



Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion to the Sick and Homebound (Thursdays)

*We who are called to be **ministers of hospitality** as ushers are entrusted with fostering a sense of welcoming and belonging among those assembled at prayer. We are the first contact made with anyone who enters the worship space. Although functions such as seating latecomers and taking up the collection are important, **our role challenges us beyond "ushering" to see in every person the face of the Lord.** We have the opportunity to be the hands of Christ to the living Body of Christ. We should be watchful for the ways in which we can help to foster the sense of family among all who worship and **especially among those who are new** to our community. Most of all, by our very presence, let us be examples of the Christian love which identifies us and binds us together. (*Liturgical Ministry: A Practical Guide to Spirituality* by Donna M. Cole)*

All liturgical ministers are registered parishioners and should be in good standing with the Catholic Church. The guidelines that follow conform to the theological and liturgical principles in the diocesan guidelines.

Attire and Behavior

Ministers, regardless of age, dress in **business casual attire**. Sneakers/athletic shoes, flip-flops, jeans, T-shirts, sweat/jogging suits, shorts, and skimpy clothing (e.g. spaghetti straps or strapless tops/dresses) of any type are not appropriate, as well as buttons/pins advertising personal agendas, (e.g. political/sports). Always come to the church dressed, in case you are needed to serve as a replacement. Wearing of the **liturgical color of the day is encouraged**.

Training and Formation

Technical and practical training are a necessary part of every ministry. Initial orientation and training are required before the new minister enters service. Periodic formation events held to benefit *all* parish liturgical ministers.

Scheduling/Substitution Procedure

Ministers are required to find their own substitutions; only trained liturgical ministers serve during a liturgy. Schedules are prepared for three-month periods by the parish secretary and sent to each trained minister. If you are filling in for someone, note the change on the Liturgical Ministers (LM) closet door schedule by crossing out the scheduled person's name and writing your initials next to it. Please inform your ministry coordinator and/or the director of liturgy about scheduling changes. Current schedules and rosters are always available at www.iccwilm.org.

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| 1. Log on to www.iccwilm.org | 3. Click Liturgical Ministers Schedules | 5. Password: oblates2 |
| 2. Scroll over Ministries | 4. Scroll over Liturgical Commission | |

Preparation Prior to the Liturgy

Preparation for Visitation

1. Visitation to homes should take place **immediately following the Thursday morning liturgy**. The minister's dismissal from the liturgy is part of the Rite for taking the Eucharist to the sick. If you are unable to fulfill your ministry, please be sure to find a replacement and notify your coordinator.
2. Spouses or family are welcome to accompany you on a visitation, but would not act as (or in behalf of) the trained minister.

Pre-visit Phone Calls

1. Contact assigned sick and homebound parishioners one day prior to your visit. This allows for those who will receive to be prepared. You may also become aware of their intention to receive. Be sensitive to meal times, and appointments.
2. Determine the time that is most convenient after the Thursday liturgy for the Eucharist to be taken to him/her. Inform the sick/homebound of the estimated time of arrival at their residence.
3. Ask if there will be other people present who would like to receive. (In this situation, Communion may be received a second time, including yourself).
4. If this is a first visit, check directions, and allow time to be prompt. If you arrange a specific time, stick to it. They may have guests or medications or meals at other times.

Day of the Thursday Liturgy

At the Church

1. Sign the presider's binder in the Sacristy 5-10 minutes prior to the Liturgy. This informs the presider to call you forth from the assembly after the Communion procession. It also informs the presider about the number of hosts that you will need.
2. After signing in, if you have not already done so on your way to church, say the prayer given to you at your training session, asking God's blessing upon your ministry from St. Francis de Sales:
Lord, I give you my actions and ministry. Help me to conduct myself in a manner that will give praise to you and will assist my brothers and sisters in their worship of your holy name.
3. Immediately after the Communion procession, when the presider calls Extraordinary Ministers to the Sick and Homebound, come forward to the presider with your Pyx ready to be opened. When the presider approaches you, tell him how many hosts you need. (*Note: if you are ever "short" on hosts, you can simply break apart to make more pieces. You must consume any extra hosts.*)
4. After the presider has given you the Eucharist he will bless you; then, leave the church immediately. You should normally go directly to the sick and homebound. Simple stops are permitted.
5. What you need:
 - **Identification tag.**
 - **Eucharistic cross.**
 - **Eucharist in Pyx container.**
 - **Handbook of prayers for EMHC/Sick and Homebound.**
 - A **vigil candle** (often battery-operated) is recommended, along with a **white corporal**. (*Other considerations: Parish Bulletin, Seasonal parish materials.*)

NOTE: The Eucharist may not be reserved at home overnight.

Special Circumstances

1. If you retrieving hosts from the church outside of normal weekend liturgy times, **it must be cleared with the pastor first.**
2. If there is no Thursday liturgy (typically due to a funeral), you may retrieve hosts from the tabernacle. In this instance, you may retrieve the host any time the office is open.
3. If retrieving (with permission):
 - Approach the tabernacle and open it. (The tabernacle key is in the upper right cabinet behind the altar, hanging on a side hook.) Genuflect and remove the hosts that are needed.
 - Replace the ciborium and close/lock the Tabernacle.
 - Return key.

