

Instructions on the Easter Triduum Celebrations Circular 2009-06

To: All Diocesan and Religious Priests in the Diocese:

Greetings of Peace!

In view of the importance of the Holy Week Celebrations and the need to clarify some practices, we have the following instructions for observance in our Diocese:

On Place of Easter Triduum Celebrations:

It is preferred that all celebrations of the Easter Triduum, i.e. *Mass of the Lord's Supper and Washing of the Feet, Veneration of the Cross and Easter Vigil*, will be **celebrated in the parish Church** to show the importance of the celebrations themselves and their value for the parish community. However, due to the demands of some large parishes, **exemptions to this rule** should be consulted with the bishop, who as a rule grants the exemption provided that:

(1) There is just cause due to considerable large number of attendees and distance from the parish church,

(2) That the celebration in the chapel will be celebrated after the Parish celebration to give deference to the importance to the communal celebration, and

(3) That the parish priest or his assistant priests will preside this celebration in the chapels.

On Chrism Mass in the Cathedral:

The liturgical books prefer that the Celebration of the Chrism Mass, as truly a diocesan Celebration wherein the headship (presidency) of the bishop is clearly manifested, **should be held in the Cathedral** or the primary Church of the diocese. Therefore, our Chrism Mass will be held at the Cathedral of the Good Shepherd. May I ask the parish priest to invite not only their Pastoral Council Members, but also the parishioners, **especially the poor**, to take part in this celebration.

On Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper and Washing of the Feet

The choice for the apostles for the washing of the feet depends on the theme or purpose intended by the Parish Priest. However, Parish Priests should grab this occasion to teach their parishioners about love for the poor and service to one another. It is suggested that **love offerings on this Mass be given to the**

programs that directly benefit the poor. Feeding of the poor may also be done, in the spirit of the Last supper.

On Altars of Repose:

As the word suggests, the Altar of Repose is not an exposition of the Holy Eucharist and thus there has to be **no communal recitation of prayers** by the faithful. May I remind the Parish Priests to ask the people to pray in silence before this altar and accord the same reverence we give for to Tabernacles. It is advised that these altars be prepared in places worthy of veneration.

Veneration of the Cross:

There will be **only one cross for veneration** during Good Friday. This being the case, the Parish Priest should plan the veneration so as not to prolong the celebration for hours.

Funeral Procession Good Friday:

It has been a Filipino Tradition to hold a funeral procession after the Veneration of the Cross. **We uphold this tradition** because it promotes the faith and devotion to the Suffering Christ, and has for decades evoke sentiments that lead to true piety. We, however, encourage that it shall be done in the spirit of the Scriptures who attested to the burial of the Lord. Anything contradictory to this should be slowly done away with so as to properly teach our faithful on the true meaning of this event.

On *Salubong* or *Encuentro*:

As approved in 1971 by the Congregation for Divine Worship, the procession of the Images of the Resurrection and the Blessed Virgin Mary, called *Salubong* or *Encuentro*, takes place **as entrance rite of the Dawn (*bukang-liwayway*) Mass** for Easter Sunday. Therefore, there should be celebration of the Holy Eucharist when there is *Salubong* Rite, and the latter is essentially connected with it. This is not, however, connected with the Easter Vigil of the preceding evening. Unique as it is among Filipino Catholics, it is suggested that this be celebrated in parishes creatively so to emphasize the importance of the resurrection.

On Renewal of Baptismal Vows:

The renewal of baptismal vows also **takes place in every Mass of Easter Sunday**, after the homily and omitting the Credo or Profession of Faith. Please follow the Rite provided in the Liturgical books, or the Liturgical Supplement for the Mass (*Missalette*).

On Novena to the Divine Mercy:

Since the Holy Eucharist takes precedence over all forms of devotions and the Octave of Easter being in itself very important, we maintain the universal practice of **the Second Sunday of Easter as the Divine Mercy Sunday**. While we do not deny the beauty of the Devotion to the Divine Mercy, we have decided with proper

consultation with Msgr. Josefino Ramirez that in this Diocese **the Novena to the Divine Mercy starts only on Easter Sunday** and that the Novena to the Divine Mercy be **prayed after Communion**.

Please be guided accordingly.

Given in the Chancery in Fairview, Quezon City, this 23rd day of March in the Year of Our Lord, 2009.

Most Rev. Antonio R. Tobias, DD
Bishop

Attested by:

Rev. Fr. Jerome U. Rosalinda
Chancellor