

Bishop David Zubik Issues Directives for Sacraments and Parish Activities

March 16, 2020

With a continuing commitment to protect health and safety due to coronavirus (COVID-19) concerns, and in the wake of suspending all public Masses in the diocese until further notice, today Bishop Zubik issued directives regarding sacraments and other parish activities.



The following guidelines are effective immediately and until further notice:

Baptism

The celebration of the Sacrament of Baptism, outside of Mass, is permitted. In order to limit any potential spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) to a vulnerable population, only a small private family baptism should be held. Multiple baptisms of several children from different families is not permitted. All state and local government-imposed restrictions on the number of people at public gatherings are to be obeyed.

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)

RCIA Instructors will communicate with those preparing to be received in the church with further details.

Sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Communion

All First Reconciliations and First Communion for the month of March are to be postponed and rescheduled at another date. Dates for First Reconciliation and First Communion after April 1, 2020 will be determined in the future depending on the circumstances surrounding the coronavirus.

Sacrament of Confirmation

All scheduled confirmations for the month of March are postponed and will be rescheduled. Confirmation dates after April 1, 2020 will be determined in the future depending on circumstances surrounding the coronavirus.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

The *Light is on for You*, scheduled for April 1, 2020 has been cancelled. Parishes will be offering regularly scheduled times for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Health guidelines regarding social distancing will be followed.

Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick

Communal celebration of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is suspended until further notice. Priests will offer Anointing of the Sick on an individual basis following health and safety guidelines related to coronavirus.

Funerals and Weddings

Until further notice, weddings and funerals may proceed but attendance should be limited to immediate family. All state and local government-imposed restrictions on the number of people at public gatherings are to be obeyed.

Parish Events and Activities

In compliance with the requests of governmental leaders and sound medical practices, parishes must cancel all scheduled events until further notice.

Church Buildings

While churches will remain open for private prayer, including adoration, there will be no scheduled “services” that would bring people together at a specific time. Social distancing must be maintained if people attend church for private prayer.

“During this time of unknowns, concerns about access to the sacraments have created anxiety among the faithful. We will be working to reassure people and help them with ways to live and strengthen their faith during this unprecedented time. I continue to ask all of us to come together in prayer, especially with the intercession of the Blessed Mother and Saint Joseph to guide and protect us,” Bishop Zubik said.