

DIOCESE OF PORTLAND

COMMEMORATING HOLY WEEK 2020

Introduction

The following notations are intended to provide additional guidance, references and suggestions for the celebration of the liturgies of Holy Week, which commemorate the passion, death and resurrection of the Lord. These notations are based upon the most recent decree (see pages 4-5 of this document) issued by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, “In time of Covid-19 (II)” (i.e., hereinafter referred to as “the Decree”) as well as the rubrics and options already contained in the Roman Missal, © 2011, 3rd Typical Edition, and the previously published guidance provided by Bishop Deeley.

Guiding Principles:

- All celebrations must be limited to/not exceed ten (10) people or less, including all clergy.
- The processions that are unique to the Holy Week celebrations are to be omitted because of the lack of the presence of a usual/typical congregation.
- The Decree states, “...avoiding concelebration and the sign of peace.” Concelebration may take place when only a few priests are present, and they can maintain proper distancing; the sign of peace is not to take place.
- Because concelebrating priests must receive the Precious Blood for validity, priests are granted permission to self-communicate by intinction.

Palm Sunday – March 29

- Although everyone recognizes the significance of palms as a beloved sacramental for the faithful, to ensure the safety of all, no provision should be made for the distribution of palms to the faithful.
- Since the palms have already been ordered, perhaps some of them can be used to decorate your churches, especially the church from which the livestreaming of Masses take place; these palms may also serve you well on Easter Sunday, as a partial substitution for flowers (which are more expensive and for which many parishes will not be able to take up a collection this year).
- The decree states that the third form of entrance (The Simple Entrance) must be used in parish churches. For Palm Sunday, the instructions include:

“17. While the Priest proceeds to the altar, the Entrance Antiphon with its Psalm (no.18) or another chant on the same theme is sung. Arriving at the altar, the Priest venerates it and goes to the chair. After the Sign of the Cross, he greets the people [i.e., “The Lord be with you.”] and continues the Mass in the usual way [i.e., Penitential Rite, Collect].”

Please note that there is no blessing of palms, no reading of the first Gospel, and no procession.

A sample penitential rite (many liturgical aids provide alternatives), based on Philippians 2:6-11:

Lord Jesus, you emptied yourself for our sake: Lord, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you humbled yourself to the point of death: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you have been exalted in heaven and on earth: Lord, have mercy.

- It is recommended that the Gospel Passion of our Lord (according to Matthew) be read by one cleric, rather than in parts, which requires more participants.

Chrism Mass & Mass of the Oils

As noted in an earlier mailing, the Chrism Mass is being postponed to a later date (to be announced). All parishes are asked to retain their current supplies of the holy oils (Oil of the Sick, Oil of Catechumens, Sacred Chrism) and to use them in the administration of the sacraments until such time as new oils are blessed/consecrated. The Mass of the Oils in Aroostook County has been cancelled.

Holy Thursday – April 9

- The washing of feet, which is already optional, is to be omitted.
- After the distribution of Holy Communion, the Blessed Sacrament is placed in the tabernacle.
- The Prayer after Communion follows.
- The procession with the Blessed Sacrament (in a ciborium) is omitted.
- Presuming that the Good Friday service will take place in the same church, no blessing or dismissal is given; those present leave the sanctuary in a simple, orderly, well-spaced procession (without a processional cross).

Good Friday – April 10

- The cross customarily used for adoration/veneration should be placed in the sanctuary before the commemoration of the Passion of the Lord begins.
- The ministers should be seated in the sanctuary before the start of the service.
- To begin the service (see Good Friday instructions #5-6):
 - The priest-celebrant goes before the altar and venerates it with a bow; he then prostrates himself (or kneel) and prays in silence for a while. All others kneel in place.
 - The priest-celebrant then stands, goes to the chair, and offers the prayer, without saying, “Let us pray.”
- It is recommended that the Gospel Passion of our Lord (according to John) be read by one cleric, rather than in parts, which requires more participants.
- At the request of the Holy Father, the Solemn Intercessions should include an eleventh (special) invitation and prayer, a sample of which is provided on page 6 of this document.
- Because the showing of the Holy Cross customarily includes a procession and involves a number of people who carry a cross of substantial size, it is strongly recommended that the procession be eliminated.
 - In that case, the priest alone processes to the location where the cross had been placed before the commemoration of the Passion of the Lord began.
 - Then, the *Ecce lignum Crucis* (Behold the wood of the Cross) is sung three times.
 - If the priest uses a smaller cross that he can handle alone, it may be possible for him to elevate it three times during which the *Ecce lignum Crucis* is sung.
- After the *Ecce lignum Crucis* is sung three times, the priest-celebrant alone is permitted to kiss the cross as an act of adoration.
 - All other participants (presumably less than ten in number) should adore as a group, kneeling in their place for a moment of silent adoration (see Good Friday instruction #19).
- The priest-celebrant is responsible for both retrieving and returning the Blessed Sacrament from/to the Tabernacle.
- The Prayer after Communion is said.
- The Good Friday service concludes with a Prayer over the People, but without a blessing; those present in the sanctuary turn towards the cross, genuflect, and then leave in a simple, orderly, well-space procession.

Holy Saturday/Easter Vigil – April 11

In the Diocese of Portland, regardless of the number of parishes entrusted to a single pastor, only one vigil may be celebrated, and only in parishes that have the ability to livestream (without recording) the Vigil. In addition, the initiation sacraments (i.e., that is, all baptisms, receptions into full communion, confirmations and first Communion) are not to be celebrated at the Easter Vigil.

