



Office of Divine Worship

Archdiocese of Newark

Holy Week in Time of Covid 19

3/26/20

The following has been prepared by the Office of Divine Worship of the Archdiocese of Newark for Holy Week in accordance with the Decree issued by the Congregation for Divine Worship, “In time of Covid-19” protocol number 153/20.

Church Year

The Church Year with its sacred liturgies is the basis of our spirituality as Catholic Christians, with the Eucharist as the “source and summit” of the Christian life. Sadly, the current crisis which has suspended liturgical services, will now be disrupting Holy Week. It should be noted that the following temporary measures are for 2020 ONLY. The adaptations provided by the Holy See, by way of exception for this difficult period, are not meant to establish a future precedent.

Lent and the Time Leading Up to Holy Week

Church Visitation

With the closing of all churches, church buildings should be locked. No public celebrations of the liturgy, devotions or exposition of the Blessed Sacrament may be held.

Holy Week

According to the Decree “In Time of Covid 19,” the dates of the Paschal Triduum (Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Vigil/Sunday) cannot be transferred to another time. Therefore:

Indications for the Paschal Triduum

Wherever the civil and ecclesiastical authorities have put restrictions in place, the Sacred Triduum must be celebrated in the following way: Bishops will give indications...so that, in the Cathedral and parish churches, though without the physical participation of the faithful, the Bishop and parish priest(s) can celebrate the liturgical mysteries of the Paschal Triduum. The faithful should be informed of the times of the celebration so that they can prayerfully unite themselves in their homes. **In this occasion, the means of live (not recorded) televisual or internet broadcasts are helpful.**

IN THE ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK, ALL PUBLIC CELEBRATIONS OF HOLY WEEK, INCLUDING PALM SUNDAY AND EASTER SUNDAY, HAVE BEEN SUSPENDED.

It is not required that parishes celebrate the liturgies of the Easter Triduum, but when doing so the following is to be observed.

Churches may not be open for public prayer during the Paschal Triduum; no public liturgies or events may be scheduled. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament is not permitted during the Paschal Triduum. This year, the Eucharist should remain in the tabernacle for the duration of the three days.

Chrism Mass

According to the “Decree In Time of Covid 19,” “the Bishop has the faculty to postpone the Chrism Mass to a later date.” Cardinal Tobin has decided to postpone the date of the Chrism Mass which will be announced once public celebrations of the liturgy have resumed. Parishes may continue to use the Holy Oils which were blessed in 2019. Parishes which need more oils should contact the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart.

Priests may bless the Oil of the Sick but only within the celebration of the Sacrament. (See Pastoral Care of the Sick, 21 and 123.) Priests may bless the Oil of the Catechumens immediately before the anointing. (See RCIA, 101 and 102). **In both cases this may be done only as needed for a particular anointing and not to replenish the parish’s supply.**

Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord

- Priests may celebrate Palm Sunday Mass privately.
- Parishes which stream Mass may do so for Palm Sunday.
- Due to the absence of the assembly, the “Third Form: the Simple Entrance” is suggested.
- Palms may be made available for distribution at a later date.

Holy Thursday

Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper

- Where and in the measure that there is a real possibility of doing so, the priest(s) of the parish may celebrate the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper
- The faculty to celebrate Mass on this day without the people is granted in an exceptional manner to all priests.
- The washing of feet, which is already optional, is to be omitted.
- At the end of the Mass, the procession of the Blessed Sacrament to the place of repose is to be omitted.
- The Blessed Sacrament is to be kept in the tabernacle.
- Priests who are unable to celebrate Mass should instead pray Evening Prayer of the day.
- **Televised or live stream broadcasts should be live (not recorded).**

Good Friday

Celebration of the Passion of the Lord

- Where and in the measure that there is a real possibility of doing so, the priest(s) of the parish can celebrate the Passion of the Lord
- The First Form of the showing of the cross is suggested because of the absence of an assembly.
- The following intercession should be included in the Universal Prayer:

XI. For those suffering the effects of COVID-19

Deacon or other minister:

Let us pray for all enduring the effects of the *coronavirus pandemic*,
the sick and the dead, those who feel lost or dismayed;
as well as those who care for the sick.
Though chastised now by affliction,
may they find relief at last through God's loving mercy.

