

What is Ministry to the Sick and Shut-in?

Ministry to the Sick and Shut-in is the name given to services offered to those people hospitalized, in nursing homes or confined to private homes.

These services are provided by parishes within the Diocese of Orlando and consist in:

- > a caring visit with time to listen to and pray about the concerns of the sick or shut-in; and
- > bringing the Eucharist.

The purpose of this ministry is to provide the sick or shut-in 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 and shut-in connected with their faith community.

Who can do this Ministry?

Any practicing Catholic, 18 years or older can become a minister to the sick and shut-in. 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 back-ground 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 Lay Ministry Office of the Diocese of Orlando provides Ministry to the Sick training. In addition each parish coordinator has an orientation process. The Diocese 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/shut-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 the Lay Ministry Office, 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 limited only to 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 Lay Ministry Office oversees the training and

development of those who serve as ministers to the sick and shut-in. Pastors

who approve of lay 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/shut-in 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