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## **COVID-19 Coronavirus: UK, message from Card. Nichols. Guidance on Masses and prayers, invitation to charity. Document on sacraments**

(London) Starting from Friday, 20 March, the celebration of Mass will take place without a public congregation, and the Sunday obligation is suspended. Catholics in England and Wales are invited - in a letter signed by the President of the Bishops' Conference, Card. Vincent Nichols, and by the Vice-President, Archbishop Malcolm Mc Mahon - to "join in spiritually" by watching the Mass that priests will be celebrating on TV or online. The approximately five million faithful are given the assurance that "during these disturbing and threatening times, the rhythm of the prayer of the Church will continue", and everyone is invited to "play their part in this". "Our churches will remain open", the letter reads, and "they will be a focal point of prayer, where you will find solace and strength. "In visiting our churches at this time, we will observe with great care the practices of hygiene and the guidance on social distancing" between people. The message ends with an appeal to charity, "being attentive to the needs of our neighbour, especially the elderly and vulnerable; contributing to our local food banks; volunteering"; and showing "kindness and mutual support". For more information, the bishops refer to another document containing guidance on the sacraments and other liturgical aspects, and to the [website](#) of the Bishops' Conference. The Catholic Primate of England and Wales himself, Card. Nichols, will address the faithful in a video message this afternoon, explaining the new rules that have just been introduced by the Bishops' Conference.

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