

## **Celebration of the Triduum in Parish Clusters/Pastoral Regions**

When two or more parishes come together for the celebration of the Triduum, it presents a number of liturgical issues. We are still in the infancy stages of addressing the liturgical challenges we face when gathering a number of parishes into a single worshipping community for the Church's high-point of the liturgical year, the Triduum. It should be noted that the *Roman Missal* and the *Circular Letter Concerning the Preparation and Celebration of the Easter Feasts (CL)* recommend that in places where the priest has responsibility of several smaller parishes, the Triduum should be carried out in the principal parish. (cf. *RM, Introduction to the Sacred Paschal Triduum, 3; CL, 43*)

**Ministries:** Liturgical ministers should be chosen from each of the parish communities. The liturgical ministries should “look” like the entire gathered assembly, not just the parish at which the liturgy is being celebrated. However, this suggests that each parish has common liturgical practices and skills training. The liturgical ministers need to be excellent in their skill and familiar with the particular liturgical practices of the church where the Triduum liturgy is being celebrated.

**Music:** Music is integral to worship. The sung participation of the faithful must be carefully considered especially when pastoral regions are combining for a common celebration of the Triduum. Prior to the Triduum, pastoral regions must seek to develop common repertoire so that when parishes come together for the Triduum, all present will feel a sense of belonging because the music is familiar, not alien, to the assembly gathered. Combining the parish choirs may facilitate a sense of commonality and belonging.

Secondly, music must be chosen according to sound liturgical principles. The music director(s) and the pastor will need to work together to ensure that the music reflects the unity, the solemnity, and the meaning of the Triduum.

### **Ritual Elements**

#### **Mass of the Lord's Supper**

- **Presentation of Blessed Holy Oils:** Oils blessed and consecrated at the Chrism Mass may be presented prior to the Mass of the Lord's Supper or at another appropriate time following the Chrism Mass. Representatives from each parish may carry a vessel to be presented. However, the presentation of each oil to the presiding minister should only be spoken once.

- **Washing of the Feet:** Representatives from each parish community should be chosen.
- **Transfer of the Blessed Sacrament:** Normally, it is preferred that the Triduum be celebrated in the principal church of a given cluster or pastoral region. (cf. *RM*, Introduction to the Triduum, 3; *CL*, 43). However, if the celebration of the Good Friday liturgy is celebrated in another church, then the Mass of the Lord's Supper is concluded with the blessing and dismissal. There is no procession or adoration. The Blessed Sacrament is placed in the tabernacle in the usual way after Communion. (cf. *RM*, Mass of the Lord's Supper, 44)

### Easter Vigil

- **Multiple Paschal Candles:** "The *Roman Missal*, not envisioning the pastoral situation of mission churches or cluster parishes, specifies that only one paschal candle is used. To accommodate the particular circumstances, the Secretariat might suggest that the candles from the mission churches or other parish churches could be present at the Easter Vigil, having been prepared in advance, and blessed alongside the main candle (perhaps having deacons or other representatives holding them). In keeping with the rubrics, for the lighting and procession only one candle should be lit (the principal one, or the one which will remain in that particular church). As the other candles in the congregation are lit, the other paschal candles could be lit and held (but not high, in order to maintain the prominence of the one principal candle) by someone at their place in the assembly. Once all the candles are extinguished after the singing of the *Exsultet*, the other paschal candles are put aside. On Easter Sunday morning, those candles could be taken to each of the missions and carried, lit, in the entrance procession at the first Mass at each church and put in place in the sanctuary." (from *USCCB Secretariat for Divine Worship, Eighteen Questions on the Paschal Triduum*)