

Holy Week & Triduum and the Response to COVID-19

Guidelines for Parishes
based on the CDWDS Decree in Time of COVID-19 (19-Mar 2020),
the Update to the General Indications (25-Mar 2020),
and Governor Hogan's Stay-in-Place Directive

updated March 31, 2020

*The CDWDS Decree is given in smaller *Italic font*. Guidelines for the Archdiocese of Baltimore are provided in larger Times New Roman font.

During this difficult time through which we are living because of the Covid-19 pandemic, and considering the impediment to the community celebration of the liturgy in church as per the direction of Bishops for their territories, a number of queries have come to this Congregation concerning the imminent celebration of Easter. In this regard, the following general indications are offered along with some suggestions for Bishops.

Holy Week and Triduum. In the Archdiocese of Baltimore, due to Governor Hogan's stay-at-home directive, the public celebration of Masses and liturgies is suspended until further notice.

- I. Holy Week and Triduum Masses and liturgies may be concelebrated by Parish Priests and assisted by Parish Deacons, always respecting social distancing.
- II. The Pastor may invite only the minimum number of assisting liturgical ministers needed for the proper celebration of a Mass or liturgy.
- III. If a Parish has the capability of livestreaming, it is preferable that the Parish livestream the Mass/liturgy rather than pre-record it.
- IV. For livestreamed or recorded Masses: The sign of peace should be omitted and Holy Communion should be given to lay liturgical ministers after Mass and off camera. Additionally, a separate chalice should be consecrated for each concelebrating Priest and for each Deacon assisting at the altar.
- V. Specific guidelines regarding the stay-at-home directive are provided with each liturgy.

Due to the stay-at-home directive and the ban of all gatherings of people, all churches and shrines are to be closed to the public immediately. This decision is made with the safety of all in mind. All parishes are encouraged to provide livestreamed or recorded Masses and liturgies and should see to it that resources are provided to support family and personal prayer, if possible.

Palm Sunday. In the Archdiocese of Baltimore, the following guidelines are to be observed:

I. Livestreaming or Recording Masses:

- a. The Mass of Palm Sunday may be livestreamed or recorded.
- b. The Archdiocese will provide a livestream of the Mass of Palm Sunday, which will be celebrated by Archbishop Lori at *11:00 AM on Sunday, April 5th*. All Parishes should clearly communicate the details of this livestream to parishioners.
- c. Parishes with livestream or recording capabilities are encouraged to livestream or record a Mass of Palm Sunday. **This Mass may be celebrated on either the Vigil (no earlier than 4:00 PM) or the day of Palm Sunday (any time).** The details of the livestream/recording should be clearly communicated to all parishioners.

II. Parishes without livestream or recording capabilities:

- a. Even in Parishes where livestreaming or recording is unavailable, the Parish should communicate the time of the Mass to parishioners so that parishioners may prayerfully unite with the Mass in their homes.

III. Distribution of Palms: No palms are to be made available to the faithful at this time. However, if a parish wishes to bless palms for future distribution, the Second Form given in the Roman Missal is to be used at the beginning of Mass. All other parishes that are not blessing palms are to use the Third Form. Palms may be distributed at each Pastor's discretion, at a later date, once current restrictions are lifted.

1 – Concerning the date of Easter. 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.

2 – The Chrism Mass. Having evaluated the concrete situation in the different countries, the Bishop has the faculty to postpone it to a later date.

The Chrism Mass.

- I. Archbishop Lori will celebrate the Chrism Mass with the faithful and the presbyterate at a later date.
- II. Priests are asked to continue using their current oil stocks until new oils are distributed at the Chrism Mass. Priests are also reminded that the Oil of the Sick and the Oil of Catechumens may be blessed by a Priest on an *ad hoc* basis according to the blessings provided in the respective rites.

3 – Indications for the Paschal Triduum. *Wherever the civil and ecclesiastical authorities have put restrictions in place, the Sacred Triduum must be celebrated in the following way:*

Bishops will give indications, which have been agreed with the Episcopal Conference, so that, in the Cathedral and parish churches, though without the physical participation of the faithful, the Bishop and parish priest(s) can celebrate the liturgical mysteries of the Paschal Triduum. The faithful should be informed of the times of the celebration so that they can prayerfully unite themselves in their homes. In this occasion, the means of live (not recorded) televisual or internet broadcasts are helpful. The Episcopal Conference and individual dioceses will see to it that resources are provided to support family and personal prayer.

