

D9 COMMUNION OF SICK PEOPLE IN THEIR HOMES OR IN HOSPITAL

The taking of Holy Communion to the sick is covered by Canon B37.2 and B12.3. Canon B37 encourages a ministry to the sick including the giving of Holy Communion “*at such place and time as may be convenient*”. Communion of the Sick should not be confused with Communion by Extension, for which there are different and distinct guidelines.

Canon B12 covers the authorisation of those (other than in priestly orders) who are permitted to distribute the sacrament. The licence of a deacon or reader and the commission of a lay elder includes authority under the direction of the incumbent to administer the sacrament in either kind as previously celebrated and to take and administer it to the sick and housebound in their homes, nursing homes and hospitals. This includes any gathered group in a hospital or nursing home.

The bishop is willing to authorise other lay people to exercise this ministry and requests should be directed to him by the incumbent of the parish concerned or by the rural dean during an interregnum. Such lay people must have the full support of the PCC and be carefully prepared and trained for the task.

Forms of worship for *The Distribution of Holy Communion at Home or in Hospital* are available in **Common Worship: Pastoral Services** page 74 and following. There are some helpful notes on page 78.

Clergy are reminded that the celebration or administration of Holy Communion in a hospital should always be agreed with the Hospital Chaplain.

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