

TAKING HOLY COMMUNION TO THE SICK AND HOUSEBOUND FROM MASS

One of the great privileges of being an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion is to be able to take the Body of Christ to those ill or infirm members of the parish who are unable to come to Mass. They are still part of our Eucharistic community and are joining with us in a particular way when they are able to receive Holy Communion directly from Mass.

Some guidelines:

- ❖ Arrive at Mass in good time to collect your pyx and altar breads and to spend a few minutes in prayer for those to whom you will be taking the Blessed Sacrament.
- ❖ Ensure that your pyx, containing the correct number of altar breads, is placed on the offertory table, to be taken up with the gifts, or on the credence table, according to parish practice.
- ❖ At the end of Mass, before the dismissal, those taking out Holy Communion should approach the sanctuary at the invitation of the priest who will then give each minister the appropriate pyx and send them out with a prayer such as:

Lord, from the beginning of time
you have always wanted what is good for your people.
You sent your Son to share our fears and our hopes
and to bring encouragement where there was suffering.

May his encouragement now go in this gift of the Eucharist
to those who are housebound and sick
and may we ourselves never fail in compassion
for those in pain or in need.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

- ❖ Ministers should place their pyx in a small purse or pouch and go straight from church to the home of the person who will receive communion. It is not appropriate simply to pop the pyx in your pocket. Wear the purse around the neck or place it in a separate compartment in a handbag or jacket pocket.
- ❖ Do remember that you are carrying the Blessed Sacrament with you, so this is not the time to join others for coffee or to have a chat with your friends before you leave.
- ❖ A suggested format for the liturgy at the person's home is available.
- ❖ If you are able to do so after the short liturgy, and are not taking communion on to another person, it can be a real gift to the sick person if you spend a little time in conversation with them, perhaps over a cup of coffee.
- ❖ Should you find that the sick person is not at home, for whatever reason, please reverently consume the Blessed Sacrament yourself. Please do not carry the Blessed Sacrament around or leave it somewhere 'safe'.
- ❖ Be sensitive to the needs (often changing) of the person to whom you are taking communion and be prepared to adapt as necessary.