Holy Thursday. *In Cathedral and parish churches, where and in the measure that there is a real possibility of doing so, established by the one responsible, the priest(s) of the parish can celebrate the evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper. The faculty to celebrate Mass on this day in a suitable place, without the people, is granted in an exceptional manner to all priests. 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 with the Blessed Sacrament to the place of repose is to be omitted and the Blessed Sacrament is to be kept in the tabernacle. Priests who are unable to celebrate Mass should instead pray Vespers of the day (cf. Liturgia Horarum).*

Holy Thursday. In the Archdiocese of Baltimore, the following guidelines are to be observed:

- I. The Holy See has granted the faculty in an exceptional manner to all priests to celebrate Mass on this day in a suitable place without the people. While a “suitable place” is permitted, Mass is to be celebrated in the Parish church or the chapel of a religious community associated with the Parish.
- II. Ritual details for all Masses:
 - a. According to the needs of the Parish, this Mass may be a “private Mass” (see GIRM 254) or “Mass with a Single Minister” (see GIRM 252ff).
 - b. The washing of feet, which is already optional, is to be omitted.
 - c. According to the Decree in the Time of COVID-19, at the end of the Mass of the Lord’s Supper, the procession with the Blessed Sacrament to the place of repose is omitted and the Blessed Sacrament is to be kept in the tabernacle.
- III. Livestreaming Masses:
 - a. The Evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper may be livestreamed wherever possible. However, in accordance with the Decree in the Time of COVID-19, this Mass may not be recorded at a time that is not proper to the usual celebration of the Mass. **Therefore, a parish that has no livestream capability but wishes to record the Mass for the faithful, may do so no earlier than 5:00 PM on Holy Thursday.** The details of the livestream or recording should be clearly communicated to all parishioners.
 - b. The Archdiocese will provide a livestream of the Evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper, which will be celebrated by Archbishop Lori at 7:30 PM on Thursday, April 9th. All Parishes should clearly communicate the details of this livestream to parishioners.

- IV. All Parishes, even those that are not livestreaming or recording the Mass, should communicate the time of the Parish Mass to parishioners so that parishioners may prayerfully unite with the Mass in their homes.
- V. Since churches will not be open to the faithful for adoration, parishes are encouraged to livestream the tabernacle until midnight and may wish to conclude with Night Prayer. Please note: exposition of the Blessed Sacrament is forbidden during the Triduum.
- VI. Priests and others who cannot attend Mass:
 - a. Parishes may offer a livestream or recorded video of Evening Prayer for Holy Thursday. Preferably, this should be led by an individual who is not in attendance at the livestreamed Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper.
 - b. All who are unable to attend Mass in person, even if they unite themselves in prayer to a Mass through livestreaming, are encouraged to pray Evening Prayer.

Good Friday. *In Cathedral and parish churches, where and in the measure that there is a real possibility of doing so, established by the one responsible, the Bishop/Parish Priest will celebrate the Passion of the Lord. In the Universal Prayer, the Bishop will see to it that there is a special intention for the sick, the dead, for those who feel lost or dismayed (cf. Missale Romanum, pag. 314, n. 13).*

Good Friday. In the Archdiocese of Baltimore, the following guidelines are to be observed:

- I. According to tradition, celebrations of the Office of Readings and Morning Prayer are encouraged during the Triduum.
 - a. Parishes may offer a livestream or recorded video of the Office of Readings and Morning Prayer for Good Friday.
 - b. Parishes should provide details to parishioners regarding resources for the Liturgy of the Hours.
- II. In the exceptional case of the time of coronavirus, a Priest may celebrate the Passion of the Lord on Good Friday in the Parish church without the faithful. The liturgy for the Parish must take place in the Parish church or in the chapel of a religious community associated with the Parish.
- III. Ritual details for all liturgies:
 - a. Because the Adoration of the Cross requires responses to be made, at least by an assisting minister (namely, "Come, let us adore"), the liturgy of the Passion of the Lord may not be celebrated by a Priest alone. The Pastor may invite only the minimum number of assisting ministers needed for the proper celebration of the liturgy.
 - b. Concelebrants and/or ministers should give the responses of the people.
 - c. At the direction of the Decree in the Time of COVID-19, the following special intention for the sick, the dead, and for those who feel lost or dismayed is to

be inserted after the final intercession provided in *The Roman Missal* (that is, after “X. For those in tribulation”):

XI. For the Sick, the Dead, and for Those Who Feel Lost or Dismayed

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.**

- d. In accordance with *The Roman Missal*, the act of veneration during the Adoration of the Cross may be a genuflection or profound bow alone (see *The Roman Missal*, Proper of Time, Good Friday, no. 18.). During the coronavirus crisis, the Adoration of the Cross by kissing it shall be limited solely to the celebrant.

IV. Livestreaming liturgies:

- a. The Passion of the Lord may be livestreamed wherever possible. However, in accordance with the Decree in the Time of COVID-19, this liturgy may not be recorded at a time that is not proper to the usual celebration of the liturgy. **Therefore, a parish that has no livestream capability but wishes to record the liturgy for the faithful, may do so no earlier than 12:00 PM on Good Friday.** The details of the livestream or recording should be clearly communicated to all parishioners.
- b. The Archdiocese will provide a livestream of the Passion of the Lord, which will be celebrated by Archbishop Lori at 3:00 PM on Friday, April 10th. All Parishes should clearly communicate the details of this livestream to parishioners.

