



The Vocation to be an Extraordinary Minister of the Holy Eucharist



Norms and Guidelines

Welcome to the Ministry of Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharist!

"The Eucharist constitutes the very life of the Church, for the Lord said; I am the bread of life. No one who comes to me shall ever be hungry; no one who believes in me shall ever thirst."

"In every celebration of the Eucharist there should always be a sufficient number of ministers for the distribution of the Eucharist. Priority is always given to ordinary ministers (bishops, priests, deacons) and auxiliary ministers (instituted acolytes). When there are large numbers of the faithful present and there are **insufficient** ordinary and auxiliary members at hand, special or extraordinary ministers properly appointed beforehand should assist in the distribution of Communion." (HLS, #29).

This booklet is designed to assist you in your participation in the Liturgical **Ministry of Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharist** (more commonly known as **Eucharistic Minister**), here at Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in Fremont.

Your willingness to serve as an **Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharist**, reflects not only a response to your Baptismal call to serve the people of God, but a commitment to Christ as you share

in the preaching, teaching and leading aspects of the church. You offer the Eucharist, recognize the Body of Christ in those to whom you offer Eucharist and ultimately you act as the Body of Christ by fully participating in the life of the parish and the wider community. Your willingness to commit to a schedule, to prepare properly for your service and to arrive on time dressed appropriately for your assigned Mass, further reflects that commitment.

Once trained and commissioned in this ministry, you will be assisting the Celebrations according to the schedule assigned to you. You will wear the medal or badge available in the vestibule as a sign of your humility and availability for it signifies that you have accepted the awesome privilege of assisting in the distribution of Holy Eucharist!

God bless your efforts!

Fr. Joy Kumarthusseril, mf

General Ministry Information

General Ministry Information:

- In the Parish of Our Lady of Guadalupe, all Eucharistic Ministers are appointed by the pastor for a term of three (3) years, which term may be renewed twice for a total service time of nine (9) years.
- At Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish, the Coordinators of Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist, after consultation with the pastor, issues a written invitation in the name of the pastor to those parishioners either or both have deemed to be appropriate members for the ministry.
- Upon completion of a term or terms, the Extraordinary Minister returns to the Assembly, allowing someone else within the parish community to respond to the invitation to serve. +
- Those invited to serve in this ministry are **designated only for service in our parish**. Eucharistic Ministers should not take it upon themselves to bring Communion to a parent, family member, friend or neighbor, unless permission is given from the pastor or his designee, of the parish in which the person resides. (specially applicable when you visit a parish other than where you are instituted as a Minister)
- The selection of and invitation to serve as an Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharist is a reflection of the diversity of the parish. An invitation to join the ministry does not mean that one is "**better or holier than another**", nor is an invitation indicative of a reward of some sort. Diocesan and liturgical

guidelines for invitation to service in this ministry clearly indicate that an invitation to serve ...not to create an elite in the church community.

- **Your respect for the Ministry** should be reflected in your appearance and attire; appropriate attire includes being properly groomed and wearing a suit and tie or clean, nicely creased trousers with shirt and tie or nice sweater; pants suit or skirt or slacks with blouse/sweater or any other dress that could be considered decent. Please note: no inappropriate dress at any time! Jewelry or clothing which would be distracting to the Assembly is highly discouraged.
- There are usually few Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist assigned to each of the regularly scheduled Week-end Masses, Holy Day Masses and daily Masses.

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Additional Responsibilities Information

Ministry to the Sick / Homebound:

- A parish is to have sufficient ministers trained and prepared for the Ministry of Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharist, whose responsibility is not only for the assistance in the distribution of the Eucharist at every regularly scheduled Week-end Mass, daily Mass and Masses offered during the Christmas and Easter Season **but to homebound parishioners and those in hospitals and nursing centers as well.**
- At Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish, we have the specific Ministry of Pastoral Visitation to the Sick and Homebound, in which visitors are specifically trained in pastoral visitation including offering

Eucharist when desired and requested by the homebound parishioner or in nursing centers or hospitals.