Pray in silence. Then the priest with hands extended sings or says:

Priest:

Almighty and merciful God,
look with compassion on our affliction;
lighten our burden and so confirm our faith,
that we may always trust without hesitation
in your fatherly providence.
Through Christ our Lord. **R:** Amen

- Priests who are unable to celebrate the liturgy should instead pray Evening Prayer.
- **Televised or live stream broadcasts should be live (not recorded).**

The Easter Vigil in the Holy Night

The Easter Vigil

- The Easter Vigil is to be celebrated only in parish churches where there is a real possibility of doing so.
- The Easter Vigil should only begin at or after 8:15 PM.
- The preparation and lighting of the fire is omitted.
- The Paschal Candle, prepared privately, is lit with dignity.
- The Procession is omitted and the Easter Proclamation follows.
- The “Liturgy of the Word” takes place as usual.
- The “Blessing of Water” (shorter version, no. 54 in the Roman Missal) should be used to bless a small amount of water which can be reverently disposed afterwards). No water should be placed in fonts.
- For the “Baptismal Liturgy,” the “Renewal of Baptismal Promises” alone is necessary.
- The “Liturgy of the Eucharist” follows.
- Priests who are unable to celebrate the liturgy should instead pray Evening Prayer.
- **Televised or live stream broadcasts should be live (not recorded).**

Easter Sunday

Easter Sunday Mass

- Priests should celebrate Mass in private on Easter Sunday.
- Masses may be live streamed on Easter Sunday.

Tabernacle

Pastors should use their best judgment in determining the need to consume hosts over time reserved in the tabernacle. They should refresh them regularly from the celebration of private Masses.

RCIA

Christian Initiation

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (paragraphs 26-30) envisions exceptional circumstances when the normal celebration of initiation at the Easter Vigil may not take place.

During the time of delay, it is crucial that catechists, sponsors and godparents remain in contact with the catechumens and candidates.

Accordingly, when public worship resumes, the following applies:

- At least one Scrutiny should be celebrated, either at Sunday Mass or at another time when convenient.
- The Rites of Initiation are to be celebrated in their entirety according to RCIA, 220 ff.
- It is not permitted to separate the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism - Confirmation - First Eucharist) for catechumens (elect) being fully initiated.
- The celebration of full initiation must occur at Mass on a Sunday (or Saturday evening). The Mass of the occurring Sunday is to be used. During Ordinary Time, but not on a Solemnity (e.g. The Most Holy Trinity or The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ), the Ritual Mass "Christian Initiation: Baptism" with its appropriate readings may be used.
- The *Lucernarium* and Liturgy of the Word of the Easter Vigil are unique to the Vigil and are not to be celebrated outside of the Easter Vigil itself.

Pentecost and Initiation

If public celebrations of Mass have resumed in time, an appropriate day to celebrate initiation outside the Easter Vigil is the Vigil of Pentecost with the extended Vigil readings. (See *Lectionary for Mass*, #62)

Confirmation of Adult Catholics

The delegation for pastors to confirm adult (18+) Catholics baptized as children will be extended for two months beyond the resumption of public worship, even if this is beyond the end of the Easter Season.

For the year 2020 only, Cardinal Tobin hereby grants delegation to pastors to confirm adult baptized Catholics (18+), without recourse to the Regional Vicars, on the designated Sundays.

Reception Into Full Communion

When public worship resumes, Priests may celebrate the "Reception Into Full Communion" at any appropriate time during the year, preferably on a Sunday, according to RCIA, 487. Delegation to confirm is not required.

Note that the "Confirmation of Adult Catholics" and the "Reception Into Full Communion" should not be done at the same liturgical celebration as the full initiation of the catechumens.

Rite of Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens

Because of the unusual circumstances this year, the requirement for a full year catechumenate may be shortened for 2021 only. The Rite of Acceptance should be celebrated as soon as possible after public worship resumes, at least six months before Easter, 2021.

Questions

Questions regarding Holy Week or the RCIA should be addressed to the Office of Divine Worship:

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