The Visitation

1. When you enter, spend some *brief* time socializing. Should someone be interested in a longer visit, suggest the services of our visitation ministry, and inform your Coordinator.
2. If the sick or homebound person suffers from Dementia or Alzheimer's disease, use common sense to determine if they are aware enough to understand receiving Communion, and can do so with reverence.
3. When it is time to celebrate the Communion rite, prepare a place on a small table.
4. The Rite includes the following:
 - Introductory Rites
 - Liturgy of the Word (the **previous** Sunday's readings).
 - Reflection - Keeping it brief, try to summarize the homily for that day.
 - Pray the "Our Father" together and share the sign of peace.
 - Giving and receiving of the Eucharist:
 - ❖ Communion Reception (for the patient, Catholic guests, and yourself, if you wish).
 - ❖ EMHCs are commissioned *only* to distribute the Body and Blood of Christ, *not* to give a blessing. **The EMHC may offer a brief, audible prayer** for those who come forward in the communion procession and who are not receiving Holy Communion, such as "May God bless you" or "*The Blessing of Christ be with you*". (*Note: When using the sign of the cross, always cross yourself – not other people.*)
 - ❖ You may offer the patient a glass of water to help them consume the host.
 - Final prayer and blessing (Use only the blessing written for a lay Communion minister to use.)
6. The Handbook you are given contains all of these parts.
7. **When the recipient is unable to receive the Host**, here is the suggested prayer to be used:

An Act of Spiritual Communion

*My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.
I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul.
Since I cannot at this time receive You sacramentally,
You come at least spiritually into my heart.
I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You.
Never permit me to be separated from You.*

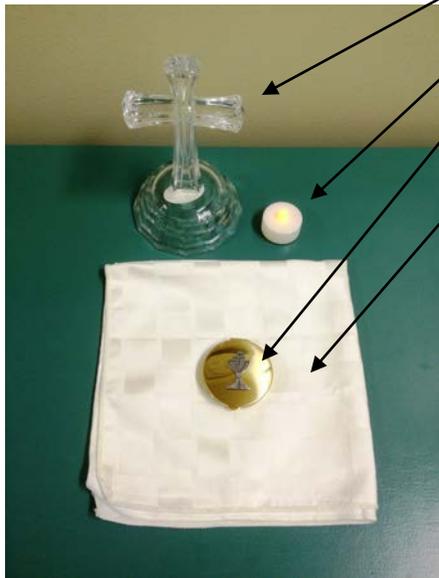
8. When you finish the Communion service, it is often a good time to leave and give the recipient some quiet time with the Lord.

NOTE: Never leave an unconsumed host with those you are visiting.

After The Visitation

1. If this is your only or last visit of the day, you do not have to bring the remaining consecrated hosts back to the church. You should consume them when you give Communion or immediately after you leave.
2. If there are any problems, suggestions or changes in the patient's condition that we should know about, or if the patient has been moved to another facility or returned home, please email your coordinator.
3. If someone requests an anointing or the sacrament of Reconciliation, instruct them to **notify the pastor**. No one should feel pressured into an anointing or Reconciliation.

Items for Distributing Communion to the Sick and Homebound



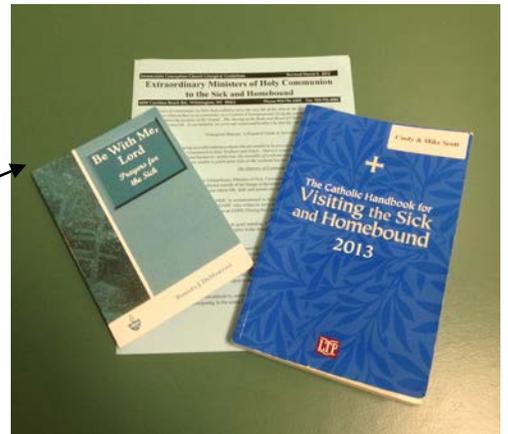
Cross

Candle (battery operated)

Pyx – Contains the consecrated Host

Purificator – White cloth which serves as a Corporal on which to place the Pyx with the Host, similar to what is done at the altar during the liturgy.

Books and Guidelines for EMHCs to the Sick and Homebound



Called to *Serve*
Ministry of the Sick



Guidelines for the Reception of Holy Communion

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 t.

A person who is conscious of grave sin is not to receive the Body and Blood of the Lord without proper 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 (Code of Canon Law, canon 916). A frequent reception of the Sacrament of Penance is encouraged for all.

For 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" (John 17:21). 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 (can 844 s3).

For Those Not Receiving

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.

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About Our Pineapple: *The pineapple was a staple of Indian feasts and rites. The pineapple was once an uncommon and coveted a commodity. King Charles II of England designated receiving the pineapple as royal privilege and gift. In time, the pineapple became a symbol of Southern hospitality. For this reason, Immaculate Conception Church chose the pineapple as its hospitality emblem. **When a new household is officially welcomed to our community, we present this symbol of hospitality and welcome.***

EMHC Sick and Homebound (Thursdays) “at a glance”

- ❖ Attend the Thursday liturgy to be commissioned by the presider.
- ❖ Take host to the homes immediately following the liturgy.
- ❖ Take with you: (1) **Pyx** (2) **Candle** (3) **Cross** (4) **Corporal** (5) **Handbook**
- ❖ Administer *Spiritual Communion* to anyone physically incapable of receiving.
- ❖ Consume all hosts.