

D8 COMMUNION BY EXTENSION

In making authorised provision for Communion by Extension, the House of Bishops has principally in mind the needs of a single cure with a number of authorised places of worship, or a group or team ministry. In such circumstances worshippers gathered in one of the places where Holy Communion has not been celebrated may receive communion by extension brought from a church where Holy Communion has been celebrated, with a minimal interval of time between the services. The provision is intended primarily for Sundays and Principal Holy Days, but may be appropriate on other occasions.

In October 2000 the House of Bishops produced a set of Guidelines for Communion by Extension upon which these diocesan guidelines are based.

Definition

The phrase 'Communion by Extension' as used in these guidelines is the distribution of the elements of Holy Communion previously consecrated in one church in a benefice to other congregations and churches within the same benefice or team ministry.

Minister

The service should only be led by a person who has been specifically authorised for this purpose by the bishop. Such a person will normally be a deacon, reader or lay worker licensed under Canon E7, and must be properly prepared to conduct such a service.

Permission

Permission to use the rite of Communion by Extension must be obtained in writing from the bishop and will normally be given for a specific occasion or for a limited period in response to specific pastoral circumstances.

Application for Permission

An application to use the rite should be made by the incumbent or priest in charge of the benefice or the team rector in a team ministry. In a vacancy the application can be made by the rural dean. The application must have the full backing of the PCCs of any parishes involved.

The application is made to the diocesan bishop and the following information must be given:

- A statement giving the reasons why the request for Communion by Extension is being made.
- The names of those who will preside at the rite and their current status within the church (eg. deacon, reader, elder, lay worker).
- The place and time of the Eucharist from which the consecrated elements are to be taken.
- The place(s) and time(s) where Communion by Extension is to be conducted.

Form of Service

A form of service has now been published by Church House Publishing - ***Public Worship with Communion by Extension***, and is available from Revelations Bookshop. This form of service contains guidance notes and regulations.

General

It is important that those who conduct this rite are properly prepared.

The sacrament so administered should normally:-

- have been consecrated the same day,
- be administered in both kinds,
- be conveyed to the church in a secure vessel kept for the purpose,
- be completely consumed within the service.

House groups

It is **not** envisaged that Communion by Extension is suitable for Communion in house groups. Such groups may from time to time wish to celebrate the Eucharist together and it would be appropriate for the parish priest to preside, though attention will need to be given to Canon B40 which governs the celebration of Holy Communion other than in a consecrated building.

Communion of the Sick

This is a separate provision covered under Canon B37.2 and B12.3 and should not be confused with Communion by Extension. See D9 Communion of sick people in their homes or in hospital.

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