

Live streaming figures for Holy Week in Lockdown - The Catholic Church in England and Wales

Compiled by The Catholic Church Bishop's Conference of England and Wales
<https://www.cbcew.org.uk/>

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Case Study 1

Diocese of Arundel and Brighton

Diocese in southern England covering the counties of Sussex and Surrey.

Arundel Cathedral of Our Lady and Saint Philip Howard

Outside of lockdown, generally 150 people would attend a Maundy Thursday Service at **Arundel Cathedral**.

This Maundy Thursday over 3,500 people logged onto the live stream and the number of people watching could be much higher (families etc). Readership vs circulation. The virtual congregation is 23 times higher (2300%) than the congregation outside of lockdown.

"In these times when it is not possible for people to enter churches, the possibility of livestreaming services has proved an immense help to many. In some places, where livestreaming has been done for a while, it has already proved a great benefit to the housebound. While the figures cannot be equated to attendance in particular churches through the year, since not every parish is able to livestream, it is very clear that great numbers of people are benefitting from the ability to 'tune in' and join their brothers and sisters in a virtual way. I do believe that the capacity to livestream will continue to be an effective way to engage with people right across society, enabling them to discover the message of the Gospel and the beauty of the Church's worship."

The Right Reverend Richard Moth, Bishop of Arundel and Brighton

Good Friday - Live and Catch-up

Arundel Cathedral - 2466

Ordinarily - 300

Over eight times higher than usual.

St Mary of the Angels, Worthing

People in pews (outside of lockdown) on Maundy Thursday - 300

This Maundy Thursday - 3,029

10 times higher than usual - 1,000% increase.

Good Friday

3163, ordinarily 450 people in the pews on Good Friday.

Over 8 times higher than the congregation outside of lockdown.

800% increase.

St Dunstan's Woking

Maundy Thursday

320 people in the pew last Maundy Thursday

1775 watching online last night -

5.5 times more people than the usual flock....

On Good Friday there were 2094.

Ordinarily 500 people in the pews on Good Friday.

Over 4 times higher than the congregation outside of lockdown.

Case Study 2

Archdiocese of Birmingham

The Archdiocese extends from Stoke in the North to the Thames in the South.

St Chad's Cathedral

Outside of lockdown, generally 200 people would attend a Maundy Thursday Service at St Chad's Cathedral. This Maundy Thursday, the Archdiocese had 1,876 visitors to the Cathedral website. I make that 9.38 times higher than normal and in percentage terms a 938% increase.

Good Friday

1,348 visitors - ordinarily 300 in the congregation on a Good Friday.

Four and a half times higher than an average congregation on a Good Friday.

"As we celebrate Easter this year, in the midst of our joy we also remember all those who have lost their loved ones because of the coronavirus, and those who are anxious about their family members or friends who are ill. The risen Christ gives us all hope, inviting us to share in his life, and sending us with a message of Easter peace for all who are troubled. May your faith in the risen Lord help you to see beyond our present difficulties. Witness this Easter to your confidence in the Lord Who died and rose from the dead for us, until we can once again gather together in our churches to receive Him in Holy Communion and to worship Him and bless His holy name."

The Most Reverend Bernard Longley, Archbishop of Birmingham

Case Study 3

Diocese of Salford

A Diocese which encompasses most of Greater Manchester and neighbouring parts of Lancashire.

Salford Cathedral (St John the Evangelist)

Outside of lockdown, generally up to 500 people would attend a Maundy Thursday Service at Salford Cathedral. Last night, over 800 people logged into the live streaming of the service.

I make that a 60% increase....

"There is a lot of initiative being employed in providing various means of live-streaming by many parishes across the country. From many comments received, it is clearly being appreciated by people who are able to experience a sense of community and belonging in a different way. While being in a church together is important and to be valued, perhaps this is helping us renew our sense of being Church wherever we are and being missionary disciples even when we are in strange and difficult circumstances."

"Remarkably, live-streaming of services and devotions is actually attracting a lot of people who claim not be regular church attenders. Is this their path to re-connect with a sense of faith and community in these uncertain times? This is very encouraging, particularly as it is providing a bridge to others at the very time when we are socially distanced and many would otherwise feel isolated. God at work in mysterious ways."

The Right Reverend John Arnold, Bishop of Salford

Case Study 4

Diocese of Leeds

Leeds Cathedral (St Anne's Cathedral)

The Mass last night started at 7pm and ended at 8.30pm ... by the time it started, the Cathedral was three times its seating capacity of 500!

2.5k people joined live (2473 to be exact)

12 hours later, a further 15.5k people had watched (15,447).

Hundreds of live chat messages came in - too many to count - but as well as people from all across the Diocese of Leeds, those who mentioned where they were from came from as far afield as Kenya, Nigeria, Barbados, USA (New York; Indiana) - and from the names and languages used, many people of Hispanic origin and again, several messages from India.

Around 500 people would normally be in the congregation on a Good Friday (500 is the maximum seating capacity).

This Good Friday **5,118** participated live...and according to YouTube, there have since been **37k** playbacks of the Mass and a further **1.7k** new views!

The 'virtual congregation' hailed from: Malaysia, India, South Africa, Swaziland, Nigeria, Canada, USA (New York; Georgia; Texas; Delaware), Qatar, Poland, Ireland ... as well as from Swansea, Golders Green, Stokesley, Hertfordshire, Reigate ...and of course from right across the Diocese of Leeds. At least two people (one a Vicar) from the CofE joined the live-chat and were made very welcome. What was extremely touching is the fact that so many of these people – most of them strangers to one another – will offer a very particular prayer intention (maybe that their family would come back to the Church) – and this is then immediately supported and taken up by others in the same situation...

