



GUIDELINES FOR HOLY WEEK 2026

The following guidelines for Holy Week highlight some of the instructions from the *Roman Missal* and other official Church documents.

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT – MARCH 22

Covering Crosses and Images

The practice of covering crosses and images throughout the church beginning this Sunday may be observed. Crosses remain covered until the end of the Celebration of the Lord’s Passion on Good Friday, and images remain covered until the beginning of the Easter Vigil.

PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD – MARCH 29

The Commemoration of the Lord’s Entrance into Jerusalem

1. For an “Order of Placing Branches in the Home”, see *Catholic Household Book of Blessings and Prayers*, no. 108-109.
2. If palm branches are not available, then other greenery may be used.
3. There are **three forms** of beginning the liturgy on this day:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● First Form: <i>In this form the Procession or a gathering takes place in another suitable place other than inside the church to which the procession will go (Palm Sunday, no. 2).</i> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The faithful carry palm branches or other greenery plants. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Red vestments are worn – Chasuble or Cope may be used at this time. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The antiphon or a suitable hymn is sung. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The priest greets the people. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Priest says the prayer of blessing of the palms and sprinkled with holy water (in silence) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Gospel of the Entry into Jerusalem is proclaimed from the <i>Roman Missal</i> or Book of the Gospels (Cycle C – Luke 19:28-40). The Book of the Gospels may be incensed, if used. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A brief homily may be given – Instruction for the procession is also given. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Procession Begins and songs are sung while the procession goes inside the church. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Thurible (Incense) ○ Processional Cross Adorned with Palms ○ Candle bearers ○ Priests & Ministers ○ The Faithful |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Upon arrival at the altar, the priest: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reverence and incensation of the Altar |

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| ○ He puts on the red chasuble, if he wore a cope. |
| ▪ Penitential Rite is omitted. |
| ▪ Collect is prayed, then Mass continues in the usual way. |

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| <p>● Second Form: <i>When a procession outside the church cannot take place, the entrance of the Lord is celebrated inside the church by means of a Solemn Entrance before the principal Mass (Palm Sunday, no. 12).</i></p> |
| ▪ Meet at the entrance of the church (usually the vestibule area) |
| ▪ Priest goes to the meeting place, wearing a red cope or chasuble |
| ▪ The antiphon or a suitable hymn is sung. |
| ▪ Blessing of Palms. |
| ▪ The Gospel of the Entry into Jerusalem is proclaimed from the <i>Roman Missal</i> or Book of the Gospels (Cycle C – Luke 19:28-40). The Book of the Gospels may be incensed, if used. |
| ▪ The priest enters into the sanctuary, while the antiphon or a suitable hymn is sung. |
| ▪ Upon arrival at the altar, the priest: |
| ○ Reverence and incensation of the Altar |
| ○ He puts on the red chasuble, if he wore a cope. |
| ▪ Penitential Rite is omitted. |
| ▪ Collect is prayed, then Mass continues in the usual way. |

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| <p>● Third Form: <i>The Simple Entrance before other Masses. The Solemn Entrance, but not the Procession, may be repeated before other Masses. This form omits the blessing of palms, the Gospel at the Procession with Palms, and the procession of people and ministers.</i></p> |
| ▪ The priest goes to the altar – The antiphon or a suitable hymn is sung. |
| ▪ The priest reverences and incenses the altar |
| ▪ He then proceeds to the celebrant’s chair |
| ▪ Mass begins with the Sign of the Cross and Greetings |
| ▪ Penitential Rite is used. |
| ▪ Collect is prayed, then Mass continues in the usual way. |

Order of the Mass

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| ● Collect |
| ● First Reading is proclaimed. |
| ● Responsorial Psalm is said or sung. |
| ● Second Reading is proclaimed |
| ● *** <i>The celebrant may choose to omit the two readings and just proclaim the Passion.</i> |
| ● Lenten Gospel Acclamation |



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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Narrative of the Passion is read. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The narrative of the Lord’s Passion is essential to the liturgy of this day and cannot be omitted. It is read without candles and without incense, with no greeting or signing of the book. It may be proclaimed by three persons who take the parts of Christ, the Narrator, and the People. The part of Christ should be reserved to the priest. If the Passion is proclaimed by only one reader, then it should be proclaimed by a deacon or priest (Palm Sunday, no. 21; <i>Paschales Solemnitatis</i> 33). |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homily or a moment of silence may be observed. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creed |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Prayer |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prayer over the Offerings |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preface of the Passion of the Lord is used. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solemn Blessing no. 5 may be used. |

CHRISM MASS – MARCH 30

1. The Chrism Mass will be celebrated on Monday of Holy Week at the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels at 7:00 PM. No other services should be scheduled for this evening in the Archdiocese.
2. Each parish is required to identify one individual who will be responsible for picking up the newly blessed and consecrated oils following the Chrism Mass.
3. Please contact the Cathedral Parish Office directly for more information on the Holy Oil Distribution (213) 680-5200.

FUNERALS DURING THE EASTER TRIDUUM

On Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday, a funeral Mass ***may not*** be celebrated. On these days the body of the deceased may be brought into the church for the ***Funeral Liturgy Outside Mass*** using the *Order of Christian Funerals*, Part I, Chapter 4. A Mass for the deceased should be offered as soon as is convenient after Easter Sunday (OCF, 107-203).

MARRIAGES DURING THE TRIDUUM

The celebration of Matrimony (including the convalidation of marriage) is **not permitted** during the Easter Triduum.

COMMUNION FOR THE SICK AND VIATICUM

Communion may be brought to the sick on all days except Holy Saturday. On Holy Saturday communion may be given only as *Viaticum*. Communion services outside of the liturgy are **not permitted** on Holy Thursday, Good Friday, or Holy Saturday.

