

Diocese in Europe Bishop's guidelines for liturgical celebration with Holy Communion by extension

INTRODUCTION

This page sets out, in as brief and direct way as possible, the essential requirements for the use by chaplaincies and congregations of this Diocese of the Church of England form of service for public worship with communion by extension (ISBN 0-7151-2053-0). In this Diocese it is titled Liturgical Celebration with Holy Communion by Extension. These guidelines must be read closely and be observed with care. They are intended to supplement and interpret the House of Bishops guidelines given in the above booklet and may be revised from time to time by the Bishop of the Diocese.

A. GENERAL GUIDELINES

The bishop is the principal minister of the sacraments in the Diocese, and in his absence an episcopally ordained priest (normally the licensed priest) must preside at the eucharistic celebrations of all chaplaincies and congregations.

'Liturgical Celebration with Holy Communion by Extension'

- (1) provides for worshippers gathered for a liturgical celebration in the absence of a priest to receive Holy Communion from a eucharistic celebration elsewhere in the Chaplaincy. Worshippers in a location where no priest is available on a particular Sunday or Principal Holy Day may still gather to ask God's forgiveness for their sins, hear the Scriptures read and the Gospel proclaimed; and receive Holy Communion — literally 'by extension' — from a eucharistic celebration within the chaplaincy with a minimal interval of time between services. Thus the sacramental bonds of communion between the two congregations of the Diocese are affirmed.
- (2) may only be used where explicit permission has been obtained from the local Archdeacon on behalf of the Diocesan Bishop. Such permission will be given in writing to the chaplain or priest-in-charge (or in a vacancy a deacon, reader or lay minister and churchwardens); it will relate to specific pastoral circumstances; and will be for a particular occasion or for a specific duration. The Bishop will regularly review its use in the chaplaincies and congregations where it is permitted. The permission will be copied to the Suffragan Bishop's office where the official register of such permission is kept.
- (3) is to be regarded as exceptional and provisional, looking to circumstances when a priest is present to preside at a eucharistic celebration, and not for use in emergency circumstances.
- (4) will principally be permitted for use in a chaplaincy or pastoral area which includes a number of places of worship or serves other outlying congregations. (Other particular situations will be considered.)

(5) is not to be relied upon as the means of eucharistic participation, and care should be taken to ensure that a celebration of the Eucharist by a priest takes place regularly in each place concerned.

(6) should not normally be used as a means of providing for Holy Communion during a pastoral vacancy; may only be used in an emergency in exceptional circumstances following consultation with the Archdeacon, and with his authorisation for this purpose.

(7) is envisaged as having some affinity with Communion of the Sick. The main differences concern the public nature of a liturgical celebration with Holy Communion by extension, and the consequent need for careful attention to its overall shape and content as a public act of worship.

(8) must not be regarded as a means of introducing a sacramental element into the life of house groups, or other parish groups, whether on occasional or regular basis. When a eucharistic celebration is desired by such groups, an authorized eucharistic rite — at which a priest must preside — should be celebrated.

B. THE FORM OF SERVICE, MINISTERS AND LECTIONARY

1. A copy of the form of service prepared for use in this Diocese and authorized by the Diocesan Bishop, which may be duplicated for use in chaplaincies, is available from the Suffragan Bishop's Chaplain or the diocesan website. It is based on the booklet Public Worship with Communion by Extension. It makes clear that there is but one celebration of the Eucharist from which the Sacrament is transported to other congregations of worshippers.

This principle will require appropriate teaching and instruction. The Bishop will not give permission until this requirement is assured. The form of service must be used as provided by the Diocese, not in any other version or edition.

2. The provision is intended primarily for Sundays and Principal Holy Days, but may be appropriate on other occasions.
3. The service shall be led only by a named person who has been specifically authorised for this purpose by the Bishop and appropriately trained by the chaplain, or during a vacancy by the archdeacon (or area dean). Such a person will normally be a Deacon, Reader or Licensed Lay Worker, and he / she must wear the appropriate vesture.
4. The choice of collect, readings and post-communion prayer is governed by the authorised lectionary for the day.
5. Those who have permission to assist in the distribution of Holy Communion may assist in this way; but the minister who presides at the service must have the more specific authority from the Bishop,
6. The Archdeacon will give Permission on the Diocesan Bishop's behalf when he is satisfied that all practical provisions for transporting and reserving the Sacrament are in place.
7. The Archdeacon will forward a copy of the permission to the Suffragan Bishop's office for recording in the official register.

C. APPLICATION FORM

Bishop's permission to assist in the distribution of Holy Communion form:

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D. PRACTICAL GUIDELINES FOR USE AFTER BISHOP'S PERMISSION HAS BEEN RECEIVED

1. It strengthens the bonds of the local Church for the congregation that is gathered for a Eucharist from which the Sacrament will be transported to know which congregation will be sharing in Holy Communion. And, conversely, for the congregation gathered for a Liturgical celebration with Holy Communion to know from which Eucharist the Sacrament has been transported.
2. Care must also be taken by the priest that in terms of quantity the Sacrament to be transported is adequate to the needs of the receiving congregation.
3. So far as possible, there should be the minimum of delay between the eucharistic celebration and the liturgical celebration to which the Sacrament has been transported.
4. Where it is required that the Sacrament be reserved between the two services, this shall be done in a seemly and dignified manner, according to the local custom of the church concerned. Reservation may be public in those circumstances where the Sacrament is customarily reserved in the church. In circumstances where this is not the custom, the Sacrament must be kept in a specially provided place that is reverent, seemly and secure.
5. The Sacrament must be contained, kept and transported in proper and appropriate containers set aside for the purpose. Consecrated hosts are best reserved in a container such as a ciborium or pyx with a secure and close-fitting lid. Particular care is required with consecrated wine; a glass container with a secure, ground-glass or screw-on metal stopper should be used and every care should be made to avoid breakage or spillage during transport.
6. At the eucharistic celebration, the priest should be careful to consecrate sufficient wafers (not leavened bread) and wine for the receiving congregation; but the priest should also avoid the risk of difficulties caused by the consecration of too great an amount.
7. When the Sacrament arrives at the place of worship where the liturgical celebration is to be held, it should be placed, at once, in an appropriate location where its security is ensured. Customarily, the location of the Sacrament may be marked by a small lamp or lighted candles.
8. The place where liturgical celebration is to take place must be provided with the materials and provisions required for the worship: that is, altar linen, lighted candles, communion linen, chalice, water cruet, orders of service, etc.
9. Before or during the liturgical celebration, the Sacrament must be placed on the altar or holy table, on a linen corporal. It may, but need not necessarily be, covered by a white veil. The consecrated wine should be poured into the chalice at an appropriate time.
10. In order that the relationship between the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Sacrament may be made clear it is desirable that a sermon be preached or a suitable homily read at the service in each church.
11. Holy Communion is distributed and received in the usual manner.

12. Should the Sacrament run short, the consecrated hosts should be broken accordingly. Where there is insufficient consecrated wine, the ministers shall continue to distribute consecrated hosts only.
 13. What remains of the Sacrament (after all who wish to receive Communion have done so) shall be consumed following the distribution or immediately after the service.
 14. All vessels, including those used to transport the Sacrament, shall be cleaned, particular care being required for the vessel in which consecrated wine has been transported.
 15. The altar or holy table shall be cleared of the vessels, etc. used for the Holy Communion. Used linen purificators should be thoroughly washed after use.
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