



Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide

Archbishop of Adelaide

10th March, 2021
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Dear sisters and brothers,

RE: Celebrating the Holy Week in time of Pandemic

Grace and peace, I hope that this note finds you well.

I would wish to communicate the following information to you.

As of the time of writing the State Government has not changed its existing restrictions for the protocols for Places of Worship. We are continually petitioning the Government to relax the current restrictions, so far to no avail.

1. Social distancing

For all of the Holy Week ceremonies the direction of 1 person per 2 square metres must still be observed.

2. Live-streaming

It is to be hoped that as many Parishes as possible will live stream their Easter ceremonies so that those who are not able to be physically present can still participate to the best of their ability.

3. The Celebration of Triduum ceremonies

- 3.1**
- a) There is to be only ONE Easter Vigil in each Parish.
 - b) If a Parish deems it beneficial, TWO opportunities for the Mass of the Lord's Supper and the Good Friday Commemoration of the Lord's Passion, are permitted.
 - c) Another way of including greater numbers at each of the Triduum ceremonies (while still observing social distancing) would be to transfer from the church to a larger building. e.g School hall etc.

- 3.2** Traditionally, gifts for the poor are brought up with the bread and wine at the **Preparation of Gifts**. The procession of bread and wine has been omitted during COVID restrictions, and this instruction should continue for the Mass of the Lord's Supper.

However, to make clear the connection between the Washing of the Feet and the call to serve, it would be appropriate for the **Project Compassion boxes** to be brought up at this time, since they will not be touched by anyone and can be retrieved immediately after Mass for safe-keeping.

3.3 Distribution of Holy Communion

Even though this is the one night when everyone is encouraged to receive Holy Communion under both forms, it can only be offered under the form of bread this year. Only the priest (and any concelebrating priests) will receive the Precious Blood. As well as this, a reminder of the Diocesan Policy which prohibits Holy Communion being received on the tongue.

3.4 **Transfer of the Blessed Sacrament** to the place of repose.

There are two options here:

- a) If the place of repose does not allow for people to be sufficiently spaced for adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, then do not create a place of repose, but rather put the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle (obviously there will not be any flowers or other decorations since the altar is to be stripped and everything made ready for the Good Friday ceremony.) The faithful can adore the Blessed Sacrament from the body of the church and pray Night Prayer at a suitable time, if this is the custom in your Parish.
- b) If the place of repose *does* allow people to be sufficiently spaced, then the Transfer of the Blessed Sacrament should be carried out by the priest and servers only (i.e. no procession of people following behind.) Once the Blessed Sacrament is in place the faithful may come and pray. In this case, the place of repose can be suitable decorated, and Night Prayer be celebrated at a suitable time.

4. **Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord**

Parishes are encouraged to use the Third Form of the Commemoration of the Lord's Entrance into Jerusalem. In this, the Simple Entrance, the people gather *inside* the church in the usual way and the priest (and other liturgical ministers) come through the church to the altar while the Entrance Antiphon or hymn (e.g. "All glory, laud and honour") is sung by a cantor or small group of singers.

The priest venerates the altar and goes to the chair. After the Sign of the Cross and the Greeting he proceeds with Mass in the usual way.

5. **Holy Thursday: Mass of the Lord's Supper**

5.1 The Washing of Feet is always optional during the Mass of the Lord's Supper. This year, with the restrictions of COVID-19, there are three options:

- a) It is included, but only the priest carries out the washing by moving from one person to the next, pouring water over the foot, then handing the person their individual towel, they dry their own feet.
- b) It is included, but rather than have twelve people, just the members from a single family come forward to have their feet washed.
- c) It is omitted.

For options a) and b) the priest will sanitise his hands before and after the foot-washing.

If the Washing of Feet is omitted, the Universal Prayer (Prayer of the Faithful) is prayed after the homily (since the Creed is not prayed at this Mass).

6. **Good Friday**

6.1 **Morning Prayer and Stations of the Cross**

If it is the custom in your Parish to celebrate either **Morning Prayer** or the **Stations of the Cross** (or both) it is essential that the COVID-19 restrictions are able to be observed throughout.

If Stations are celebrated *inside* the church, it is possible to have the people stay in their place and simply turn towards each Station. In the case of *outdoor* Stations, appropriate social distancing is to be observed while moving from Station to Station. For this reason it would be advisable to have several COVID Marshalls present to direct the flow of traffic. A reminder that the collection for the Holy Places ought to be taken up at these celebrations.

6.2 Celebration of the Passion of the Lord

1. The Holy See has recommended that the following Intention be included (as Intercession XI) in the **Solemn Intercessions** :

Deacon: Let us pray, dearly beloved, for a swift end to the coronavirus pandemic that afflicts our world, that our God and Father will heal the sick, strengthen those who care for them, and help us all to persevere in faith.

All pray in silence for a few moments, then:

Priest: Almighty and merciful God,
you never abandon those who call on you.
source of all life, health and healing,
look with compassion on our world, brought low by disease;
protect us in the midst of the grave challenges that assail us
and in your fatherly providence grant recovery to the stricken,
strength to those who care for them,
and success to those working to eradicate this scourge.
Through Christ our Lord.
All: Amen

2. Adoration of the Cross.

- a) The only person to adore the Cross by kissing it is the celebrant.
- b) The faithful may adore the Cross by bowing or genuflecting. Each parish will decide the best option for their particular situation:
 - the people may come forward (suitably spaced) and make their individual act of veneration. Please use ushers to ensure a steady flow of people.
 - the people all remain in their places and the single Cross is placed so that all can see it. A generous period of time is then allowed for adoration. During this time a cantor/small group may sing an appropriate hymn (e.g. 'The Reproaches' or 'O Sacred Head') or a sacred silence may be observed.

3. Distribution of Holy Communion.

This will be done in the usual way according to COVID-19 restrictions.

7. Easter Vigil

1. Normally the **Blessing of the Fire and Preparation of the Candle** take place outside. However, if this means that COVID restrictions cannot be observed, then it would be better to have this inside.
2. During the **Baptismal and Confirmation Liturgy**, please have hand sanitizer (in the form of disinfectant wipes) at the ready, to be used after the anointing of each candidate.
3. The **Renewal of Baptismal Promises** by the entire congregation takes place as usual.

8. General Guidelines and Reminders

The following are reminders:

- a) Parishes must take reasonable steps to maintain 1.5m physical distancing
- b) You must maintain good hygiene: hand sanitisation and regular cleaning of surfaces
- c) Please discourage people from congregating at entry/exits and outside
- d) QR code and/or collection of contact details is still required at all Masses and gatherings
- e) You must have a COVID Safe Plan

1. Congregational Singing

The Government advice on congregational singing is that it should be avoided. Members of choirs should be spaced **more than** 1.5 metres apart. Singing increases the distance that droplets from the mouth can spread. This issue is being actively followed up with SA Health as to when there will be a return to congregational singing.

2. Gatherings (Tea and Coffee) after Mass

Provided that the good hygiene and physical distancing is maintained, gatherings after mass can commence. Please ensure:

- a) There is no self-service for tea/coffee and food.
- b) Food should be individually wrapped.
- c) A couple of volunteers should manage this process.

3. Ongoing Support, Catholic Health Safety and Welfare

If you would like further assistance please contact Deb Nation and her team at Catholic Health Safety and Welfare on 08 8215 6850.

If any of the above impacts on the Easter ceremonies that you may have already submitted to my Office, please ensure that you advise the office of any changes.

In Domino,



+Patrick O'Regan
Archbishop of Adelaide