



## GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR BRINGING COMMUNION TO THE SICK AND HOUSEBOUND:

- Extraordinary ministers of communion may be involved in taking communion to those members of the parish who are unable to be present at the celebration of the Eucharist.

*The faithful who are ill are deprived of their right and accustomed place in the Eucharistic community. In bringing communion to them, the minister of communion represents Christ and manifests faith and charity on behalf of the whole community toward those who cannot be present at the Eucharist.*  
(Pastoral Care of the Sick #73)

- The minister of communion brings Christ to the sick, in the form of the minister's own person and in the Eucharist.

*In receiving the body and blood of Christ, the sick are united sacramentally to the Lord and are reunited with the Eucharistic community from which illness has separated them.*  
(Pastoral Care of the Sick #51)

- Communion may be taken to the sick at any time, but the symbolism is enhanced when it is taken directly from Mass. The symbol of unity between the community and its sick members has its deepest significance on Sunday, the Lord's Day, the special day of the Eucharistic assembly.
- Ideally the celebrant would send forth the ministers at the conclusion of the Prayer after Communion, saying something like "...give them our greetings and our love, read today's scripture with them, pray with them and minister to them this most precious sacrament."
- Ministers should be prepared to share with the sick person, a portion of the word of God, some prayers, as well as a brief reflection on the homily preached.

*Those who visit the sick should help them to pray, sharing the word of God proclaimed in the assembly from which their sickness has separated them.*  
(Pastoral Care of the Sick #46)

- Take along a copy of the parish bulletin or any other information that connects them to the parish and allows them to keep in touch with the community's activities. The minister brings back to the larger community the needs and prayers of the sick person.
- Those who carry the Blessed Sacrament are to protect it and never leave it unattended or let other activities distract them from their ministry.
- Ministers will at all times respect and be mindful of the rights and dignity of a patient or sick person. You must adhere to the Diocese's Privacy policy as mandated by law; and, also bring to the attention of an appropriate authority any concerns that you may have identified about the persons welfare. *(Toowoomba Diocese Privacy & Safeguarding Policies)*  
(see: [www.twb.catholic.org.au/documents/resources](http://www.twb.catholic.org.au/documents/resources))
- When visiting someone in a hospital or nursing home always check in with those responsible for the care of the person. The rules of the hospital or institution are to be respected and may require you to undergo a police security check. Please adhere to the institution's requirements and bring this practice to the attention of your Parish Priest.
- The rite for the church's prayer when bringing communion to the sick and housebound is outlined in the book ***Pastoral Care of the Sick: Rites of Anointing and Viaticum.*** (See chapter 3)