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MASS OF THE LORD’S SUPPER – APRIL 2

Prep Checklist for Holy Thursday: <https://lacatholics.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Prep-Checklist-Holy-Thursday-Mass-of-Lords-Supper.pdf>

1. Ritual Masses, including Funeral Masses, are not permitted.
2. Lent ends with the beginning of the Mass of the Lord's Supper on the evening of Holy Thursday — the **only** Mass permitted on this day. All Masses without an assembly are forbidden.
3. The altar may be decorated with flowers (Holy Thursday, 5).
4. The tabernacle should be entirely empty with the doors open, and the sanctuary lamp should not be lit (Holy Thursday, 5).
5. The oils blessed and consecrated at the Chrism Mass may be carried into the church before the celebration of the Mass (Roman Missal, Chrism Mass, no. 15).
 - Parish Reception of Oils: https://lacatholics.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Parish_Reception_of_Oils.pdf
6. The *Gloria* is sung. Bells are rung, and when finished, they remain silent until the *Gloria* of the Easter Vigil (Holy Thursday, 7).
7. Bells are not rung during the Consecration.
8. The celebration of the Washing of Feet may take place. If the priest chooses the optional foot washing, “it is for [him] to choose a small group of persons who are representative of the entire people of God— lay, ordained ministers, married, single, religious, healthy, sick, children, young people, the elderly, and people of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds —and not just one category or condition” (*Congregation for Divine Worship & Discipline of the Sacraments* letter of January 6, 2016).

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| • The celebrant removes his chasuble. |
| • He washes their feet and dries them. |
| • It should be celebrated in a way that allows the congregation to participate visually. |
| • Suitable music, especially hymns that speak of charity, may be used during this time. |
| • While there is a tradition in kissing the feet, the rubrics do not specify that action. |
9. After the Washing of Feet, the priest returns to his chair, washes and dries his hands, puts the chasuble back on, and from there directs the Universal Prayer (Holy Thursday, 13).
10. The Creed is not said.
11. The renewal of priestly commitment from the Chrism Mass is not to be used at the Mass of the Lord's Supper.
12. At the Offertory, gifts for the poor may be presented in procession with the bread and wine (Holy Thursday, 14).
13. Enough bread should be consecrated at this Mass for the liturgy of Good Friday as well.
14. The Roman Canon (Eucharistic Prayer I) includes special inserts. At an appropriate moment during Communion, the priest may entrust the Eucharist from the altar to a deacon, acolyte, or extraordinary minister, so that it may be brought to the sick who are to receive Holy Communion at home (Holy Thursday, 33).

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15. The Prayer after Communion is said by the priest standing at the chair (Holy Thursday, 35).
16. There is no Concluding Rite with the usual greeting, blessing and dismissal.
17. After the Prayer after Communion, the Priest uses incense to bless the Blessed Sacrament three times. He puts on a white humeral veil and covers it (Holy Thursday, 37).
18. The Holy Eucharist, in a ciborium, is transferred to the place of reposition.
19. The Altar of Repose may be:
 - outside the sanctuary in another part of the church (e.g. side altar),
 - in a chapel suitably decorated (e.g. the adoration chapel), or
 - in a place set up in such a way as to be conducive to prayer and meditation (e.g. outside of the church in a hall). The place of reposition should be simply decorated.
20. **Under no circumstances is the Blessed Sacrament to be exposed in a monstrance.** In addition, under no circumstances is it permitted to reserve the Precious Blood for adoration on Holy Thursday and for distribution on Good Friday (Norms, no. 30).
21. In the order of procession for the transfer of the Blessed Sacrament to the place of reposition, a minister carrying the processional cross is followed by two others with lighted candles.
22. A minister carrying a smoking censer precedes the priest carrying the Blessed Sacrament (Holy Thursday, 38).
23. A suitable Eucharistic hymn may be sung by the faithful (ex. *Pange, lingua & Tantum Ergo Sacramentum*)
24. The faithful should be encouraged to spend some time in adoration throughout the remainder of the evening. During the time of adoration, readers may proclaim biblical passages, such as the farewell discourse from the Gospel according to John, chapters 14-17. A minister may also lead Night Prayer or some other appropriate prayer. Hymns may be sung, and silence may be kept.
25. After the Mass, holy water stoups are emptied, the altar is stripped, and the sanctuary is cleared of flowers and adornments.
26. Crosses may be covered in **red** or **violet** for Good Friday (Holy Thursday, 41).
27. Votive candles should not be lit before images of the saints (Circular Letter no., 57).

FRIDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD – APRIL 3

Prep Checklist for Good Friday: <https://lacatholics.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Prep-Checklist-Good-Friday-Celebration-of-Lords-Passion.pdf>

1. Ritual Masses, including Funeral Masses, are not permitted.
2. The Liturgy of the Hours, particularly Morning Prayer, is strongly encouraged on this day. The sacraments of Penance and the Anointing of the Sick—but no other sacraments (e.g. Matrimony)—may be celebrated on Good Friday and Holy Saturday (Good Friday, 1).
3. The Good Friday liturgy is to take place at about 3:00 p.m. or as early as noon, but not later than 9:00 p.m.
4. The Good Friday liturgy is only to be celebrated by a bishop or a priest (Good Friday, 4).



5. “The Priest and the Deacon, if a Deacon is present, wearing **red** vestments as for Mass, go to the altar in silence and, after making a reverence to the altar, prostrate themselves or, if appropriate, kneel and pray in silence for a while. All others kneel.” (Good Friday, 5).
6. The priest says the opening Prayer with hands outstretched, omitting the usual invitation, “Let us pray” (Good Friday, 6).
7. The Passion may be proclaimed by three persons who take the parts of Christ, the Narrator, and the People. The part of Christ should be reserved to the priest. If the Passion is proclaimed by only one reader, then it should be proclaimed by a deacon or priest.
8. The Holy Land Collection is taken up before the Adoration of the Cross.
9. During the Adoration of the Cross, only **one** cross should be used (Good Friday, 19). An image of Jesus on the cross is not venerated; rather, the cross on which he was crucified is adored.
10. There are two forms of Showing the Holy Cross:
 - the unveiling of the cross through the church in the middle in the sanctuary or
 - the procession with the unveiled cross through the nave.
11. The priest may adore the cross with chasuble and shoes removed. (Good Friday, 18).
12. While liturgical law does not prescribe the form or color of veils (for the veiling of images and crosses), they have traditionally been made of simple, lightweight purple cloth, without ornament.
13. If the numbers are so great that all cannot come forward, the priest, after some of the clergy and faithful have adored the cross, can stand with the cross in the center before the altar and, in a few words, invite the people to adore the Cross. He then elevates the cross higher for a brief period of time while the faithful adore it in silence (Good Friday, 19).
14. Sample Invitation for Adoration of the Holy Cross
 - a. *“Let us take a few moments to adore in silence this instrument of our salvation on which Jesus Christ demonstrated his love for us by the pouring out of his blood, bringing life to the whole world. Please kneel.”*
15. The *Missale Romanum* gives specific directions as to the music used during the adoration. The antiphons *We Worship You, Lord*, the Reproaches, the hymn *Faithful Cross*, or other suitable ones are sung.

