



## COVID-19 Liturgical Directives *(updated March 4, 2021)*

The following guidance for Holy Week 2021 is being offered to address questions related to the reverent and safe celebration of Holy Week this year in the current circumstances of the pandemic. **Please see the section on Chrism Mass for details about how to register for attendance at the Mass and ordering Holy Oils.** Remember to consult the rubrics of the Roman Missal regarding the Sacred Triduum.

### As a Reminder:

- It is not possible to distribute Holy Communion to the faithful under both kinds at this time.
- Masks continue to be required as is social distancing and hand sanitizer
- The exchange of peace is omitted
- Holy Water stoups and fonts are left empty until Easter Vigil
- Hymnals and pew cards remain out of the pews
- Do not re-use booklets or worship aids
- One cantor or choir size limited according to social distancing
- Maintain social distancing of six feet between families as church architecture allows

### Alterations:

- Parishes are no longer required to maintain the maximum 50% capacity. The wearing of masks and maintaining social distancing for all remain paramount.
  - Because of the minimal contagion on the surface of furniture, disinfecting between celebrations of Mass is no longer necessary, however good cleaning daily after Mass continues to be recommended. [<https://www.ccmonline.com/news/surface-transmission-of-coronavirus-not-as-prevalent-as-airborne-transmission>]
  - Because of the complexity of the rites of Holy Week, it is recommended that parishes use altar servers for these liturgies, provided they are able to do this safely. Servers should maintain social distancing except for short periods of time to assist as needed.
  - Singing is permitted and encouraged during these most solemn sacred liturgies and especially at the Easter Vigil, Easter Sunday, and throughout the Easter Season. Keep in mind that masks need to be worn by those in the pews while singing due to COVID contagion spread by aerosol particles.
  - Fresh water may be blessed and used for the baptismal font as well as the sprinkling rite. However, water is not to be used for more than one individual at this time and the baptismal fonts are to be drained and cleaned after use. From [CDC COVID website](#): “CDC is not aware of any scientific reports of the virus that causes COVID-19 spreading to people through the water in pools, hot tubs, water playgrounds, or other treated aquatic venues.”
1. **Palm Sunday:** Palms are to be distributed as the faithful enter the Church. The faithful should take their seats in the nave. The second form of the procession (provided in the Roman Missal, *Passion of the Lord* #12) is preferred here but the first form is permitted. A procession with including only the ministers is preferred, with the blessing of palms by the sprinkling of holy water. A small number of the faithful can

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take part in the procession at the discretion of the pastor. Faithful may take part with printed one-time-use-only worship aids. There are three possible ways to proclaim the Passion:

- a. The priest/deacon alone reads the Gospel as any other Sunday
- b. The Gospel is divided between one or two lectors and the priest/deacon, each reading a section (which is marked by the extra line space between the sections)
- c. The Passion is proclaimed with three voices, i.e., Christ (usually done by the priest/deacon), the narrator, the other voices, and the voice of the whole assembly acting as the crowd. The faithful may take part with printed one time use only worship aids.

## 2. **Chrism Mass:**

- a. This Mass with the Archbishop will be live-streamed from Blessed Sacrament Cathedral at 10:00am.
- b. The Chrism Mass will be celebrated at 10:00am on Holy Thursday but it is a ticketed event.
- c. All priests are invited to attend but must register in advance. If a parish's priest(s) is not able to attend, one member or household from the parish (deacon or laity) is asked to attend.
- d. When completing the on-line registration form please include the order for Holy Oils and when the oils will be picked up (found on the same form).
  - i. Priests and parishes are invited to register for Chrism Mass and order Holy Oils using [this electronic form](#).
- e. Any clergy or laity who do not pre-register will not be admitted.
- f. Chaplains of institutions located within the Archdiocese of Detroit are invited to order Holy Oils using [this electronic form](#).

## 3. **Mass of the Lord's Supper:**

- a. Mass will be live-streamed from Blessed Sacrament Cathedral at 7:00pm.
- b. Priests are permitted to celebrate the Mass of the Lord's Supper without the faithful again this year. This permission should only be used for extraordinary circumstances (i.e. a priest who is sick, in quarantine, or at a high risk of contracting COVID-19).
- c. The Washing of the Feet may be omitted again this year. Only if there is social distancing (depending on the size of the sanctuary) and masking with a limited number [does not have to be 12] should the washing of the feet be considered.
- d. The procession of the Blessed Sacrament to the altar of repose is permitted this year. This may vary due to location of the altar of repose and the capability to maintain social distancing. We suggest that only those who will remain to pray participate in the social distanced and masked procession to the altar of repose.
- e. Parishes are also permitted to repose the Blessed Sacrament in the Tabernacle without a procession or altar of repose this year. After a sufficient time of prayer, the Blessed Sacrament should be removed from the Tabernacle.

## 4. **Liturgy of the Lord's Passion:**

- a. This Liturgy with the Archbishop will be live-streamed from Blessed Sacrament Cathedral at 1:00 pm.
- b. There are three possible ways to proclaim the Passion
  - i. The priest/deacon alone reads the Gospel as any other Sunday
  - ii. The Gospel is divided between one or two lectors and the priest/deacon, each reading a section (which is marked by the extra line space between the sections)
  - iii. The Passion is proclaimed with three voices, i.e., Christ (usually done by the priest/deacon), the narrator, the other voices, and the voice of the whole assembly acting as the crowd. The faithful may take part with printed one time use only worship aids.

