

# INSTRUCTIONS FOR TAKING HOLY COMMUNION TO THE SICK

*(To be read and accepted by the minister or caregiver)*

Every commissioned Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion (EMHC) may take Holy Communion to the sick. At the pastor's discretion, a family member may also bring Communion to a sick relative on an occasional basis.

## **Before You Begin**

1. If you have never taken Holy Communion to the sick before, you must first report to the sacristy to receive permission and instructions.
2. Once authorized, you will receive a **pyx** (to carry the Eucharist) and a **pouch**. You must sign up and provide your contact information.
3. If you will be bringing Communion regularly, you may keep the pyx for ongoing use. Otherwise, please return it to the sacristy after use and check your name off the list.

## **Preparing to Take Holy Communion**

4. Upon arriving at the church, go to the table near the front doors where the offertory gifts are placed. Open the large ciborium and place as many hosts as needed into your pyx. Then, place the pyx on the small glass tray.
5. Your pyx will be carried to the altar with the offertory gifts and consecrated during Mass. After the recessional hymn, go to the altar, retrieve your pyx, and place it in your pouch.

## **Reverence and Handling**

6. **Remember: You are carrying Jesus.** Always keep the pouch close to your heart—never in a pocket or purse.
7. **Go directly to the sick person.** Do not make stops for socializing, coffee, or errands. If you need to complete another ministry or finish a conversation, wait to take the pyx until you are ready to leave.
8. **The Eucharist must never be kept overnight** at home. If, for any reason, you are unable to deliver Holy Communion, return it immediately to the sacristy or give it to a priest or deacon. If the church is closed, **you must consume the host reverently** as you would at Mass.

## **Administering Holy Communion**

9. **Holy Communion should be given with the utmost reverence.** While it is not a lengthy rite, it should be conducted prayerfully. Copies of the rite are available in the sacristy—simply ask.
10. The setting should include a **cross, a candle, and a white cloth** to honour the presence of Christ. It is recommended to place the host on the tongue, either whole or in a small piece, offering a sip of water if needed. Always ensure the person is able to swallow solid food safely.
11. If the sick person is unable to receive Communion, return the host to the church as instructed above.

## **Handling Special Situations** if the host becomes contaminated (e.g., with saliva):

12. Wrap it in a small cloth (which should be kept in the pouch) or a piece of tissue. Return it to the church with an explanation. There is a specific protocol for handling this situation.

## **Final Reminder**

13. The Holy Eucharist is **the real presence of Jesus Christ—Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity**. You are carrying this sacred mystery to those most in need of His touch. Thank you for your ministry and for serving Christ and His people.