Archdiocese of Vancouver
ARCHBISHOP'S OFFICE

DECREE

Delegating to Pastors and Chaplains

the Faculty to Depute Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

for Service in Parishes and Institutions

The Code of Canon Law establishes that the ordinary minister of Holy Communion is a bishop, priest or deacon, while the Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion is an acolyte or another member of the Christian faithful designated according to law.¹

This norm is further clarified by the Instructions *Ecclesiae de Mysterio*² and *Redemptionis Sacramentum*,³ which state the conditions under which lay people, even though they are not acolytes, may distribute Holy Communion. These conditions exist when ordinary ministers are not present, when those present are unable to assist, or when the Mass would be excessively prolonged because of an insufficient number of ordinary ministers. Such Extraordinary Ministers may be authorized to exercise this function either on a specific occasion or for a period of time.

These two Instructions also identify those who are able to grant the necessary permission for this exercise of this ministry. In unforeseen circumstances, the priest presiding at the Mass is empowered to authorize this service at a particular liturgy. Only the Ordinary, however, is able to grant a mandate for a period of time.

By this Decree, I delegate to all pastors and canonically-appointed chaplains the faculty to depute Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion to serve in the parish.

---

¹ Cf. Code of Canon Law, c. 910, c. 230 §3.
² Congregation for the Clergy et al., Instruction *Ecclesiae de Mysterio*, “On Certain Questions Regarding the Collaboration of the Non-Ordained Faithful in the Sacred Ministry of Priests” (15 August 1997).
³ Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, Instruction *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, “On Certain Matters to be Observed or to be Avoided Regarding the Most Holy Eucharist” (25 March 2004).
or other institution for a term of three years, subject to the following norms:

1. This delegation is given to pastors and chaplains during their term of office, and may not be subdelegated, even to an assistant pastor.
2. Priests temporarily in charge of a parish, whether as administrators or temporary administrators, may depute Extraordinary Ministers for a maximum term of six months.
3. The mandate granted in this way does not expire on the pastor’s transfer or retirement from office.
4. The mandate is to be given in writing, and a copy kept in the parish file. A sample is attached in the appendix of the Guidelines for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion.
5. Those chosen must be Catholics of good reputation and, if married, in a valid marriage.
6. The pastor must withdraw the mandate should the conditions in n. 5 change.
7. As specified in the Archdiocesan Guidelines for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, those chosen are to be carefully instructed in the meaning of the service they provide, including its extraordinary character, in the reverence to be shown for the Sacrament, in the rubrics to be observed, and in the discipline on admission to Holy Communion.
8. All provisions of the Archdiocesan Guidelines for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are to be followed carefully; a copy is to be attached to each mandate.

This Decree is effective from today, the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, October 4, 2016.

Given at the Archdiocese of Vancouver, in the City of Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, on the Fourth day of October, in the Year of Our Lord, Two Thousand and Sixteen.

+Michael Miller CSB
Most Reverend J. Michael Miller, CSB
Archbishop of Vancouver

Very Reverend Gary Franken
Vicar General