- c. Only the celebrant may adore the cross by kissing it.
  - i. If Roman Missal, Good Friday # 18 is followed for the Adoration of the Holy Cross, the faithful may be invited to process forward, keeping social distance and masking, and approach the cross to offer a genuflection or profound bow, without kissing or touching the cross. One could mark a distance of at least 6 feet from the cross to discourage those who are tempted to touch or kiss the cross.
  - ii. It is permissible to follow Roman Missal: Good Friday # 19 for the Adoration of the Holy Cross by holding the cross up and allowing the faithful to make a silent act of adoration.
- d. A prayer “For an end to this pandemic” is to be added to the Solemn Intercessions again during this Liturgy. This should follow the tenth intercession: “X. *For those in tribulation.*”

#### XI. For an end to the pandemic

Let us pray, dearly beloved, for a swift end  
to the coronavirus pandemic that afflicts our world,  
that our God and Father will heal the sick,  
strengthen those who care for them,  
and help us all to persevere in faith.

*Prayer in silence. Then the Priest says:*

Almighty and merciful God,  
source of all life, health and healing,  
look with compassion on our world, brought low by disease;  
protect us in the midst of the grave challenges that assail us  
and in your Fatherly providence  
grant recovery to the stricken,  
strength to those who care for them,  
and success to those working to eradicate this scourge.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
R. Amen.

5. **Easter Vigil:** Parishes are invited to celebrate the Easter Vigil with as much richness as possible this year. Following are some details to this effect.
- a. This Mass with the Archbishop will be live-streamed from Blessed Sacrament Cathedral at 9:00pm.
  - b. Following the ancient custom and regardless of other circumstances, the Easter Vigil should not begin before dusk on Holy Saturday evening. 8:30 pm is the earliest time parishes are permitted to begin this Mass.
  - c. The Blessing of the Fire and Preparation of the Candle and Procession should be done according to the ritual for parishes. However, the blessing of the Easter fire and the Paschal Candle outside with a procession into the Church may not be possible or advisable given particular parish circumstances. Due to concern about the spreading of contagion with the blowing out of the candles, we strongly recommend not distributing candles to the faithful at this Mass. The priest and ministers begin as described in Roman Missal *The Easter Vigil in the Holy Night*, #13 “Where, because of difficulties that may occur, a fire is not lit, the blessing of fire is adapted to the

circumstances. When the people are gathered in the church as on other occasions, the Priest comes to the door of the church, along with the ministers, carrying the Paschal Candle. The people, insofar as is possible, turn to face the Priest.” The greeting and address take place as in #9, then the fire is blessed and the candle is prepared, as in #10-12. Parishes are reminded to maintain social distancing as best as possible during this rite.

- i. If pastoral situations demand it, the Blessing of the Fire and Preparation of the Candle and Procession may be omitted.
  - ii. If this is the case, the Paschal Candle is prepared and lit at a suitable place followed immediately by the Exsultet.
- d. No change to the Exsultet or the Liturgy of the Word should be required.
- e. ***Baptisms:***
- i. The rite should follow the usual steps: Presentation of the Candidates, Invitation to Prayer, [Procession to Font], Litany of the Saints, Blessing of Water, Renunciation of Sin, and Profession of Faith.
  - ii. If there is more than one candidate for Baptism, immersion should not be used; rather Baptisms should be performed by three times pouring water over the head while speaking the words “N., I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.”
    1. Godparents should still place their right hands on the shoulders of the candidate during the rite.
    2. Godparents should assist in other ways to limit those interacting with the candidate.
  - iii. Parishes should ensure that fresh new water is used for each candidate. When preparing for these rites before Mass, it would be good to reserve several pitchers or bowls of water, depending on the number of candidates for Baptism. Masks should be worn by all; at the pastor’s discretion, candidates for Baptism may remove their masks for the Renunciation of Sin, Profession of Faith, and Baptism. They should replace their masks after the Baptism.
- f. The **Renewal of Baptismal Promises and Sprinkling with Baptismal Water** should not be omitted.
- g. ***Confirmations:***
- i. After the neophytes are joined by others receiving Confirmation, the celebration of Confirmation should proceed with the Invitation, Laying on of Hands, and Anointing with Chrism.
  - ii. This year only, all priests who already possess the faculties (pagella) of the Archdiocese of Detroit may administer the Sacrament of Confirmation to any Catholic at the Easter Vigil.
  - iii. For the Laying on of Hands: the priest extends his hands over all those to be confirmed.
  - iv. For the Anointing with Chrism, follow the guidance from the June “AOD Celebration of Confirmation During Pandemic as follows:
    1. “The presider dips his thumb in the Chrism and with the thumb makes the sign of the Cross on the forehead of the one to be confirmed saying...”
    2. “If there is a concern regarding the spread of disease, the minister may use a separate cotton ball or swab for each individual candidate. After Mass the cotton balls or swabs are to be burned.”
    3. The form for Confirmation is: “N., be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit.”
  - v. Priests should wash and sanitize their hands after Confirmations are completed.
6. **Easter Sunday:** Parishes are invited to celebrate Easter Sunday Masses with as much richness as possible this year.

- a. This Mass with the Archbishop will be live-streamed from Blessed Sacrament Cathedral at 11:00am.
- b. The **Renewal of Baptismal Promises and Sprinkling with Baptismal Water** should not be omitted.