EASTER VIGIL – APRIL 4

1. The Liturgy of the Hours, particularly Morning Prayer, is strongly encouraged on this day.
2. Again, the celebration of Matrimony (including the convalidation of a marriage) is not permitted on this day.

Lucernarium – The Solemn Beginning of the Vigil

3. The Easter Vigil must begin at night. **This year, the Easter Vigil should not begin before 7:45pm**, allowing for the new fire to break the darkness of night (Easter Vigil, 4).
4. **The Easter Vigil is the first Mass of Easter Sunday and not** in any way to be considered an Anticipated Mass for Easter Sunday. This is why the discipline of the Church insists that it should not begin before nightfall in any circumstance. Furthermore, the beginning of the Easter Vigil is governed not by a clock,

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but by the sacramentality of light and darkness. “The entire celebration of the Easter Vigil takes place at night. It should not begin before nightfall; it should end before daybreak on Sunday” (Congregation for Divine Worship, 1988).

5. The tabernacle should be empty.
6. Please note that there is to be *only one* Easter Vigil: for pastoral reasons an additional Mass may be celebrated after the Mass of the Easter Vigil using the Liturgy of the Word of the Mass of the Easter Vigil and omitting the Service of Light.

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| 7. The Blessing of the Fire and Preparation of the Candle |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The lights of the Church are turned off. ▪ The faithful gathered outside the Church and the fire is lit there. ▪ A minister prepares and takes the paschal candle to the fire ▪ Greeting and exhortation by the priest. ▪ The Vigil begins with the Sign of the Cross and the greeting (Easter Vigil, 9). ▪ Blessing of the fire and preparation of the Candle |
| <p><i>*“The paschal candle should be prepared, which for effective symbolism must be made of wax, never be artificial, be renewed each year, be only one in number, and be of sufficiently large size so that it may evoke the truth that Christ is the light of the world. It is blessed with the signs and words prescribed in the Roman Missal...” (Paschales Solemnitatis, 82).</i></p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The priest lights the paschal candle from the new fire |
| 8. Procession |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The deacon or, if a deacon is not present to carry the Paschal Candle, another suitable minister takes the paschal candle and the procession forms (Easter Vigil, 15). ○ The procession towards the Church begins: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incense • Deacon with the Paschal Candle • Priest with ministers • The people (all holding unlit candles) |
| <p><i>*The processional cross and candles used on Sunday Mass are not to be carried in this procession (Easter Vigil, 8).</i></p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ At the door of the church, the Deacon or priest, raising the up the candle, sings, “The Light of Christ” and all respond, “Thanks be to God”. ▪ The places at which the proclamation, “The Light of Christ”, are sung are: at the door of the Church (after which only the priest celebrant lights his candle), in the middle of the Church (after which all light their candles), and before the altar, facing the people. |
| <p><i>*The catechumens do not use candles at this point, as the candles are a sign of Christ indwelling in the baptized. Catechumens receive their candle later, after their own baptism.</i></p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ After the deacon or other minister reaches the sanctuary and has sung “The Light of Christ” for the third time, he places the Paschal Candle next to the ambo or in the middle of the sanctuary. |
| 9. The Easter Proclamation (Exsultet) |



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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The <i>Exsultet</i> is sung by deacon, or priest, or layperson from the ambo or a lectern (Easter Vigil, 19). Before the Easter Proclamation, the priest gives his candle to one of the ministers and blesses incense as at the Gospel during Mass. If a lay cantor announces the proclamation, the words, “My dearest friends,” up to the end of the invitation are omitted, along with the greeting, “The Lord be with you” (Easter Vigil, 18-19). |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The lights throughout the church are turned on, but the altar candles remain unlit (Easter Vigil, 17). The illumination of the church building does not happen after the singing of the <i>Exsultet</i> or the proclamation of the readings. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Before the beginning of the Liturgy of the Word, the faithful are instructed to extinguish their candles. |

Liturgy of the Word

- 10. At least three of the seven Old Testament readings should be used, including the reading from Exodus.
- 11. If only three readings are used, there should be readings from both the Law and the Prophets (the two readings from Genesis plus the reading from Exodus cannot be the only Old Testament readings used).

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| 12. The priest instructs the people and invites them to participate with quiet hearts before the readings |
| 13. The Reading is proclaimed. |
| 14. The psalm is sung or said (or in place of the psalm a period of sacred silence may be observed) |
| 15. The priest says a prayer |
| <i>*This order is repeated throughout all the readings</i> |
| <i>*Required Readings: Exodus 14 and its canticle Exodus 15 is never omitted from this liturgy.</i> |
| 16. After the last Reading from the Old Testament with its Responsorial Psalm and its prayer, the altar candles are lit, and the Gloria is sung, while bells are rung. |
| 17. The Collect is said |
| 18. After the Epistle is proclaimed, all rise and the priest solemnly intones the triple <i>Alleluia</i> (Easter Vigil 34). |
| 19. The psalmist or cantor proclaims Psalm 118 (117) with the people responding <i>Alleluia</i> (Easter Vigil 34). During the singing of this psalm, the priest puts incense in the thurible and blesses the deacon, if there is one present. The deacon or priest goes to the altar to pick up the Book of the Gospels and then goes to the ambo. |
| 20. For the Gospel Procession, the processional candles are not used since the Paschal Candle is by the ambo. Only incense is carried in procession to the ambo. |
| 21. After the Gospel, the Homily, even if brief, is not to be omitted |

Liturgy of Baptism

- 22. The Vigil is for the Baptism of the Elect (adults and children) as well as infants. But for pastoral reasons, the Elect under the age of 18 may also celebrate their initiation at a Sunday Mass (OCIA, 304).

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23. Previously baptized candidates are received into the full communion of the Catholic Church at other times of the calendar year.
24. All of the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, & First Communion) must be celebrated for each of the catechumens at the same liturgy; **splitting the sacraments is forbidden.**
25. Even if there are no candidates for Baptism, the blessing of baptismal water should take place in parishes where baptisms will occur during the year. In this case, the priest says, “Dearly beloved, let us humbly invoke upon this font the grace of God the almighty Father, that those who from it are born anew may be numbered among the children of adoption in Christ” (Easter Vigil, 40). The Litany of the Saints and the blessing of water follow.