- **Eucharistic Ministers** may be called upon to bring Eucharist to **temporarily homebound parishioners** who may be, temporarily, unable to participate, in the Parish liturgical celebrations, due to illness or hospital recuperation. The Pastor or the Coordinator of EME Ministry assigns Eucharistic Ministers to bring Eucharist in these situations, by neighborhood, so you are not inconvenienced. The expectation is that you will bring Eucharist to the temporarily homebound person(s) on your way home after you have attended Sunday or weekday Mass, or at a designated time when it is opportune for the homebound to receive the Eucharist.
- The Blessed Sacrament is conveyed in a small closed container called a pyx. When bringing Eucharist to a homebound the EME, leaves the pyx on the altar, **with the needed number of hosts in it** before Mass to be consecrated. After Communion, or in rare cases, at the conclusion of Mass the priest will give the pyx with the host in it to you.
- When carrying the Blessed Sacrament, be careful to place it in a safe spot. You may place the pyx in a small cloth bag and wear it around your neck or you may put it in your pocket, or pocketbook. If you do that, you should be careful to place it alone, rather than in a cluttered area. Do not leave it unattended. You should go directly after Mass to the person (s) to whom you will be bringing communion and not let other activities distract you from your ministry, e.g., go shopping or tend to errands then to give communion.

- You do want to remember that you are carrying the Blessed Sacrament and attending to the business of the Lord so if you meet someone, you do want to smile and greet your neighbor, but you want to be careful about stopping and engaging in a long conversation. Use your good judgment!
- The protocol used by Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish for bringing Eucharist to the homebound will be published in a pamphlet and will be made available to all on our website. The Coordinator of Lay Ministry may also provide you with a pamphlet with prayers to be used when you are asked to bring Eucharist to the homebound. Essentially the protocol consists of: a greeting; penitential rite; a short reading from Scripture; intercessory prayers; the Lord's Prayer; reception of Communion; a prayer after Communion and a blessing.

Ash Wednesday:

- EME's may be asked to assist with the distribution of ashes on Ash Wednesday. If you are assigned to assist in one of the Ash Wednesday services, you should check in at the sacristy and determine from the Celebrant, where you will be located to distribute the ashes and what script you will use: "**Turn away from sin and be faithful to the gospel**", or "**Remember, you are dust and to dust you will return.**" You mark each persons forehead with the sign of the cross with your thumb while saying one of the scripts. Be sure to wash your hands after administering the ashes.

Before Mass Information

- On the day you are assigned to serve as an Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharist, it is appropriate and a good practice, to develop the habit of taking time to prepare for your service with quiet prayer and if possible, a reflective reading of Scripture.
- Plan on being in the vestibule at least 15 minutes prior to your scheduled Mass time; **check your name off the posted schedule or insert your name for the person for whom you are substituting** and then you may remain there to help welcome the people as they come and if necessary assist them to their seat. Your checking in early allows the HEM to know that you (or your substitute) are present for your assigned Mass and able to fulfill your ministry.
- Your hands should be clean, with possibly neatly trimmed and clean nails. It is good practice to wash your hands with soap and water before the liturgy. You may also sanitize your hands before the distribution of the communion as you line up.
- Your participation in the liturgy should be whole and complete, by paying respectful attention to the proclamation of the Word, joining in the singing and offering the peace greeting, etc.

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At Mass Information

You may sit in the Assembly with family or friends, close enough to the altar to move there easily **during** the sign of peace within the liturgy.

