



REVISED Guidelines for *Holy Week under Epidemic* for the Catholic Diocese of Hong Kong

(cf. Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, Decrees, *In time of Covid-19 (I) and (II)*, 19 and 25 March 2020)

According to the Chancery Notice on *New Arrangements for Opening Churches to the Faithful*, dated 28 March 2020, “Churches remain open to the faithful, but for personal prayers only, with individuals keeping a distance of at least two metres between themselves”. Also, “no religious rites may be celebrated”, so as to avoid group gatherings. Furthermore, it is obligatory to adopt anti-epidemic means, such as wearing masks, taking of body temperature, hand sanitization by disinfectants, cleansing of the church, etc.

In view of the Covid-19 pandemic, communal celebration of the Holy Week Liturgies in church is not feasible. The faithful are nevertheless encouraged to take part, individually or with their families, in the Liturgy of the Hours, the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, the Way of the Cross, the recitation of the Rosary or the Chaplet of the Divine Mercy, meditating on liturgical texts or Scripture passages, etc., as well as prayerfully uniting oneself spiritually to the Holy Week Liturgies broadcast live **and receiving Communion spiritually**. Through meditating on the Death and Resurrection of Christ, the faithful will be able to renew themselves and respond to the signs of the times as manifested by the pandemic.

Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord, 5 April

Parishes are advised to provide meditations on Palm Sunday at scheduled times for private reflection and prayer by the faithful.

It is advisable to read and meditate on the Gospel of the Lord's Entrance into Jerusalem (Mt 21:1-11) and of His Crucifixion (Long Form: Mt 26:14 – 27:66; Short Form: Mt 27:11-54).

Alternatively, say the Rosary - the five Sorrowful Mysteries

(For private Mass, the priest should follow the “Holy Week Liturgy: Passion Sunday” of the Roman Missal: adopt the Simple Entrance (Third Form), then Mass as usual.)

Holy Thursday – the Lord's Supper, 9 April

The **Chrism Mass** in the morning will be participated by the members of the Diocesan Curia and the Deans only.

At the designated time in the evening, parishes are advised to place a ciborium with consecrated Hosts on the altar for private adoration by the faithful, following the practice at the conclusion of the Mass of the Lord's Supper.

(Before midnight, the Blessed Sacrament should be transferred to another tabernacle outside the Church, **and the altar is to be stripped**.)

It is advisable to read and meditate on the Readings of the Mass that evening:

Ex 12:1-8, 11-14

1 Cor 11:23-26

Jn 13:1-15

Alternatively, say the Rosary - the five Luminous Mysteries

(For private Mass, the priest should follow the “Holy Week Liturgy: Lord's Supper” of the Roman Missal: omit the Washing of Feet; at the closing of Mass, omit the Procession of the Blessed Sacrament, but simply transfer the Blessed Sacrament to another tabernacle outside the Church.

Good Friday – Passion of the Lord, 10 April

Fasting and abstinence is obligatory.

In the Church, set the Holy Cross in front of the altar so that the faithful may meditate on the Passion of the Lord, pray and adore the Cross. (The Blessed Sacrament is not kept in the Church.)

It is advisable to read and meditate on the Gospel narrative of the Passion of the Lord (Jn 18:1 – 19:42) and to pray for the salvation of humankind.

Perform the Way of the Cross in private, or say the Rosary - the five Sorrowful Mysteries

(For private celebration of the Passion of the Lord, a priest should follow the Roman Missal: abstain from kissing the Cross, but venerate it by simple genuflection or bow. In the Solemn Intercessions, add an intercession for those who find themselves in distress, and for the sick and the dead.)

Holy Saturday – commemorate the burial of Christ, 11 April

Say the Rosary - the five Sorrowful Mysteries. Alternatively, meditate and pray the Way of Our Sorrowful Mother (*Via Matris*).

For the **Vigil**, parishes are advised to light a lasting flame (a burning oil lamp or the Paschal Candle) in front of the altar inside the Church, so that the faithful may pray in private.

It is advisable to read and meditate on:

Gen 1:1 – 2:2

Ex 14:15 – 15:1

Rm 6:3-11

Mt 28:1-10

(If there is a baptismal font, do not fill with water, but light a candle as a symbol.)

Alternatively, say the Rosary - the five Glorious Mysteries, or meditate on the Easter Proclamation (*Exsultet*) and the Prayer for Blessing of Baptismal Water.

(In celebrating in private the Easter Vigil Liturgy in accordance with the Roman Missal at the Cathedral and parish churches, the following adjustments should be made: At the beginning of the Vigil, omit the lighting of the Fire, the candles, and the Procession, but simply light the Paschal Candle and recite the Easter Proclamation (Exsultet), then the Liturgy of the Word. The Renewal of Baptismal Promises follows, and then the Easter Eucharist. It is advisable to consecrate new hosts and also to replace the big host for the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament.)

Easter Sunday, 12 April

It is advisable to set the lighted Paschal Candle in the sanctuary. At the designated time, parishes are advised to expose the Blessed Sacrament for private adoration by the faithful.

(In case the Government extends the enforcement of the Regulation on the prohibition of group gatherings, the Diocesan Liturgy Commission will provide a Simple Form for the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament for parish use.)

It is advisable to read and meditate on the Mass Readings:

Col 3:1-4; or 1 Cor 5:6b-8

Jn 20:1-9; or Mt 28:1-10;

Or Lk 24:13-35 (in the evening)

Alternatively, say the Rosary - the five Glorious Mysteries;

Or recite and meditate on the Creed.

NOTES:

- 1. Just as the Cathedral will have live broadcast of the Holy Week Liturgies celebrated by Cardinal John Tong, some parishes will also have live broadcasts of their own. In order to highlight the precedence of the liturgies officiated by the Bishop over parish liturgies, the parishes with live broadcasts are asked to announce well in advance not only the schedules of their own Holy Week Liturgies, but also those of the Liturgies officiated by the Cardinal, so that the faithful can give priority to watching the online Liturgies officiated by him.*
- 2. Therefore, live broadcasts of Holy Week Liturgies officiated by priests in private do not have to be scheduled after the corresponding Liturgies officiated by Cardinal John Tong.*

() The above revised live broadcast arrangements for the Holy Week Liturgies supersede the previously suggested arrangements.*