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| 26. Presentation of the Candidates for Baptism |
| ○ The priest and the ministers go the place of baptism |
| ○ Those that will be baptized come forward |
| ▪ There are three options: A. Baptism at the Font B. Procession to the Font for Baptism C. Baptism in the Sanctuary |
| 27. The celebrant addresses those present and instructs |
| 28. The Litany of the Saints and the prayer of blessing follow. |
| ○ Litany of the Saints <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there is no baptismal font at all, such as in a monastery, convent, seminary, shrine, or other chapel where baptisms do not usually take place, the Litany of the Saints is not sung, and only a vessel of holy water is blessed (Easter Vigil, 42 & 54). • In the Litany the names of some Saints may be added, especially the Titular Saint of the Church and the Patron Saints of the place and beloved by the soon to be baptized. • Sometimes the Litany of Saints is sung as the catechumens process to the font and in other places it is sung after they have assembled. |
| ○ Blessing of Water <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The celebrant may use any of the blessing formulas given in options A, B, and C. • The prayers are said with hands extended; and for option A, by lowering paschal candle into water. |
| 29. Renunciation of Sin (for the Elect) |
| ○ The celebrant may ask each person to be baptized, or all the elect together, by using one of the three formulas (A, B or C). |
| 30. Profession of Faith (for the Elect) |
| ○ Now the Elect, profess their faith. |
| ○ When there are a great many to be baptized, the Profession of Faith may be made simultaneously by all (Elect and all the faithful). |
| 31. Rite of Baptism |
| ○ After the Profession of Faith, each elect is immediately baptized by immersion or by pouring of water. After the baptism of each adult, a brief acclamation may be sung by the people (See OCIA, 226; Appendix II, 595-597) |



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| 32. Explanatory Rites |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Anointing after Baptism (Chrism Oil) – this is done <i>only</i> for children under the age of 7 that were baptized. ○ Clothing with a White Garment ○ Handing on of a Lighted Candle |
| 33. Celebration of Confirmation |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The priest that baptizes adults and children of catechetical age must also administer the sacrament of confirmation (OCIA, 232; Easter Vigil, 50). ○ The celebration of Confirmation is to take place in the sanctuary as indicated in the Roman Ritual according to the Rite of Confirmation (Easter Vigil, 53). |
| 34. The Renewal of Baptismal Promises (By all the Faithful may be done here; unless it was already done with the Elect (see above no. 30, OCIA, 237)) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ At the Easter Vigil, the renewal of baptismal promises by the congregation follows the celebration of Confirmation ○ All stand, holding lighted candles (from the fire of the Paschal Candle) in their hand, and renew their promise of baptismal faith. ○ While the Profession of Faith, no. 30, is for those going to receive the Sacrament of Baptism, at this moment, the Renewal of Baptismal Promises, no. 34, are for those who have already been baptized. |
| 35. Renunciation of Sin (for the faithful) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The celebrant may choose from the two options (A or B). |
| 36. Profession of Faith (for the faithful) |
| 37. Sprinkling with Baptismal Water |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ During sprinkling, a hymn of baptismal character is sung. |
| 38. Creed is omitted |
| 39. Universal Prayer (Prayer of the Faithful) |

Liturgy of the Eucharist

1. The neophytes may be invited to bring up the gifts of bread, wine, and food for the poor during the Offertory.
2. If Eucharistic Prayer II, III, or IV is used, the proper formula for the neophytes is used from the Ritual Mass for the Conferral of Baptism. (OCIA, 242; Easter Vigil 63).
3. It is desirable that the neophytes receive Holy Communion under both kinds, together with their godfathers, godmothers, and Catholic parents and spouses, as well as their lay catechists. (OCIA, 243; Easter Vigil, 65)
4. Before the priest says, “Behold the Lamb of God...”, he may make a brief remark to the neophytes on their first Communion (see text OCIA, 243; Easter Vigil, 64).



SUNDAY OF THE RESURRECTION – APRIL 5

1. At all Masses on Easter Sunday, the Renewal of Baptismal Promises and the accompanying Sprinkling Rite replace the Creed and the Penitential Act. In addition to following the homily, these rites may also take place as part of the introductory rites.
2. A Rite of Sprinkling appropriately replaces the Penitential Act on Sundays during the Easter Season, including Pentecost.
 - a. During the Rite of Sprinkling, an appropriate hymn is sung, such as *I Saw Water Flowing, Water of Life, Baptized in Water*, etc.
 - b. When the priest returns to his chair and the singing is over, he stands facing the people and with hands joined, says:
**May almighty God cleanse us of our sins,
and through the celebration of the Eucharist
make us worthy to share at the table of his Kingdom.**
 - c. After the priest is done with this prayer, the *Gloria* begins.
 - d. If Renewal of Baptismal Promises takes the place of the Creed, the Penitential Rite is prayed at the beginning of the Mass as usual, and the Sprinkling Rite takes place after the Renewal of Baptism Promises.
3. *Gloria* is sung (with gusto and enthusiasm).
4. Collect is prayed.
5. Liturgy of the Word takes place as normal.
6. The Sequence is sung or said before the Alleluia at all Masses on Easter Sunday (GIRM no., 62).
 - a. The Sequence may be sung or said from the ambo or another suitable place.
7. The Creed is recited unless it is replaced with the Renewal of Baptismal Promises and sprinkled with holy water.
8. If the Roman Canon is used (Eucharistic Prayer I), it takes proper forms in paragraphs 86 and 87.
9. The double Alleluia is added to the dismissal formulary during the octave of Easter (i.e. “Go forth, the Mass is ended, alleluia, alleluia,” or “Go in peace, alleluia, alleluia” and the response, “Thanks be to God, alleluia, alleluia”) (Easter Vigil, 69).

OCTAVE OF EASTER - APRIL 6-12, 2026

1. The first eight days of the Easter Season make up the octave of Easter and are celebrated as solemnities of the Lord (Ceremonial of Bishops, 373).
2. The *Gloria* is to be sung or recited during the octave of Easter.
3. The Sequence is optional during the days of the octave (GIRM, 64).
4. The double Alleluia is added to the dismissal formulary during the octave of Easter (Easter Vigil, 69).



