



## HOLY WEEK 2021

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### **General Principles**

The Vatican Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments recently issued guidelines for the celebration of Holy Week this year in light of the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

In the note signed Feb. 17, 2021 by the congregation's prefect Cardinal Robert Sarah and secretary Archbishop Arthur Roche, the congregation said that bishops were called upon to make prudent decisions regarding the liturgy in line with the Vatican decree on Holy Week liturgies issued in March 2020, which will remain valid for this year.

"We therefore invite you to re-read it in view of the decisions that bishops will have to make about the upcoming Easter celebrations in the particular situation of their country," it said.

In the Archdiocese of Portland all Holy Week liturgies should be celebrated in each parish using the limits of people in attendance already established in each church building. Social distancing and mask wearing protocols are to be strictly observed.

If possible these liturgies should be livestreamed so that the faithful who cannot attend can unite with their pastors and fellow parishioners in prayerful participation. All the liturgies of Holy Week should follow exactly the indications of the Roman Missal with the changes allowed/mandated by the Holy See and the recommendations of the Archdiocese.

### **Palm Sunday**

"The Commemoration of the Lord's Entrance into Jerusalem is to be celebrated within sacred buildings; in Cathedral churches the second form given in the Roman Missal is to be adopted; in parish churches and in other places the third form is to be used."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Decree Covid-19 (II), Congregation of Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments, 25 March 2020

The palms should be blessed using the formula in the first form. The Blessed Palms can be left in a suitable place for collection by the faithful at some later time. Alternatively, the faithful can collect the palms on the way into the church and the priest can bless them by sprinkling holy water over them as part of his procession.

### **Chrism Mass**

The Chrism Mass will be celebrated by the Archbishop at the Cathedral on Monday 29 March at 3:30pm with priest concelebrants. This will be livestreamed. Those priests who cannot attend in person are encouraged to follow the livestream of this Mass if possible and after the homily renew their priestly promises.

The Holy Oils will be consecrated/blessed at this Mass and shortly after ready to be collected. Those priests who cannot attend will be mailed their oils via their Vicar Forane.

### **Mass of the Lord's Supper**

“The washing of feet, which is already optional, is to be omitted. At the end of the Mass of the Lord's Supper the procession is also omitted, and the Blessed Sacrament is to be kept in the tabernacle.” The Archdiocese recommends that there be a period of adoration after this Mass.

### **Good Friday**

“In the Universal Prayer, Bishops will arrange to have a special intention prepared for those who find themselves in distress, the sick, the dead, (cf. *Missale Romanum*). The adoration of the Cross by kissing it shall be limited solely to the celebrant.”<sup>2</sup> Other ministers and the faithful may reverence the crucifix with a profound bow.

The universal prayer provided by the United States Bishops is attached to this document.

Since the Passion Liturgy of Good Friday envisions that the Blessed Sacrament is not present in the place where this liturgy takes place it is recommended that the Blessed Sacrament be removed to another place sometime before the Passion Liturgy.

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

## Easter Vigil

In the Archdiocese of Portland the Rites of Christian Initiation can be celebrated at the Easter Vigil or can be transferred to a later date in this time of pandemic. “The entire Rite of Christian Initiation is arranged so that the sacraments will be celebrated during the Easter Vigil, however because of unusual circumstances or serious pastoral needs another time can be selected (preferably during the Easter Season). When the Rite of Christian Initiation occurs at a different point of the liturgical year, the structure of the entire Rite remains the same. [RCIA 26]

Since it would be difficult for most parishes that are live streaming the Vigil, to be outside for the lighting of the fire we suggest that sometime before the Easter Vigil is begun a new fire is lit and blessed. A candle lit from that fire is then put into the church somewhere out of the sanctuary (e.g. sacristy); when the time comes to light the Paschal Candle a minister goes to this candle and takes a light for the Paschal Candle.

The Easter Vigil should be celebrated in the absence of the Blessed Sacrament with the tabernacle empty and open. After Holy Communion the Blessed Sacrament is returned to the tabernacle and the sanctuary light lit.

The earliest time for the Easter Vigil is 8:30pm.

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The Office of Divine Worship is always available to assist our priests and parishes with any liturgical or sacramental questions.

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## 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.

**Pray 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.