



Guidance for those requiring Gluten-Free Bread and Non-Alcoholic Wine

This guidance considers the needs of those with coeliac disease and those suffering from alcoholism in relation to the Eucharistic celebration.

Gluten-Free Bread

- The elements for Holy Communion in Canon Law and good practice requires that the bread of the Eucharist, which may be leavened or unleavened, must be "of the best and purest wheat flour that it is convenient to obtain" (Canon B.17).
- Where unleavened bread is used, this can either be the widely used forms of wafer bread (including thicker biscuit-type wafers which can be broken into many pieces) or it can take the form of matzah, i.e. the Jewish unleavened bread used at the Passover Meal which comes in the form of a biscuit.
- Gluten-free bread, usually in wafer form and square in shape for easy recognition, is also both legal and pastorally desirable for those suffering from coeliac disease. Canon B.17 is not intended to restrict any of these possibilities, but it does point to the requirement of quality in what is provided. Only the best should be offered to God in the service, which is the living memorial of Christ's Passion.
- Please ensure that gluten-free bread is kept completely separate from all other types of bread so that it does not become contaminated.
- If the taking of wine is by 'intinction' (the consecrated bread being dipped in the consecrated wine) a separate chalice of wine must be made available for those who require gluten free bread for if 'ordinary' bread is dipped in the wine, it may contaminate the wine for those with coeliac disease.
- We would recommend that 'intinction' was discouraged as a form of receiving the wine because of the health and safety risk of parishioner's fingers contaminating the wine.
- If your church offers gluten-free wafers please advertise the fact clearly and state who is the point of contact within the church so that the president is aware.

- Gluten-free wafers are obtainable from <http://charlesfarris.co.uk>, and <http://www.kevinmayhew.com>

Non-Alcoholic Wine

- Those for whom any alcohol would be medically harmful can be legally and properly provided with non-alcoholic wine. This is wine from which the alcohol has been extracted and is readily available commercially. This is not the same as using unfermented grape juice or other fruit juices, which are not wine and are neither Scriptural nor Canonical. A very small quantity of non-alcoholic wine can easily be consecrated for such persons in a clinical chalice (i.e. the small cup sometimes used in home Communion) or in a secondary chalice.
- As with gluten-free bread, this should only be used for the particular communicants for whom it is prepared.
- If your church offers non-alcoholic wine please advertise the fact clearly and state who is the point of contact within the church so that the president is aware.
- Non-alcoholic wine is obtainable from <http://charlesfarris.co.uk>, <http://www.frankwrightmundy.com> and <http://www.kevinmayhew.com>

Rev Timothy Goode

Southwark Diocese Access and Disability Advisor

July 2015