- The lighting and blessing of the *Lucernarium* (Easter fire) is omitted.
- The Paschal Candle is prepared (with the A, the Ω, the numerals 2-0-2-0, and the five grains of incense) before the start of the Easter Vigil. It is placed in the Paschal candle stand near the ambo.
- The ministers enter the sanctuary; the lights of the sanctuary are already on.
- An assisting minister lights the Paschal Candle using a traditional candle lighter.
- Once lit, the Exultet is sung/proclaimed in the usual manner.
- The Liturgy of the Word takes place as usual.
 - For the Easter Vigil, the instructions include:
 - “21. ...*At least three readings should be read from the Old Testament, both from the Law and the Prophets, and their respective Responsorial Psalms should be sung. Never, moreover, should the reading of chapter 14 of Exodus with its canticle be omitted.*”
 - In addition, it is required that the Epistle from Romans 6:3-11 be read, along with the Gospel according to Matthew 28:1-10.
- After the Gospel, a homily is offered.
- After the Homily, the Blessing of the Water takes place. In all locations celebrating the Easter Vigil in this Diocese, the priest-celebrant follows the following instruction:
 - “54. *If no one present is to be baptized and the font is not to be blessed, the Priest introduces the faithful to the blessing of water ...*”
 - Note that this rubric presumes that the water being blessed would be contained in an aspersorium (holy water bucket).
 - After the Blessing of the Water, the Renewal of Baptismal Promises takes place.
 - After the Renewal of Baptismal Promises, the priest-celebrant sprinkles the people.
 - After the sprinkling rite, (omitting the Creed) the Universal Prayer is done.
- After the Universal Prayer, the Mass continues as usual.
- After the Final Blessing, the special dismissal is offered (i.e., “Go in peace, alleluia, alleluia.” followed by “Thanks be to God, alleluia, alleluia.”)

Easter Sunday – April 12

- Whether or not the Easter Vigil was celebrated, the Paschal Candle is already in the Paschal Candle stand and lit before the start of Mass.
- Mass is celebrated in the usual manner, taking note that:
 - After the second reading and before the Gospel Acclamation (“Alleluia”), the Sequence must be said/sung.
 - After the Homily, in lieu of the Creed, the Blessing of the Water (again) takes place as described above (at Easter Vigil) and the Renewal of Baptismal Promises with a sprinkling rite takes place.
 - After the sprinkling rite, (omitting the Creed) the Universal Prayer is done.
 - After the Universal Prayer, the Mass continues as usual.
 - After the Final Blessing, the special dismissal is offered (i.e., “Go in peace, alleluia, alleluia.” followed by “Thanks be to God, alleluia, alleluia.”)

DECREE

In time of Covid-19 (II)

Considering the rapidly evolving situation of the Covid-19 pandemic and taking into account observations which have come from Episcopal Conferences, this Congregation now offers an update to the general indications and suggestions already given to Bishops in the preceding decree of 19 March 2020.

Given that the date of Easter cannot be transferred, in the countries which have been struck by the disease and where restrictions around the assembly and movement of people have been imposed, Bishops and priests may celebrate the rites of Holy Week without the presence of the people and in a suitable place, avoiding concelebration and omitting the sign of peace.

The faithful should be informed of the beginning times of the celebrations so that they can prayerfully unite themselves in their homes. Means of live (not recorded) telematic broadcasts can be of help. In any event it remains important to dedicate an adequate time to prayer, giving importance above all to the *Liturgia Horarum*.

The Episcopal Conferences and individual dioceses will see to it that resources are provided to support family and personal prayer.

1 - **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.

2 – **The Chrism Mass.** Evaluating the concrete situation in different countries, the Episcopal Conferences will be able to give indications about a possible transfer to another date.

3 – **Holy Thursday.** 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. On this day the faculty to celebrate Mass in a suitable place, without the presence of the people, is exceptionally granted to all priests.

4 – **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.

5 – **The Easter Vigil:** Is to be celebrated only in Cathedral and parish churches. For the "Baptismal Liturgy" only the "Renewal of Baptismal Promises" is maintained (cf. *Missale Romanum*).

Seminaries, houses of clergy, monasteries and religious communities shall follow the indications of this decree.

Expressions of popular piety and processions which enrich the days of Holy Week and the Paschal Triduum can be transferred to other suitable days in the year, for example 14 and 15 September, according to the judgement of the Diocesan Bishop.

De mandato Summi Pontificis pro hoc tantum anno 2020.

From the offices of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, 25 March 2020, on the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord.

Robert Card. Sarah
Prefect

✠ Arthur Roche
Archbishop Secretary

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Special Intercession for Good Friday

The Holy Father has asked that a supplemental intercession be added for the current pandemic. For Good Friday, the instructions include:

“13. In a situation of grave public need, the Diocesan Bishop may permit or order the addition of a special intention.”

- I. For Holy Church
- II. For the Pope
- III. For all orders and degrees of the Faithful
- IV. For catechumens
- V. For the unity of Christians
- VI. For the Jewish people
- VII. For those who do not believe in Christ
- VIII. For those who do not believe in God
- IX. For those in public office
- X. For those in tribulation

The following sample was provided by the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions:

- XI. For those suffering from the current pandemic.

Deacon or lay minister:

Let us pray, dearly beloved,
to God the Father almighty,
that he may extend his hand in mercy
to all those affected by the Coronavirus pandemic.

Silent Prayer

Priest:

Almighty ever-living God,
heal those who are ill,
comfort those who mourn,
give solace to all who are afraid and alone,
and protect those who are providing medical care.
Make us instruments of your peace
among our brothers and sisters.
In your mercy, alleviate our fears
and eliminate this scourge,
so that we may come together again
to give you praise and to build your Kingdom.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.