Ministry to the Sick

By a Lay Minister
Within the Diocese of Columbus

Communion In Ordinary Circumstances,
In Hospitals or Institutions, or
Visiting the Sick Without Communion
And Visits to a Sick Child

Diocese of Columbus
Office for Divine Worship
2012
Dear Lay Minister,

In your performance of this ministry, providing pastoral care for the sick by your visiting and taking communion to those confined to their homes or other institutions, you are truly reaching out to Christ, for “whenever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me” (Matt.25:40b).

To aid you in this wonderful and rewarding ministry, the Office for Divine Worship has provided this pamphlet to guide you in this ministry. All the references and instructions that pertain to clergy have been removed and the text that reflects the third typical edition of the Roman Missal has been replaced. Individual response cards for those you will be visiting.

We ask that you use this pamphlet in the performance of your ministry until there are new ritual handbooks printed.

May God’s blessing be upon you as they are to those to whom you provide your ministry.

The Office for Divine Worship

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Blessing Prayer:

70  The minister makes a sign of the cross on the child’s forehead, saying one of the following:

L-M  ( ____ ), when you were baptized, you were marked with the cross of Jesus. I (we) make this cross ✝ on your forehead and ask the Lord to bless you, and restore you to health.

Rsp  Amen.

Each one present may in turn trace the sign of the cross on the child’s forehead, in silence.

Blessing:

*Lay ministers sign themselves with the sign of the cross while saying the following blessing.

L-M:  May the Lord bless us, protect us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.

Rsp:  Amen.
Concluding Prayer:

The minister says one of the following concluding prayers:

A  God of love, ever caring, ever strong, stand by us in our time of need.
    Watch over your child (____), who is sick, look after (him/her) in every danger, and grant (him/her) your healing and peace. We ask this in the name of Jesus the Lord.

B  Father, in your love you gave us Jesus to help us rise triumphant over grief and pain.
    Look on your child (____), who is sick and see in (his/her) sufferings those of your Son. Grant a share in the strength you granted your Son that (he/she) too may be a sign of your goodness, kindness, and loving care. We ask this in the name of Jesus the Lord.

Rsp  Amen.

Pastoral Care of the Sick

OFFICES AND MINISTRIES FOR THE SICK

32  If one member suffers in the Body of Christ, which is the Church, all the members suffer with that member (1 Corinthians 12:26). For this reason, kindness shown toward the sick and works of charity and mutual help for the relief of every kind of human want are held in special honor. Every scientific effort to prolong life and every act of care for the sick, on the part of any person, may be considered a preparation for the Gospel and a sharing in Christ's healing ministry.

33  It is thus especially fitting that all baptized Christians share in this ministry of mutual charity within the Body of Christ by doing all that they can to help the sick return to health, by showing love for the sick, and by celebrating the sacraments with them. Like the other sacraments, these too have a community aspect, which should be brought out as much as possible when they are celebrated.

34  The family and friends of the sick and those who take care of them in any way have a special share in this ministry of comfort. In particular, it is their task to strengthen the sick with words of faith and by praying with them, to commend them to the suffering and glorified Lord, and to encourage them to contribute to the well-being of the people of God by associating themselves willingly with Christ’s passion and death. If the sickness grows worse, the family and friends of the sick and those who take care of them have the responsibility of informing the pastor and by their kind words of prudently disposing the sick for the reception of the sacraments at the proper time.

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1  See Vatican Council II, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, no. 7: AAS 57 (1965) 9-10.
2  See Vatican Council II, Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, no. 8: AAS 58 (1966) 845
4  See Vatican Council II, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, no. 28: AAS 57 (1965) 34.
5  See ibid., no. 21: AAS 57 (1965) 24.
CHAPTER THREE COMMUNION OF THE SICK

INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains two rites: one for use when communion can be celebrated in the context of a liturgy of the word; the other, a brief communion rite for use in more restrictive circumstances, such as in hospitals.

Priests with pastoral responsibilities should see to it that the sick or aged, even though not seriously ill or in danger of death, are given every opportunity to receive the eucharist frequently, even daily, especially during the Easter season. They may receive communion at any hour. Those who care for the sick may receive communion with them, in accord with the usual norms. To provide frequent communion for the sick, it may be necessary to ensure that the community has a sufficient number of ministers of communion. The communion minister should wear attire appropriate to this ministry.