Case Study 5

Diocese of East Anglia

For the five main Masses/vigils from Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday at St John the Baptist Cathedral in Norwich, a total of 15,000 people either watched it live or on playback on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1L1vHKBeZgiaUf6hUxbT0A/videos>

This is obviously many more than would have attended the services at the Cathedral with capacity around 1,400 when absolutely rammed full and I would imagine an increase of at least 300-400% (av 750 attendance usual maybe, but I can check on this if you want a definite).

Case Study 6

Archdiocese of Liverpool

Palm Sunday Mass, 5 April	9,113
Usual congregation	750
Mass of the Lord's Supper, 9 April	6,269
Usual congregation	500
Good Friday, 10 April	12,700
Usual congregation	2,000
Easter Vigil, 11 April	9,400
Usual congregation	2,000
Easter Sunday Mass, 12 April	10,100
Usual congregation	2,000

Case Study 7

Diocese of Wrexham

The Wrexham Diocese website has seen a 320% increase in traffic over the past two weeks.

On Palm Sunday at St Mary's Cathedral, Wrexham, there were 1,295 views online. This is three times the normal attendance at the Cathedral on a Palm Sunday.

There is a six fold increase in the number of people taking part in Exposition on the diocesan Facebook page. For Compline in the bishop's private chapel, up to three hundred people are taking part online.

Generally, weekday Masses at the Cathedral have a congregation of around twenty people, now weekday Masses online can have a congregation of over three hundred people. One weekday Mass had a virtual congregation of nine hundred and fourteen people.

On Maundy Thursday, there were five hundred and twenty nine people watching the live stream, double the number of people who would normally attend the Mass of the Lord's Supper at the Cathedral.

On Good Friday, Bishop Brignall led a meditation on the Seven Last Words, which had a congregation of three hundred and seventy nine people, normally twenty to twenty five people would take part in this meditation.

Bishop Peter Brignall says “Whilst the raw data must be accurately and appropriately interpreted and understood, there is every indication that the Church’s worship, prayer and spiritual life mediated online is desired, helpful, nourishing and bringing blessings. Whether it is necessity being the mother of invention or something more profound, I feel that what is being achieved with live streaming could be compared with the assisted breathing provided for a suffering patient and is better for it.

“It's hugely encouraging that people are taking the time to log on and stay on. The age range online is broad - from families in their mid-twenties to people in their eighties. It is not only people from the diocese who are logging on. Someone from Dublin participated in the Palm Sunday Mass and not an insignificant number are joining from the North West of England. We are receiving comments from the online congregations both during and after Mass and services. People are hugely appreciative of what's being done.

“More positively the motivation to start live-streaming lay in the desire to fill something of the void created by the closure of churches, called for by the coronavirus outbreak, the response has been so positive and indicated a great desire to connect with the church that is known and with which there is a familiarity I could do nothing but strive to nourish the seeking faith that is there.

“The Church’s Liturgy, albeit most simply presented is an encounter by the faithful with their living Lord, when this is supported by the reading of the Bible as currently promoted by the God Who Speaks project, the Church is nourished and discovering afresh a living and robust faith that will bring us through this crisis. It is now not just the case of a glass being half full or half empty, it is the discovery of the desire for a bigger glass.”

Case Study 8

Diocese of Nottingham

The Cathedral of St. Barnabas, Nottingham, has seating capacity for 500. The live streaming for the Triduum from the Cathedral received:

Good Friday :

Number of unique viewers: 3,712

Number of hours watched: 3,833

Holy Saturday:

Number of unique viewers: 3,102

Number of hours watched: 3,634

Easter Sunday:

Number of unique viewers: 3,119

Number of hours watched: 2,859

In addition to this Bishop Pat McKinney opened his own YouTube channel 3 weeks ago, and soon gained 1200 subscribers:

He celebrates Daily Mass from home with 70-120 views live and then between 400-700 views once uploaded.

For his Sunday Mass he had 800 viewers waiting before the stream went live with 4200 views once uploaded.

Other devotions such as rosary, adoration and stations receive between 400-2400 views.

Herewith some comments received through social media/email/text etc in response to this simple offer of live streaming from bishop's house:

“Thank you Bishop Patrick and Fr Jonathan for the lovely Easter Vigil Mass this evening. My 82 year old mother - who had a stroke almost 7 years ago which left her like a 4 year old toddler - joined in with the Latin responses and sang her heart out. It was a joy to see and for a short while she was like her old self. Praise be to God.

“Thank you Bishop Patrick. It was moving - two teenagers completely silent after the Passion reading.

“I will be live streaming your Mass and sharing the audio down the phone with my Grandma. She is 96, without tech/internet and lives alone in Hertfordshire. It’s brought us closer together (despite the miles that separate us) and it’s helped me better understand (and learn from) her strength of faith.

“Thank you so much. It is so helpful to share the Mass even on line and to hear your words of affirmation and prayers.

“[Bishop Patrick McKinney](#) thank you for everything you are doing - from our homes, the domestic church is being reborn.....Praise God!

'I felt compelled to tweet my deepest gratitude to you, Bishop, for the beautiful Masses throughout Holy Week. We've been blessed to have had the opportunity to join in them via the streaming.'

“A really beautiful Holy Mass with [@BishopPMcKinney](#) this morning. Followed by the praying of the Rosary for the priests of the Diocese. Finished off with “Litany for All Priests” something I really liked, something I’ll encourage in the future. Thank you Bishop Patrick.