

Holy Week and Easter 2020

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Readings for Holy Week and Easter 2020:

[All daily Mass readings are available on www.catholicbishops.ie/readings](http://www.catholicbishops.ie/readings)

Monday in Holy Week 6 April 2020

Is 42: 1-7. Ps 26:1-3, 13-14, R/ v 1. Jn 12:1-11.

Our attention is now focused on the great mystery of Christ, dying and rising. The sense of impending doom hovers over the actions of Jesus. Like a lamb led to the slaughter, Christ does not cry out or shout aloud. Mary's anointing becomes one of preparation of the body for burial after death. All things are being readied for the final hour. The chrism is prepared for blessing by the bishop this week: it will be used to sign new Christians with the Cross, to seal them for Christ.

Tuesday in Holy Week 7 April 2020

Is 49:1-6. Ps 70:1-6, 15, 17, R/ v 15. Jn 13:21-33, 36-38.

The words of Isaiah speak beautifully of our vocation in Christ. Chosen before birth, given great gifts of body and mind, called to be servant of the Most High, and destined to be a light of the nations so that Christ's salvation may be brought to the ends of the earth. Such is our destiny. And yet, we can fail. We can reject this calling, give way to weakness. Both Judas and Peter in their weakness are put before us today, one to betray, the other to deny. So close to Jesus and yet capable of losing him.

Wednesday in Holy Week 8 April 2020

Is 50: 4-9. Ps 68:8-10, 21-22, 31, 33-34, R/ v 14. Mt 26:14-25.

Spy Wednesday we call it – for Judas has left his mark on our calendars. The pain of his betrayal is to be felt in the account of Saint Matthew's Gospel. And thirty pieces of silver goes into language currency ever since. At the end of this lent, which has seen us trying to purify ourselves of all that is not Christian, these thirty pieces of silver come before us as a warning.

Holy Thursday 9 April 2020

Morning: Is 61:1-3, 6, 8-9. Ps 88:21-22, 25, 27, R/ v2. Apoc 1:5-8, Lk 4:16-21.

The Easter Triduum

Christ redeemed us all and gave perfect glory to God principally through his paschal mystery: dying he destroyed our death and rising he restored our life. Therefore the Easter Triduum of the Passion and Resurrection of Christ is the culmination of the entire liturgical year. The celebration of the paschal mystery is not simply a recalling of past events in history. It is a sacramental celebration that renders present and actualises the saving power of Christ's death and Resurrection to the Church.

Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper

Ex 12:1-8, 11-14. Ps 115:12-13, 15-18, R/ cf. 1 Cor 10:16. Jn 13:1-15.

The washing of feet, which is already optional, is to be omitted this year. At the end of the Mass of the Lord's Supper the procession is also omitted and the Blessed Sacrament is to be kept in the tabernacle. On this day the faculty to celebrate Mass in a suitable place, without the presence of the people, is exceptionally granted to all priests.

The Scripture readings this evening direct our minds at the opening of the great Paschal celebration to the meaning of what we celebrate. We are entering into this mystery in such a way that when we break bread and share this cup that we once more proclaim the death of the Lord. With this Mass of the Lord's Supper the Church begins the sacred Easter Triduum and devotes itself to the remembrance of the Last Supper.

Good Friday 10 April 2019 Celebration of the Lord's Passion

Is 52:13-53:12, Ps 30:2, 6, 12-13, 15-17, 25, R/ Lk 23:46. Heb 4:14-16, 5:7-9. Jn 18:1-19:42.

Saint John's account of the Passion is more reflective and theological. He emphasises Jesus' obedience to the Father's will. The kingship of Jesus is asserted: the crucifixion is a victory, the hour of death is also the hour triumph. 'Christ gives his life, he is "lifted up" on the Cross, but willingly'.

In contemplating the Cross of its Lord, the Church commemorates its own origin and its mission to extend to all peoples the blessed effects of Christ's Passion that it celebrates on this day in a spirit of thanksgiving for his marvellous gift.

In the Universal Prayer, Bishops will arrange to have a special intention prepared for those who find themselves in distress, the sick, the dead, (cf. *Missale Romanum*). The adoration of the Cross by kissing it shall be limited solely to the celebrant.

Holy Saturday 11 April 2020 Easter Vigil

In accord with ancient tradition, this night is one of vigil for the Lord. Saint Augustine called it 'the mother of all vigils'. The Gospel of Saint Luke reminds the faithful to have their lamps burning ready, awaiting their master's return, so that when he arrives he will find them wide awake and will seat them at his table.

There are several different elements to the Easter Vigil: The Service of Light, the Liturgy of the Word, Liturgy of Baptism and Liturgy of the Eucharist.

The new fire is blessed outside the church, and its flames should be such that they dispel the darkness and light up the night. All present hold candles to which the light of the new Paschal Candle is gradually passed. The Liturgy of the Word follows with readings from sacred scripture. This year, for the "Baptismal Liturgy" only the "Renewal of Baptismal Promises" is maintained (cf. *Missale Romanum*). The celebration of the Eucharist which follows is in the fullest sense the Easter Sacrament, the commemoration of the sacrifice of the Cross and the presence of the Risen Christ.

Easter Sunday 12 April 2020 – Easter Day of the Lord's Resurrection

Acts 10:34, 37-43. Ps 117:1-2, 16-17, 22-23, R/ v 24. Col 3:104 or 1 Cor 5:6-8. Jn 20:1-9.

'Christ is risen, alleluia!' This is the ancient Christian greeting on this day of great joy and happiness for all. Easter is not simply one feast among others, but the "Feast of feasts".