The sick person and others may help to plan the celebration, for example, by choosing the prayers and readings. Those making these choices should keep in mind the condition of the sick person. The readings and the homily should help those present to reach a deeper understanding of the mystery of human suffering in relation to the paschal mystery of Christ.

The faithful who are ill are deprived of their rightful 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. For the sick the reception of communion is not only a privilege but also a sign of support and concern shown by the Christian community for its members who are ill.

The links between the community's Eucharistic celebration, especially on the Lord's Day, and the communion of the sick are intimate and manifold. Besides remembering the sick in the general intercessions at Mass, those present should be reminded occasionally of the significance of communion in the lives of those who are ill: union with Christ in his struggle with evil, his prayer for the world, and his love for the Father, and union with the community from which they are separated.

The obligation to visit and comfort those who cannot take part in the eucharistic assembly may be clearly demonstrated by taking communion to them from the community's eucharistic celebration. This symbol of unity between the community and its sick members has the deepest significance on the Lord's Day, the special day of the eucharistic assembly.

When the eucharist is brought to the sick, it should be carried in a pyx or small closed container. Those who are with the sick should be asked to move to a position that best facilitates the reception of communion. The minister may assist the sick to receive communion, and those with them should also assist in any way necessary.

Response:

After the reading of the word of God, time may be set apart for silent reflection if the child is capable of this form of prayer. The minister should also explain the meaning of the reading to those present, adapting it to their circumstances. The minister may then help the child and the family to respond to the word of God. The following short responsory may be used.

L-M: Jesus, come to me.
Rsp: Jesus, come to me.

L-M: Jesus, put your hand on me.
Rsp: Jesus, put your hand on me.

L-M: Jesus, bless me.
Rsp: Jesus, bless me.

The Lord’s Prayer:

The Lord’s Prayer is introduced in these words:

L-M: At the Savior’s command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:

Rsp: Our Father . . .
A  A reading from the Holy Gospel
According to Mark (9:33-37)

Jesus and his disciples returned to Capernaum and Jesus, once inside the house, began to ask them, "What were you discussing on the way home?" At this they fell silent, for on the way they had been arguing about who was the most important. So he sat down and called the Twelve around him and said, "If anyone wishes to rank first, he must remain the last one of all and the servant of all." Then he took a little child, stood him in their midst, and putting his arms around him, said to them, "Whoever welcomes a child such as this for my sake welcomes me. And whoever welcomes me welcomes, not me, but him who sent me."

The Gospel of the Lord.

B  A reading from the Holy Gospel
According to Mark (10:13-16)

People were bringing their little children to him to have him touch them, but the disciples were scolding them for this. Jesus became indignant when he noticed it and said to them: "Let the children come to me and do not hinder them. It is to just such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. I assure you that whoever does not accept the reign of God like a little child shall not take part in it." Then he embraced them and blessed them, placing his hands on them.

The Gospel of the Lord.

to prepare a table covered with a linen cloth upon which the blessed sacrament will be placed. Lighted candles are prepared and, where it is customary, a vessel of holy water. Care should be taken to make the occasion special and joyful.

Sick people who are unable to receive communion under the form of bread may receive it under the form of wine alone. If the wine is consecrated at a Mass not celebrated in the presence of the sick person, the blood of the Lord is kept in a properly covered vessel and is placed in the tabernacle after communion. The precious blood should be carried to the sick in a vessel which is closed in such a way as to eliminate all danger of spilling. If some of the precious blood remains, it should be consumed by the minister, who should also see to it that the vessel is properly purified.

If the sick wish to celebrate the sacrament of penance, it is preferable that the priest make himself available for this during a previous visit.

Communion to the Sick
Ordinary Circumstances

77  If possible, provision should be made to celebrate Mass in the homes of the sick, with their families and friends gathered around them. The Ordinary determines the conditions and requirements for such celebrations.

Introductory Rite

Sign of the Cross:

L-M:  In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Rsp:  Amen.

81  The minister greets the sick person and the others present [with the following greeting]:

Greeting:
L-M: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be God for ever.

Rsp: Blessed be God for ever.

The minister then places the Blessed Sacrament on the table, and all join in adoration.

**Liturgy of the Word**

**Reading:**

84 The word of God is proclaimed by one of those present or by the minister. An appropriate reading from one of the following readings may be used:

A ☞ A READING FROM THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN (6:51)

Jesus said: “I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give is my Flesh for the life of the world.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

B ☞ A READING FROM THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN (6:54-58)

Jesus says: “He who feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has life eternal, and I will raise him up on the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood real drink. The man who feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him. Just as the Father who has life sent me and I have life because of the Father, so the man who feeds on me will have life because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Unlike

**Introductory Rite**

**Sign of the Cross:**

L-M: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Rsp: Amen.

**Greeting:**

L-M: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be God for ever.

Rsp: Blessed be God for ever.

**The Liturgy of the Word**

**Reading:**

66 One of the following readings may be used for a brief liturgy of the word. Other readings may be chosen, for example Mark 5:21-23, 35-43, (Jesus raises the daughter of Jairus and gives her back to her parents); Mark 9:14-27, (Jesus cures a boy and gives him back to his father); Luke 7:11-15 (Jesus raises a young man, the only son of his mother, and gives him back to her); John 4:46-53 (Jesus gives his second sign by healing an official’s son). In addition, other stories concerning the Lord’s healing ministry may be found suitable, especially if told with the simplicity and clarity of one of the children’s versions of scripture.
VISITS TO A SICK CHILD

INTRODUCTION

“Let the children come to me; do not keep them back from me.”

The following readings, prayers, and blessings will help the minister to pray with sick children and their families. They are provided as an example of what can be done and may be adapted as necessary. The minister may wish to invite those present to prepare for the reading from Scripture, perhaps by a brief introduction or through a moment of silence.

If the child does not already know the minister, the latter should seek to establish a friendly and easy relationship with the child. Therefore, the greeting which begins the visit should be an informal one.

The minister should help sick children to understand that the sick are very special in the eyes of God because they are suffering as Christ suffered and because they can offer their sufferings for the salvation of the world.

In praying with the sick child the minister chooses, together with the child and the family if possible, suitable elements of common prayer in the form of a brief liturgy of the word. This may consist of a reading from Scripture, simple one-line prayers taken from Scripture which can be repeated by the child, other familiar prayers such as the Lord's Prayer, the Hail Mary, litanies, or a simple form of the general intercessions. The laying on of hands may be added by the priest, if appropriate, after the child has been blessed.

your ancestors who ate and died nonetheless, the man who feeds on this bread shall live forever.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

A READING FROM THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN (14:6)

Jesus says: “I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through me.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

A READING FROM THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN (15:5)

Jesus says: “I am the vine, you are the branches. He who lives in me and I in him, will produce abundantly, for apart from me you can do nothing.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

A READING FROM THE FIRST LETTER OF JOHN (4:16)

We have come to know and to believe in the love God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.

The Word of the Lord.

Response:

A brief period of silence may be observed after the reading of the word of God. The minister may then give a brief explanation of the reading, applying it to the needs of the sick person and those who are looking after him or her.
Prayers of the Faithful:

The general intercessions may be said. With a brief introduction the minister invites all those present to pray. After the intentions the minister says the concluding prayer. It is desirable that the intentions be announced by someone other than the minister. “As a rule, the series of intentions is to be a) for the needs of the Church; b) for public authorities and the salvation of the whole world; c) for those burdened by any kind of difficulty; d) for the local community.” (GIRM 70) [A prayer for vocations should be added.]

Liturgy of Holy Communion

Lord’s Prayer:

The Lord’s Prayer is introduced in these words:

L-M: At the Savior’s command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:

Rsp: Our Father . . .

Communion:

The minister shows the Eucharistic bread to those present, saying:

L-M: Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

The sick person and all who are to receive communion say:

Rsp: Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

Blessing:

L-M: choose A or B.

A All praise and glory is yours, Lord our God, for you have called us to serve you in love. Bless (_____ ) so that (he/she) may bear this illness in union with your Son’s obedient suffering. Restore (him/her) to health, and lead (him/her) to glory. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

For an elderly person

B All praise and glory are yours, Lord our God, for you have called us to serve you in love. Bless all who have grown old in your service and give (_____ ) strength and courage to continue to follow Jesus your Son. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Rsp: Amen.

*Lay ministers sign themselves with the sign of the cross while saying the following blessing.

L-M: May the Lord bless us, protect us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.

