

Q&A HOSPITALIZED CATHOLIC PATIENTS & THEIR CARETAKERS

"When the Church cares for the sick, it serves Christ himself in the suffering members of his Mystical Body." (Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship)

HOW DO I REQUEST A PRIEST FOR SACRAMENTAL SUPPORT?

When possible, arrange to receive the sacraments of reconciliation and anointing of the sick in your home parish before hospitalization. In emergency situations, you can contact your home parish. In addition, the Spiritual Care department or chaplain at your hospital can often contact a priest on your behalf. Because of the shortage of priests, it normally takes up to 48 hours from the time a request is made until a priest or other minister is bedside. For this reason, whenever possible, **please do not defer contacting a priest until it is an emergency.** Some hospitals also have pastoral ministers available for non-urgent pastoral care. Please contact the Spiritual Care department at your hospital to request support.



WHEN SHOULD I BE ANOINTED OR HAVE A FAMILY MEMBER ANOINTED?

Whenever possible, arrange to receive the sacrament of anointing of the sick in your home parish before going in for surgery. Anointing of the sick is a sacrament of healing for the living and should not be deferred until death is imminent.

WHAT ARE THE LAST RITES? DOES THE CHURCH STILL OFFER THAT?

Traditionally, the "Last Rites" of the Church include the sacraments of reconciliation, anointing and viaticum (the last holy Communion of a dying person) and the commendation of the dying. While only a priest can provide confession and anointing, a deacon or lay minister can offer viaticum and the commendation of the dying.



I WANT TO RECEIVE COMMUNION WHILE I'M HOSPITALIZED. IS THAT POSSIBLE?



Yes, it is possible to receive communion in the hospital. Almost every hospital has lay Eucharistic Ministers, deacons, or priest chaplains who can bring Holy Communion to those who are hospitalized and their loved ones. Please contact the Spiritual Care Department of the hospital to see if this is possible in your setting. Always check with the medical team to ensure you or your loved one is medically able to receive Holy Communion.