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■ POLICY

□ GUIDELINE

YOUTH MINISTRY PROGRAMS

YOUTH AND LITURGICAL ROLES

All ministry is a service to the people of God. Liturgical roles are viewed as a service to the assembly and not as an honor for the individual. No one who meets the criterion for these roles should be purposefully excluded.

Neither Canon Law nor liturgical law expressly lists an age requirement for the various liturgical roles. What is important is that those of any age who fulfill these roles are 1) Part of the assembly (they worship regularly in the community); 2) Possess the talent and ability required by these various roles; 3) Strive to lead a Christian life; and 4) Are well trained in the roles following the diocesan guidelines. Ultimately, it is the pastor's responsibility to judge the suitability of a person to a given liturgical role as well as guaranteeing that no qualifying segment of the parish community is excluded from these roles.

An Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion must be fully initiated into the Church and in good standing with the Church. *Immensae Caritas* says the following regarding the choice of Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion that they "... distinguish himself or herself by a Christian life, faith and morals: striving to be worthy of this great office; cultivating devotion to the holy Eucharist and acting as an example to the other faithful by piety and reverence for this most holy Sacrament of the altar." (VI)

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are just that, "extra" or beyond the ordinary ministers (priests, deacons, installed acolytes.) Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are not required, but should be prepared in the case that not enough ordinary ministers are present.

It is important to note that all Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are appointed by the Bishop for a period of two years and are to be commissioned. This means that at least every two years a letter should be sent to the Bishop with the names of potential new Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion as well as those who wish to be recommissioned. The Bishop will then reply to the request. These instructions are more completely outlined on pp. 4-5 of the Diocese of Columbus Guidelines for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion.