

The Cathedral of St John the Baptist

EASTER DUTY

The bishops of all the dioceses in England and Wales have formally dispensed the “Easter Duties,” that is, the obligation placed upon Roman Catholics to receive Holy Communion during the period between Ash Wednesday and Trinity Sunday, and, therefore, the implicit obligation to make a sacramental confession in preparation for this obligatory reception of Holy Communion.

Therefore, a Roman Catholic who does not receive Holy Communion, and who does not make a sacramental confession at this time remains a Catholic in good standing, anything else notwithstanding. This dispensation lasts for the whole of the calendar year 2020.

The Bishop asks us that, while we cannot easily go to confession, we should all still make a Perfect Act of Contrition at this time.

A Perfect Act of Contrition is an expression of true and real sorrow for sins, having realised the immense love of God for us. We express this contrition when we realise how we have offended God by our sinful words, deeds and omissions in contrast to his immeasurable love and mercy that he continually shows us.

A suggested 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.

n.b. The Church asks Roman Catholics to take upon themselves, where it is actually possible, five obligations of love (or precepts), by which we can establish publically we are in good standing with the Church, and so declare ourselves to be active participant members of the Body of Christ. These five precepts are: 1) to participate in Holy Mass on Sundays and Holydays of Obligation, 2) to receive Holy Communion once a year (between Ash Wednesday and Trinity Sunday), 3) to make sacramental confession once a year, 4) to observe the prescribed annual days of fasting and abstinence, and 5) to help provide for the needs of the Church. 1) *is not possible to fulfil at this time, and 2) and 3) are commuted this calendar year.*