

MINISTERS OF COMMUNION TO THE SICK

Purpose:

Extraordinary Ministers are involved in the ministry to take Communion to those who are not able to attend Mass as a sign of the support and concern of Christ on behalf of the parish community. It is the Church's ancient custom to draw into communion with those who cannot be present at the celebration of the Eucharist.

Responsible to:

Parish Priest and Communion to the Sick Coordinator

Role Description:

The Minister of Communion to the Sick brings Communion to those members of the parish who are unable to be present for the celebration of the Eucharist.

Duties:

The Minister of Communion to the Sick will:

- Usually attend Mass prior to being sent forth to take Communion to those who are housebound or sick.
- Will carry the Blessed Sacrament to those who are sick in homes, hospitals, or care facilities and will, in situations where it is possible, follow a short liturgical rite to distribute Communion. The Word of God will be proclaimed and prayers said.
- On the day of the visit as appropriate, place the number of hosts in a pyx and place it on the Altar at the beginning of Mass for the priest to consecrate during Mass.
- Come forward when called to receive the pyx and to be prayed over and sent forth to minister to the sick and housebound.
- In collaboration with the Priest or Coordinator of Communion to the Sick in the parish, visit the sick, frail, aged or housebound in homes, hospitals, aged care facilities, or other facilities.
- Have prepared beforehand a short liturgical rite that follows the Rite for Communion to the Sick (*according to the Introduction and Instruction nos. 71 – 76 of the Communion of the Sick (Chapter Three) from Pastoral Care of the Sick: Rites of Anointing and Viaticum (1982), ICEL*). This will include the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of Communion, unless otherwise deemed inappropriate.
- Assure the sick and elderly that they are united with the community of the faithful in the parish, through prayer and Communion.
- Share any requests or concerns from the sick or elderly person upon your return.

Conditions:

- This is a volunteer role.

- The anticipated commitment for visits to aged care facilities and hospitals is to be part of a team and placed on a roster. Visits to private homes will be arranged to meet the needs of the individual parishioner.

Communion to the Sick Ministers are required to:

- hold a current Victorian Working with Children Check or Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) registration with the parish registered as a volunteer organisation. This check remains current for five years;
- apply for a Police Record Check or provide a recent Police Record Check (cost will be covered by the Parish);
- read and sign the Safeguarding Code of Conduct. Once signed, it will remain current for three years;
- Complete the Safeguarding Essentials online training module. Once completed, it will remain current for three years.
- complete compliance paperwork and training as specified by the individual aged care facility or hospital requirements.

Training required:

- All volunteers must complete a safeguarding training module as required.
- Initial induction training prior to commencing in the role and other training as required.

Qualifications and experience:

- No prior experience required as Ministers of Communion to the Sick are provided training.
- Practices the Catholic faith through regular attendance at liturgy and reception of the Sacraments.

Skills and attributes:

- Incumbent to respect the cultural, gender and age diversity of the parish.
- Committed to the safety of children, young people and vulnerable people.
- Commitment to ongoing personal faith formation.
- Willingness to work collaboratively as part of a team.
- Respect confidentiality and privacy.
- Able to communicate effectively and respectfully with others.

Benefits to this position:

Communion Ministers make it possible to bring Communion to the sick more frequently than would otherwise be the case. In bringing Communion to the sick, the minister of Communion represents Christ and manifests faith and charity on behalf of the whole community.