

Bishops' Committee
for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations
Australian Catholic Bishops Conference
The Faithfulness of the Lord endures for ever
Guidelines for Catholic-Jewish Relations

Appendix

Passover

In recent years numbers of Catholics have become interested in celebrating Passover (Pesach, Seder). Thus it is necessary to draw attention to the following:

- i. Passover is a feast sacred to the Jews. When non-Jews demonstrate it, the rites of the Haggadah should be respected in all their integrity. For this reason the use of a text approved by a Rabbi is recommended; even if a text has been approved overseas, the local Rabbi should be consulted, as attitudes vary somewhat with place and circumstances.
- ii. It is desirable to invite a Jewish couple or family to conduct the rite.
- iii. One of the chief reasons for this celebration by Christians should be to acknowledge and experience some of what we have received from the Jews in the history of salvation.
- iv. This ritual has value as background for teaching about the Last Supper, but it should never be a hybrid presentation of Jewish and Christian celebrations.
- v. In recent years some Catholics have chosen to attend a Seder on Holy Thursday instead of the Catholic Liturgy. Thus they celebrate the deliverance of the Hebrews from Egypt, while omitting the celebration of our Passover and deliverance in Christ. It is strongly recommended that the Seder experience be held outside Holy Week, or at least at a time allowing for attendance at the Holy Week ceremonies.