



## **PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF CROSSLACON PARISH**

# **HOME COMMUNION POLICY**

This policy is set out for Crosslacon Parish where lay people take Holy Communion to the housebound or the sick, or to others who cannot get to church.

As this ministry involves sometimes working with and ministering to vulnerable adults and often in their homes, it is necessary that the parish has ensured that those who go in the name of the church have received appropriate training and have been carefully selected.

Everyone involved in such ministry will already have been nominated by the parish priest and PCC and had some experience as a Eucharistic/Communion Assistant in church services.

Those involved in this ministry must hold a current DBS and engage in safeguarding training.

## **Policy Guidelines**

### **1. Eligibility**

Home Communion is only for those who are physically unable to attend regular worship. The Vicar may occasionally take communion to those who have been particularly ill, but the normal use of home communion is for those who need it and not for those who have removed themselves from the church for a different reason.

### **2. Approval**

Volunteers will need to be individually approved by the Vicar and the PCC. These authorisations need to be renewed annually.

Volunteers are only able to take Holy Communion to people at home. Approval will need to be obtained as above before taking Communion to someone new/unknown.

### **3. List of Regular Recipients**

The Pastoral team leader will maintain and monitor a list of all those in receipt of regular Communion in the home and liaise with the Vicar as any changes need to be made.

#### 4. Conduct of the Service

Ensure that you obtain sufficient consecrated wafers prior to your arrangements to visit. Transport the wafers in a pyx. Consecrated wine can be taken in a small bottle. The wafer can be dipped in the wine before given to the person receiving communion. Pace the ritual with sensitivity. Be aware of the sick person's ability to follow. Adapt to the situation of each visit. Give a small portion of the host to a person who has difficulty swallowing. When distributing the Eucharist do check if there are any issues in swallowing and or any allergies to wafer or wine. Take time to pray reverently and to be present with the sick person and the family. Be sensitive to the proper time to depart.

Be prepared in the face of refusal or rejection by either the person who is sick or by a family member. Be ready to offer modified services in such cases or a simple Lord's Prayer. If the person does not wish to share Communion at this time, ask if they would like to share in a short blessing prayer.

#### 5. Safeguarding Considerations for Ministers of Communion for the Sick

Prior to embarking on this ministry, familiarise yourself with the Diocesan Guidelines for working with Vulnerable Adults.

Be sensitive to the situation when you enter a person's home or room, the person's appearance, medical equipment, the environment, the person's mood. Listen attentively. If you are uncertain or have any concerns write your observations down and share with the Vicar.

Be sensitive to any feelings of loneliness and depression the person may be displaying.

If a person is showing signs of confusion and memory impairment, ensure that someone else is present during your visit.

If a person has a physical disability, do not offer personal assistance with physical tasks but refer to a member of the family or trusted neighbour.

If on arrival you discover that the person has had a fall ring for emergency services. Do not attempt to lift or move the person.

If you have concerns about the person's wellbeing or safety discuss with the Minister or with Diocesan Safeguarding lead. Do not try to solve problems yourself initially. Speak with the vicar and seek advice.

While visiting a person sometimes gifts or benefits may be offered, as a personal courtesy. Gifts and benefits may be offered out of gratitude and goodwill. However, gifts and benefits can also be offered as a subtle form of influence. This in turn may give rise to a conflict of interest and breach of boundaries. Acceptance of a gift or benefit can create a sense of obligation that may compromise the relationship. You may only accept gifts of 'negligible value' and very infrequently. If a recipient insists on giving a 'gift', ask the recipient to give the item to a charitable organization or to make a donation to the church, possibly for the 'Communion to the Homebound Ministry'.

## Home Communion Policy

If the person asks you to become involved in any transactions involving money ie pick up their pension, pay a bill for them, pick up some shopping. Politely refuse and explore alternative solutions to their request involving family or friends.

### 6. Covid Considerations

Ensure that you remain masked when visiting. Do not visit if you have had any symptoms associated with Covid, and/or you have had a positive LFT or a PCR and/or you have been in close recent prolonged contact with someone who has tested positive for covid.

When administering communion, make sure that you are seated at least 1 metre away from the individual. Wash your hands with anti-bacterial gel before handling the elements and before administering to the recipient.

After the service, ensure that any vessels are washed in hot soapy water. Sanitise the laminated communion cards.

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