Rsp: Amen.

The minister may then trace the sign of the cross on the sick person’s forehead.
Concluding Rite

Concluding Prayer:

L-M:  choose A, B or C.

A  Father, your Son accepted our sufferings to teach us the virtue of patience in human illness. Hear the prayers we offer for our sick (brother/sister). May all who suffer pain, illness, or disease realize that they have been chosen to be saints and know that they are joined to Christ in his suffering for the salvation of the world. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

B  All-powerful and ever-living God, the lasting health of all who believe in you, hear us as we ask your loving help for the sick; restore their health, that they may again offer joyful thanks in your Church. Grant this through Christ our Lord.

C  All-powerful and ever-living God, we find security in your forgiveness. Give us security in your forgiveness. Give us serenity and peace of mind; may we rejoice in your gifts of kindness and use them always for your glory and our good. We ask this in the name of Jesus the Lord.

Rsp:  Amen.

The minister goes to the sick person and, showing the blessed sacrament says:

L-M:  The body of Christ.

Rsp:  Amen.

Others present who wish to receive communion then do so in the usual way.

Silent Prayer:

89  Then a period of silence may be observed.

Prayer After Communion:

L-M  Let us pray.

The minister chooses one of the following:

A  God our Father, you have called us to share the one bread and one cup and so become one in Christ. Help us to live in him that we may bear fruit, rejoicing that he has redeemed the world. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

B  All-powerful God, we thank you for the nourishment you give us through your holy gift. Pour out your Spirit upon us and in the strength of this food from heaven keep us single-minded in your service. We ask this in the name of Jesus the Lord.
All-powerful and ever-living God, may the body and blood of Christ your Son be for our brother/sister (_____ ) a lasting remedy for body and soul. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Rsp: Amen.

Concluding Rite

Blessing:

L-M: *Lay ministers sign themselves with the sign of the cross while saying either of the following blessings.

A May the Lord bless us, protect us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.

B May the almighty and merciful God bless and protect us, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Rsp: Amen.

Lord’s Prayer:

The Lord’s Prayer is introduced in these words:

L-M: At the Savior’s command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:

Rsp: Our Father . . .
Communion in Hospitals and Institutions

Rsp: O Lord, hear my prayer and let my cry come to you.

He has broken down my strength in the way; he has cut short my days.
I say: O my God,
Take me not hence in the midst of my days; through all generation your years endure.

Rsp: O Lord, hear my prayer and let my cry come to you.

Of old you established the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands.
They shall perish, but you remain though all of them grow old like a garment.
Like clothing you change them, and they are changed, but you are the same, and your years have no end.

Rsp: O Lord, hear my prayer and let my cry come to you.

Let this be written for the generation to come, and let his future creatures praise the Lord:
“The Lord looked down from his holy height, from heaven he beheld the earth, To hear the groaning of the prisoners, to release those doomed to die.”

Rsp: O Lord, hear my prayer and let my cry come to you.

B PSALM 27

Rsp: The Lord is my light and my salvation.

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom should I fear? The Lord is my life’s refuge;

Antiphon:

92 The rite may begin in the church, the hospital chapel, or the first room, where the minister says one of the following antiphons:

A How holy this feast in which Christ is our food: his passion is recalled; grace fills our hearts; and we receive a pledge of the glory to come.

B How gracious you are Lord: your gift of bread from heaven reveals a Father’s love and brings us perfect joy. You fill the hungry with good things and send the rich away empty.

C I am the living bread come down from heaven. If you eat this bread you will live for ever. The bread I will give is my flesh for the life of the world.
Introductory Rite

Greeting:

93 On entering each room the minister [uses the following greeting].

L-M: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be God for ever.

Rsp: Blessed be God for ever.

The minister then places the blessed sacrament on the table, and all join in adoration.

Liturgy of the Word

If there is time and it seems desirable, the minister may proclaim a Scripture reading (one listed in this pamphlet, from today’s Mass or another that may benefit the communicant).

Liturgy of Communion

Lord’s Prayer:

94 When circumstances permit (for example, when there are not many rooms to visit), the minister is encouraged to lead the sick in the Lord’s Prayer.

The Lord’s Prayer is introduced in these words:

L-M: At the Savior’s command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:

Rsp: Our Father . . .

temple, and they were filled with amazement and astonishment at what had happened to him.

