



Diocese of OWENSBORO

Memorandum

March 30, 2020

To: All Priests

From: Lauren Johnson, Office of Worship, 270-852-8366

Below is a comprehensive list of all the current liturgical guidelines that have been shared. New information is highlighted in yellow. Please feel free to call or email with any questions.

Holy Week:

- The celebrations of Holy Week and Easter cannot be transferred to another date. However, these could still be celebrated by the priest although without a congregation, if possible by livestream at a time publicized to all, so the faithful can prayerfully unite themselves while in their homes.
- Expressions of popular piety typically celebrated during this time may be transferred to other appropriate days.
- Palm Sunday- On March 25, the Vatican decreed that parishes should use the third form (the simple entrance), which does not include the blessing of palms. Palms may be blessed outside of the Mass privately, to be distributed when public gatherings are reinstated.
- Holy Thursday- Priests may celebrate the Mass of the Lord's Supper without a congregation; the washing of feet is to be omitted; the procession of the Blessed Sacrament to a place of repose is to be omitted; the Blessed Sacrament is to remain in the tabernacle; if a priest is unable to celebrate the Mass, he should pray the Vespers of the day.
- Good Friday- It would be good to have at least one other person assisting during the veneration of the cross. Veneration should be shown by a profound bow or genuflection instead of kissing or touching the cross.

Addition to Solemn Intercessions:

XI. For an end to the pandemic

Let us pray, dearly beloved, for a swift end
to the coronavirus pandemic that afflicts our world,
that our God and Father will heal the sick,
strengthen those who care for them,
and help us all to persevere in faith.

Prayer in silence. Then the Priest says:

Almighty and merciful God,
source of all life, health and healing,
look with compassion on our world, brought low by disease;
protect us in the midst of the grave challenges that assail us
and in your fatherly providence
grant recovery to the stricken,
strength to those who care for them,
and success to those working to eradicate this scourge.
Through Christ our Lord.
R. Amen.

- **Easter Vigil- Bishop Medley is allowing for the start of the Easter Vigil before nightfall at a time most beneficial to those viewing at home.** The lighting of the fire is omitted; the procession is omitted; the Easter candle is lit, followed by Easter Proclamation, then the Liturgy of the Word; only the Renewal of Baptismal Promises is necessary for the Baptismal Liturgy, followed by the Liturgy of the Eucharist; Priests who have no possibility of celebrating the Easter Vigil are to pray the Office of Readings for Easter Sunday.

Miscellaneous guidelines:

- Private Masses may be celebrated with the priest(s), one lector, one cantor, one musician, and the camera operator.
- Holy water fonts are to be emptied.
- Elect and Candidates: According to the Rite of Christian Initiation, the Bishop may “decide whether and when, as circumstances warrant, the entire rite of Christian initiation may be celebrated outside the usual times” (RCIA 34.2). Initiation into the Church is to be delayed until the Sunday Eucharist is resumed (including the rites during the Period of Purification and Enlightenment).
- Concerning Blessed Oils: You may continue using the blessed oils from last year. The Office of Worship has additional Sacred Chrism on hand if you happen to run out. As a reminder, a priest may consecrate more Oil of the Sick or the Oil of Catechumens if necessary. You can find those prayers of blessing attached to this email. Please note that there is a new translation of these blessings as the texts were translated in accord with the principles articulated in *Liturgiam authenticam* and confirmed in November 2018; therefore, the prayers of blessing in the Book of Blessings and Rite of Christian Initiation are not currently up to date (please see the attachment for the prayers of blessing).
- Weddings should be postponed. If it is not possible to reschedule, weddings may be celebrated within the Mass. Participation/attendance will be limited to the presider, the engaged couple, the wedding party, and the immediate family of the engaged couple, adhering to the CDC and governmental guidelines/regulations, keeping in mind any limit concerning attendance numbers.
- Funerals may be celebrated within the Mass, or funeral liturgies outside Mass may be held in funeral homes or churches. Participation/attendance will be limited to the presider and the

immediate family of the deceased, adhering to the CDC and governmental guidelines/regulations, keeping in mind any limit concerning attendance numbers.

- All baptisms of children will be one child at a time, celebrated outside of Mass. Participation/attendance will be limited to the presider, the godparents, and the immediate family of the child being baptized, adhering to the CDC and governmental guidelines/regulations, keeping in mind any limit concerning attendance numbers.
- Private confessions may still be held at the discretion of the pastor, given that it can be carried out safely and keeping in practice with social distancing.
- Churches will remain open for prayer, but the faithful are urged to practice social distancing efforts to minimize their own and others' potential exposure. The Blessed Sacrament may be exposed for adoration at the discretion of the pastor, but there is to be no solemn exposition or benediction.
- Mass intentions can and should be fulfilled at Masses without a congregation as much as possible.
- All parish events and gatherings are cancelled without exception. These include—but are not limited to—Communal penance services, Stations of the Cross, Solemn Exposition and Benediction, religious education and RCIA classes, youth and young adult ministry events, meetings of parish committees and other ministries, parish fish fries (with the exception of drive-thru service), and other fundraisers.
- External events scheduled to be held in parish facilities (e.g. parish halls, school gymnasiums, etc.) should be rescheduled or are to adhere to CDC and governmental guidelines/regulations, keeping in mind any limit concerning attendance numbers.