

LITURGICAL GUIDELINES FOR HOLY WEEK AND THE SACRED TRIDUUM

The following guidelines are to assist parishes within the Diocese of Green Bay for Holy Week and the Sacred Triduum, 2021.

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.”¹

Palm Branches may be blessed and distributed with reasonable caution.

HOLY THURSDAY

The *Mandatum* ritual – washing of feet – is not to take place this year due to COVID-19. It should be noted that this rite is always optional.²

“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.”

“Holy Communion may only be distributed to the faithful during Mass; but it may be brought to the sick at any hour of the day.” (*Roman Missal*; Thursday of the Lord’s Supper, no. 4)

PRESENTATION OF THE HOLY OILS IN THE PARISH

It is appropriate that the oils blessed and consecrated at the Chrism Mass be carried in as part of the entrance procession and presented before the beginning of the Mass of the Lord’s Supper [if they have been received by then] or on another day after the Chrism Mass (RM, Chrism Mass 15).

The oils from the previous year are to be disposed of by burning (BB, 1127). They may be burned in the Easter fire or in another lamp. If the oils cannot be burned, they may be buried in a sacred place unlikely to be disturbed such as in a parish cemetery. Oils should not be poured down the sacrarium unless it is a small portion of oils so as to prevent clogging of the drain.

¹ Congregation of Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, “Decree In Time of COVID II,” no. 1.

² Congregation of Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, “Decree In Time of COVID II,” no. 3.

GOOD FRIDAY

The celebration of the Lord's Passion, the principal celebration of this day, should take place about 3 p.m. unless a later time is chosen for pastoral need. The celebration of the Lord's Passion may not be celebrated after 9 p.m. (Paschale Solemnitatis, 63).

While there is no short form of the Johannine Passion, in accord with the rubrics of the *Roman Missal* itself, the homily should be brief.

The Showing of the Holy Cross may take place in either of the two forms provided in the *Roman Missal*. If, because of the large number of people or arrangement of the church, it is not possible for all to approach the cross in procession, the individual Adoration can be done by only the priest and "some of the faithful", with the entire assembly adoring the cross in silence from their place. (cf. *Roman Missal*, Good Friday 19) The cross should not be venerated by touch, especially by a traditional kiss; a genuflection or bow of the head would be appropriate. **The adoration of the Cross by kissing it shall be limited solely to the celebrant.**³

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).⁴ Unless the USCCB provides a different text for 2021, the same text from 2020 should be used:

Let us pray also for all those who suffer the consequences of the current pandemic, that God the Father may grant health to the sick, strength to those who care for them, comfort to families and salvation to all the victims who have died.

Almighty ever-living God, only support of our human weakness, look with compassion upon the sorrowful condition of your children who suffer because of this pandemic; relieve the pain of the sick, give strength to those who care for them, welcome into your peace those who have died and, throughout this time of tribulation, grant that we may all find comfort in your merciful love. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

EASTER VIGIL

The earliest time that the Easter Vigil may begin is 8:00p.m.

“[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.”⁵

³ Congregation of Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, “Decree In Time of COVID II,” no. 4.

⁴ Congregation of Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, “Decree In Time of COVID II,” no. 4.

⁵ Congregation of Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, “Decree In Time of COVID II,” no. 5.

Consideration should be given to the safe, socially distanced gathering of the faithful at the fire and the procession into the church. If this cannot be done safely, the gathering of people at the fire may be limited to the ministers and the elect (with their godparents).

Since all would need to remove their masks and exhale forcefully to extinguish them, the use of small lit candles by the faithful should be omitted both during the *Lucernarium* and the Renewal of Baptismal Promises. The only candle to be used would be the pascal candle.

While the reading of the Word of God remains a “fundamental part” of the Vigil, for the purposes of brevity in this unusual year the number of readings from the Old Testament may be reduced. As few as three readings from the Old Testament may be read, both from the Law and the Prophets, and their respective Responsorial Psalms sung. The reading from Exodus 14 with its canticle may NOT be omitted. (cf. *Roman Missal*, Easter Vigil 21)

Baptism should be done by pouring, not immersion, and the water used for baptizing should afterward be given to the ground (via the *sacrarium* or otherwise). Water should not be “re-used” for subsequent baptisms.

If a priest believes it necessary for health safety, an instrument (e.g. cotton swab) may be used for Confirmation. Those instruments should be burned after Mass.

EASTER SUNDAY

As with Ash Wednesday and Palm Sunday, consider using a system of advance reservations to gauge and regulate capacity.

CONCERNING HOLY MATRIMONY, BAPTISM, AND FUNERALS DURING THE SACRED TRIDUUM

Holy Matrimony

Weddings may not be celebrated during the Easter Triduum, including on Holy Saturday after the Vigil and Easter Sunday (RM).

Baptisms

The Roman Missal states that baptism is one of the four parts of the Easter Vigil, celebrated “as day approaches, with new members reborn in Baptism” (Easter Vigil 2). The RCIA is geared and planned for the reception of the sacraments of initiation at the Vigil. The Rite of Baptism of Children states: “To bring out the Paschal character of baptism, it is recommended that the sacrament be celebrated during the Easter Vigil or on Sunday when the Church commemorates the Lord’s resurrection.”

Baptisms may not be celebrated on Holy Thursday, Good Friday or Holy Saturday before the Easter Vigil unless the one to receive the sacrament is in imminent danger of death (RM).

Funerals

Funerals may be celebrated on Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday, but not within the context of Mass. The Eucharist may not be distributed at a funeral on these days. On Good Friday, funerals are to be celebrated without singing, music or bells (Paschale Solemnitatis, 61).