



## GUIDELINES FOR BRINGING COMMUNION TO THE HOMEBOUND

Communion Ministers to the Sick and Homebound

St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church | Roseville, MN | 651.645.9389

**THANK YOU** for sharing three of the greatest gifts anyone can receive: Eucharist (God Himself), love and community. “We think sometimes that poverty is only being hungry, naked and homeless. The poverty of being unwanted, unloved and uncared for is the greatest poverty” (Mother Teresa). In your ministry, YOU are assisting in alleviating one of the greatest poverties in the world today.

*“The faithful who are ill are deprived of their rightful and accustomed place in the Eucharistic community. In bringing communion to them the minister of communion represents Christ and manifests faith and charity on behalf of the whole community toward those who cannot be present at the Eucharist. For the sick the reception of communion is not only a privilege but also a sign of support and concern shown by the Christian community for its members who are ill” (Pastoral Care of the Sick: Rite of Anointing and Viaticum, 73).*

### BEFORE VISITING:

- **Pray before your visits** (Prayer of Preparation) – “the minister of communion represents Christ”
- Collect information about the person who is sick and other helpful information for your visit to the home or hospital.
  - If the person is a parishioner of St. Rose of Lima please coordinate with the ministry lead.
- Obtain a pyx, burse, Rite of Communion Sheet (multiple copies, for you and those you minister to), bulletin and Catholic Spirit (if requested)
  - Bring a handmade “Prayer Shawl” from St. Rose of Lima Parish Center on first visits or if one is requested.
- Email ministry lead (Mary Dietz) your schedule and any pertinent information.
- Obtain the Holy Eucharist during Communion at Mass (preferred) or by signing in at front desk of Parish Office.
- **Please note: Only priests can distribute Communion to themselves.** Please only obtain enough hosts for those you are ministering to or have another minister distribute Communion to you (during a Communion Service).
- Carry the host in a pyx and place the pyx in a burse. The burse (containing pyx with host) must be placed around your neck. Please have respect and reverence for the presence of Christ.
- When transporting the Eucharist, ministers should avoid any activity not in keeping with the reverence due to the Blessed Sacrament.
- Wear attire appropriate to the ministry.
- Sign in where appropriate (i.e. hospital, TCU, etc.) – including name and St. Rose of Lima Parish
- Proper Hygiene – Wash hands prior to visit.

## **SCHEDULING:**

**During your first meeting with the homebound please set up a schedule for your visits.** For example, visiting weekly after the 8:00 AM Mass every Wednesday at St. Rose of Lima. **Please coordinate a backup minister and share information with Ministry Lead (Mary Dietz).** At the beginning of each year, please work with the backup minister to ensure they are available for the visits you can't go to.

## **AS YOU BEGIN THE VISIT:**

- Share greetings and introductions and hand out a parish "Prayer Shawl" (for first visits)
- If person shares any health issues or personal information – ASK IF IT IS OKAY TO SHARE
- Ask if they would like to be on the parish prayer line
- Do not manually move anyone
- After listening to the conditions and desires of the person who is sick, ask if the person desires Communion at this time. Invite the family members who are Catholic to receive Communion also.
- Prior to the communion service: Ask if they can consume the entire host.
  - Have water on hand if there is a need.
- Offer extra copies of "Rite" for the Parishioner and family to follow along.

## **THE RITE**

- Pace the ritual with sensitivity. Be aware of the sick person's ability to follow.
- Adapt to the situation of each visit.
- Give a small portion of the host to a person who has difficulty swallowing. Check with the nurse or doctor in cases of special feeding.
- Wait for the person to swallow the host. Offer water if necessary. Be prepared with a cloth in the event that the person has problems.
- **Consume entire host prior to leaving if the person is unable to consume the entire host.**
- Take time to pray reverently and to be present with the sick person and the family.
- Be sensitive to the proper time to depart.
- Leave a St. Rose business card somewhere visible (kitchen table or counter) with your name and the date & time of visit written on the back. This is so the family of the homebound parishioners knows when you visited.

## **SPIRITUAL COMMUNION:**

In a Care Facility, some of the elderly/sick residents may not be able to communicate with you. In many cases, they can hear you and are aware of your presence even though it may not seem that way. Assume that they know that you are praying for them and treat them with kindness and love. Let them know that God is with them and loves them and that they are not alone. If they are physically unable to receive the Eucharist, it is appropriate to make a Spiritual Communion by extending your hand over their forehead and reciting:

*My Jesus, I believe that you are in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love you above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Come into my heart and never leave me. May Christ be in your heart and mind to bring you peace and take away all fears and answer all your hopes and bless you by spiritually nourishing your heart with His Body and Blood.*

#### **AFTER VISIT:**

- Share any concerns and/or recommendations with the Ministry Lead (Mary Dietz or Mary Cay Pepin)
- If consent is obtained, include person on parish line
- **If consent was not given please do not share any of the private conversation with others.**
- Wash hands

#### **WHAT IF...**

**The person you are visiting says they need to go to confession before they receive**

**Communion:** Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist do not hear confessions. This Sacrament is only to be administered by an ordained priest. If a patient does ask to see a priest, for whatever the reason, contact the parish office and leave that person's name, facility and room number, or home address.

**The person or a member of the family requests that they receive the Sacrament of the**

**Anointing of the Sick:** Only a priest can administer the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. Please contact Parish.