- If, at the Mass to which you are assigned, there is the unexpected presence of a deacon or another priest, the last person named on the schedule should refrain from coming forward.
- Ministers come forward to the altar, **during** the "Sign of Peace", pass by the hand sanitizer stand (to the side of the front pews in our Church) and after having sanitized the hands please stand below the sanctuary. Time your arrival to **precede** the Celebrant's readiness to begin the Breaking of the Bread as **this is a significant liturgical action**. There is no need to continue the peace greeting on the altar as your attention at this time should be focused on the altar. After the Priest has received the Body, please proceed with reverence to the side of the Altar and stand between the altar and tabernacle to receive the communion.
- To encourage the Assembly at a particular liturgy, to understand their own participation in the sacrament, the Church explicitly encourages the reception of communion from bread consecrated at that Mass. At Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish, this is a practice that has not been reversed as yet. The priest may bring if needed additional ciboria, from the tabernacle, to the altar, for distribution.
- At Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish, as in any most other churches, you receive Communion after the celebrant. You line up behind the altar and stand **shoulder to shoulder** for the celebrant to distribute Communion.
- You should be alert to the needs of the faithful in the first row or two on either side of the Church, as often, physically challenged or elderly parishioners are there, to whom you should bring the

Eucharist so they do not have to come forward.

- At some of the more crowded Masses where there may be members of the Assembly in the Choir area or Children's Chapel, the Celebrant may call an additional Eucharistic Minister forward to distribute Eucharist.
- When bringing Eucharist to these areas, be aware that you are only to bring Communion to the assigned area. Go directly to the area, distribute Communion there and then come directly back to the altar with your ciborium. The Celebrant can take care of placing the leftover hosts back in the tabernacle after emptying your ciborium to the one, which would be kept in the tabernacle. Place the Ciborium back to the credence table and proceed to your seat.
- When offering Eucharist, state in a clear, audible, but not loud voice, "**The Body of Christ.**" This is a faith statement and should not be modified in any way under the guise of making it more "meaningful" by such statements as "Take Jesus", "The Precious Body of Jesus" etc. These statements DO NOT profess the faith of the Catholic Church regarding the meaning of the action at that moment.
- When offering Eucharist, do not state a person's name, even if you know it. This fragments the common unity of the assembly. When you say some names and not others, it implies some are more important than others.
- Remember - you are a presence of Christ to each person as you minister, so, smile kindly, and refrain from appearing annoyed or

stern or appear to be in a hurry.

- Allow each communicant a moment to respond "Amen".
- If you drop the Consecrated Host, do not serve it to the person in front of whom you dropped it. Your calm demeanor at this moment can calm or assure an anxious and embarrassed person. Pick up the Host and consume it yourself, or if stepped on it and dirtied it, put it to the side of the ciboria until you can place it in the dish next to the Tabernacle for disposal. **Please do not place it directly into the Sacrament in the sacristy.**
- When there are no more communicants at your station, you bring any unconsumed elements to the altar as quietly, efficiently and reverently as possible. The priest or deacon will assist you in emptying your ciborium. Once you have brought and place the empty ciborium on the credence table, you may return to your seat within the Assembly and join in the communal silence or singing which may be occurring at that time. (**N.B.** It is appropriate to consolidate the ciboria and any **empty** ciboria **should be left on the apron of the Credence table** for proper cleansing after Mass).

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Distribution of the Precious Blood:

- Because of the numbers attending Masses, Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish only offers the cup at designated Masses. May refrain from it especially during the flu season or when directed for any reason by the diocese.
- When Cup is distributed to avoid a back-up of communicants while offering the cup at Mass, please be aware of leaving a

significant distance between the minister offering the Eucharistic Bread and you offering the cup. At the Holy Thursday Mass and the Easter Vigil, you will be expected to participate in a rehearsal and will be given a specific location at which to stand (and may be different from the usual place).

