

## **Guidelines for Parish Ministries**

*Diocese of El Paso*

*Better that many people do some ministry, than some doing everything.  
Good will is not enough; formation is required and necessary (US Catholic Bishops).*

### **Definitions:**

*Liturgical Ministries:* Any ministry around the altar or sanctuary, such as Eucharistic minister, lector, altar server.

*Non-liturgical Ministries:* bereavement, home visits, prison work, migrant and social justice related activities, St. Vincent de Paul, etc.

1. **Ministry.** One is “called” into a ministry. This “call” usually happens through an invitation by someone in the community. Someone asks you: “Have you thought of being a . . . ?
2. **Diocesan policy** requires that any person wishing to participate in a parish ministry must attend the Christian Formation Classes (September to December), followed by Ministry Training (January and February) at the Tepeyac Institute. The person is then installed by the local bishop at an evening liturgy, usually in October and March.
3. **Age.** Liturgical ministers (Eucharist and Lector) should be at least 17 years of age and have received the sacrament of Confirmation.
4. **Handicapped.** Special attention should be given to the handicapped and their involvement in a particular ministry. Church sanctuaries should have wheelchair ramps and rails.
5. **Divorced.** If a person is divorced and/or remarried in the Church, that person can carry out a liturgical ministry.
6. **Time in Ministry.** Ideally, a person should hold a ministry for three years, and then change to another ministry. This change gives others the opportunity to discover their gifts and to be involved in ministry. Some ministries are exceptions, such as catechesis.
7. **Two Ministries.** Generally, a person should perform no more than two ministries at a given time. It is important to balance time with family and work in the Church.
8. **Renewal.** Ministries must be renewed through the Tepeyac Institute every three years. One has the option to enter a new ministry.
9. **Ministry as a public function.** Ministry responds to the needs of the Church and others, not my need. This means one cannot say “I lector only at the 9 am mass because it is my favorite choir.” Or “I don’t like the 5 pm mass on Sunday because it is too late in the day.” Ministry never revolves around one’s personal interests, but the interests of the community.

(Tepeyac, updated 9/12)