

What is Ministry to the Sick?

Ministry to the Sick is the name given a parish ministry which offers a pastoral visit to people hospitalized, in nursing homes or confined to private homes.

This ministry is provided by parishes within the Diocese of Orlando and consists in:

- a caring visit with time to listen and pray about the concerns of the sick.
- bringing the Eucharist

The purpose of this ministry is to provide the sick with an experience of the care and concern of their faith community and also, to provide an opportunity to pray with others and to receive Eucharist.

It is a way to keep the sick connected with their faith community.

Who can do this Ministry?

Any practicing Catholic, 18 years or older can become a minister to the sick. They should be people who feel compassion for those who suffer or are confined. They should be people who are willing to listen to another's stories, to give time to visiting regularly and to

participate in training and spiritual development. The Bishop of Orlando has requested that every Minister to the Sick be fingerprinted and have a background check in order to safe guard those visited.

How will I be trained?

Prior to receiving training as Minister to the Sick, you must be trained as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion.

The Office of Family Life & Pastoral Care of the Diocese of Orlando provides Ministry to the Sick training. In addition, each parish coordinator has an orientation process. The Diocese of Orlando and parishes provide on-going spiritual and educational enrichment. When your training is completed you will receive a certificate, signed by the Bishop of Orlando, authorizing you to visit the sick in of your parish and to bring the Eucharist with you on these visits. You will also receive a small identification card signed by the Bishop, the Director of Family Life & Pastoral Care, and your pastor. This card should be carried with you. Your authorization lasts for three (3) years. During that time you will be expected to complete 9 hours of spiritual enrichment and 9 hours of continuing education. Your coordinator will help you achieve these 18 hours.

Will I have to attend meetings?

Each parish coordinator is asked to gather the ministers regularly for sharing, prayer, and updating.

Why do people serve in this ministry?

Men and women serve in this ministry for many reasons: in gratitude for the blessings God has given them; because they or their families received care and wish others to have it; because they understand how lonely others can get; because they treasure the Eucharist and do not wish anyone deprived of it; because they are compassionate, gentle people who are responding to God's call.

Is this ministry only for those terminally ill or permanently confined?

No, this ministry is available to any person hospitalized, or in a nursing home, or even temporarily confined to home.

Does my pastor approve of this ministry?

This ministry is approved by the Bishop of our Diocese who through the Office of Family Life & Pastoral Care oversees the training and development of those who serve as ministers to the sick. Pastors who approve of laity servicing in this role send them through the training provided.

How often will I be required to visit?

Each parish has its own schedule for visitation. Once you have been interviewed and accepted for this ministry, your parish coordinator will discuss with you mutually agreeable times and frequencies.

Can I belong to this ministry if I did it in another diocese?

If you come from another diocese where you visited the sick and brought communion, your new parish will be happy to allow you to share in that ministry here. However, since each diocese has a different way of preparing its ministers, and evaluation of your past training will have to be done by your coordinator. If the training is equivalent to our process, there is no problem. If not, then you will be asked to attend the certification process for the Diocese of Orlando.



Is there a charge to the parishioner for this ministry?

No, caring for the sick is one of the pastoral services of our church.

Will the minister be able to anoint?

The Sacrament of the Sick (in the past called Extreme Unction) is administered only by a priest. The Minister to the Sick can be an instrument for helping those visited to understand the healing purpose of this sacrament and to prepare to receive it. However, the minister does not bring or use oils during the visitation to prevent confusion on the part of the one visited.

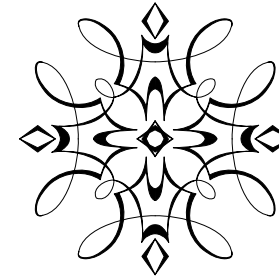
The heart can rest on hope as gently as a butterfly on a flower.

Qualities of a Minister to the Sick

Compassion	Confidentiality
Prayerfulness	Listener
Patience	Acceptance
Empathy	Common Sense
Unselfishness	Understanding
Openness	Presence

If you feel that the Holy Spirit is leading you to reach out to the sick or shut-in in your parish, contact your pastor or parish Ministry to the Sick Coordinator

*“If today you hear God’s voice harden not your heart”
(Ps 95:8)*



Ministry to the Sick



For I was sick... I was alone... and you visited me... when you did it to these... you were doing it to me!

(Matt: 25:36,40)

DIOCESE OF ORLANDO
Office of Family Life & Pastoral Care
PO Box 1800 • Orlando, FL 32802
407.246.4880 • fax: 407.246.4936
pastoralcare@orlandodiocese.org