

## **SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR LITURGICAL ADAPTATIONS FOR HOLY WEEK CELEBRATIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF A PANDEMIC**

Many are already asking themselves questions about the Palm Sunday and TRIDUUM celebrations.

Without being exhaustive or binding, these liturgical suggestions are shared with you to help communities adapt most of our rites while respecting health regulations. Most of these suggestions are already provided for in the Roman Missal and take into account the recommendations of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments for the Easter Triduum 2021, published last year.

Our usual health protocols apply. We must remember that these, among other things:

- Prohibit participants from passing items to each other.
- Ask that the congregation avoid all movement in the worship space, except for entering and leaving the worship space.
- Request that physical contact between people be avoided.
- Prohibit congregational singing and choral singing. However, it is possible to have one or two people singing when they are more than 2 meters from any other person and using a microphone.
- Suggestion that, for communion, the faithful remain in their seats and that the ministers of communion go to them.
- Suggest that the abbreviated versions of the celebrations in the Roman Missal be used to reduce their length and the risk of contamination.

### **PALMS**

There is nothing to prevent the distribution of palms in the church. However, a procession cannot be made.

Concretely:

- Palm branches can be distributed at the entrance of the church at the beginning of the celebration:
  - Assign responsibility for the preparation of the branches to one person to avoid multiple handlings.

- Do not distribute objects from hand to hand. Instead, place the branches on tables at the entrance of the church and ask participants to take one per person, not to share it, and to bring it with them when they leave.
  - Once they have their branch in hand, people go directly to their seats.
  - Having a volunteer to oversee the process will likely make the process easier.
- There can be no gathering or procession of the faithful at the entrance of the church.
  - The congregation must be in their seats at all times and leave only when leaving the church.
  - The presider enters the sanctuary, greets the altar, and gives the meaning of the celebration and Palm Sunday, using the opening antiphon of the Roman Missal or the Living with Christ booklet. He blesses Palm Sunday with a hand gesture (preferably sprinkling), with the people remaining in their seats.
  - At the end of the celebration, the people go home with their Living with Christ, their prayer booklet, and their Palm Branch.

We can also think of a distribution of the Palms on the church square during the day:

- The Palms will have been blessed beforehand during the celebration.
- The method of distribution is similar to that explained above.
- The presence of volunteers to supervise the whole process is an asset.

## HOLY THURSDAY

The washing of the feet or any other similar rite is to be avoided.

Communion should not be offered under both species.

If a time of adoration is offered at the end of the celebration, it should be done without a Eucharistic procession, and the faithful should remain in their seats, as follows: the presider places the ciborium on the altar, says the prayer after communion from his seat, then invites to a moment of adoration, then incenses the ciborium accompanied by the *Tantum* ergo or another song, and carries it to the tabernacle to conclude the celebration.

Attention should be given to the curfew: ideally, the church should be closed 30 minutes before the curfew begins, as businesses do.

## HOLY FRIDAY

The procession and the personal gesture of veneration of the Cross by the members of the congregation should be avoided. There is a way to be creative here while making sure that people stay in their place and do not touch the same object, as in this case, the Cross. This can be done by taking a moment of silence and bowing from one's seat in the worship of the Cross.

## HOLY SATURDAY

- It is possible to live the rite of light, but faithful will have to be in their seats.
- It is possible to distribute the candles of the Easter Vigil at the entrance, as was done for Palm Sunday.
- There is no gathering in the square. There is no procession for the assembly.
- It is preferable not to have a fire outside or inside.
- It is possible, however, for the beginning of the celebration to be done in semi-darkness, with the lights of the church turned off or dimmed.
- It is suggested that a deacon (or volunteer) who brings the unlit Paschal candle accompany the presider, and both enter the sanctuary directly. The presider lights the Paschal candle in front of the altar with a wick and proclaims the acclamation "Light of Christ" three times. The people, however, will not be able to respond as usual. The cantor may do so on behalf of the congregation.
- The flame may be distributed, but only by a few people designated to do so: for example, one per aisle. People should not share the flame from one to the other because then the distance will not be respected.
- The president may sing the *Exultet*, preferring the third and shorter form, after which the faithful extinguish their candles.
- The sacraments of initiation (baptism, confirmation, first communion) will not be celebrated without the permission of the bishop.
- Baptismal promises may be renewed. The small candles that the faithful have may be relit beforehand, in the same way as the first time.
- The number of people in the sanctuary should be kept to a minimum and physical distancing should be maintained at all times.

## EASTER SUNDAY

As usual!