- Hold the Chalice before each communicant and say "**The Blood of Christ**". The same comments hold true about modifying this statement as those for "**The Body of Christ**." The Communicant responds with an "Amen" and the minister hands the cup to the communicant, who takes the cup, takes a sip and hands the cup back.
- Wipe the rim of the cup carefully with the purificator, (inside and out) and turn the cup a quarter turn for the next person. (The easiest way to do this is to, before offering the cup to the 1st communicant in line, open the purificator from its folds so that is available to use like a small dish towel...that is what it is!)
- If your cup is emptied and there are more communicants, see if another minister is finished and has **Consecrated** wine remaining in his or her cup can invite him or her to take your place. If not, you should take the empty cup to the credence (table) and place your cup with the purificator on it, on the credence table and then return to your seat within the Assembly.
- If, after the last communicant, you have Precious Blood remaining in your chalice, look around at the other stations to see if there is a place where you can assist or where some other minister may need the wine from your cup. If not, take the cup to the credence (table), consume the Precious Blood and then follow the same procedure as above. Please note, that if there is a substantial

amount of Precious Blood left, no one is expected to consume an extraordinary quantity of Precious Blood. Please be responsible in getting others to assist you. If you have a wheat or alcohol related illness, you will not be expected to consume the Precious elements. In that case, please put your cup on the altar for the priest or other EM to consume and return to your place within the Assembly.

- If you drop or spill the Precious Blood - **DO NOT PANIC!** Stop what you are doing. Your demeanor will reassure those communicants in line or, in particular, the person who may have caused the spill. If the spill is small, your purificator may be all you need to blot the spill. Delay the communion line as little as possible. If it is a large spill, go to the sacristy for a large towel or cloth. If necessary get help from someone. Soak up the Precious Blood as well as you can and then place a clean towel over the spot, and begin distributing at a spot moving little away from the spillage place so that no one needs to step on it. After the Liturgy, get a cold wet cloth and carefully scrub the place where the spill occurred. The cloths used to soak up the original spill should be placed with the purificators to be rinsed out in the appropriate manner.

Information about Intinction and Celiac Disease.

The General Instruction on the Roman Missal offers four (4) methods for administering communion from the cup, weighted in order of preference: drinking, by a spoon, through a tube, or by intinction (dipping the sacred host in the Precious Blood) The spoon and tube are not customary in the United States. **Drinking directly from the cup is clearly preferred to any other method of ministering the Precious Blood.** In the Diocese of Oakland, administering Eucharist by intinction is discouraged. In other places, where it is allowed, if you are asked to be an EME, faced with a communicant who presents a consecrated host to you as a minister of the cup take the host from the hand of the communicant, dip the host into the Precious Blood and administer it on the tongue of the communicant with the words "**The Body and Blood of Christ.**" (should not happen usually).

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Celiac Disease:

Celiac disease is a disorder causing an allergic intestinal reaction to the gluten in wheat. Gluten is a protein enzyme which activates when flour is kneaded and functions to bind the wheat together. Gluten is a toxin to persons with the disease and damages the digestive system which inhibits the absorption of vitamins and nutrients and predisposes its victims to a myriad of illnesses. As a Eucharistic minister, it is important to recognize that there are persons in the assembly who are medically advised against the reception of Holy Communion under the form of bread and it is not your place to judge those who approach only the cup. The principle of extending the cup to these faithful is a matter of justice. Unless they receive the Precious Blood, they cannot participate in Holy

Communion. **Canon Law # 925** permits the reception of communion "under the form of wine alone in cases of necessity."

Miscellaneous Information.

- Be sure to notify **HEM (Assign one for each Mass) before one month**, of any known schedule issues, e.g. vacations for the following month, so the schedule may be prepared appropriately.
- The schedule is available in the sacristy, in the vestibule, on the website, for a reasonable period.
- Be sure to have the schedule **before** the start of the new month so that if arrangements for a substitute have to be made, there will be ample time to do so. **Remember it is your responsibility to secure a substitute should you have a schedule conflict.**
- When you come forward from the Assembly to fulfill your ministry at Mass, and when returning to your place within the Assembly after fulfilling your service within the Liturgy, do so quietly and efficiently without calling attention to yourself.
- If you need to take the Blessed Sacrament from the tabernacle, you approach the tabernacle, open the door, genuflect (or deeply bow if unable to genuflect) then remove the ciborium.
- If you are taking the Blessed Sacrament to the tabernacle, you open the door of the tabernacle, place the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle, genuflect (or deeply bow if you are unable to genuflect) and close and lock the tabernacle door.

