

Eucharist Visitor Guidelines *St. Alban's Chapel*

Thank you for your willingness to serve as a Eucharistic Visitor! A Eucharistic Visitor is a lay person who is authorized to take the consecrated elements of bread and wine to members of the congregation who are ill or infirm and were unable to be present at the service. The people you visit may be alone, isolated, and feeling detached from their church family. In addition to offering bread and wine, you offer fellowship, encouragement, and hope.

Preparing for a visit: Collect a pix, the small container for the wafers, from Fr. Drew after the service. Bring copies of the Sunday bulletin. Bring extra copies of the liturgy. Set aside time to pray before your visit, both for yourself and the person you will visit. Pay attention to your own fears or anxieties about the visit. Ask God to prepare you to be an instrument of grace and healing. Bring a mask with you and ask if they would like you to wear it during your visit.

When to visit: Conferring with Fr. Drew, Charlene Thompson will assign the Eucharistic Visitor teams to those who have requested a Eucharistic visit. We prefer our Eucharistic Visitors generally make their visits after services on Sunday, but they can also visit during the week. Make sure that you have confirmed the time of your visit and that it is convenient.

Safe Church Issues: All our Eucharistic Visitor need to complete the required online diocesan Safe Church Training and have their certification on file in the office. It is preferable to make your visit as a team of two. Jesus sent the disciples out in teams of two. Not only does this protect both you and those you visit, more importantly, it gives those you visit a deeper sense that the Church is present with them in their sickness.

The visit itself: Remind him/her of the purpose of your visit. You are there to pray for and with him/her and to share communion with them. Do your best to get eye level with the person. It is best not to stand over them if you can help it.

Talking and listening: You are not there as a doctor, therapist, or counselor. It is best to view yourself primarily as a listener. The persons you visit may be in pain, feeling anxiety about their future. They may be thinking about death, dealing with family conflict, or just lonely. Allow time and space for the person to talk. Your role is not to “cheer up” the person, but simply to be present. Your presence will speak volumes to those you visit. It will also strengthen your own faith.

The liturgy: The main reason for your visit is to share the Holy Communion with him/her and to pray. Receiving communion joins them spiritually to God and to the rest of the congregation. A few things to keep in mind . . .

- Be sure to invite anyone else present in the room to join in the service. All baptized Christians are welcome to receive. The host may be broken to accommodate more than the planned number of communicants.
- If someone appears to have trouble swallowing, ask about receiving the wafer. If they cannot, you can still do the whole liturgy and receive the bread yourself.
- It is appropriate to abbreviate the liturgy if circumstances require. That is a good move if someone is agitated, obviously has become exhausted, or you feel that you need to speed the service along for their sake.
- You may invite everyone to hold hands during “The Lord’s Prayer”, if you are with another team member, and if it does not feel invasive.
- When praying for their healing, you may lay hands on the arm or shoulder as you pray. Ask their permission before you do so. It is appropriate to say, “I lay my hands upon you in the name of Jesus Christ, ask him to heal you of”
- During the prayers it is appropriate to share some of the things that the congregation prayed about during the service. When doing so, be careful to avoid ANY appearance of gossip. It is also good to ask the person you are visiting, “Is there anything specifically that you’d like to include in our prayers today?” You might also encourage the person to pray for the ministries of the Church. That is something important that can be done even if the person is absent from the congregation.

When to leave: Short is good. You don’t want to rush your visit. On the other hand, you need to be sure not to stay too long. Doing so may make it less likely that you will be welcomed in again. These visits can tire an unwell person, perhaps more than anticipated. You could also ask if there is anything he/she needs from the church. The Pastoral Care Team may be able to help in some specific ways (prayers, food, a ride, encouraging cards).

Afterwards: Do not discuss the details of a person’s health or medical condition with anyone else unless you have their specific permission. Send Fr. Drew a short email (lsuchaplain@stalban.org) or text (225-933-0241) after your visit just to confirm that it has taken place. Let him know about anything significant that occurred. He will record the visit in the service book.

Holy Communion for Eucharistic Visits
St. Alban's Chapel

Opening Sentences

God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. *John 3:16*

Jesus said, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to Me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in Me shall never thirst." *John 6:35*

Jesus said, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live for ever; and the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is My flesh. For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him." *John 6:51, 55-56*

Jesus said, "Abide in me, as I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples. As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you; abide in My love." *John 15:4-5a, 8-9*

The Collect of the Day (from the Sunday bulletin)

A Reading from Scripture (from the Sunday bulletin)

The Confession

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you, in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your name. *Amen.*

The Absolution

Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life. *Amen.*

The Lord's Prayer

Let us pray in the words our Savior Christ has taught us. Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed by Thy Name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

A Prayer before Receiving Communion

Almighty Father, whose dear Son, on the night before He suffered, instituted the Sacrament of his Body and Blood: Mercifully grant that we may receive it thankfully in remembrance of Jesus Christ our Lord, who in these holy mysteries gives us a pledge of eternal life; and Who lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**

The Gifts of God for the People of God and may add Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on Him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ keep you in everlasting life. [Amen.]

Post Communion Prayer

Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and You have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of His Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve You with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

For a Sick Person

O Father of mercies and God of all comfort, our only help in time of need: We humbly beseech thee to behold, visit and relieve thy sick servant *N.* for whom our prayers are desired. Look upon him with the eyes of thy mercy; comfort him with a sense of thy goodness; preserve him from the temptations of the enemy; and give him patience under his affliction. In thy good time, restore him to health, and enable him to lead the residue of his life in thy fear, and to thy glory; and grant that finally he may dwell with thee in life everlasting; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer for Mercy

High and Lofty One, because Your mercy is everlasting and Your truth endures from generation to generation, show mercy to Your child and grant her deliverance from this sickness. Lord, keep her under Your care, for only in You can we live in safety and wellbeing. Visit her with Your saving health. Do not forget Your daughter, who is needy, nor let her hope be taken away. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, we pray. *Amen.*

Prayer to Sustain the One Who Is Sick

Lord Who Inhabits Eternity, we ask that You sustain our sick loved one with Your Holy Spirit. O Lord, let Your mercy rest upon him, for his trust is in You. May his days be spent in Your favor. Defend him with Your mighty power and remind him that You are always walking with him. Receive our entreaties and prayers which we offer before You for Your mercies' sake. *Amen.*

Prayer to Look with Favor

Lord God of our Fathers, look with favor on our brother (sister) who is suffering and for whom pain is a constant companion. Have mercy on him (her). In Your great compassion, take this pain away. Strengthen him (her) and grant that he (she) may enjoy the blessings of abundant health. To You, he (she) cries out; answer him (her) from Your holy mountain. Sustain him (her) and restore him (her) as he sleeps. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. *Amen.*