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Lord Hall
Director-General
BBC

(By e-mail, no signed original)

25 March 2020

Dear Lord Hall,

We are writing on behalf of the 4.5 million Catholics in this country to ask you to take account of the needs of Catholics and others in how the BBC responds to Covid-19.

The public celebration of Mass has now been suspended for understandable reasons by the Catholic Bishops in the UK and while some churches are now able to live stream their services, that leaves a proportion of the Catholic population unable to view or hear Mass on Sundays. Weekly or daily attendance at Mass is a central part of the spiritual life of all Catholics and elderly people who are among the most vulnerable in the present crisis are precisely those who are least likely to have access to religious services online.

We therefore urge you to consider finding a place in the schedule of BBC TV and/or BBC Radio for the regular celebration of Mass on Sundays while the present crisis continues. It would also be appreciated if there could be coverage of special events such as the *Urbi et Orbi* blessing which Pope Francis announced will take place on Friday 27 March at 6pm (local time in Rome).

We appreciate that there will be competing demands on the BBC at this time from other religious groups but hope that you will be able to give this request your fullest consideration.

We are copying this letter to the Secretary of State and Adam Conant at DCMS and to Charlotte Moore, Director of Content at the BBC.

Yours sincerely,

Rt. Hon. Sir Edward Leigh MP

President of the Catholic Union of Great Britain

Mike Kane MP

Vice-President of the Catholic Union of Great Britain and Convenor of the Catholic Legislators Network

p.p. 

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