



## LITURGICAL UPDATES & GUIDELINES DURING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC: HOLY WEEK & EASTER

On March 19, the *Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments* released directives (Prot. N. 153/20) from Pope Francis concerning the celebration of Holy Week and Easter. In accord with that document, Bishop Brennan has decided on the following guidelines for the celebration of Holy Week and Easter in the Diocese of Columbus.

### GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

- The Vatican has granted all priests in an exceptional manner the faculty to celebrate the Mass of the Lord's Supper privately (without the presence of other people) in a suitable place (day chapel/private chapel). You will note that this is granted only for Holy Thursday, not for the Good Friday Liturgy nor the Easter Vigil.
- The Congregation also gave some guidelines for the celebration of the Triduum during these extraordinary circumstances. When live-streaming liturgies, you may bring together the bare minimum of liturgical ministers necessary to assist the priest. These might include a deacon, lector, server, cantor and/or musician (organist). Keep in mind the total number of persons in the Church for any single gathering such as these should be less than the state guidelines (currently 10) and fulfill the expectations of social distancing. Only those needed for the proper celebration of the liturgy should be included rather than an attempt to involve more people.
- Given the complexities and recommending that you focus your attention on Easter Sunday, we strongly suggest uniting yourself (and parishioners) to these liturgies with the Holy Father from Rome or from St. Joseph's Cathedral rather than live streaming parish celebrations of the Good Friday Liturgy and Easter Vigil. While this is not a prohibition, it is a strong suggestion.
- As you know, priests and deacons who cannot unite themselves to the Liturgies of the Sacred Triduum are to pray the appropriate hours in the Breviary: Evening Prayer on Holy Thursday and Good Friday, and the Office of Readings for Easter in place of the Easter Vigil.

- Bishop Brennan will celebrate the **Chrism Mass** on Holy Thursday morning in a non-public liturgy. The Mass will be broadcast on St. Gabriel Radio and live-streamed. While the time is tentatively set for 9:00 AM on Thursday, April 9, 2020, please watch for forthcoming updates. The blessed oils will be regionally distributed in a manner yet to be determined. Plans are being discussed for a celebration later this year, hopefully on the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart or its vigil (June 18 or 19, 2020) in which the renewal of priestly vows will be done.
- In order to assist the faithful to enter into Holy Week more fully, the Office for Divine Worship will have a book of prayers, devotions and activities available online prior to Holy Week. The Office of Social Concerns and the Marriage and Family Life Office have also contributed to the book. The book will be accessible via the Diocesan website at [liturgical and prayer resources](#). Plans are also underway for a Diocesan-wide Parish Mission to take place on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday of Holy Week. Father Michael Kelly will lead the Mission. It will be streamed in the evening on all our social media platforms and broadcast on St. Gabriel Radio. Details will be forthcoming. Please be sure to share this information with your parishioners.

#### NOTES FOR SPECIFIC DAYS OF THE SACRED TRIDUUM

- **Holy Thursday**- The faculty to celebrate the Mass of the Lord's Supper privately (without the presence of other people) in a suitable place (i.e. in the church or in a day chapel) has been granted in an exceptional manner to all priests. The Mass may be celebrated or concelebrated observing the guidelines for social distancing and hygiene.

Please note the following changes:

1. Washing of the Feet is to be omitted.
2. The procession with the Blessed Sacrament is to be omitted.
3. The Blessed Sacrament is to remain in the church in the tabernacle.

Priests and deacons who are unable to celebrate Mass are to pray that day's Vespers.

- **Good Friday**- Given the complexities, it is suggested that other personal devotional exercises such as the Stations of the Cross, Divine Mercy Chaplet, etc. be undertaken this day. If the Passion of the Lord is celebrated, (noting the considerations listed above), the following are to occur:

1. Only the celebrant is to kiss the cross for the Adoration of the Cross.
2. In the Universal Prayer an intention must be added for the coronavirus victims;  
For those suffering from the current pandemic.

Deacon or lay minister:

Let us pray, dearly beloved,

to God the Father almighty,  
that he may extend his hand in mercy  
to all those affected by the Coronavirus pandemic.

### Silent Prayer

#### Priest:

Almighty ever-living God,  
heal those who are ill,  
comfort those who mourn,  
give solace to all who are afraid and alone,  
and protect those who are providing medical care.  
Make us instruments of your peace  
among our brothers and sisters.  
In your mercy, alleviate our fears  
and eliminate this scourge,  
so that we may come together again  
to give you praise and to build your Kingdom.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

- **Holy Saturday-The Easter Vigil-** The Initiation of the Elect and Candidates to the Sacraments will not take place. At this time, no date is selected due to the unknown status of the coronavirus pandemic. The Vigil should not begin before dark. In most parts of our area around 8 PM should be fine. Again, given the complexities, it is recommended that you and your parishioners join in the broadcast of the Easter Vigil from Rome or from St. Joseph Cathedral (details to follow). Priests and deacons may to unite themselves with the Vigil through the praying of the Office of Readings for Easter. If the Easter Vigil is celebrated, (noting the considerations listed above), the following are to occur:
  1. The preparation and lighting of the fire is omitted.
  2. The procession is omitted.
  3. The Paschal Candle is lit and the Easter Proclamation (Exsultet) is sung.
  4. The Responsorial psalm may be omitted after the readings from the Old Testament in favor of silence.
  5. For the Baptismal liturgy, only the Renewal of the Baptismal Promises is necessary.
- **Easter Sunday-**No specific guidelines have come forth regarding the celebration of Easter Sunday Masses. The Paschal Candle is lit before Mass, which is celebrated in the usual manner. All priests are encouraged to offer Mass on Easter Sunday either privately or for streaming.
- For the purpose of live-streaming or other broadcast, you may include musicians in a very limited way – a cantor and organist or the equivalent. Again, keep in mind the total number of persons in the Church for any single gathering should be

less than the state guidelines (10) and fulfill the expectations of social distancing. It is suggested that any music being used should be familiar to the congregation.

\*Remember that copyright laws exist if you are using music and live streaming a liturgy or Mass. Many publishers are giving free rights. If you have questions, contact the Office for Divine Worship and we can tell you if the music you are using is covered under that publisher.