

## **EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF THE EUCHARIST**

*By Joanne Alloway*

Many people are accustomed to calling lay ministers who help distribute the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ as “Eucharist Ministers”, however, that is inaccurate. The only true Eucharist Ministers are Priests and Bishops, as they are the Ordinary ministers of the Body and Blood of Christ. Lay people who help our Pastor and visiting priests on the altar are now properly called Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist (EME),

I’d like to share my story with you, as to how I became a part of this joyful and amazing ministry four years ago. For six weeks, in winter of 2014, I had been very sick, going to doctors, being hospitalized and trying many medicines, with no improvements. One night I simply got down on my knees and begged our Lord to help me, and in return I’d do anything He asked of me. Anything! I went to bed crying, but the very next morning, I could tell I was better! That afternoon, as I was enjoying feeling well, Fr. Andy called to ask if I would bring Communion to a very ill parishioner in Edgewater. I was stunned; this must be what Jesus wanted me to do for Him. I had never done this before, but I surely said yes! Fr. assured me that the office staff would give me what I needed, and they were most accommodating. I worried needlessly until I met this kind lady. I found myself looking forward to the visits, and even taking Communion to her in the hospital and nursing home – if she was transferred. This very first lady I gave Jesus to at home, was such an inspiration to me, I truly saw Christ in her. She radiated a joy in everyday and in thoughts of Heaven, despite how sick she was. I always felt that I was getting more out our visits than she was, but she disagreed. That’s when I realized I wanted to become an Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharist, and shortly after meeting her, I did.

My first-time giving Communion at mass was on Christmas Eve, 2014, in the Narthex. I remember being very excited and nervous. It was wonderful to be a tiny part of the mass. In fact, to this day, I feel this ministry is a privilege and an honor, and often a high point in my week, whether I am serving His Body or His Precious Blood to our parishioners. Although this is an ongoing commitment of time, it is one that I cherish. I believe most EMEs feel this way too.

For anyone interested in becoming an EME, the training is short, most of the real training happens on the altar itself, as you become familiar with and are at ease with the process. Please email Donna Wardrup, [office@hfccmail.org](mailto:office@hfccmail.org) for more information on the next training, and God bless you.

