

PROCEDURE FOR EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS TO EXEMPLA LUTHERAN HOSPITAL

Spirit of Christ is responsible for taking the Eucharist to Exempla Lutheran Hospital every Sunday. The hospital is located at 8300 W. 38th Avenue in Wheat Ridge. When you are scheduled to take Eucharist, plan to go to the hospital on Sunday between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.

Exempla Lutheran requires that all Eucharistic ministers go through the hospital volunteer program. This program requires that you attend an initial orientation and safety training from the hospital, attend annual safety training thereafter, get a picture identification card made at the hospital, take annual TB tests, and go to an interview with one of the hospital Pastoral Care personnel. Once you have met these requirements, you are ready to be scheduled to take Eucharist to the hospital. Please “Steps to Fulfill Exempla Lutheran Volunteer Requirements” on page 4 for more detail.

Materials and Supplies Needed.

- Pyx
- ID badge issued by the hospital
- Communion of the Sick book
- Plain white cloth
- Rosaries
- Prayer cards/books
- Pen or pencil
- Plastic baggie

What to do on the Sunday you are scheduled:

(1) Obtain consecrated hosts for shut-ins from the main church tabernacle, these hosts are smaller than the ones used at mass. (If the smaller hosts are not in the main church tabernacle you will need to track down a church employee with a key to the sacristy in the chapel in order to obtain hosts from the chapel tabernacle.) Remember, you are carrying the Body of Christ, please be respectful. Once you obtain the hosts, go directly to the hospital.

(2) Before you leave church, check your supplies and stock up. There are rosaries, prayer cards (in English and Spanish) and prayer books in the Eucharistic Minister sacristy.

(3) When you get to Lutheran, put on your hospital ID badge. Ask at the information desk in the main lobby for the Catholic census sheet. Be sure to use a census created on Sunday. There are clipboards at the information desk for you to use.

(4) Sign in at the computer using the last 4 or 5 digits of your phone number.

(5) Sit down in the lobby. This would be a good time to pray to prepare you for your ministry. Next, go over the census, marking the rooms you are scheduled to visit based on the column your name appears in on the schedule. Attached is an example of the Catholic census.

(6) Go to your assigned rooms. Unless you are substituting for someone, please only go to your assigned rooms. The assignments are divided as follows:

Rooms 2200-2249	Rooms 330-391	All of the 5 th floor
Rooms 300-329	All of the 4 th floor	All of the 6 th floor
Labor/Delivery Rm 1-10 CCU & ICU	(including INCA)	CHC Collier Hospice Center

(Note: Follow the laminated instructions for ministering to the hospice center that are attached to the clip board provided at the information desk.)

(7) Report to the nurse's station for each section that you are to visit. They will provide you with information on Catholic patients' ability to consume solid food (the Eucharist). If a patient can not receive Eucharist, you can offer them spiritual Eucharist. Most nurses are very helpful, but usually very busy. Some nurses may like to receive communion.

(8) Knock on the patient's door. Introduce yourself, tell them you are from Spirit of Christ, and ask them if they would like to receive communion. To satisfy hospital regulations, ask the patient to give you their name to verify their identity. Some might do best with only a piece of the host. Invite others visiting the patient to participate in the prayers, and ask Catholic visitors if they would like to receive communion. Be sure to leave a prayer card or a prayer book in each room you visit, ask if the patient needs a rosary.

(NOTE: If the patient is unable to completely consume the host, and spits it out, place the host in a plastic baggie and return it to the church so that a priest can dispose of the host properly)

(9) **Sanitize your hands with the antibacterial lotion, located in each room, before administering communion to the patient.** This is very important for the safety of the patients and the minister!

(10) Consume any remaining hosts with the last patient or go to a quiet place in the hospital. Now would be a good time to pray for all the patients.

(11) When you are finished visiting your assigned patients, return the clipboard to the information desk and place the Catholic census in the black box on the right end of the information desk. The patient information is confidential and protected by law.

(12) Sign out at the computer.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

If a patient wants to see a priest, suggest that they call Sts. Peter and Paul Parish (303-424-3706). They could also make their request through the Pastoral Care Department in the hospital (dial “0”).

Don't be discouraged if some Catholic patients don't want to receive communion. Don't judge them or insist they receive communion. Expect to see some of this. You will also find those who make your day with excitement about receiving the Eucharist. Be respectful of the Eucharist. After you obtain the Eucharist, go directly to the hospital. Don't take hosts from Saturday evening mass for the use the next day. Don't take hosts home with you.

Communicate with the patients, talk to them to create a friendly atmosphere, listen to them. Make sure that the patient knows that any opinions that you offer are your opinions and do not reflect the opinions of Spirit of Christ Catholic Community.

You might want to have water handy to help the patient swallow the host. The people who have the oxygen supply at their nose often have very dry throats. Ask the patient if they need water.

People who are ill or in the hospital don't need to abstain from food or drink before receiving communion.

Always use a pyx to carry hosts. When you buy your pyx, make sure it is large enough to hold a sufficient number of hosts. Sometimes you may need to break hosts to make sure you have enough for all your patients.

Never take hosts from the tabernacle during mass. This is distracting to those attending mass.

Spend time with the liturgy from your book. It is important that you give the patient the opportunity to prepare to receive the Eucharist.

Follow directions. If a sign on the door states that the patient is in isolation, **DO NOT VISIT THAT PATIENT!** It is for your own protection, and the protection of the patient. If you have any questions at all, ask a nurse.

If you are unable to make your Sunday assignment, it is up to you to use the schedule to find a replacement. If you can not work out a trade, try one of the substitute ministers listed at the bottom of the schedule. If you still can not find a replacement, call the ministry chairperson.

A captain should call you by the Thursday night before your scheduled Sunday, but please keep your own calendar and don't rely on this as a reminder. If you exchange Sundays, let the captain know.

Please dress appropriately. Dress as you would to distribute communion during mass at church.

STEPS TO FULFILL EXEMPLA LUTHERAN VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS

1) Fill out volunteer application and mail it to:

Exempla Lutheran Medical Center
Volunteer Services
8300 W. 38th Ave.
Wheat Ridge, CO 80033

If you have any questions, call the Exempla Lutheran Volunteer Office at 303-425-2142.

- 2) After returning the application, call 303-425-2929 to register to attend the safety and orientation sessions. At these sessions, you will get instructions about how to get the TB tests, get a picture ID made, and how to make an appointment to meet with Pastoral Care.
- 3) Take required TB tests and have them read.
- 4) Talk to Pastoral Care.
- 5) Get picture ID made.
- 6) After you have completed the steps above, you are ready to be scheduled. Call Ted Fernandez at 303-420-8628.

Please be flexible because the requirements seem to always be evolving. We are guests at the hospital and have to play by their rules. If you have problems or need help with the requirements, call Ted Fernandez at 303-420-8628.