- V. All Parishes, even those that are not livestreaming or recording the liturgy, should communicate the time of the Parish liturgy to parishioners so that parishioners may prayerfully unite with the liturgy in their homes.
- VI. The faithful are encouraged to place a cross/crucifix in an appropriate place in their home as they unite themselves in prayer to the celebration of the Passion of the Lord, especially when uniting in prayer fostered by livestreaming. This cross/crucifix may be venerated with a genuflection or profound bow, especially at the corresponding time in a livestreamed liturgy. Parishes should communicate this encouragement to parishioners.
- VII. Parishes may wish to livestream Adoration of the Cross until the Parish's customary time when the Cross is removed in preparation for the Easter Vigil.

Easter Sunday.

The Easter Vigil: *Is to be celebrated only in Cathedral and parish churches, where and in the measure that there is a real possibility of doing so, established by the one responsible. 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. The "Liturgy of the Word" then takes place. For the "Baptismal Liturgy" the "Renewal of Baptismal Promises" alone is necessary (cf. Missale Romanum, pag. 371, n. 55). The "Liturgy of the Eucharist" then follows.*

Those 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 (cf. Liturgia Horarum).

The Easter Vigil. In the Archdiocese of Baltimore, the following guidelines are to be observed:

- I. According to tradition, celebrations of the Office of Readings and Morning Prayer are encouraged during the Triduum.
 - a. Parishes may offer a livestream or recorded video of the Office of Readings and Morning Prayer for Holy Saturday.
 - b. Parishes should provide details to parishioners regarding resources for Liturgy of the Hours.
- II. In the exceptional case of the time of coronavirus, a Priest may celebrate the Easter Vigil in the parish church without the faithful. The liturgy for the Parish must take place in the Parish church or in the chapel of a religious community associated with the Parish.
- III. Ritual details for all Masses:
 - a. Because the Renewal of Baptismal Promises requires responses to be made, at least by an assisting minister (namely, "I do"), the Easter Vigil may not be celebrated by a Priest alone. The Pastor may invite only the minimum number of assisting ministers needed for the proper celebration of the Mass.

- i. Due to the stay-at-home order, if even a single minister is unable to assist, leaving the Pastor alone, and if the Pastor is unable to join clergy at a nearby Parish, the Pastor is encouraged to celebrate the Office of Readings for Easter Sunday.
- b. Concelebrants and/or ministers should give the responses of the people.
- c. At “The Solemn Beginning of the Vigil or Lucernarium” the preparation and lighting of the fire is to be omitted, the Paschal Candle is lit, the procession is omitted, and the Easter Proclamation (*Exsultet*) follows.
- d. The “Liturgy of the Word” then takes place.
- e. For the “Baptismal Liturgy” only the “Renewal of Baptismal Promises” is maintained (cf. *Missale Romanum*, n. 55). Therefore, the Blessing of the Font (when no one is baptized) or the Blessing of Water (without blessing of the font) is omitted.
- f. The celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation and/or Reception into Full Communion are not to take place at the Easter Vigil in 2020.
 - i. At the discretion of the Pastor, they may be delayed at least until the Pentecost Vigil, which is also an appropriate time for baptism according to ancient tradition. It is to be noted that delays extending beyond Pentecost are possible depending on the spread of coronavirus.
 - ii. Alternatively, the Archdiocese of Baltimore is hopeful to have an archdiocesan-wide celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation at Pentecost. More details will be forthcoming.
- g. The “Liturgy of the Eucharist” then follows.

IV. Livestreaming Masses:

- a. The Easter Vigil may be livestreamed wherever possible. However, in accordance with the Decree in the Time of COVID-19, this Mass may not be recorded at a time that is not proper to the usual celebration of the Mass. **Therefore, a parish that has no livestream capability but wishes to record the Mass for the faithful, may do so no earlier than 6:00 PM on Holy Saturday and may not make the recording available before 8:00 PM on Holy Saturday.** The details of the livestream or recording should be clearly communicated to all parishioners.
- b. The Archdiocese will provide a livestream of the Easter Vigil, which will be celebrated by Archbishop Lori at 8:00 PM on Saturday, April 11th. All Parishes should clearly communicate the details of this livestream to parishioners.

V. All Parishes, even those that are not livestreaming or recording the Mass, should communicate the time of the Parish Mass to parishioners so that parishioners may prayerfully unite with the liturgy in their homes.

VI. Those 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.

- a. Parishes may offer a livestream or recorded video of the Office of Readings for Easter Sunday.
- b. All who are unable to attend Mass in person, even if they unite themselves in prayer to Mass through livestreaming, are encouraged to pray Evening Prayer.
- c. Parishes should provide details to parishioners regarding resources for Liturgy of the Hours.

Easter Sunday. In the Archdiocese of Baltimore, the following guidelines are to be observed:

- I. The Archdiocese will provide a livestream of the Easter Sunday Mass during the Day, which will be celebrated by Archbishop Lori at *12:00 PM on Sunday, April 12th*. All Parishes should clearly communicate the details of the livestream to parishioners.
- II. Parishes with livestream or recording capabilities are encouraged to livestream or record an Easter Sunday Mass during the day. **This Mass is to be celebrated on the day of Easter Sunday and may be livestreamed or posted at any time during that day.** The details of the livestream/recording should be clearly communicated to all parishioners.

By mandate of the Supreme Pontiff, for the year 2020 only.