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Other resources:

Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions (FDLC):

- <https://fdlc.org/2026/02/liturgical-preparation-aid-for-lent-the-sacred-paschal-triduum-and-the-easter-season-2026-year-a/>

Triduum:

- <https://www.usccb.org/prayer-worship/liturgical-year/triduum>
- <https://www.usccb.org/resources/what-easter-triduum>

Holy Thursday

- <https://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/liturgical-year-and-calendar/triduum/roman-missal-and-the-evening-mass-of-the-lords-supper>
- <https://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/liturgical-year-and-calendar/triduum/holy-thursday-mandatum>
- <https://www.usccb.org/es/prayer-and-worship/liturgical-year-and-calendar/triduum/holy-thursday-mandatum>

Good Friday

- <https://myfranciscan.org/good-friday/>
- <https://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/liturgical-year-and-calendar/triduum/roman-missal-and-the-good-friday-liturgy>
- <https://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/the-mass/order-of-mass/liturgy-of-the-word/proclamation-of-the-gospel-by-the-laity>

Easter Vigil

- (Spanish) <https://www.usccb.org/es/prayer-and-worship/liturgical-year-and-calendar/triduum/roman-missal-and-the-easter-vigil>
- (English) <https://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/liturgical-year-and-calendar/triduum/roman-missal-and-the-easter-vigil>

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APPENDIX I MUSIC GUIDELINES FOR HOLY WEEK

PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD

At the beginning of the Liturgy, there are three Forms of Entrance that may be utilized: *The Procession*, *The Solemn Entrance*, or *The Simple Entrance*. It is imperative for all music ministers to know which Form will be used so that proper preparation can be made beforehand.

FIRST FORM: THE PROCESSION

As the Priest, Deacon, and other ministers approach the place where the people are gathered – usually outside – the prescribed *Hosanna* antiphon, as per the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (*GIRM*: Palm Sunday, No. 4), or another appropriate chant is sung. At the conclusion of the Gospel and as the Procession into the church sets off, the prescribed antiphons or other suitable chants are sung (*GIRM*: Palm Sunday, no. 9). It is sustained throughout the entire procession and concludes when the people have completely entered the church and are in place.

SECOND FORM: THE SOLEMN ENTRANCE

When a procession outside the church cannot take place, the entrance of the Lord is celebrated inside the church by means of a Solemn Entrance before the principal Mass (*GIRM*: Palm Sunday, no. 12). While the priest approaches the appointed place such as the vestibule, the prescribed *Hosanna* antiphon or other appropriate chant is sung. At the conclusion of the Gospel, just as with the First Form, the antiphon or other suitable chant is sung.

THIRD FORM: THE SIMPLE ENTRANCE

At all other Masses of this Sunday at which *The Procession* or *The Solemn Entrance* is not held, the memorial of the Lord's entrance into Jerusalem takes place by means of a Simple Entrance. Similar to the Entrance Procession at Sunday Mass, the prescribed antiphon or another chant on the same theme is sung as the Priest arrives at the altar, venerates it, and goes to the presidential chair. After the Sign of the Cross, he greets the people and continues Mass in the usual way (*GIRM*: Palm Sunday, nos. 16 & 17).

AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE LITURGY

An appropriate **reflective** and **slow tempo** hymn such as *Jesus, Remember Me* (Berthier, Taizé) or another similar hymn should be sung and sustained until most of the gathered faithful have departed from the church. Doing so will preserve the solemnity that this Sunday calls for at the conclusion of the Mass. In addition, if requested by the Priest Celebrant, the Mass can end in silence, provided that a directive is given to the people to quietly remain in their places until the Priest and other liturgical ministers have exited the church.



HOLY THURSDAY OF THE SUPPER OF THE LORD

- The *Presentation of Holy Oils* may take place before the beginning of the Liturgy. As each Oil is processed forward by a member of the parish community, a hymn that describes each Oil is sung, leading to a refrain that exclaims, “Blessed be God forever!”
- The prescribed *We should glory in the Cross* antiphon or other appropriate chant is then sung as the Mass begins.

GLORIA IN EXCELSIS (GLORY TO GOD)

The *Gloria* is sung while bells are rung, and when it is finished, they remain silent until the *Gloria* of the Easter Vigil. Likewise, during this same period, the organ and other musical instruments may be used only so as to support the singing (*GIRM*: Holy Thursday, no. 7).

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION AND WASHING OF FEET

The *Gospel Acclamation* that has been sung throughout the season of Lent is used, along with its prescribed verse specific to Holy Thursday. Then, when the *Washing of Feet* takes place after the homily, the prescribed Antiphons or other appropriate chants whose texts are based on *Ubi Caritas* are sung (*GIRM*: Holy Thursday, no. 12). Whichever musical option is selected is to be sustained throughout the entire Washing.

THE TRANSFER OF THE MOST BLESSED SACRAMENT

- Following the *Prayer After Communion*, the Priest puts incense in the thurible while standing, blesses it and then, kneeling, incenses the Blessed Sacrament three times. Then, having put on a white humeral veil, takes the ciborium, and covers it with the ends of the veil (*GIRM*: Holy Thursday, no. 37). A procession is formed in which the Blessed Sacrament, accompanied by torches and incense, is carried through the church to a place of repose prepared in a part of the church or in a chapel suitably decorated. During this procession, the hymn *Pange lingua* (exclusive of the last two stanzas) or another eucharistic chant is sung (*GIRM*: Holy Thursday, no. 38).
- When the procession reaches the place of repose, the Priest, with the help of the Deacon if necessary, places the ciborium in the tabernacle, the door of which remains open. Then he puts incense in the thurible and, kneeling, incenses the Blessed Sacrament, while *Tantum ergo Sacramentum* or another Eucharistic chant is sung. Then the Deacon or the Priest himself places the Sacrament in the tabernacle and closes the door (*GIRM*: Holy Thursday, no. 39).
- After a period of adoration in silence, the Priest and ministers genuflect and return to the sacristy (*GIRM*: Holy Thursday, no. 40). Following this time of silence, some hymns or chants can be sung so as to prayerfully heighten and enhance the reverence of the adoration that will continue into the evening. Simple chants and hymns are highly recommended such as *Stay With Me* (Berthier, Taizé) along with other suitable and similar options.