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- After you have finished distributing the Eucharist, and have returned any remaining Hosts, you may dip the fingers you used to distribute Holy Eucharist into the small bowl on the credence table and dry them on the purificator next to the bowl.
- **You need not process out with the celebrant at the end of Mass.**
- Unless otherwise there is a dire need, a Liturgical Minister may perform only one liturgical ministry at a time, at Mass, thus, e.g. if you are performing the function of Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharist at Mass, you may not also perform the function of lector at the same Mass.

Appendix

Liturgy Guides

Some of the following guidelines may be repetitive, however these are indications given by the “United States Catholic Conference of Bishops - USCCB” for the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion at Mass.

General Principles

In every celebration of the Eucharist, there should be a sufficient number of ministers of Holy Communion so that it may be distributed in a reverent and orderly manner. Bishops, priests and deacons distribute Holy Communion in virtue of their office as ordinary ministers of the Body and Blood of the Lord. ⁽¹⁾ When the size of the congregation or the incapacity of the bishop, priest, or deacon requires it, the celebrant may be assisted by other bishops, priests, or deacons. If such ordinary ministers of Holy Communion are not present, "the priest may call upon extraordinary ministers to assist him, i.e., duly instituted acolytes or even other faithful who have been deputed for this purpose. In case of necessity, the priest may also depute suitable faithful for this single occasion (GIRM 162)."

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Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion should receive sufficient spiritual, theological, and practical preparation to fulfill their role with knowledge and reverence. In all matters, they should follow the guidance of the diocesan bishop (*Norms for the Distribution and Reception of Holy Communion Under Both Kinds for the Dioceses of the*

United States of America, NDRHC, no. 28). When recourse is had to Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion, especially in the distribution of Holy Communion under both kinds, their number should not be increased beyond what is required for the orderly and reverent distribution of the Body and Blood of the Lord. In all matters such Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion should follow the guidance of the diocesan bishop (IBID).

All ministers of Holy Communion should show the greatest reverence for the Most Holy Eucharist by their demeanor, their attire, and the manner in which they handle the consecrated bread or wine. Should there be any mishap--as when, for example, the consecrated wine is spilled from the chalice--then the affected "area . . . should be washed and the water poured into the *sacrarium* [*GIRM*, 280]." (NDRHC, 29).

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Liturgy of the Eucharist

- As the *Agnus Dei* or *Lamb of God* is begun, the Bishop or priest alone, or with the assistance of the deacon, and if necessary of concelebrating priests, breaks the Eucharistic bread. Other empty ciboria or patens are then brought to the altar if this is necessary. The deacon or priest places the consecrated bread in several ciboria or patens, if necessary, as required for the distribution of Holy Communion. If it is not possible to accomplish this distribution in a reasonable time, the celebrant may call upon the assistance of other deacons or concelebrating priests.
- If extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion are required by pastoral need, they should not approach the altar before the

priest has received Communion. After the priest has concluded his own Communion, he distributes Communion to the extraordinary ministers, assisted by the deacon, and then hands the sacred vessels to them for distribution of Holy Communion to the people.

- All receive Holy Communion in the manner described by the *General Instruction to the Roman Missal*, whether priest concelebrants (cf. GIRM, nos. 159, 242, 243, 246), deacons (cf. GIRM, nos. 182, 244, 246), or Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (cf. GIRM, no. 284). Neither deacons nor lay ministers may ever receive Holy Communion in the manner of a concelebrating priest. The practice of Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion waiting to receive Holy Communion until after the distribution of Holy Communion is not in accord with liturgical law. (NDRHC, 39; GIRM, 160).
- After all Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion have received the Eucharist, the bishop or priest celebrant reverently hands vessels containing the Body or the Blood of the Lord to the deacons or extraordinary ministers who will assist with the distribution of Holy Communion. The deacon may assist the priest in handing the vessels containing the Body and Blood of the Lord to the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. (NDRHC, 40).
- The proper and only permissible form for distributing Holy Communion is to offer the consecrated bread by saying, "The Body of Christ" and to offer the consecrated wine by saying, "The Blood of Christ." No other words or names should be added; and the formula should not be edited in any way. (Cf. GIRM, 161; 284-287).

