

Lay Eucharistic Visitors Specially Licensed to Take the Sacrament

To Those Who are Ill or Infirm Best Practices

1. Lay Eucharistic Visitors must be confirmed, adult communicants in good standing, be carefully chosen and trained, and be specially licensed. A candidate is to be recommended by the cleric in charge of the congregation to the Bishop of the diocese to be licensed. "Such special license shall be given only at the request, and upon recommendation of, the Member of the clergy in charge of the Congregation in which the lay Eucharistic Visitor will be serving. The license shall be issued for a period of time not to exceed three years and shall be revocable at any time by the Bishop, or by the Member of the clergy at whose request it was granted." (Title III, Canon 3, Sec 2).
2. Where a Deacon serves in a congregation, that minister should supervise the work of the Lay Eucharistic Visitors. (Title III, Canon 4, Sec 6 & 7).
3. It is recommended that a person to be ministered to be prayed for specifically in the Prayers of the People by the congregation on that day.
4. The administration of the Sacrament to the persons visited should take place immediately after the Celebration of Holy Eucharist. Following the communion of the people, the Lay Eucharistic Visitors come forward and are commended for this ministry with the following or similar words: *In the name of this congregation, I send you forth bearing these holy gifts that those to whom you go may share with us in the communion of Christ's body and blood. We who are many are one body, because we all share one bread one cup.*
5. A suitable container in which to carry the two vessels for the bread and the wine, corporals, and purifications is to be supplied. The container is to be returned immediately to the parish along with any unconsumed elements. The Lay Eucharistic Visitor should record the distribution of the Sacrament in the Record of Services book.
6. The people to whom the Holy Communion is to be administered are to be notified in advance and the time of the appointment clearly set.
7. The order of the rite entitled, "*Ministration to the Sick*" found in the Book of Common Prayer (page 453) or the form below should be used.

Distribution of Holy Communion by Lay Eucharistic Visitors to Persons Who are Ill or Infirm

This form is to be used only immediately following the principal Eucharist on Sunday or other Principal Celebration(s).

The Lay Eucharistic Visitor should be accompanied by other persons from the congregation.

The Lay Eucharistic Visitor greets the people

The Lord be with you.

People's Response: and also with you.

L.E.V. prays one of the prayers for the sick BCP pages 4458-461

L.E.V. reads the Gospel of the Day or some other short passage of scripture appropriate to the occasion (BCP page453-454)

Comments may be made about the sermon of the day.

Suitable prayers may be offered for intercessions or thanksgiving by all present (BCP pages 458- 461)

A Confession of Sin may be said

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your name. Amen.

Then the L.E.V. may say: May Almighty God in mercy receive our confession or sorrow and of faith, strengthen us in all goodness and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life. Amen.

Exchange the Peace *The peace of the Lord be always with you, and also with you.*

The L.E.V. then distributes communion saying The Body of Christ, the bread of heaven. The Blood of Christ, the cup of salvation.

Closing Prayer

Gracious Father, we give you praise and thanks for this Holy Communion of the Body and Blood of your beloved Son Jesus Christ, the pledge of our redemption; and we pray that it may bring us forgiveness of our sins, strength in our weakness, and everlasting salvation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

L.E.V. says Let us bless the Lord.

People's response *Thanks be to God.*

Concerning the Rite

The Book of Common Prayer affirms the place of Holy Eucharist as “the principal act of Christian worship on the Lord’s Day and other major Feast,” and thus the foundation of the corporate prayer of the Church. As an act of the whole community of faith, the Eucharist is a summons to all the baptized to share in the table of the Lord. The above form for the distribution of Holy Communion by licensed lay persons (Lay Eucharistic Visitors) is intended to foster a corporate sense of the Eucharist among those who, by reason of illness or infirmity, are unable to be present in their church’s assembly on Sunday or some other principal feast.

This service is to be conducted by a duly licensed person immediately following such parish celebrations of the Holy Eucharist. The General Convention (1985) has specified that: The function of Lay Eucharistic Visitors shall be limited to the following:

- a) Directly following a Celebration of Holy Eucharist on Sunday or other Principal Celebrations, if so authorized by the member of the clergy in charge of the congregation and especially licensed thereto by the Bishop, taking the Sacrament consecrated at the Celebration to those members of the congregation who, by reason of illness were unable to be present at the Celebration.
- b) It is desirable that other parishioners, relatives and friends also be present to communicate with the person visited.
- c) Those visited should also be visited regularly by the clergy of the congregation. In this way, those who are unable to participate regularly in the worship of the Eucharistic assembly may nevertheless experience their relation to the community and also join the personal faith and witness to that of their community.
- d) It is appropriate that the person be invited to join in commenting on the scripture and in offering suitable prayers during the rite.

Title III, Canon 4

Sec 7 A Eucharistic Visitor is a lay person authorized to take the Consecrated Elements in a timely manner following a Celebration of Holy Eucharist to members of the congregation who, by reason of illness or infirmity, were unable to be present at the Celebration. A Eucharistic Visitor should normally act under the direction of a Deacon, if any, or otherwise, the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith.

Best Practices for Lay Eucharistic Ministers

Lay Eucharistic Ministers administer the cup at any Celebration of Holy Eucharist if there is an insufficient number of Priests or Deacons present.

Title III, Canon 4

Sec 6 A Eucharistic Minister is a lay person authorized to administer the Consecrated Elements at a Celebration of Holy Eucharist. A Eucharistic Minister should normally act under the direction of a Deacon, if any, or otherwise, the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith.