

Ministers of Care



When St. Peter's mother-in-law was stricken with a fever (Luke 4:38-40), Jesus was not too busy to go to her home to see her in-person. Inspired by Jesus' example, a dedicated group of St. Elizabeth of the Trinity "Ministers of Care" (MOCs) regularly visit homebound parishioners to pray with them and bring them the Eucharist.

Sometimes you will see these individuals called up to the front of the church just before the Final Blessing at Sunday Masses to receive the Eucharist in their individual pyx, which is a small, round vessel used to properly carry the Eucharist. However, in many instances, the MOCs go unseen by the parish community as they schedule their visits to homebound parishioners on weekdays. Furthermore, a couple times a month, MOCs accompany one of our parish priests to area nursing homes. There, the MOCs visit Catholics in their rooms who are unable to go to the Mass that is being celebrated in the community room.

To prepare them for their ministry of visiting the homebound, MOCs receive training provided by the Archdiocese of Chicago. MOCs are guided in fundamentals such as developing a listening presence, maintaining confidentiality of what they see and hear at the person's home, and engaging in empathic conversation with those they visit. As a further help, sometimes new MOCs begin by shadowing a parishioner with experience.

While a prescribed prayer liturgy and the sharing of the Eucharist is the centerpiece of the visit, MOCs often take time to chat about family news, provide updates about the parish, and listen to concerns. Occasionally, a family member or a caregiver of the homebound person participates in the visit.

Serving as a Minister of Care is a serious and significant responsibility as it involves traveling with the Lord and bringing the Lord to others. We will share personal reflections from St. Elizabeth of the Trinity Ministers of Care in next week's "Parishioners' Corner" article.

The Archdiocese of Chicago reminds that serving as a MOC is not "volunteering" -- it is a ministry. As such, it's important that Ministers keep in mind that they are not acting on their own, but they are bringing the Eucharist to the faithful on behalf of the Church.

Do you feel called to share Christ's presence with others? If so, consider becoming a Minister of Care, serving our sick and homebound by bringing them the Eucharist. For more information, contact Tony Lupinski through the parish office.