

GUIDELINES FOR COMMUNION MINISTERS TO THE SICK AND HOMEBOUND

Communion Ministers have volunteered to bring the Body of Christ to those unable to receive in any other manner. This is truly a spiritually rewarding experience for all involved. To proclaim God's word and to minister the Eucharist to one's fellow pilgrims are honored offices in the believing community. Those who carry Holy Communion to the sick continue the community's act of worship. They extend the community's embrace to include those unable to be physically present.

The Eucharist for Communion outside a church is to be carried in a pyx, and the manner of carrying the Eucharist should be appropriate and respectful.

It is best to bring Holy Communion directly from the community's celebration of Eucharist in the church to the person in the home. If this is not reasonable, please bring it as soon as possible, showing respect for the presence of Christ, avoiding any activity not in keeping with the reverence due the Blessed Sacrament.

As you begin, share a Scripture reading from the Sunday readings or choose any appropriate reading from the Bible.

Communion must be given by the minister, who shows the particle of consecrated bread to the communicants and gives it to them, saying "The Body of Christ," to which the communicants reply "Amen." Take time to pray reverently and to be present with the sick person and the family.

If there are remaining consecrated hosts, please consume them. If the host is dropped and there are no health concerns, the host may be picked up and consumed. If the dropped host presents health concerns or the person removes the host from his/her mouth, it should be dissolved in water and the water poured onto the ground, not down a drain.

The Communion Minister should properly purify their pyx and consume the water used for purification. Remember, the Body of Christ is present in the tiny particles that may fall off the host and rest at the bottom of the pyx. As a result, these particles must be treated with the utmost care and concern for they are the sacred body of the Lord. A simple method for purifying a pyx is to run a small amount of water into the empty pyx, swirl the water around in order for the pyx to be fully washed, and then pour the water into a drinking glass which is then consumed by the individual purifying the pyx. Following proper purification, the pyx should be thoroughly dried and returned to the parish office. The empty pyx should be kept in a safe and respectful place when not in use.