

# Training Handbook

## Pastoral Care of the Sick and Housebound

Te Awakairangi Parish – April 2026

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### 1. Introduction

This handbook is designed to support Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion and pastoral visitors in their ministry to the sick, elderly, and housebound.

Your role is a ministry of presence, prayer, and compassion.

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### 2. The Role of the Minister

As a minister, you are called to:

- Represent Christ
- Represent the parish community
- Bring Holy Communion reverently
- Offer prayer and companionship

You are not just “taking Communion” — you are bringing the Church.

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### 3. Preparing for a Visit

Before the visit:

- Pray briefly for the person
  - Ensure you have the pyx and hosts
  - Dress appropriately and respectfully
  - Be aware of any pastoral notes
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### 4. During the Visit

Begin with:

- A warm greeting
- A few moments of conversation

Then:

- Invite prayer
- Read a short Scripture passage
- Pray the Lord's Prayer
- Give Holy Communion
- Offer a concluding prayer

Keep the visit simple and respectful.

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## 5. Practical Guidelines

- Be punctual
  - Be patient and attentive
  - Respect confidentiality
  - Do not rush
  - Be sensitive to emotional and physical needs
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## 6. In Hospitals and Care Homes

- Follow all facility guidelines
  - Check if the person can receive Communion
  - Be aware of fatigue or discomfort
  - Keep visits shorter if needed
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## 7. When Not to Give Communion

Do not give Communion if:

- The person is unable to swallow
- They are unconscious
- They do not wish to receive

Instead, offer prayer.

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## 8. Scenarios and Responses

### **Scenario 1: Person is very tired**

Keep prayer brief and gentle.

**Scenario 2: Family present and emotional**

Include them in prayer; be calm and reassuring.

**Scenario 3: Person begins sharing deeply**

Listen attentively; do not rush.

**Scenario 4: End-of-life situation**

Contact the priest immediately for Viaticum and Anointing.

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## 9. Safeguarding and Boundaries

- Maintain appropriate boundaries
  - Do not give medical advice
  - Report concerns to parish priest and parish leadership
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## 10. Spiritual Disposition

Ministers are encouraged to:

- Pray regularly
  - Participate in Mass
  - Reflect on their ministry
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## 11. Conclusion

This ministry is a privilege and a sacred trust. Through your service, Christ's presence reaches those most in need.