The Word of the Lord.

Gospel:

B ✦ A READING FROM THE HOLY GOSPEL

ACCORDING TO MATTHEW (8:14-17)

Jesus entered the house of Peter, and saw Peter’s mother-in-law in bed with a fever. Jesus touched her hand, the fever left her, and she rose and waited on him. When it was evening, people brought Jesus many who were possessed by demons, and he drove out the spirits by a word and cured all the sick, to fulfill what had been said by Isaiah the prophet: “He took away our infirmities and bore our diseases.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Response:

58 A brief period of silence may be observed after the reading of the word of God. An appropriate psalm of the following psalms may be used.

A PSALM 102

Rsp: O Lord, hear my prayer and let my cry come to you.

O Lord, hear my prayer, and let my cry come to you.

Hide not your face from me in the day of my distress.

Incline your ear to me; in the day when I call, answer me speedily.
Greeting:

L-M: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be God for ever.

Rsp: Blessed be God for ever.

Liturgical Text

Liturgy of the Word

Reading:

57 The word of God is proclaimed by one of those present or by the minister. An appropriate reading from one of the following readings may be used:

A A READING FROM THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES (3:1-10)

Peter and John were going up to the temple for the three o’clock hour of prayer. And a man crippled from birth was carried and placed at the gate of the temple called “the Beautiful Gate” every day to beg for alms from the people as they entered. When he saw Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked for alms. But Peter looked intently at him, as did John, and said, “Look at us.” He paid attention to them, expecting to receive something from them. Peter said: “I have neither silver nor gold, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazorean, rise and walk.” Then Peter took him by the right hand and raised him up, and immediately his feet and ankles grew strong. He leaped up, stood, and walked around, and went into the temple with them, walking and jumping and praising God. When all the people saw him walking and giving praise to God, they recognized him as the one who used to sit begging at the Beautiful Gate of the temple.

Communion:

The minister shows the Eucharistic bread to those present, saying:

L-M: Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

Rsp: Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

The minister then offers the blessed sacrament, saying:

L-M: The body of Christ.

Rsp: Amen.

Others present who wish to receive communion then do so in the usual way.

Concluding Rite

Concluding Prayer:

96 The concluding prayer may be said either in the last room visited, in the church, or chapel. One of the following is used.

L-M Let us pray.

A God our Father, you have called us to share the one bread and one cup and so become one in Christ. Help us to live in him that we may bear fruit, rejoicing that he has redeemed the world. We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Visits to the Sick

The prayers contained in this chapter follow the common pattern of reading, response, prayer, and blessing. This pattern is provided as an example of what can be done and may be adapted as necessary. The minister may wish to invite those present to prepare for the reading from Scripture, perhaps by a brief introduction or through a moment of silence. The laying on of hands may be added by the priest, if appropriate, after the blessing is given.

The sick should be encouraged to pray when they are alone or with their families, friends, or those who care for them. Their prayer should be drawn primarily from Scripture. The sick person and others may help to plan the celebration, for example, by choosing the prayers and readings. Those making these choices should keep in mind the condition of the sick person.

The passages found in this chapter and those included in Part III speak of the mystery of human suffering in the words, works, and life of Christ. Occasionally, for example, on the Lord’s Day, the sick may feel more involved in the worship of the community from which they are separated if the readings used are those assigned for that day in the lectionary. Prayers may also be drawn from the psalms or from other prayers or litanies. The sick should be helped in making this form of prayer, and the minister should always be ready to pray with them.

The minister should encourage the sick person to offer his or her sufferings in union with Christ and to join in prayer for the Church and the world. Some examples of particular intentions which may be suggested to the sick person are: for peace in the world; for a deepening of the life of the Spirit in the local Church; for the pope and the bishops; for people suffering in a particular disaster.

Introductory Rite

Sign of the Cross:

L-M: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Rsp: Amen.

Visits to the Sick

B All-powerful and ever-living God, may the body and blood of Christ your Son be for our brothers and sisters a lasting remedy for body and soul. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

C All-powerful God, we thank you for the nourishment you give us through your holy gift. Pour out your Spirit upon us and in the strength of this food from heaven keep us single-minded in your service. We ask this in the name of Jesus the Lord.

Rsp Amen.

Blessing:

*The blessing is omitted.*