

On March 24th, the Office of Worship sent out this guidance from Archbishop Thompson...

"The current pandemic and the measures taken to combat it make responding to individual requests for confession very difficult. Therefore, out of great concern for the health our people and until further notice requests for individual confession should be postponed unless it is requested by one who is in imminent danger of death."

The teaching of the Church regarding situations in which the sacrament cannot be celebrated was also repeated:

"When a person finds themselves in the painful impossibility of receiving sacramental absolution because they can't connect with confession, it should be remembered that perfect contrition, (1) flowing from their love of God, (2) expressed by a sincere request for forgiveness (like praying the act of contrition) and (3) with the intention to go to sacramental confession as soon as it is offered, obtains forgiveness of sins, even mortal ones (cf. Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 1452)."

Not having the opportunity for individual confession or general absolution will make some of the faithful anxious, especially during this Lenten season of penance. To help in this, the Holy See has offered this additional recourse for the faithful:

- *"The gift of special Indulgences is granted to the faithful suffering from COVID-19 disease, commonly known as Coronavirus, as well as to health care workers, family members and all those who in any capacity, including through prayer, care for them."*
- *This is a time of suffering, especially for those who have contracted COVID-19. As such, it may be a time for us to "rediscover 'the same redemptive suffering of Christ' (Salvifici doloris, 30)." Trusting in Christ, a Plenary indulgence is "granted to **the faithful suffering from Coronavirus**, who are subject to quarantine by order of the health authority in hospitals or in their own homes if, with a spirit detached from any sin, they unite spiritually through the media to the celebration of Holy Mass, the recitation of the Holy Rosary, to the pious practice of the Way of the Cross or other forms of devotion, or if at least they will recite the Creed, the Lord's Prayer and a pious invocation to the Blessed Virgin Mary, offering this trial in a spirit of faith in God and charity towards their brothers and sisters, with the will to fulfill the usual conditions (sacramental confession, Eucharistic communion and prayer according to the Holy Father's intentions), as soon as possible."*
- *"**Health care workers, family members and all those who**, following the example of the Good Samaritan, exposing themselves to the risk of contagion, **care for the sick of Coronavirus** according to the words of the divine Redeemer: 'Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends' (Jn 15: 13), will obtain the same gift of the Plenary Indulgence under the same conditions."*

- *An indulgence is “the expression of the Church's full confidence of being heard by the Father when - in view of Christ's merits and, by his gift, those of Our Lady and the saints - she asks him to mitigate or cancel the painful aspect of punishment by fostering its medicinal aspect through other channels of grace” (John Paul II, General Audience, September 29, 1999).*
- *A plenary indulgence removes all the temporal punishment due to sin (CCC, 1471).*