



Communion by Extension in the Diocese of Leicester

(Update in relation to Minster Community development)

Communion by Extension allows for bread and wine, consecrated at a service of Holy Communion, to be shared at another service as an 'extension' of that prior celebration.

This additional service is a celebration of a 'Public Worship with Communion by Extension', which is an authorised service and can be led by a deacon or licensed lay minister (e.g. an Associate Minister or Reader) but should not be led by any other lay person.

Due to the importance of the eucharistic sacrament, the Diocesan Bishop's permission must be sought, via the Bishop's Chaplain, and the authorised form of service must be used. Care should be taken to explain that it is not a celebration of Holy Communion, but a means by which a worshipping community can participate in Holy Communion 'by extension'.

Whilst Communion by Extension can be valuable in particular circumstances, it should not become the normal setting in which people receive the consecrated elements. It should not, for instance, be used as a means for avoiding necessary conversations about unsustainable service provision. Nor should it be used as a means of introducing a sacramental element into the life of home groups or other parish groups, whether on an occasional or a regular basis.

Having said this, I recognise that in some parts of the diocese there are fewer priests available to celebrate Holy Communion (in particular, there are some areas with no retired priests with Permission to Officiate). In such circumstances, I am prepared to be more flexible about the frequency of Communion by Extension. This provision relates to Sundays but also to other Festivals, including those which are not or do not fall on a Sunday in any given year; Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Christmas Day, Epiphany, the Annunciation, Ascension Day and All Saints Day.

Therefore, Churchwardens who are struggling to find a priest to offer Holy Communion, should in the first instance discuss this with their Area Dean, and then, if the Area Dean is in agreement, they should approach the Bishop's Chaplain, who holds a small list of Cathedral / diocesan priests who might be able to help, and who will in turn consult the Archdeacon. If the Bishop's Chaplain feels there is a strong case for allowing more frequent services of Communion by Extension, they will make this recommendation to the Bishop, who will give their decision in writing to the parish. However, as Bishop, I reserve the right to encourage a parish to review its service patterns and / or participate in services of Holy Communion in a neighbouring parish rather than automatically agreeing a request for Communion by Extension.



Communion by Extension is also not a provision for taking communion to the sick or housebound - the Common Worship liturgy for the Distribution of Communion at home or in hospital should be used for this purpose.

Before seeking permission to administer Communion by Extension, please consult the following sets of guidance:

- [The House of Bishops Guidelines for Public Worship with Communion by Extension](#)
- [The Authorized provision for Communion by Extension](#), using the Common Worship liturgical material for the Church of England
- [Rules for Regulating Authorized Forms of Service](#)

+Martyn Leicester
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