



## ***Office of the General Secretary***

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**Monsignor J. Brian Bransfield, S.T.D.**  
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### **MEMORANDUM**

To: All Bishops

From: Reverend Monsignor J. Brian Bransfield, General Secretary *ABB*

Date: March 20, 2020

Subject: Decree of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments  
Decree In time of COVID-19

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Your Eminence / Your Excellency,

I take this opportunity to convey to you the attached decree of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments received this morning through the courtesy of the Apostolic Nunciature as regards the celebration of the Paschal Triduum.

Please scroll down within the PDF for the translations in English and Spanish.

Thank you for your thoughtful attention to this memorandum.



CONGREGATIO DE CULTU DIVINO  
ET DISCIPLINA SACRAMENTORUM

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Prot. N. 153/20

**DECREE**  
**In time of Covid-19**

During this difficult time through which we are living because of the Covid-19 pandemic, and considering the impediment to the community celebration of the liturgy in church as per the direction of Bishops for their territories, a number of queries have come to this Congregation concerning the imminent celebration of Easter. In this regard, the following general indications are offered along with some suggestions for Bishops.

1 – **Concerning the date of Easter.** Easter is the heart of the entire liturgical year and is not simply one feast among others. The Easter Triduum is celebrated over the arc of three days which is preceded by Lent and crowned by Pentecost and, therefore, cannot be transferred to another time.

2 – **The Chrism Mass.** Having evaluated the concrete situation in the different countries, the Bishop has the faculty to postpone it to a later date.

3 – **Indications for the Paschal Triduum.**

Wherever the civil and ecclesiastical authorities have put restrictions in place, the Sacred Triduum must be celebrated in the following way:

Bishops will give indications, which have been agreed with the Episcopal Conference, so that, in the Cathedral and parish churches, though without the physical participation of the faithful, the Bishop and parish priest(s) can celebrate the liturgical mysteries of the Paschal Triduum. The faithful should be informed of the times of the celebration so that they can prayerfully unite themselves in their homes. In this occasion, the means of live (not recorded) televisual or internet broadcasts are helpful.

The Episcopal Conference and individual dioceses will see to it that resources are provided to support family and personal prayer.

**Holy Thursday.** In Cathedral and parish churches, where and in the measure that there is a real possibility of doing so, established by the one responsible, the priest(s) of the parish can celebrate the evening Mass of the Lord's Supper. The faculty to celebrate Mass on this day in a suitable place, without the people, is granted in an exceptional manner to all priests. The washing of feet, which is already optional, is to be omitted. At the end of the Mass of the Lord's Supper the procession with the Blessed Sacrament to the place of repose is to be omitted and the Blessed Sacrament is to be kept in the tabernacle. Priests who are unable to celebrate Mass should instead pray Vespers of the day (cf. *Liturgia Horarum*).

**Good Friday**, in Cathedral and parish churches, where and in the measure that there is a real possibility of doing so, established by the one responsible, the Bishop/Parish Priest will celebrate the Passion of the Lord. In the Universal Prayer, the Bishop will see to it that there is a special intention for the sick, the dead, for those who feel lost or dismayed (cf. *Missale Romanum*, pag. 314 n. 13).

### **Easter Sunday**

**The Easter Vigil:** Is to be celebrated only in Cathedral and parish churches, where and in the measure that there is a real possibility of doing so, established by the one responsible. At "The Solemn Beginning of the Vigil or Lucernarium" the preparation and lighting of the fire is omitted, the Paschal Candle is lit, the procession is omitted and the Easter Proclamation (Exsultet) follows. The "Liturgy of the Word" then takes place. For the "Baptismal Liturgy" the "Renewal of Baptismal Promises" alone is necessary (cf. *Missale Romanum*, pag. 371, n. 55). The "Liturgy of the Eucharist" then follows.

Those who have absolutely no possibility of uniting themselves to the Paschal Vigil celebrated in a church should pray the Office of Readings for Easter Sunday (cf. *Liturgia Horarum*).

Decisions regarding monasteries, seminaries and religious communities shall be made by the Diocesan Bishop.

Expressions of popular piety and processions which enrich the days of Holy Week and the Paschal Triduum can be transferred to other suitable days in the year, for example 14 and 15 September, according to the judgement of the Diocesan Bishop.

By mandate of the Supreme Pontiff, for the year 2020 only.

