

D6 HOLY COMMUNION AND LAY ASSISTANTS

Permission for a lay person to assist in the administration of the elements at a Service of Holy Communion

The distribution of the consecrated elements by a person who is not ordained is covered under Canon B12.3. This allows the bishop to give special authorisation under such regulations as the General Synod may make from time to time.

The permission is given by the bishop at the joint request of the incumbent and the Parochial Church Council. The request should take the form of a resolution passed unanimously by the PCC.

Such permission is automatically given to readers and elders and is included in the reader's licence and in the elder's commission. It may be given to any other lay person whom the incumbent and PCC consider suitable and acceptable to the congregation. Such a person will normally be a regular communicant and aged not less than sixteen. Permission is given by the bishop for a period of five years whereupon it can be renewed for a further period.

Those who are given permission will need to receive preparation for performing this ministry. After permission has been given it may be thought appropriate to have a short ceremony of admission either in private or public, at which the lay ministrant commits themselves to ministry in this form.

For the sake of clarity in regulation, permission to assist in the administration at a Service of Holy Communion is not the same as taking of Holy Communion to the sick and housebound which is covered separately.

2005