



ARCHBISHOP OF DETROIT

## COVID-19 Liturgical Directives (March 23, 2020)

The following directives are being issued based on Governor Whitmer's "Stay Home, Stay Safe" executive order of March 23, 2020. These directives are in place through Easter Monday, April 13, 2020.

### **I. General Principles**

1. In cooperation with the governor's executive order, **parish offices are to be closed** and employees, as they are able, to work from home. Pastors should take precautions to keep their churches clean and open, if they are able, and available for prayer, especially for those interceding for the sick. Parishes should look for innovative ways to spiritually support the faithful, including livestreaming of Masses and supporting the catechesis of the faithful through electronic means. Parishes may consider collaborating with other parishes to provide high-quality options for the faithful.
2. **Funerals and weddings** are to be suspended during this time. Priests should coordinate with their funeral directors when families request the rites proper to funerals. Graveside services are still permitted provided they observe proper social distancing.
3. **Baptisms** are also to be suspended during this time. Where there is a real danger of death, the person should be baptized in the hospital or home of the parents. In danger of death, the faithful should consult with their pastors.
4. Priests are to continue to celebrate private **Mass** daily, remembering the efficacious nature of the Mass even without the presence of the faithful and to fulfill **Mass intentions** which have been allocated. Pastors are reminded of their obligation to offer the Sunday Mass for the people of the parish. Collective Mass intentions are permitted twice a week if the donors agree to such. If Mass intentions cannot be fulfilled in the near future, the intention (and the attached stipend) should be sent to priests at other entities, such as the missions or Sacred Heart Major Seminary, where they can be fulfilled.
5. Since the spiritual well-being of the faithful in this time is essential, a very small number (not to exceed 10) of assistants (musician, cameraperson, server) is permitted so that a quality livestream Mass is possible.

**UNLEASH THE GOSPEL**

6. The pastoral care of the faithful **must** always be paramount. Therefore, priests should consider the best options for the celebration of **private confession** for those in dire need of the Sacrament. See the [accompanying directives regarding sacramental confession and General Absolution](#).
7. **Anointing of the Sick** for those in dire need of the sacrament should still be performed in the home of the individual or in the hospital or health care facility, following the directives of the health care facility. Be sure to sanitize the oil stock before and after each anointing. Do not contaminate the sacred oil. For each anointing, use a new cotton ball (or “Q-tips”) and new oil on the cotton. You are also permitted to use the cotton ball, and not your thumb, to anoint the head. In the case of pastoral necessity, the hands do not need to be anointed. Be sure to then remove the cotton from the stock and properly burn it at a suitable time.
8. Parish **Confirmations** scheduled for the remainder of 2020 are suspended until further notice. Plans for their resumption will be examined at a later time.

Holy Week Services are to be continued in parishes which are able. Pastors are to take into account General Principles #1 and #5 above.

## II. Holy Week

1. **Palm Sunday:** Celebrate with the simple entrance option. Palms are not to be distributed in the parish during the “Stay Home, Stay Safe” executive order and may be distributed at a later time.
2. **Chrism Mass:** Will be celebrated privately (not open to the faithful or the public) and livestreamed from Blessed Sacrament Cathedral Monday of Holy Week (6 April) at 7 pm. Arrangements will be made for the oils to be distributed to the parishes through the Vicars.
3. Triduum liturgies are to be offered in private, keeping in mind General Principles #1 and #5. Triduum liturgies with Archbishop Vigneron will be livestreamed from Blessed Sacrament Cathedral; see times below.
  - a. **Mass of the Lord’s Supper:** *Note: The Prefect of the Congregation of Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments has granted permission for the liturgy on this day to be celebrated without the people due to these extraordinary circumstances (DECREE “In time of Covid-19”)*
    - i. The Washing of the Feet is to be omitted.
    - ii. The procession of the Blessed Sacrament is to be omitted. The Blessed Sacrament is to be kept in the Tabernacle.
    - iii. Mass will be livestreamed from Blessed Sacrament Cathedral at 7 pm
  - b. **Liturgy of the Lord’s Passion:**
    - i. The Cross should be revered by a genuflection or profound bow without kissing or touching the cross.

- ii. A prayer “For an end to this pandemic” is to be added to the Solemn Intercessions during this Liturgy. See below.
  - iii. This Liturgy will be livestreamed from Blessed Sacrament Cathedral at 1 pm
- c. **Easter Vigil:** *Note: The Prefect of the Congregation of Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments has given special instructions for this Mass this year (DECREE “In time of Covid-19”.) No adjustments to the start time of the Mass have been made so it may not begin until after dusk.*
  - i. Administering the Sacraments of Initiation to those in RCIA is to be postponed until a later date when the fuller community can be present (see “d” below).
  - ii. The preparation and lighting of the fire as well as the procession into the church are omitted. The Paschal Candle is prepared and lit; this is followed immediately by the Exsultet.
  - iii. The baptismal liturgy is truncated to include only the Renewal of Baptismal Promises. Therefore the Mass should proceed thus after the Gospel:
    - 1. Homily
    - 2. Renewal of Baptismal Promises, (#55 in Roman Missal for “Easter Vigil”), omitting the blessing of the water and the sprinkling.
    - 3. Preparation of the Altar and Offertory (Mass continuing as usual here)
  - iv. This Mass will be livestreamed from Blessed Sacrament Cathedral at 9:00pm
- d. **Catechumens and Candidates for Full Communion**
  - i. The Archbishop will determine a suitable time for the reception of these members into the Church (RCIA, 26-27).
    - 1. This will be announced in advance to allow proper preparation.
    - 2. At the time of the announcement, a plan for (or dispensation from) the Scrutinies will be announced (RCIA, 20, 30).
  - ii. They have been a part of the RCIA process for many months and they are supported by the RCIA team and parish. Part of our Easter joy is the parish seeing and celebrating their entrance into the Church.
  - iii. In the case of an emergency a person may at any time be baptized and confirmed or received into the Church.

#### 4. **Easter Sunday:**

- a. Easter Sunday liturgies are to be offered in private, keeping in mind General Principles #1 and #5.
- b. This Mass will be livestreamed from Blessed Sacrament Cathedral at 11:00am.

Good Friday Solemn Intercession XI.

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.**