

# Guidelines for Particular Celebrations – UPDATED 3/20/20



## Mass

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1. Reminder: the faithful have been dispensed from the obligation to participate in Sunday Mass until further notice.
2. Beginning Wednesday, March 18, **public** celebrations of the Mass are suspended in the Diocese of Stockton, until further notice.
  - If possible, parishes are encouraged to find ways of streaming or broadcasting a Sunday liturgy. The departments of Liturgy & Worship and IT of the Pastoral Center stand ready to assist parishes.
  - Priests are obligated to celebrate Mass privately. In light of the stay-at-home order, as few people as possible should be present.
3. Due to the statewide stay-at-home order, churches and adoration chapels are to be closed to the public.
4. Our people must know that even with public Masses suspended, our concern and obligation for their spiritual care continues.
  - This is a graced time for all of us to reflect on how we are living out the reality of our own domestic churches.
  - Parishes should take steps to make sure that those parishioners who may be socially isolated, especially the elderly, in some way experience the care of the Church. Parish ministers and volunteers, for instance, might give them a phone call and offer to pray with them and find out if there is anything that they need (groceries, etc.).
  - Parishes should be especially concerned for the spiritual care of those parishioners who do not have access to the spiritual resources available on the internet. Prayer cards and articles could be mailed to them, for example.
5. Chrism Mass will be celebrated privately. The Office of Liturgy & Worship will arrange for the delivery of oils to parishes.
6. It is likely at this point that the Triduum will not be able to be celebrated publicly. To assist with your planning, the Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments has sent out a notice regarding how the Triduum is to be celebrated this year when it is not possible to gather a congregation. This notice is attached.

## **Funerals**

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7. Funeral Vigils are suspended. No visitations.
8. Any funeral liturgies must be coordinated with the pastor.
  - The recommended celebration is Final Commendation and Committal at the cemetery, with a Memorial Mass held at a later date.
9. No receptions are to be held on parish property.

## **Matrimony**

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10. Celebrations of the Sacrament of Matrimony are to be postponed.

## **Baptisms**

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11. Celebrations of baptism, outside of emergencies, are to be postponed.

## **Penance**

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12. Scheduled opportunities for the Sacrament of Penance are to be cancelled.
13. Parishes should catechize the faithful through the means available to them (social media, etc.) on the teaching of the Church regarding forgiveness of sins by making an act of perfect contrition when the Sacrament of Penance is unavailable.

## **Blessings and Popular Devotions**

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14. Celebrations of blessings, such as quinceañeras, are to be postponed.
15. We encourage popular devotions to be celebrated at home with the family.
  - Parishes might consider streaming Stations of the Cross, the Liturgy of the Hours, or similar online.

## **RCIA**

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16. Initiation of those in RCIA, outside of emergencies, will need to be delayed at least until the stay-at-home order is lifted.
17. A decree will be sent out dispensing all the adult Elect from the requirement of undergoing all three scrutinies. If they have not already gone through one of the scrutinies, it may be celebrated at a convenient time before initiation, even immediately before baptism.

## **Anointing of the Sick**

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18. The following are to be observed in making house calls:
  - Priests at high risk of serious illness from COVID-19 should consider asking another priest to take calls where the sick person has symptoms consistent with COVID-19.
  - Priests should wear gloves and should not remain in the room longer than 15 minutes. If a respirator is available, it should be used.
  - Care must be taken not to contaminate the oil stock. A cotton ball should be prepared with enough oil for both the anointing of the forehead and the hands. Following the anointing, it should be placed in a sealed bag for burning when convenient.

This is a time when many are worried and concerned. Let us be a people who, while using the gifts of prudence and reason that God has given us, place our trust in the Lord Jesus. This is a crisis, but it is also an opportunity to grow in grace and holiness.