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GOOD FRIDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD

- On the afternoon of this day, about three o'clock (unless a later hour is chosen for a pastoral reason), there takes place the celebration of the Lord's Passion consisting of three parts, namely, the *Liturgy of the Word*, the *Adoration of the Cross*, and *Holy Communion* (*GIRM*: Good Friday, no. 4).
- The Priest and the Deacon, if a Deacon is present, wearing red vestments as for Mass, go to the altar **in silence with no Gathering Hymn** and, after making reverence to the altar, prostrate themselves or, if appropriate, kneel and pray in silence for a while. All others kneel (*GIRM*: Good Friday, no. 5). Then the priest, with the ministers, goes to the chair where, facing the people, who are standing, he says, with hands extended, one of the prescribed prayers, omitting the invitation "Let us pray." (*GIRM*: Good Friday, no. 6)

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION AND COLLECTION

The *Gospel Acclamation* that has been sung throughout the season of Lent is used, along with its prescribed verse specific to Good Friday. It should be sung on this day in a more subtle manner versus how it may have been previously rendered. Following the *Solemn Intercessions*, a collection is taken in support of the Holy Land at which time an appropriate hymn is sung.

THE SHOWING OF THE HOLY CROSS

As the Cross is carried via a procession after the collection, the *Ecce lignum Crucis* (*Behold the wood of the Cross*) is chanted three times as it moves through the church via the center aisle. This chant is sung by the Priest and is assisted in singing by the Deacon or, if need be, **by the choir and cantor**. All respond, "Come, let us adore." At the end of the singing, all kneel and for a brief moment adore in silence (*GIRM*: Good Friday, no. 15).

THE ADORATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

As the Adoration takes place, various prescribed chants or other suitable hymns are sung. Because this portion of the Liturgy can be lengthy, an appropriate number of hymns should be prepared to sustain the singing throughout the entire Adoration.

HOLY COMMUNION AND THE CONCLUSION OF THE LITURGY

After the Adoration has concluded, the altar is prepared in a simple manner for the distribution of Holy Communion. The *Our Father* is said, the *Sign of Peace* and *Lamb of God* are omitted, and the *Invitation to Communion* takes place. Communion then commences in the usual way at which time appropriate Eucharistic hymns are sung. At the conclusion of Communion, the Priest says a Prayer over the People, then all ministers, after genuflecting **in silence with no Sending Forth hymn**, depart the sanctuary in silence (*GIRM*: Good Friday, nos. 31 & 32).

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THE EASTER VIGIL IN THE HOLY NIGHT

PROCESSION OF THE PASCHAL CANDLE

As the Paschal Candle is processed through the church and the people's candles are gradually lit from it, the Priest or Deacon chants three times "The Light of Christ," or "Lumen Christi." The response, which is taken up by all, is "Thanks be to God," or "Deo grátias" (*GIRM*: Easter Vigil, nos. 15-17).

THE EASTER PROCLAMATION (EXULTET)

The *Exultet* is proclaimed by the Deacon – or in the absence of a Deacon, by the Priest himself or by another concelebrating Priest. **If, however, because of necessity, a lay cantor sings the Proclamation, the words "Therefore, dearest friends" up to the end of the invitation are omitted, along with the greeting "The Lord be with you."** (*GIRM*: Easter Vigil, no. 19)

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD, GLORIA, ALLELUIA

- In this Vigil, the mother of all Vigils, nine readings are provided, namely seven from the Old Testament and two from the New (the Epistle and Gospel), all of which should be read whenever this can be done, so that the character of the Vigil, which demands an extended period of time, may be preserved (*GIRM*: Easter Vigil, no. 20).
- Nevertheless, where more serious pastoral circumstances demand it, the number of readings from the Old Testament may be reduced, always bearing in mind that the reading of the Word of God is a fundamental part of this Easter Vigil. At least three should be read from the Old Testament, both from the Law and the Prophets, and their respective Responsorial Psalms should be sung. **Never, moreover, should the reading of chapter 14 of Exodus with its canticle be omitted** (*GIRM*: Easter Vigil, no. 21).
- Great care is to be taken that trivial songs do not take the place of the psalms.
- In place of the Responsorial Psalm a period of sacred silence may be observed.
- After the last reading from the Old Testament with its Responsorial Psalm and its prayer, the altar candles are lit, and the Priest may intone the chant *Gloria in excelsis Deo* (*Glory to God in the highest*). At the end of the chant, the *Gloria* is then taken up by all while bells are rung (*GIRM*: Easter Vigil, no. 31).
- When the *Gloria* has concluded, the Priest says the Collect in the usual way, then the reader proclaims the Epistle. After the Epistle has been read, all rise, and the priest may solemnly intone the *Alleluia* three times, raising his voice by a step each time, with all repeating it. **If necessary, the psalmist intones the Alleluia.** Then the psalmist or cantor proclaims Psalm 118 (117) with the people responding "Alleluia." At the conclusion of the Psalm, the Gospel is proclaimed followed by the homily (*GIRM*: Easter Vigil, nos. 32-36).



BAPTISMAL LITURGY, RITES OF BAPTISM AND CONFIRMATION

- After the homily, the Baptismal Liturgy begins. After the Priest makes an introductory statement, the *Litany of Saints* is sung, with all standing and responding. If, however, there is to be a procession of some length to the baptistery, the Litany is sung **during** the procession; in this case, those to be baptized are called forward before the procession begins, and the procession takes place led by the Paschal Candle, followed by the catechumens with their godparents, then the ministers, the Deacon, and the Priest (*GIRM*: Easter Vigil, no. 41).
- If no one is to be baptized and the baptismal font is not to be blessed, **the Litany is omitted**, and the *Blessing of Water* takes place at once (*GIRM*: Easter Vigil, no. 42).
- In the Litany the names of some Saints may be added, especially the Titular Saint of the church and the Patron Saints of the place and of those to be baptized (*GIRM*: Easter Vigil, no. 43).
- If the *Blessing of Baptismal Water* takes place, the chant *Springs of Water*, or a similar setting, is sung at the conclusion of the Blessing after the people respond “Amen” and as the Paschal Candle is lifted out of the water (*GIRM*: Easter Vigil, nos. 44 & 45).
- If no one present is to be baptized and the font is not to be blessed, the Priest introduces the faithful to the *Blessing of Water*. At the conclusion of it, the people respond with *Amen*, **and the *Springs of Water* chant is not sung** (*GIRM*: Easter Vigil, no 54).
- During the *Rite of Baptism*, the catechumens are brought to the font. As each one enters it to be baptized, simple and low-volume instrumental underscore can take place, eventually leading to an energetic *Alleluia* refrain that is sung right after the Priest baptizes the catechumen in the name of the Trinity.
- After the last catechumen has been baptized, the concelebrating Priest addresses the gathered faithful via *The Renewal of Baptismal Promises*, which is then followed by the sprinkling of the people with the blessed water. During this time, the prescribed antiphon *I saw water flowing from the temple (Vidi aquam egredientem de templo)* is sung, or another appropriate chant that is baptismal in character (*GIRM*: Easter Vigil, no 56).
- At the conclusion of the sprinkling of the people, the newly baptized return to the church now wearing white garments. A hymn that speaks of “becoming a new creation by being baptized in Christ” may be sung to accompany their return.
- The newly baptized then receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. As each candidate becomes sealed with the Holy Spirit, a **low-volume and meditative *Veni Sancte Spiritus*** chant can be sung or rendered instrumentally. **It is imperative to keep the volume low so that the dialogue between the Priest and candidate is not hindered.**
- The *Universal Prayer (Prayer of the Faithful)* takes place in which the candidates participate for the first time. Mass then continues in the usual way.



