



PARISH OF SAINT FELIX, FELIXSTOWE

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April 5th, 2020 : PALM SUNDAY

Fr. John writes :

Dear Parishioners,

I imagine that we all feel dismay and even incredulity as we begin to keep a Holy Week in which the churches are closed, and the great Liturgies of Holy Week are not allowed to be celebrated publicly. It is a huge deprivation for all Catholics, but also it is a challenge. It would be so easy to give up on our living out of the Faith : for us to 'give up on God', either in the long term or the short term. The situation demands resolution and determination on the part of us all. We must do all that we can to keep this great week of the year Holy. To use our time, our prayer books, our imagination and our screens to enter as fully as we can into the momentous events of this week, without the aid and stimulation which the Services of Holy Week usually provide us with. It may even be that we are enabled to enter more fully into the suffering and dereliction of our Blessed Lord. We may even vocalise our sense of deprivation and dismay in those words from the Psalmist which Our Lord himself quoted on the Cross, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?" Gethsemane and Calvary are maybe going to be seen in more vivid colours this year. It will be more difficult, I suspect, to enter into Easter joy!

The Bishops of England and Wales have issued instructions to every parish priest regarding what is to be done. In a nutshell, the priest is to celebrate the Rites of Holy Week in church, but alone, and omitting most of the ceremonies. I would like to tell you in detail what I am required to do **ON YOUR BEHALF, AND WITH YOU, HOPEFULLY, ALONGSIDE ME IN HEART AND MIND** day by day. For that reason, I want

you to know at what times the Rites will take place in St. Felix.

PALM SUNDAY April 5th 9.30am

The Palm ceremonies are omitted, but the Solemn Mass of the Passion will be celebrated by the priest (alone) in the normal way, with the Reading of the Passion. This will take place at the main Altar (I'm using the Altars in the Sacred Heart Chapel and St. Joseph's Chapel for the ordinary weekday Masses at present.)

THE MASS OF THE CHRISM This has been cancelled. The Bishop plans to hold a Mass of the Chrism maybe in September this year, so that new Holy Oils may be blessed.

MAUNDY THURSDAY April 9th 8.0pm

The Liturgy will again be celebrated at the main Altar. Obviously the Footwashing ceremony will be omitted, as will the Procession to the Altar of Repose at the end of Mass. The Blessed Sacrament will remain in the tabernacle, and the Altar will not be stripped. I hope to watch before the Blessed Sacrament until ten o'clock on your behalf, and would like to feel that you are observing this special time of prayer with me at home, remembering Jesus in Gethsemane.

GOOD FRIDAY April 10th 3.0pm

Again the priest is to celebrate the normal Liturgy - the first half of the Mass in its most primitive and austere form, followed by the priest Venerating the Cross, and receiving Holy Communion from the tabernacle.

This year Childrens' Stations of the Cross in the morning, and *Mater Desolata* in the evening will obviously not take place this year.

HOLY SATURDAY April 11th 8.0pm

The kindling of the New Fire and the Procession are to be omitted : the Paschal Candle will be blessed, lit, and placed in the candlestand and the Easter Proclamation will be sung. Of the Baptismal Liturgy, only the Renewal of Baptismal Promises remains. The Mass will duly be said.

EASTER DAY April 12th 9.30am

Again, I am instructed to say the Mass for you on my own.

Your Easter Duties - to make your Confession before Easter, and to receive Holy Communion during the Easter Season - have been dispensed by the Bishops for this year. But they urge us all to make a purposeful Act of Contrition before the festival. They write 'We express our contrition when we realise how we have offended God by our sinful words, deeds, and omissions in contrast to the immeasurable love and mercy that he continually shows us. They ask us to use the following words in the making of this Act of Contrition :

My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart. In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good, I have sinned against you, whom I should love above all things. I firmly intend, with your help, to do penance, to sin no more, and to avoid whatever leads me to sin.

Our Saviour Jesus Christ suffered and died for us. In his name, my God, have mercy. Amen.

Many of you have told me that you are watching Masses on television, or on the internet, and this is an excellent thing to do when you are not able to be at Mass physically. The Bishop is going to celebrate the four great Liturgies of Holy Week - Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday - at the Cathedral, and these will be live streamed. I think that participating in these liturgies with our bishop should be our priority. Details on the Diocesan Website

<https://www.rcdess.org.uk/eastanglia-masses-to-be-live-streamed/> and for the Cathedral <https://www.sjcathedral.org.uk/> Also Mass is available each day streamed from the Shrine at Walsingham.

Finally, I've no hesitation in wishing you a very blessed Holy Week. This remains the great week of the Christian Year, and God's grace will be amply available to us, even if not in quite the usual ways.

Your friend and Parish Priest,
Fr. John

PARISH NOTICEBOARD

Anniversaries this week Elsie Barratt (2011), Helen Samkin (2009), and Miriam Harcourt (2004). May they Rest in Peace.

Pamela Vickers RIP Pamela died recently, and her private funeral will be held at the Crematorium of the Seven Hills on Thursday this week at 3.0pm. We send our condolences to Brian.

Ways to help the poor and hungry at this difficult time. Stephen Badcock writes : 'As it is not possible to make donations of food to a food bank at present, an alternative is via the Trussell Trust on-line. By entering Trussell Trust into the search engine of your computer you will find their web page which will describe what to do and also allow you to give monetary donations on-line. 'Every gift takes us a step closer to ending hunger'.'

**Series for Lent
THE WOUNDS OF CHRIST**

In this short series we have thought about the five wounds of Christ, the wounds made by the nails in his hands and in his feet, and also that made by the spear in his side. But some speak of a sixth wound - the wound made on his shoulders by the carrying of the Cross. The wood of the heavy and rough-hewn Cross must indeed have cut into the shoulders and back of Our Lord as he walked - or rather stumbled in terrible pain and weakness - along the road to Calvary.

As we think of Jesus bruised and bleeding, we remember that he endured all this for us, to secure our forgiveness and freedom. And we realise how small the privations and inconveniences which we suffer really are.