**Holy Week 2020**

It is anticipated that, by the time of Holy Week 2020, the people of Ireland may well be suffering a peak of Corona virus cases. All the more reason, then, for the Church to remember and celebrate the saving Passion, Death and Resurrection of the Lord Jesus in the solemn liturgies of Holy Week.

These liturgies will, of necessity, be in a greatly scaled-down manner. We will try to pray with noble simplicity.

What many parish groupings have already decided is to focus their resources and strengths into liturgies based in some churches that can be shared by webcam or radio with the faithful. We then discern how best to use the webcam to maximise the participation and visibility for those who are praying along with us.

With the most recent Government announced restrictions, particularly with the ‘cocooning’ of those over 70, we are limited in the numbers of Clergy, Readers, liturgical Cantors, and liturgical Musicians we can have; just enough to fulfil these roles. All those participating need to constantly maintain safe social distancing. In choosing music for the liturgy, please give priority to selecting congregational parts and hymns that those watching will know and with which they can join in.

*If your church doesn’t have radio system or a webcam, do your best to make your parishioners aware of how they can pray with webcasts of the Holy Week liturgies being provided by parishes near to you or in the Pro Cathedral or communities like the Benedictines of Glenstal, Murroe, Co. Limerick. Also, remind them of the live broadcasts of religious services provided by RTÉ.*

**[a] Palm Sunday**

It is being recommended that we use the Third Form, the Simple Entrance at Mass for today. Palms can be blessed in our parishes as part of the liturgy, but it is impossible to distribute them or make them available to the people on the day without greatly increasing the possibility of contagion. Best, then, that the blessed palms are retained in storage **for** to be distributed to the faithful in the future when the current crisis has abated.

**[b] Chrism Mass**

Archbishop Diarmuid has postponed our Diocesan Chrism Mass until the time is right and safe for us to all gather together and celebrate it joyfully. It is unlikely that parishes will run out of any of the sacred oils in the meantime.  
If necessary, spare oils may be available from the Pro-Cathedral.

**[c] Evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper**

The Congregation for Divine Worship asks that the Washing of Feet is to be omitted. However, it may be very appropriate at that point when the Washing of Feet normally takes place, that a jug of water, a bowl and a towel are placed in a significant location and time is allowed for the few present and the many following by webcam to focus their attention on the profound meaning of these symbols among us in these days where so many healthcare staff are serving the sick, the dying and their loved ones. Reference could also be made in the homily to those in other services like food shops and food suppliers, pharmacies, those caring for the poorest and other public services to remember how they are embodying Jesus’ example of service to others and in the giving of his life for the world.

The procession with the Blessed Sacrament to the Place of Repose is omitted and the Blessed Sacrament is to be kept in the tabernacle. Priests who are unable to take part are to celebrate Evening Prayer.

**[d] Good Friday: Celebration of the Lord’s Passion**

*In the Solemn Intercessions, see The Roman Missal p 176, number 134, the Irish Bishops Conference will provide a special intention for the sick, the dead, for those who feel lost or dismayed as arising from the Corona virus pandemic.*

Adoration of the Cross: The rubrics indicate that only one Cross should be offered for adoration (see: *The Roman Missal* p. 191).

An appropriate gesture of adoration can be a simple genuflection (*The* *Roman Missal*, p 190) or bowing to the Cross is also appropriate. Kissing the Cross is NOT permitted at this time. As indicated by the rubrics, it is also permissible for the Cross to be elevated for a brief time, during which there is a time of adoration in silence (*The Roman Missal* p.190). This could also provide us, and all who are praying with us, with a moment to meditate upon and to lift up the suffering of members of the Body of Christ among our communities and throughout the world in these extraordinary days.

Think too about webcasting the praying of the Stations of the Cross, where possible.

**[e] Easter Sunday: The Easter Vigil, Holy Saturday Night, 11 April 9.30pm**

By direction of the Holy See, the Holy Saturday Easter Vigil can be celebrated only in Cathedral and Parish Churches, but not in Seminaries, Communities of Clergy, Monasteries or Religious Houses.

Please remember our brothers and sisters who are in the Elect, who were hoping to receive full Christian Initiation at this year’s Easter Vigil. We hope they can understand that this moment is postponed till it can be done fully and joyfully with the community as their witness and support. The reception during Easter of candidates into the full communion of the Catholic Church is similarly postponed.

The preparation and lighting of the Easter Fire is omitted.   
The Paschal Candle is lit and the *Exsulte*t (the Easter Proclamation) follows.   
The Liturgy of the Word then takes place.

For the baptismal Liturgy, *The Renewal of Baptismal Promises* alone is necessary. See *The* *Roman Missal* p. 247 # 55.

The Liturgy of the Eucharist follows.

**[f] Easter Week**

If access to churches for private prayer remains possible in Easter week, it would be commendable to burn incense at least once a day and to have a simple arrangement of trumpet lilies or other flowers. It is not expected that Easter Water should be made available.

**[g] So-called Dawn Masses Outdoors on Easter Sunday Morning**

For strictly public health, safety and, otherwise liturgical reasons, so-called 'Dawn Masses' outdoors on Easter Sunday morning should NOT take place.

**For further liturgical updates please log on to www.litmus.dublindiocese.ie**