

Region IV Pastoral Response for Good Friday and Other Resources for Hispanic Community Due to COVID-19

The Hispanic community has a long-standing cultural and religious tradition of celebrating Good Friday with the Viacrucis by processing on the streets and bearing public witness to the Catholic faith. This tradition is rooted in popular religiosity that goes back to their native countries. The Viacrucis draws hundreds of people, if not thousands, and it often includes non-Hispanic faithful. The Viacrucis is a profound experience of faith in the Sacred Triduum because it connects the mystical body of Christ to the Passion of Jesus. Therefore, it is recommended to televise or live-stream this celebration as an effort to unite the Hispanic faithful in region IV.

Liturgical Recommendations: Good Friday – April 10, 2020

Plan A - Televised Viacrucis via Univision at 3 p.m. from St. Matthew's Cathedral in Washington, DC – Bishop Dorsonville to lead the Viacrucis, along with other bishops who may be available.

- Because many in the Hispanic community do not yet have access to social media, the proposal is to work with these national networks to televise the transmission of the Viacrucis, which is a long-standing tradition for Hispanic families on Good Friday. In addition to televising the Viacrucis, dioceses/parishes could also stream the Viacrucis linking to their social media.
- For the live stream of the Viacrucis, technical support from the local archdiocese is necessary.
- Currently working with the networks to provide this service on a pro-bono basis. If pro-bono is not available, financial support from each diocese is necessary.

Plan B – To live stream the Viacrucis from St. Matthew's Cathedral in Washington, DC at 3 p.m. on Good Friday - Bishop Dorsonville to lead the Viacrucis, along with other bishops who may be available.

- If the Viacrucis cannot be televised, the second option is to live stream the Viacrucis and allowing the regional dioceses to share the link in their networks so that others may join the transmission.
- Utilize existing networks such as VEA Radio and other social media outlets to expand outreach.
- For the live stream of the Viacrucis, technical support from the local archdiocese is necessary.

In Solidarity with Vulnerable Communities: Social Ministry Recommendations

According to experts, the most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic are undocumented immigrants, Dreamers, TPS recipients, and the African American communities. The Catholic faithful looks to the Church in times of need for financial, social, and legal support. The Church has the responsibility not only to tend to the spiritual welfare of these communities but also their everyday necessities. It is vital to be in solidarity with the most vulnerable by supporting them in their most basic needs.

Regional Resources and Assistance:

- A. Gather a list of resources for assistance for the community (Food bank, local Catholic Charities, and other entities that may have resources for those seeking their most basic needs). Dioceses could then share these resources within their communities.
 - Each diocese would provide a list of local resources available in their areas.
- B. Provide financial and legal education to families in Spanish
 - Information from a professional in finances to help families prioritize their bills and make the most out of the resources they have in place.
 - Each diocese would provide a list of local resources available in their areas.
- C. Encourage parishes to create a food drive/food bank
 - a. Provide parishes with best resources as to how they may be able to respond to provide the most basic food needs (canasta básica) for their parishioners and those in need in their communities.
- D. Advocacy efforts from regional bishops to encourage mortgage and utility companies to defer payments
 - a. Because undocumented immigrants (including DACA and TPS recipients) are not going to qualify for the stimulus package, deferring payments would be a great financial help for these families.
 - b. Additionally, this would be a great help for all families who live paycheck to paycheck.
 - c. Advocacy in this area is greatly needed because many immigrant families provide financial support to their families back home.