



RICHARD FRANK STIKA
BY THE GRACE OF GOD AND FAVOR OF THE APOSTOLIC SEE
THIRD BISHOP OF KNOXVILLE
DECREE

Whereas, on March 19, 2020, the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, by mandate of the Supreme Pontiff for the year 2020 only, issued the DECREE *In time of Covid-19*;

As Bishop of the Diocese of Knoxville, I promulgate the following decree regarding the liturgies of Palm Sunday and Holy Week throughout the territory of the Diocese of Knoxville to assist the clergy and the faithful in the spiritual celebration of the Paschal Mysteries.

PALM SUNDAY

- No public gatherings (inside or outside Churches, in cars, etc.).
- The Mass for Palm Sunday will be celebrated by the Bishop without a congregation, with palms blessed, and broadcast via the live-stream internet on the Diocesan websites at 9 am on Sunday, April 5, 2020.
- The Mass for Palm Sunday shall be celebrated without a congregation by the pastor/parish priest in parish churches with live-stream capability; pastors should notify the parishioners of the time for the live-stream; pastors shall also notify the Diocesan Office of Communications so that a Diocesan calendar/schedule of events might be posted for access by the faithful of the Diocese. The doors to the Church shall be locked prior to the beginning of Mass.
- Blessed palms can be made available for distribution at a later date.

CHRISM MASS

- The Chrism Mass will be postponed and re-scheduled for another date/time with the renewal of priestly commitment and the blessing/consecration of oils occurring at that time.
- Oils/chrism from the current supplies (currently in use) may continue to be used until a new supply is blessed/consecrated and made available.
- If the parish is running low on oils/chrism, contact Deacon Sean Smith, Chancellor, ssmith@dioknox.org.

PASCHAL TRIDUUM

- The Paschal Triduum cannot be transferred to another time.

HOLY THURSDAY

- No public gatherings (inside or outside Churches, in cars, etc.).
- Televised or live-stream broadcasts **should be live (not recorded)**.
- The Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper will be celebrated by the Bishop without a congregation and broadcast via the live-stream internet on the Diocesan websites at 7 pm on Thursday, April 9, 2020.
- The Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper shall be celebrated without a congregation by the pastor/parish priest in parish churches with live-stream capability; pastors shall notify the parishioners of the time for the live-stream; pastors shall also notify the Diocesan Office of Communications so that a Diocesan calendar/schedule of events might be posted for access by the faithful of the Diocese. The doors to the Church shall be locked prior to the beginning of Mass.
- During the Evening Mass for the Lord's Supper: the Washing of the Feet, which is already optional, is to be omitted; the usual procession with the Blessed Sacrament to a place of repose is to be omitted and the Blessed Sacrament should be kept in the tabernacle, as usual.
- Priests who are unable to celebrate Mass should instead pray Vespers of the day from the Liturgy of Hours.



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GOOD FRIDAY

- No public gatherings (inside or outside Churches, in cars, etc.).
- The Commemoration/Celebration of the Lord's Passion will be celebrated by the Bishop without a congregation and broadcast via the live-stream internet on the Diocesan websites at 3 pm on Friday, April 10, 2020.
- The Commemoration/Celebration of the Lord's Passion shall be celebrated without a congregation by the pastor/parish priest in parish churches with live-stream capability; pastors shall notify the parishioners of the time for the live-stream; pastors shall also notify the Diocesan Office of Communications so that a Diocesan calendar/schedule of events might be posted for access by the faithful of the Diocese. The doors to the Church shall be locked prior to the beginning of Mass.
- A special commemoration in the General Intercessions for the sick, the dead and for those who feel lost or dismayed will be developed by the Office of Liturgy and Worship and sent to the parishes for mandated use.
- Priests who are unable to celebrate this liturgy should instead pray Vespers of the day from the Liturgy of Hours.

HOLY SATURDAY

- No public gatherings (inside or outside Churches, in cars, etc.).
- The Easter Vigil will be celebrated by the Bishop without a congregation and broadcast via the live-stream internet on the Diocesan websites at 7 pm on Saturday, April 11, 2020.
- The Easter Vigil shall be celebrated without a congregation by the pastor/parish priest in parish churches with live-stream capability; pastors shall notify the parishioners of the time for the live-stream; pastors should also notify the Diocesan Office of Communications so that a Diocesan calendar/schedule of events might be posted for access by the faithful of the Diocese. The doors to the Church shall be locked prior to the beginning of Mass.
- During the Easter Vigil: the preparation and lighting of the fire is omitted; the paschal candle is lit without procession followed by the recited Easter Proclamation; the Liturgy of the Word takes place; the Baptismal Liturgy is only the renewal of Baptismal Promises; a symbolic amount (small) of Holy Water may be blessed but holy water fonts should remain empty; the Rite of Christian Initiation and/or Reception into Full Communion will be postponed and re-scheduled once restrictions are lifted and priests who are unable to celebrate the Easter Vigil should instead pray Vespers/Matins/Lauds of the day from the Liturgy of Hours.

EASTER SUNDAY

- No public gatherings (inside or outside Churches, in cars, etc.).
- Mass for Easter Sunday will be celebrated by the Bishop without a congregation and broadcast via the live-stream internet on the Diocesan websites at 9 am on Sunday, April 12, 2020.
- Mass for Easter Sunday shall be celebrated without a congregation by the pastor/parish priest in parish churches with live-stream capability; pastors shall notify the parishioners of the time for the live-stream; pastors shall also notify the Diocesan Office of Communications so that a Diocesan calendar/schedule of events might be posted for access by the faithful of the Diocese. The doors to the Church shall be locked prior to the beginning of Mass.
- Priests are otherwise asked to celebrate Easter Sunday without a congregation.

Given at the Chancery this 21st day of March in the Year of Our Lord 2020.



+ Richard F. Stika

Most Reverend Richard F. Stika
Bishop of Knoxville

Deacon Sean K. Smith

Deacon Sean K. Smith
Chancellor