



CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF ENGLAND AND WALES

Vade Mecum for Holy Week 2020

Following discussions among the Metropolitan Archbishops, the following guidance for the celebration of the liturgies of this Holy Week is presented.

The liturgies of this Holy Week will be celebrated without the presence of the faithful. This will mean that the liturgies will need adaptation and simplification without losing the heart of their meaning. The Congregation for Divine worship has issued two decrees regarding the celebration of Holy Week. They have specifically asked that there are no concelebrated liturgies, and this is being reflected in the Pope's own arrangements for these celebrations.

As requested by the Decree, the times of the various liturgies of Holy Week should be published in parishes and via the social media, especially where those liturgies are to be live-streamed from the Cathedral or Parish church. The clergy, and the faithful, should dedicate time for prayer during Holy Week, in particular, the *Liturgy of the Hours* should be used to sanctify this most precious time in the liturgical year.

What is recommended below is in accord with the Decrees of the Congregation for Divine Worship. Whatever local adaptations are agreed, the provision of the two Decrees should be adhered to.

Palm Sunday

In the celebration of the Mass of Palm Sunday, this is to be celebrated and the Commemoration of the Lord's Entrance into Jerusalem should be celebrated within the church buildings and not outside; in Cathedral churches, the Second Form (the Solemn Entrance) should be used, in parish churches and other places the Third Form (the Simple Entrance) should be used. There is no blessing of palms in the third form. Palms could be kept until next year, or parish priests may wish to bless palms separately from the liturgy so that they can be available to their people at a later date when travel becomes possible.

The Chrism Mass

The Archbishops of England and Wales, noting that the Holy Father has deferred the celebration of the Chrism Mass, have asked that a gesture of solidarity with the Holy Father is made by postponing Chrism Masses within the Conference.

Once the restrictions of the pandemic are raised, the Chrism Mass and the Blessing of Holy Oils and Consecration of the Chrism will take place, with the Bishop, priests and faithful of our dioceses. Until then, the Holy Oils from last year should be retained in parishes.

Mass of the Lord's Supper

The faculty to celebrate this Mass without the people is granted to all priests on this day. The Washing of the Feet is to be omitted and there is to be no procession to the Altar of Repose. The reserved Sacrament is to be kept in the Tabernacle. Those who are not able to celebrate this Mass should pray *Vespers* from the *Liturgy of the Hours*.

It is likely that the priest may wish to spend some time in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament in the Tabernacle. The Archbishops have asked that priests make a *Renewal of Priestly Commitment* at this time using the formula in Appendix 1.

If live-streaming facilities permit, a camera focused on the Tabernacle would allow those at home a sense of watching and praying with the Lord. St Chad's Cathedral in Birmingham will be the focus of national coverage of Watching on Holy Thursday: www.stchadscathedral.org.uk

Good Friday

The Archbishops of England and Wales ask that if it is unrealistic for a priest to celebrate the Liturgy of the Lord's Passion, he should spend time in prayer for his people. This will include the praying of *Vespers* from the *Liturgy of the Hours* and also spend time before a Crucifix, where he should pray the Universal Prayers of the Liturgy of Good Friday including the additional prayer given below.

The Holy Father has decreed that a special intention (*For the afflicted in time of Pandemic*) be inserted before the intercession *For those in Tribulation (X)*. This prayer is circulated with this notice in Appendix 2.

Note that the Cross can either be veiled or unveiled according to whether the first or second form of the *Showing* is used. It may be expedient to use the second form for ease.

The Easter Vigil

This should be celebrated in Cathedrals and Parish Churches only. If a priest is unable to celebrate the Easter Vigil, he should pray the prescribed *Office of Readings* for Easter Day noting the number of readings, chants and prayers to be used.

For those celebrating the Easter Vigil, following the Greeting, the *Lucernarium*, the preparation of the fire is omitted, and the Paschal Candle is lit and placed in the candlestick without ceremony and procession, and the Easter Proclamation (the *Exsultet*) immediately follows. As there is no procession, it is recommended that this part of the Vigil takes place in the Sanctuary where the Paschal candle is enthroned either in the centre or at the lectern.

The Liturgy of the Word follows, noting the requirements of the readings, psalms and prayers. The Renewal of Baptismal Promises is made without the blessing of water. For those who are not live-streaming their liturgy, it may be sensible to change the interrogative

form of the Renewal of Baptismal Promises into a statement of intent: *I renounce.... I believe....*

This is followed by the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

Those who should have celebrated the Sacraments of Christian Initiation, or to have been received into Full Communion with the Church and confirmed at the Easter Vigil should be remembered in the Prayer of the Faithful at the Vigil.

Mass of Easter Day

All priests should endeavour to celebrate Mass for their people on Easter Sunday. The mass should be as prescribed in the *Roman Missal* but without the sprinkling of water as part of the Renewal of Baptismal Promises.

/contd.

Appendix 1

PERSONAL RENEWAL OF PRIESTLY COMMITMENT

In the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, the priest makes the following personal renewal of priestly commitment.

✠ In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Lord Jesus Christ, as the Church approaches the anniversary of that day when you conferred your priesthood on the Apostles and on us, I renew now, in the strength of the Holy Spirit, the promises I made on the day of my priestly ordination.

With humility and faith, I (*the priest inserts his name*) resolve to be more united with you and more closely conformed to you, denying myself and confirming those promises about sacred duties towards your Church which, prompted by love of you, I willingly and joyfully pledged on the day I was ordained a priest.

I resolve to be a faithful steward of the divine mysteries in the Holy Eucharist and the other liturgical rites, and to discharge faithfully the sacred office of teaching, following you the Head and Shepherd, not seeking any gain, but moved only by zeal for souls.

Humbly, I ask for an outpouring of the gifts and graces I need for my priestly service, so that, supported by the prayers of the people entrusted to my care, and working with my brother priests, I might remain faithful in my ministry to you, the High Priest, and lead your people in the way of salvation.

I pray for my bishop (*insert the Bishop's name*) that he may be faithful to the apostolic office entrusted to him, so that, in our midst, he may be made, day by day, a living and more perfect image of you, the Priest, the Good Shepherd, the Teacher and Servant of all.

Lord Jesus, graciously keep us all in your love and lead all of us, shepherds and flock, to eternal life. Amen.

✠ In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Appendix 2

FRIDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD

The Solemn Intercessions

IX b. For the afflicted in time of pandemic

Let us pray also for all those who suffer the consequences of the current pandemic, that God the Father may grant health to the sick, strength to those who care for them, comfort to families and salvation to all the victims who have died.

Prayer in silence. Then the Priest says:

Almighty ever-living God,
only support of our human weakness,
look with compassion upon the sorrowful condition of your children
who suffer because of this pandemic;
relieve the pain of the sick,
give strength to those who care for them,
welcome into your peace those who have died
and, throughout this time of tribulation,
grant that we may all find comfort in your merciful love.
Through Christ our Lord.

R/. Amen.

Rev. Canon Christopher Thomas
1st April 2020