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AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE LITURGY

The Easter dismissal with double *Alleluia* is spoken or chanted. It is highly recommended that it be chanted and if so, the cantor and choir should know the melody very well to the response, “Thanks be to God, alleluia, alleluia.” This ensures that the gathered faithful will also respond confidently.

EASTER SUNDAY OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD

SPRINKLING RITE, GLORIA

The Sprinkling Rite takes the place of the Penitential Act, **during which time a hymn that is baptismal in character is sung**. Upon the return of the Priest and Deacon to the sanctuary following the sprinkling, a short prayer is proclaimed. After the gathered faithful respond with “Amen,” **the *Gloria* is then sung by all**.

THE EASTER SEQUENCE

The Easter Sequence is sung or said following the Second Reading prior to the Gospel Acclamation. Just as with the Pentecost Sequence, it is **not optional**. There are numerous musical settings of these Sequences in either chant or hymn form.

AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE LITURGY

Just as at the Easter Vigil, the Easter dismissal with double *Alleluia* is spoken or chanted. Again, it should be chanted whenever possible with the cantor and choir knowing the response very well so as to confidently support the gathered faithful in their singing of it.

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APPENDIX II POPULAR PIETY FOR HOLY WEEK

The following excerpt comes from the *Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy (DPPL): Principles and Guidelines*:

Holy Week

138. "In Holy Week, the Church celebrates the mysteries of salvation accomplished by Christ in the last days of the earthly life, beginning with his messianic entry into Jerusalem"(141).

The people are notably involved in the rites of Holy Week. Many of them still bear the traces of their origins in popular piety. It has come about, however, that in the course of the centuries, a form of celebrative parallelism has arisen in the Rites of Holy Week, resulting in two cycles each with its own specific character: one is strictly liturgical, the other is marked by particular pious exercise, especially processions.

This divergence should be oriented towards a correct harmonization of the liturgical celebrations and pious exercises. Indeed, the attention and interest in manifestations of popular piety, traditionally observed among the people, should lead to a correct appreciation of the liturgical actions, which are supported by popular piety.

Palm Sunday

Palms, olive branches and other fronds

139. Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday, or "Passion Sunday", which unites the royal splendor of Christ with the proclamation of his Passion"(142).

The procession, commemorating Christ's messianic entry into Jerusalem, is joyous and popular in character. The faithful usually keep palm or olive branches, or other greenery which have been blessed on Palm Sunday in their homes or in their work places.

The faithful, however, should be instructed as to the meaning of this celebration so that they might grasp its significance. They should be opportunely reminded that the important thing is participation at the procession and not only the obtaining of palm or olive branches. Palms or olive branches should not be kept as amulets, or for therapeutic or magical reasons to dispel evil spirits or to prevent the damage this cause in the fields or in the homes, all of which can assume a certain superstitious guise.

Palms and olive branches are kept in the home as a witness to faith in Jesus Christ, the messianic king, and in his Paschal Victory.

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The Paschal Triduum

140. Every year, the Church celebrates the great mysteries of the redemption of mankind in the "most sacred triduum of the crucifixion, burial and resurrection"(143). The Sacred Triduum extends from the Mass of the Lord's Supper to Vespers on Easter Sunday and is celebrated "in intimate communion with Christ her Spouse"(144).

Holy Thursday

Visiting the Altar of Repose

141. Popular piety is particularly sensitive to the adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament in the wake of the Mass of the Lord's supper (145). Because of a long historical process, whose origins are not entirely clear, the place of repose has traditionally been referred to as a "a holy sepulcher". The faithful go there to venerate Jesus who was placed in a tomb following the crucifixion and in which he remained for some forty hours.

It is necessary to instruct the faithful on the meaning of the reposition: it is an austere solemn conservation of the Body of Christ for the community of the faithful which takes part in the liturgy of Good Friday and for the viaticum of the infirmed (146). It is an invitation to silent and prolonged adoration of the wondrous sacrament instituted by Jesus on this day.

In reference to the altar of repose, therefore, the term "sepulchre" should be avoided, and its decoration should not have any suggestion of a tomb. The tabernacle on this altar should not be in the form of a tomb or funerary urn. The Blessed Sacrament should be conserved in a closed tabernacle and should not be exposed in a monstrance(147).

After mid-night on Holy Thursday, the adoration should conclude without solemnity, since the day of the Lord's Passion has already begun(148).

Visits to the 7 Churches

- After attending Holy Thursday Mass in your parish, then visit seven different churches, taking time to pray before the Blessed Sacrament on the altar of repose at each one. Bring a friend or family member to take part in this special tradition!
- Look up churches close to your home parish and plan out which ones to visit and in what order. Look at how to minimize travel time between churches, and also make sure to check which churches will be open for visitation, and how late.
- You might want to end up back where you started if friends are parking there to carpool to the other churches. If possible, make a shareable map of the route.



Good Friday

Good Friday Procession

142. The Church celebrates the redemptive death of Christ on Good Friday. The Church meditates on the Lord's Passion in the afternoon liturgical action, in which she prays for the salvation of the world, adores the Cross and commemorates her very origin in the sacred wound in Christ's side (cf. John 19, 34)(149).

In addition to the various forms of popular piety on Good Friday such as the *Via Crucis*, the passion processions are undoubtedly the most important. These correspond, after the fashion of popular piety, to the small procession of friends and disciples who, having taken the body of Jesus down from the Cross, carried it to the place where there "was a tomb hewn in the rock in which no one had yet been buried" (Lk 23, 53).

