from now on, your fellow Christians will be associated with him in carrying the Eucharist. Until now, many parishioners confined to their home could not benefit from the Eucharist except on very infrequent occasions. They were nearly always deprived of Holy Communion on Sundays and feast days. In the future, it will be possible for you to receive communion more frequently — particularly on Sundays.

When you cannot go to a banquet, one of your friends often brings you a report of what took place, and tells you how much you were missed; often you are brought a piece of the cake, or a little portion of the banquet food: by these signs, the community “reaches out” to make you one with them. In your parish, something similar will take place: after Mass, someone will read a part of the Sunday Scriptures to you, bring you the message of the homily, and “your share” of the Lord’s saving banquet, the Holy Eucharist.

The Sunday liturgy has the characteristics of a family celebration: many of you regularly take part in this celebration through radio and television. Regular Sunday communion, as an extension of the parish Mass, will strengthen your union with all your brothers and sisters in Christ.

With the Church, you will participate more fully at Christmas, Lent, Holy Week, Easter, and so forth. Regular contact with the Word of God will help you to relive the actions and situations in the life of Jesus. Frequent communion will stir up the life of Christ within you, and will associate you more intimately with His Sacrifice; in union with Jesus’ death and resurrection, you will be victorious over evil, sin and death.

More than ever, I invite you to be of good hope. Through His poverty at Bethlehem, through His hidden life at Nazareth and through His Passion, Jesus saved the world: infirmity, loneliness and all the difficult trials of being confined by illness can be very precious to the world’s future. Christ asks your cooperation; the Church is counting on you.

I am sure that you will be happy to hear of our plans to help you receive Holy Communion and hear the Word of God. I pray that you may continue your important work for the Church and the salvation of the world.

I wish God’s blessing upon you.

(Bishop’s name)

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