**You have to give Communion to a dying resident:** This may very well be the last time that the patient receives Communion in his life. This is called Viaticum. If the person is unable to take Communion, pray for the person and ask for God's blessing over them. Make sure to ask the Catholic family members if they would like to receive Communion. Suggest to the family that a priest may be called to administer the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick.

**Non-Catholics request to receive:** A non-Catholic should not receive. You can offer to pray with the person.

**The host is dropped or the resident cannot consume the Host and spits it out:** If the host is dropped, it may be picked up and consumed if you are comfortable with doing so. If the resident spits the host out, use a towel or tissue to pick up the piece of Host and securely wrap it. Take it with you until you finish your visitations. ***The host should be dissolved in water and the water poured into the church sacarium, not down a drain.***

**The person cannot consume a whole Host:** Water may be offered to a sick person receiving Communion to aid in swallowing the host. If warranted, just a small portion of the host can be offered if the person is too ill to receive the entire host. ***The remaining portion of that host must be consumed by someone who is participating in the prayer or by you as minister of Communion. Remember that the divine presence in the Blessed Sacrament is the same regardless of the size of***

***the portion of the host.*** Consult with the family concerning the condition of the person regarding swallowing. Do not leave the room until the person has consumed the host.

**\*There are crumbs of the Host left in the pyx\*:** *Remember that the divine presence in the Blessed Sacrament is the same regardless of the size of the portion of the host.* An empty pyx should always be purified after each use. Simply pour a little water into the pyx to dissolve the crumbs of the Blessed Sacrament. Then either consume it the water in the pyx or pour the water in the pyx into the Sacramentarium (in adoration chapel or Church). Do not pour the water from the pyx down a regular sink or leave the Host crumbs (Jesus Christ) in the pyx. Once the water is consumed or poured into the Sacramentarium, dry the pyx with a cloth located next to the Sacramentarium. Please then sanitize the pyx with soap and water. If you have any questions feel free to contact the Parish Office.

**The person has a mental illness or may be under heavy medication and does not appear to understand:** Use your good judgment. If there is some acknowledgement from the person about what is happening and they want to receive, err on the side of giving them Communion but ensure that they consume the Host before you leave them.

**The resident has just finished eating or is in the middle of a meal:** People who are ill or elderly do not need to abstain from food or drink before receiving Communion.

**Your resident does not speak English:** The first step is to seek out a nurse or aide to see if there is someone who may be able to translate for you. If there is not, you can attempt to communicate with the person by showing her the Host. If she still does not understand, it is best to pray quietly for him/her and leave.

**Your resident asks for assistance:** It is a natural tendency to want to help people that are in need. Never attempt to move a resident or assist her in transferring from a chair to bed, use the restroom, etc. Always call a nurse or aide to assist the resident.

### **Sources:**

Mary, Mother of the Redeemer Parish 1 Guidelines for Administering Holy Communion to the Sick and Homebound

St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church | Guidelines and Protocols for Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist

## THE RITE

### I. GREETING

**All:** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

**Minister:** Peace be with you and with all you live here.

**Response:** And with your spirit.

### II. PENITENTIAL RITE

<b>Minister:</b>	My brother(s) and/or sister(s), to prepare ourselves for this celebration, let us call to mind our sins.  <i>Pause for a recollection of sins.</i>
<b>Minister:</b>	Lord Jesus, you healed the sick:
<b>Response:</b>	Lord, have mercy.
<b>Minister:</b>	Lord Jesus, you forgave sinners.
<b>Response:</b>	Lord, have mercy.
<b>Minister:</b>	Lord Jesus, you give us yourself to heal us and bring us strength.
<b>Response:</b>	Lord, have mercy.
<b>Minister:</b>	May the almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.
<b>All:</b>	Amen.

### III. LITURGY OF THE WORD: Please use one of the readings below or the Sunday or daily Gospel reading.

**John 6:54-55:** He who feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has life eternal, and I will raise him up on the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink.

**John 6:54-58:** He who feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has life eternal, and I will raise him up on the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. The man who feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him. Just as the Father who has life sent me and I have life because of the Father, so the man who feeds on me will have life because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Unlike your ancestors who ate and died nonetheless, the man who feeds on this bread shall live forever.

**John 14:6:** Jesus told him: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through me."

**John 14:23:** Jesus answered: "Anyone who loves me will be true to my word, and my Father will love him; we will come to him and make our dwelling place with him."

**John 15:4:** Live on in me, as I do in you. No more than a branch can bear fruit of itself apart from the vine, can you bear fruit apart from me.

**1 Corinthians 11:26:** Every time, then, you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes.

**1 John 4:16:** We have come to know and to believe in the love God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.

#### IV. COMMUNION:

**Minister:** Now let us pray together to the Father in the words given to us by our Lord Jesus Christ:

**All:** Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

*Minister holds up the Host and says:*

**Minister:** Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

**All:** Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

*Minister distributes the Blessed Sacrament*

*Moment of silent prayer*

#### V. CONCLUSION:

**Minister:** Let us pray. May this heavenly mystery, O Lord, restore us in mind and body, that we may be coheirs in glory with Christ, to whose suffering we are united whenever we proclaim his Death. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

**All:** Amen.

*This blessing is said while the minister makes the sign of the Cross over himself or herself:*

**Minister:** May the Lord bless us, protect us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.

**All:** Amen.

**Minister:** Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your Life.

**All:** Thanks be to God.

*If you feel the above Rite may be too long for a particular resident, at the very least, the Lord's Prayer, Behold the Lamb of God..., and a Hail Mary after Communion should be said.*