

St Peter's RC Church Edinburgh

Eucharistic Ministers

Volunteering role

Role and responsibility

- Distribution of the Blessed Sacrament at Mass on Sundays and Holidays of Obligation under the two forms.
- Distribution of the Blessed Sacrament to the sick and housebound

Who to report to or go to for assistance

Any member of the Parish community, who wishes to volunteer as a Minister of the Eucharist should, in the first instance, contact the Parish Priest.

The Eucharistic Minister Coordinator will issue an Availability Form, usually for a 3 month period, to be completed after the 11.30a.m Sunday Mass. An indication of the dates on which Ministers would be free to distribute the Blessed Sacrament at the Mass each Sunday will allow for the rota to be compiled. A list of contact numbers and the completed Availability Form will be issued to all Ministers. Should a date be unsuitable, volunteers are requested to make their own arrangements for a substitute minister.

Distribution of the Blessed Sacrament to the sick and housebound – in the first instance, please discuss with the Parish Priest who will welcome volunteers to this important aspect of the Eucharistic Minister's role. It should be noted that a number of volunteers are unable to undertake this ministry due to work commitments.

Outline of support and formation offered by the Parish

- An induction service will be held, conducted by the Parish Priest and attended by other Eucharistic Ministers.
- The procedures for the distribution of the Blessed Sacrament at Mass and for home visits will be described during this service.
- Eucharistic Ministers can indicate to the Coordinator if they wish to distribute using the Ciborium only, or the Chalice, or both.
- If someone – adult or child – indicates they wish a blessing instead of receiving Holy Communion, please give them a blessing (for example by extending your hand over their head whilst saying 'May God bless you'). It is not necessary to touch them.

Distribution of the Blessed Sacrament to the sick and housebound

Those who volunteer to distribute the Blessed Sacrament to the sick are required to register and complete Vulnerable Adult awareness training.

Please refer any concerns to the officer in charge of 'Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults'. This is particularly important for Ministers taking the Blessed Sacrament to the sick and housebound.

It is important for the Minister to be always sensitive to the needs of the individual being visited e.g. would they prefer to receive Communion on the tongue or the hand, perhaps a glass of water would help them to swallow the host.

All Ministers who visit the housebound are issued with a book which contains suitable readings and prayers. There is no laid down format for the visit – prayers for the Mass of the Day and the Gospel of the Day and, depending on the awareness of the person of the world around them, an idea of the time of year mentioning Christmas, Easter, Lent etc may all help to support the person at this difficult time in their life.

Suggestions for suitable readings and prayers are available from the Eucharistic Ministers Coordinator.

Ministers should be aware of the Bereavement Befriending Ministry, which is available both to the person they are visiting or indeed to themselves should the person they have been visiting pass away.

Indication of time commitment

We always welcome members of the Parish Community who volunteer for this Ministry.

For the 11.30a.m Sunday Mass, a commitment of 5 Masses per Quarter (or more if possible) would be appreciated.

We usually meet for an evening of spiritual awareness during Lent.

It is hoped to have 3 annual informal gatherings to which all Eucharistic Ministers are invited. These would give us the opportunity to meet and welcome new volunteers, to discuss and share experience, any matters of concern and also to meet as a group socially and spiritually.

The dates of these events will be notified in advance.

Contact:

John Wastle 0131 447 3442 (rota)

Caroline Moffat 0131 441 4930 (training)