The procession of the "dead Christ" is usually conducted in austere silence, prayer, and the participation of many of the faithful, who intuit much of the significance of the Lord's burial.

143. It is necessary, however, to ensure that such manifestations of popular piety, either by time or the manner in which the faithful are convoked, do not become a surrogate for the liturgical celebrations of Good Friday.

In the pastoral planning of Good Friday primary attention and maximum importance must be given to the solemn liturgical action and the faithful must be brought to realize that no other exercise can objectively substitute for this liturgical celebration.

Finally, the integration of the "dead Christ" procession with the solemn liturgical action of Good Friday should be avoided for such would constitute a distorted celebrative hybrid.

Passion Plays

144. In many countries, passion plays take place during Holy Week, especially on Good Friday. These are often "sacred representations" which can justly be regarded as pious exercises. Indeed, such sacred representations have their origins in the Sacred Liturgy. Some of these plays, which began in the monks' choir, so as to speak, have undergone a progressive dramatization that has taken them outside of the church.

In some places, responsibility for the representations of the Lord's passion has been given over to the Confraternities, whose members have assumed particular responsibilities to live the Christian life. In such representations, actors and spectators are involved in a movement of faith and genuine piety. It is singularly important to ensure that representations of the Lord's Passion do not deviate from this pure line of sincere and gratuitous piety, or take on the characteristics of folk productions, which are not so much manifestations of piety as tourist attractions.



In relation to sacred "representations" it is important to instruct the faithful on the difference between a "representation" which is commemorative, and the "liturgical actions" which are anamnesis, or mysterious presence of the redemptive event of the Passion.

Penitential practices leading to self-crucifixion with nails are not to be encouraged.

Our Lady of Dolours

145. Because of its doctrinal and pastoral importance, it is recommended that "the memorial of Our Lady of Dolours"(150) should be recalled. Popular piety, following the Gospel account, emphasizes the association of Mary with the saving Passion her Son (cf, John 19, 25-27; Lk 2, 34f), and has given rise to many pious exercises, including:

- the *Planctus Mariae*, an intense expression of sorrow, often accompanied by literary or musical pieces of a very high quality, in which Our Lady cries not only for the death of her Son, the Innocent, Holy, and Good One, but also for the errors of his people and the sins of mankind;
- the *Ora della Desolata*, in which the faithful devoutly keep vigil with the Mother of Our Lord, in her abandonment and profound sorrow following the death of her only Son; they contemplate Our Lady as she receives the dead body of Christ (the Pietà) realizing that the sorrow of the world for the Lord's death finds expression in Mary; in her they behold the personification of all mothers throughout the ages who have mourned the loss of a son. This pious exercise, which in some parts of Latin America is called *El Pésame*, should not be limited merely to the expression of emotion before a sorrowing mother. Rather, with faith in the resurrection, it should assist in understanding the greatness of Christ's redemptive love and his Mother's participation in it.

Holy Saturday

146. "On Holy Saturday, the Church pauses at the Lord's tomb, meditating his Passion and Death, his descent into Hell, and, with prayer and fasting, awaits his resurrection"(151).

Popular piety should not be impervious to the peculiar character of Holy Saturday. The festive customs and practices connected with this day, on which the celebration of the Lord's resurrection was once anticipated, should be reserved for the vigil and for Easter Sunday.

The "Ora della Madre"

147. According to tradition, the entire body of the Church is represented in Mary: she is the "credentium collectio universa"(152). Thus, the Blessed Virgin Mary, as she waits near the Lord's tomb, as she is represented in Christian tradition, is an icon of the Virgin Church keeping vigil at the tomb of her Spouse while awaiting the celebration of his resurrection.



The pious exercise of the *Ora di Maria* is inspired by this intuition of the relationship between the Virgin Mary and the Church: while the body of her Son lays in the tomb and his soul has descended to the dead to announce liberation from the shadow of darkness to his ancestors, the Blessed Virgin Mary, foreshadowing and representing the Church, awaits, in faith, the victorious triumph of her Son over death.

Easter Sunday

148. Easter Sunday, the greatest solemnity in the liturgical year, is often associated with many displays of popular piety: these are all cultic expressions which proclaim the new and glorious condition of the risen Christ, and the divine power released from his triumph over sin and death.

The Risen Christ meets his Mother

149. Popular piety intuits a constancy in the relationship between Christ and his mother: in suffering and death and in the joy of the resurrection.

The liturgical affirmation that God replenished the Blessed Virgin Mary with joy in the resurrection of her Son(153), has been translated and represented, so as to speak, in the pious exercise of the *meeting of the Risen Christ with His Mother*: on Easter morning two processions, one bearing the image of Our Lady of Dolours, the other that of the Risen Christ, meet each other so as to show that Our Lady was the first, and full participant in the mystery of the Lord's resurrection.

What has already been said in relation to the processions of "the dead Christ" also applies to this pious exercise: the observance of the pious exercise should not acquire greater importance than the liturgical celebration of Easter Sunday nor occasion inappropriate mixing of liturgical expressions with those of popular piety(154).

Blessing of the Family Table

150. The Easter liturgy is permeated by a sense of newness: nature has been renewed, since Easter coincides with Spring in the Northern hemisphere; fire and water have been renewed; Christian hearts have been renewed through the Sacrament of Penance, and, where possible, through administration of the Sacraments of Christian initiation; the Eucharist is renewed, so as to speak: these are signs and sign-realities of the new life begun by Christ in the resurrection.

Among the pious exercises connected with Easter Sunday, mention must be made of the traditional blessing of eggs, the symbol of life, and the blessing of the family table; this latter, which is a daily habit in many Christian families that should be encouraged(155), is particularly important on Easter Sunday: the head of the household or some other member of the household, blesses the festive meal with Easter water which is brought by the faithful from the Easter Vigil.



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Visit to the Mother of the Risen Christ

151. At the conclusion of the Easter Vigil, or following the Second Vespers of Easter, a short pious exercise is kept in many places: flowers are blessed and distributed to the faithful as a sign of Easter joy. Some are brought to the image of Our Lady of Dolours, which is then crowned, as the *Regina Coeli* is sung. The faithful, having associated themselves with the sorrows of the Blessed Virgin in the Lord's Passion and Death, now rejoice with her in His resurrection.

While this pious exercise should not be incorporated into the liturgical action, it is completely in harmony with the content of the Paschal Mystery and is a further example of the manner in which popular piety grasps the Blessed Virgin Mary's association with the saving work of her Son.

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