

Archdiocese of Santa Fe
4000 St. Joseph Place NW
Albuquerque, NM 87120



Telephone: 505-831-8120
Fax: 505-831-8101
Email: archbishop.office@archdiosf.org

OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

March 20, 2020

Re: Upcoming Liturgical Guidelines during the Coronavirus Situation

Ref Decree of the Congregation of Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments of March, 19, 2020 ("In Time of COVID-19")

My brothers and sisters in Christ,

With gratitude to Father Glenn Jones and Ms. Damaris Thillet, I have established the following liturgical guidelines.

Quoting from the referenced decree above: *"Easter is the heart of the entire liturgical year and is not simply one feast among others. The Easter Triduum is celebrated over the arc of three days which is preceded by Lent and crowned by Pentecost and, therefore, cannot be transferred to another time."* The decree is attached for your reference.

Because of the COVID-19/coronavirus situation, the following guidelines for liturgies are promulgated for the Archdiocese in accordance with the decree of the Holy See of March 19, 2020 ("In Time of Covid-19"). These instructions apply to the Cathedral and parish churches.

1) **Chrism Mass:** postponed to a later date to be determined.

2) **Passion (Palm) Sunday and Paschal Triduum**

a. General

- i. Liturgies are to be celebrated without physical participation of the faithful.
- ii. The faithful should be informed of the times of celebration so that they can prayerfully unite themselves in their homes.
- iii. Live (not recorded) televisual or internet broadcasts are helpful, if possible.
- iv. Resources are to be provided to support family and personal prayer.

b. Passion (Palm) Sunday: Recommended is to bless the palms as normal in the Mass without the faithful and allow persons to retrieve them individually during the week. As a sacramental, it may provide some comfort to the faithful.

c. Holy Thursday

- i. The faculty to celebrate Mass in a suitable place, without the people, is granted in an exceptional manner to all priests.
- ii. Washing of feet, already optional, is to be omitted.
- iii. At the End of the Mass, the procession with the Blessed Sacrament to the place of repose is to be omitted and the Blessed Sacrament is to be kept in the tabernacle.
- iv. Priests unable to celebrate Mass should instead pray Vespers of the day.

d. Good Friday

- i. The Archbishop/Parish Priest will celebrate the Passion of the Lord in the absence of the faithful.
- ii. In the Universal Prayer, a special intention for the sick, the dead and for those who feel lost or dismayed is to be added (cf. Roman Missal, no. 13)

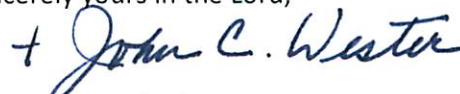
e. Easter Vigil & Easter:

- i. To be celebrated only in Cathedral and parish churches.
- ii. At "The Solemn Beginning of the Vigil or Lucernarium" the preparation and lighting of the fire is omitted, the Paschal Candle is lit, the procession is omitted and the Easter Proclamation (Exsultet) follows.
- iii. The Liturgy of the Word takes place.
- iv. Regarding reception into the Church for catechumens and candidates, see (f) below.
- v. For the "Baptismal Liturgy" the "Renewal of Baptismal Promises" alone is necessary (Roman Missal, no. 55).
- vi. The "Liturgy of the Eucharist" then follows.
- vii. Those clergy who have absolutely no possibility of uniting themselves to the Paschal Vigil celebrated in a church should pray the Office of Readings for Easter Sunday. The faithful are also encourage to read from the rites if possible.

- f. Reception of Catechumens and Candidates:** In order that those being received into the Church are not deprived of the attendance and support of friends and family, such reception is to be delayed until such time that the current COVID-19 crisis is alleviated and a fuller celebration possible. On a designated Sunday Archbishop Wester will grant an indult for sacraments normally received at the Easter Vigil to be celebrated. This will also allow pastors more time to complete validations of marriage for those in irregular situations.

As the current crisis situation develops, please be alert for any future changes to these instructions. And let us continue to pray that our Loving Lord will keep all of humanity safe from COVID-19 and that he will also grant us the gift of peace as we place all our trust in Him.

Sincerely yours in the Lord,



Most Reverend John C. Wester
Archbishop of Santa Fe