- If the Eucharistic bread or some particle of it falls, it should be picked up reverently by the minister. The consecrated bread may be consumed or completely dissolved in water before being poured down the *sacrarium*.
- Should there be any mishap, for example, if the consecrated wine is spilled from the chalice, the area should be washed and the water poured into the *sacrarium*.
- In those instances when there remains more consecrated wine than was necessary, if needs dictate, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion may consume what remains of the Precious Blood from their cup of distribution with the permission of the diocesan bishop. The sacred vessels are to be purified by the priest, the deacon or an instituted acolyte. The amount of wine to be consecrated should be carefully measured before the celebration so that none remains afterward. It is strictly forbidden to pour the Precious Blood into the ground or into the *sacrarium*. (NDRHC, 51-55).
- Similarly, "consecrated hosts are to be reserved in a ciborium or vessel in sufficient quantity for the needs of the faithful; they are to be frequently renewed and the old hosts properly consumed" (Code of Canon Law, no. 939). *Burying hosts or consecrated Eucharistic bread is strictly forbidden.*

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Notes

1. *Norms for the Distribution and Reception of Holy Communion Under Both Kinds for the Dioceses of the United States of America [NDRHC] (August, 2002), no. 26 and cf. GIRM no. 162 and NRHC, no. 28*

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Guidelines For The Reception Of Communion

On November 14, 1996, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops approved the following guidelines on the reception of Communion. These guidelines replace the guidelines approved by the Administrative Committee of the NCCB in November 1986. The guidelines, which are to be included in missalettes and other participation aids published in the United States, seek to remind all those who may attend Catholic liturgies of the present discipline of the Church with regard to the sharing of Eucharistic Communion.

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FOR CATHOLICS

As Catholics, we fully participate in the celebration of the Eucharist when we receive Holy Communion. We are encouraged to receive Communion devoutly and frequently. In order to be properly disposed to receive Communion, participants should not be conscious of grave sin and normally should have fasted for one hour.

A person who is conscious of grave sin is not to receive the Body and Blood of the Lord without prior sacramental confession except for a grave reason where there is no opportunity for confession. In this case, the person is to be mindful of the obligation to make an act of perfect contrition, including the intention of confessing as soon as possible (canon 916). A frequent reception of the Sacrament of Penance is encouraged for all.

FOR OUR FELLOW CHRISTIANS

We welcome our fellow Christians to this celebration of the Eucharist as our brothers and sisters. We pray that our common baptism and the action of the Holy Spirit in this Eucharist will draw us closer to one another and begin to dispel the sad divisions which separate us. We pray that these will lessen and finally disappear, in keeping with Christ's prayer for us "that they may all be one" (Jn 17:21).

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Because Catholics believe that the celebration of the Eucharist is a sign of the reality of the oneness of faith, life, and worship, members of those churches with whom we are not yet fully united are ordinarily not admitted to Holy Communion. Eucharistic sharing in exceptional circumstances by other Christians requires permission according to the directives of the diocesan bishop and the provisions of canon law (canon 844 §4). Members of the Orthodox Churches, the Assyrian Church of the East, and the Polish National Catholic Church are urged to respect the discipline of their own Churches. According to Roman Catholic discipline, the Code of Canon Law does not object to the reception of Communion by Christians of these Churches (canon 844 §3).

FOR THOSE NOT RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION

All who are not receiving Holy Communion are encouraged to express in their hearts a prayerful desire for unity with the Lord Jesus and with one another.

FOR NON-CHRISTIANS

We also welcome to this celebration those who do not share our faith in Jesus Christ. While we cannot admit them to Holy Communion, we ask them to offer their prayers for the peace and the unity of the human family.

EME Guidelines

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