

General Synod – Lay Assistants at Holy Communion Canon 1973 Repeal and Exclusion Ordinance 2019

Explanatory Report

Purpose of the Bill

1. The purpose of the Bill for the *General Synod – Lay Assistants at Holy Communion Canon 1973 Repeal and Exclusion Ordinance 2019* (the “Bill”) is to exclude the Lay Assistants at Holy Communion Canon 1973 (the “Canon”) and amend the *Authorisation of Lay Ministry Ordinance 2015* to authorise lay persons to assist the presbyter in the distribution of the elements of the Holy Communion on certain terms.

Recommendations

2. That Synod receive this report.
3. That Synod pass the Bill as an ordinance of the Synod.

Evidence Given

4. The Synod of the Diocese of Sydney has adopted the *Lay Assistants at Holy Communion Canon 1973*.
5. The Canon provides for lay persons to be authorised by the bishop to assist in the ministering and distribution of Holy Communion.
6. On 17 December 2002, Archbishop Peter Jensen issued a general authorisation for lay people to assist in the ministering and distribution of Holy Communion, subject to certain requirements being satisfied. This authorisation is still in force. A copy is attached.
7. It is unnecessary for the authorisation of a lay person to assist in the ministering and distribution of Holy Communion to be authorised pursuant to a Canon of the General Synod. Furthermore, since it involves an authorisation for a lay person to perform a function in the Church the provisions should be consolidated into the *Authorisation of Lay Ministry Ordinance 2015* so that the regulation of lay ministry is contained within the one ordinance.
8. Clause 2 of the Bill will repeal the *General Synod – Lay Assistants at Holy Communion Canon 1973 Adopting Ordinance 1973* and exclude the Canon pursuant to section 30(d) of the Schedule to the Anglican Church of Australia Constitution Act 1961.
9. Clause 3 of the Bill will insert a new clause 9 in the *Authorisation of Lay Ministry Ordinance 2015* to authorise a lay person to assist the presbyter in the distribution of the elements of the Holy Communion where the following requirements are met –
 - (a) the lay person has attained the age of 18 years,
 - (b) the lay person has been invited by the presbyter to provide such assistance,
 - (c) the lay person is a communicant member of the Anglican Church of Australia,
 - (d) the presbyter is satisfied concerning the doctrine held by and the character of the lay person,
 - (e) the lay person is not the subject of a request by the parish council of the parish in which the service of Holy Communion takes place that the lay person not provide such assistance,
 - (f) the lay person is not the subject of a direction of the Archbishop or an Assistant Bishop that the lay person not provide such assistance, and
 - (g) the lay person is not the subject of an undertaking given under or a suspension or prohibition order issued pursuant to the *Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017* or an equivalent ordinance.

10. The phrase “in the distribution of the elements of the Holy Communion” is used instead of the phrase “assist in the ministering and distribution of Holy Communion” in order to be more specific about what is being authorised by Ordinance.
11. The requirements to be met are the same as those in the authorisation issued by Archbishop Jensen, except –
 - (a) a person must have attained the age of 18 years rather than 21 years,
 - (b) the term “Priest” has been replaced with “presbyter”, and
 - (c) paragraph (g) has been updated to reflect changes to the professional standards regime in force in the Diocese.

For and on behalf of the Standing Committee

DANIEL GLYNN
Diocesan Secretary

29 August 2019

Authority for Lay Persons to Assist in the Service of Holy Communion

I, Peter Frederick Jensen, Archbishop of Sydney pursuant to section 1 of the Lay Assistants at Holy Communion Canon 1973 hereby authorise every lay person to assist the priest in the ministering and distribution of the Holy Communion where the following requirements are satisfied –

- (a) the lay person has attained the age of 21 years, and
- (b) the lay person has been invited by the priest to provide such assistance, and
- (c) the lay person is a communicant member of the Anglican Church of Australia, and
- (d) the minister is satisfied concerning the doctrine held by and the character of the lay person, and
- (e) the lay person is not the subject of a request by the parish council of the parish in which the service of Holy Communion takes place that the lay person not provide such assistance, and
- (f) the lay person is not the subject of a direction of the Archbishop or an Assistant Bishop that the lay person not provide such assistance, and
- (g) the lay person is not the subject of a prohibition made by the Archbishop under the Church Discipline Ordinance 1996.

In this Authority –

"minister" means –

- (a) as applied to a parish, the minister duly licensed thereto as the incumbent thereof or the person (if any) appointed thereto pursuant to clause 59 of the Church Administration Ordinance 1990,
- (b) as applied to a provisional parish, the minister duly licensed thereto as curate-in-charge or the person (if any) appointed thereto pursuant to clause 59 of the Church Administration Ordinance 1990,
- (c) as applied to St Andrew's Cathedral, the Dean thereof, and
- (d) as applied to a church situated within the Diocese but not situated in any parish, the minister licensed to officiate thereat.

"parish" means a parish and a provisional parish in the Diocese constituted or recognised under the Parishes Ordinance 1979 or a church recognised under the Recognised Churches Ordinance 2000.

"Parish council" as applied to St Andrew's Cathedral means the Chapter thereof.

PETER F JENSEN

Archbishop

17 December 2002