From the offices of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, 19 March 2020, on the Solemnity of Saint Joseph, Patron of the Universal Church.

Robert Card. SARAH  
Prefect

✠ Arthur ROCHE  
Archbishop Secretary



Prot. N. 153/20

**DECRETO**  
**En tiempo de Covid-19**

En el difícil tiempo que estamos viviendo a causa de la pandemia del Covid-19, considerando el impedimento para celebrar la liturgia comunitariamente en la iglesia según lo indicado por los obispos para los territorios bajo su jurisdicción, han llegado a esta Congregación peticiones concernientes a las próximas fiestas pascales. En este sentido, se ofrecen indicaciones generales y algunas sugerencias a los Obispos.

1 – **Sobre la fecha de la Pascua.** La Pascua, corazón del año litúrgico, no es una fiesta como las demás: celebrada durante tres días, el Triduo Pascual, precedida por la Cuaresma y coronada por Pentecostés, no puede ser trasladada.

2 – **La Misa crismal.** El Obispo, valorando el caso concreto en los diversos países, tiene la facultad para posponerla a una fecha posterior.

3 – **Indicaciones para el Triduo Pascual.**

Donde la autoridad civil y eclesial ha establecido restricciones, se siga lo siguiente.

Los Obispos darán indicaciones, de acuerdo con la Conferencia Episcopal, para que en la iglesia catedral y en las iglesias parroquiales, incluso sin la participación física de los fieles, el Obispo y los párrocos celebren los misterios litúrgicos del Triduo Pascual, avisando a los fieles la hora del inicio, de modo que puedan unirse en oración desde sus propias casas. En este caso son de gran ayuda los medios de comunicación telemática en directo, no grabados.

La Conferencia Episcopal y cada una de las diócesis no dejen de ofrecer subsidios para ayudar en la oración familiar y personal.

El **Jueves Santo**, en las iglesias catedrales y parroquiales, en la medida de la posibilidad real establecida por aquellos a quienes compete, los sacerdotes de la parroquia pueden celebrar la Misa en la Cena del Señor; se concede excepcionalmente a todos los sacerdotes la facultad de celebrar en este día la Misa sin el pueblo, en un lugar adecuado. El lavatorio de los pies, que es facultativo, se omite. Al final de la Misa en la Cena del Señor se omite la procesión y el Santísimo Sacramento se reserva en el sagrario. Los sacerdotes que no tienen la posibilidad de celebrar la Misa rezarán las Vísperas (cf. *Liturgia Horarum*).

El **Viernes Santo**, en las iglesias catedrales y parroquiales, en la medida de la posibilidad real establecida por aquellos a quienes compete, el Obispo/el párroco celebra la Pasión del Señor. En la oración universal el Obispo diocesano se encargará de establecer una especial intención por los enfermos, los muertos, quien ha sufrido alguna pérdida (cf. *Missale Romanum*, p. 314, n.13).

**Domingo de Pascua. Vigilia Pascual:** ésta se celebra solo en las iglesias catedrales y parroquiales, en la medida de la posibilidad real establecida por aquellos a quienes compete. Para el “Inicio de la vigilia o lucernario” se omite el fuego, se enciende el cirio y, omitida la procesión, se hace el pregón pascual (*Exsultet*). Sigue la “Liturgia de la Palabra”. En la “Liturgia bautismal” solo se renuevan las promesas bautismales (cf. *Missale Romanum*, p. 371, n. 55). Posteriormente la “Liturgia eucarística”.

Para quienes no pueden unirse a la Vigilia Pascual celebrada en la iglesia, recen el Oficio de Lectura indicado para el Domingo de Pascua (cf. *Liturgia Horarum*).

Para los monasterios, seminarios y comunidades religiosas, decida el Obispo diocesano.

Las expresiones de piedad popular y las procesiones que enriquecen los días de la Semana Santa y del Triduo Pascual, a juicio del Obispo diocesano podrán ser trasladadas a otros días convenientes, por ejemplo, el 14 y 15 de septiembre.

*De mandato Summi Pontificis pro hoc tantum anno 2020.*

En la Sede de la Congregación para el Culto Divino y la Disciplina de los Sacramentos,  
20 de marzo de 2020.

Robert Card. Sarah  
Prefecto

✠ Arthur Roche  
Arzobispo Secretario