



Archdiocese
of Toronto

Ministry Position: **Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion of the Sick to Homes/Institutions**

Date Last Reviewed: **July 2019**

◆ **Position Overview**

The purpose of this ministry is to bring Communion and pray with the sick and homebound of the parish community who are unable to attend regular liturgy due to illness or infirmity. This ministry provides the sick, homebound and/or institutionalized with a sense of community and belonging. Individuals are commissioned by the Pastor or his delegate.

◆ **Activities/Responsibilities**

- Visit assigned parishioners at the request of the Pastor and/or Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion Coordinator
- Actively seek information from the Coordinator regarding new homebound and institutionalized parishioners and their special needs
- Check the schedules and special assignments prepared for Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion of the Sick to Homes/Institutions and notify the Coordinator in case of any scheduling conflict
- Always work in pairs for home visitations. This is also recommended for visitations to institutions (hospitals, nursing homes and long-term care facility)
- For Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion visiting institutions exceptions can be made in cases where it is not possible to work in pairs due to lack of volunteer availability; however, they are required to have the permission of their Pastor and be registered with the institution. They are expected to keep their Pastor and/or Coordinator informed of the visit, follow the institutions protocols, checking in at the Nursing Station, keeping the room door open, and not touching the individual
- Contact the parishioners to arrange a convenient time and date for the visit
- Prayerfully meditate in preparation for a meaningful visit
- Prepare all necessary items such as prayer cards, pyx, etc. prior to the visit.
- Ensure adequate amount of Holy Eucharist is received in the pyx during liturgy and/or from the tabernacle
- Goes immediately to the home or institution of the sick or elderly parishioner
- Have necessary transportation to homebound and institutionalized parishioners.
- All Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion of the sick must exercise good judgement with a respect for safety, privacy and Confidentiality
- Ensure the parishioner(s) is/are prepared and ready to receive the Eucharist and pay particular attention to their special needs



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- Conduct the Communion of the Sick with each parishioner and distributes Holy Eucharist to them following the Ritual text: “Communion of the Sick, Ritual and Pastoral Notes for Lay Ministers” (CCCB Publications)
- Available to listen to the concerns of the sick/homebound, supporting them through empathetic listening and prayer but not giving advice
- Serve as an important link between the community of faith and the sick/homebound, reassuring them that the parish community cares about them and prays for them giving them a sense of belonging and community
- Ensure all is well with the parishioner before departing
- Return the pyx and other supplies to the allocated place at the parish. Any Communion remaining after visiting the sick should be immediately returned to the Tabernacle. If this is not possible, remaining hosts may be consumed at the end of your visit but may never be left alone in the sacristy or other place or never be reserved in the home
- Bring to the attention to the Coordinator any matters related to changes in health and/or spiritual needs of the homebound and/or institutionalized
- Never accept monies or other forms of remuneration for their service

◆ Skills, Experience and Qualifications

- Fully initiated member of the Catholic Church in full communion with the Church
- Must be at least 18 years of age
- Recognized within the parish community as a person of good reputation and love for the Eucharist
- Demonstrates good listening and empathy skills
- Flexible and open-minded in response to each situation
- Understands the issues relevant to the sick, homebound and elderly
- Regularly attends and participates in Mass at the parish
- Has participated in the training process that reflects on the mystery of the Eucharist and theology of Liturgy, including directives regarding distribution of the Eucharist outside of Mass
- In cases of emergency, knows contacts and/or procedures.

◆ Personal Traits and Qualities

- Desires to serve the community and to commit time and talents to this ministry
- Committed to prayer, gospel values and growth in personal holiness
- Non-judgmental attitude toward homebound and institutionalized parishioners
- Honest, dependable and can maintain strict confidentiality
- Respects the privacy and dignity of the homebound and institutionalized parishioners



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- Resilience and ability to deal with emotional situations
- Comfortable dealing with elderly, infirm, or persons with a disability
- People-oriented and skilled in building rapport
- Understands the sacredness of the Eucharistic encounter giving this moment the time and presence it deserves
- Friendly, patient and has good relational skills
- Comfortable with being accountable and is sensitive to the observance of proper boundaries.
- A caring presence
- Comfortable leading Ritual

◆ **Screening Requirements**

This is a High Risk/Position of Trust.

Before volunteering begins:

- Complete a Volunteer Application Form
- Attend interview and have personal references checked
- Complete a Police Information Check
- Complete appropriate training and orientation

After volunteering begins:

- There will be supervision and periodic evaluations
- An annual Offence Declaration and a new Police Information Check every 5 years
- Participant follow-ups may be conducted

◆ **Orientation and Training**

Standard parish orientation program, including AODA training and commissioning provided by the Pastor during Mass. Training provided by experienced Extraordinary or Ordinary Ministers of Communion or by the Office of Formation for Discipleship. Participation in a Lay Pastoral Visitors Training Program offered by the Office of Formation for Discipleship, as well as on-site training with more experienced EMHC of the Sick or EMHC Coordinator.

◆ **Support, Supervision and Evaluation**

The Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion Coordinator is the first level of support, supervision and evaluation. The parish Pastor and/or his delegate(s) also exercise this role.

Prepared by: Archdiocese of Toronto, Volunteer Screening Department