

DIRECTIVE ON THE TIME OF THE SATURDAY EVENING VIGIL MASS

November 6, 1989

Dear Father:

In recent months, a number of parishes have requested permission to celebrate Sunday liturgies as early as 5:00 p.m. on Saturday. The pastoral reasons for the request seemed sufficient to justify them.

Because the requests are increasing, I have decided to extend this permission to all parishes in the diocese. There is, however, one important reservation. Only one Saturday evening Mass may be celebrated in each parish, since we must, at all costs preserve the sacredness of Sunday, the day of the Lord=s resurrection and make it the center of our celebration of the Paschal Mystery.

Eucharisticum Mysterium, no. 28 notes that permission for anticipated Masses is a concession which is meant to enable the faithful in today=s conditions to celebrate more easily the day of the Lord=s resurrection. The instruction also notes that the single anticipated Mass is permitted only for genuine pastoral need and not simply for convenience.

Fraternally in Christ,

Most Rev. John Michael Sherlock
Bishop of London