

Guidelines for Extraordinary Ministers of Communion to the Sick

1. The Extraordinary Ministers of Communion might be publicly dismissed from the assembly after Communion, who leave immediately after Mass to visit the sick. They can bring along a copy of the parish bulletin.
2. The Blessed Sacrament should always be conveyed in a pyx. It is preferable that the pyx be placed in a burse with a rope necklace.
3. Plan on taking only the number of consecrated hosts you will need. If, however, you have any left after visiting the sick, they should be immediately returned to the Tabernacle. (Please note: the hosts should never just be left alone in the sacristy or other place.) If this is not possible, remaining hosts may be consumed at the end of your visit but may never be reserved in the home.
4. Go immediately to the home or institution of the sick person. Be aware that you are transporting the Body of Christ. Do not stop to visit with others and refrain from playing the radio in your car. Maintain a prayerful attitude. (The immediacy of the Communion allows us to say, “We just celebrated Eucharist, and since you could not come, we have brought Communion to you, along with the prayers of the community.”)
5. For the visits in the homes and nursing homes, a table covered with a corporal (linen cloth) is to be prepared, together with lighted candles, and where customary, a vessel of holy water. This preparation may not be appropriate in the hospitals.
6. Always check at the nursing station before the visit to make sure it is safe for the person to receive Communion at this time and to see if there are protocols you must follow.
7. Consider the size of the host for those who have difficulty swallowing. If necessary, break off a very small piece and place it on their tongue.
8. If someone spits out the host, simply retrieve it in a Kleenex (and place in jar with a lid, if available) and later on discard it according to your Pastor’s guidelines (i.e. return it to the church where it will be disposed of in the sacrarium or buried in earth on the Church’s property).
9. Remember that some people may need a glass of water after receiving Communion. Have this available to them, even before you continue with the prayers.
10. Be prepared to simply pray with the person if they are not able to receive Communion.
11. Be sure to allow for a period of silent prayer after Communion.
12. Always wash your hands before and after each visit.
13. *Do not visit* when you are feeling sick or have any symptoms, such as flu, sore throat, cough, congestion, sneezing.