



The Archdiocese of San Francisco

OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

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MEMORANDUM

To: Priests of the Archdiocese

From: Most Rev. Salvatore J. Cordileone
Archbishop of San Francisco

Date: March 24, 2020

Re: Instructions for the Celebration of Holy Week Liturgies and Confirmation

As we continue to shelter in place to try to contain the spread of the coronavirus, we now face the prospect of celebrating Holy Week without our people present in our churches. This scenario presents a number of considerations for steps to be taken to protect our people while allowing them to follow these most sacred ceremonies to the extent possible. The Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments recently issued a decree giving instructions in the regard, and Archbishop Leonard Blair, chairman of the USCCB Committee on Divine Worship, sent a letter to bishops giving some further indications for our Bishops' Conference.

After reviewing these documents and consulting with the deans, the vicar general and the vicars for clergy, I am now issuing these specific instructions for the Archdiocese of San Francisco. It is to be understood that these instructions apply only to Holy Week of 2020, and that the ceremonies described below are to be carried out with the number of ministers required for the service to be conducted, but without an assembly physically in attendance.

1. Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord

a) At the principal Mass, the Second Form for the Beginning of the Mass, i.e., the "Solemn Entrance," is to be celebrated, with the blessing of palms. At the other Masses, the Third Form ("Simple Entrance") is to be celebrated. The First Form, "Procession," is not to be used.

b) The best way to provide for people being kept safe in the distribution of palms is to delay the distribution until we are able to once again gather together in church for Mass. Alternatively (or along with), pastors may wish to ask their people to hold branches of their own in their homes while following the Mass in real time via livestream, and he bless the branches according

to the rite of the Solemn Entrance as he celebrates the rite. Any other method of distribution of palms must insure the maximum protection possible to the people receiving them.

c) It is reasonable to consider three readers as necessary for the service in order to have the narrative form of the Gospel of the Passion.

d) Since concern for limiting the length of the Mass is not as much at issue this year, pastors are asked to take this into consideration for the purposes of preaching.

2. Chrism Mass

a) The Chrism Mass will be held in the Cathedral the morning of Holy Thursday, at 10:00, with only the deans (or the dean's representative), the vicar general, the vicar for administration, the vicars for clergy and the members of the College of Consultors present.

b) The dean (or his representative) will bring to his parish the blessed and consecrated oil for all of the parishes in his deanery. He is to see to their distribution to the various communities.

3. Holy Thursday: Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper

a) According to the decree of the CDWDS, the rite of the Washing of the Feet and the procession with the Blessed Sacrament to the altar of repose are both to be omitted. Instead, the Blessed Sacrament is to be reserved in the tabernacle and the Mass ended in the usual way. At some point after the Mass, the Blessed Sacrament will then need to be taken to a secure place out of the tabernacle, in order for the tabernacle to be empty for the Good Friday Liturgy.

b) Furthermore, priests who are unable to celebrate Mass this day should instead pray Vespers of the day.

c) It is customary for the collection taken at this Mass to be given to the poor. Pastors may wish to make an announcement to this effect prior to the preparation of the altar, inviting their people to mail their checks for this collection to the parish office.

4. Good Friday: Liturgy of the Passion of the Lord

a) The Roman Missal allows the diocesan bishop to "permit or order the addition of a special intention" to the Solemn Intercessions. I ask all of our parishes to add an 11th intercession asking for an end to the coronavirus pandemic, using the following formula suggested by the USCCB:

English:

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.

Spanish:

XI. Por el fin de la pandemia

**Oremos también por un final rápido
a la pandemia de coronavirus que aflige a nuestro mundo,
que nuestro Dios y Padre sane a los enfermos,
fortalezca a quienes los cuidan,
y ayude a todos nosotros a perseverar en la fe.**

Se ora un momento en silencio. Luego prosigue el sacerdote:

**Dios todopoderoso y misericordioso
fuente de toda vida, salud y curación,
mira con compasión a nuestro mundo, abatido por la enfermedad;
protégenos en medio de los graves desafíos que nos asaltan
y en tu providencia paterna
concede recuperación a los afligidos,
fuerza a quienes los cuidan,
y éxito a quienes trabajan para erradicar este flagelo.
Por Jesucristo, nuestro Señor.**

R. Amén

b) The Adoration of the Holy Cross should be conducted without kissing it or touching it in any way. Instead, it should be venerated by a genuflection (or profound bow for those physically impeded from genuflecting).

c) As with Palm Sunday, likewise for Good Friday it is reasonable to consider three readers as necessary for the service in order to have the narrative form of the Gospel of the Passion.

d) Since the national collection for the Holy Land taken every year on Good Friday is not possible this year, pastors may wish to announce to their people prior to Part Three of the Liturgy (“Holy Communion”) that they may mail checks to the parish office for this cause.

5. Easter Vigil

a) Per the decree of the CDWDS, during the Lucernarium (“Solemn Beginning of the Vigil”) the Lighting and Blessing of the Fire and Preparation of the Candle, as well as the Procession, are to be omitted. Instead, the Paschal Candle is to be lit in its place in the sanctuary, and the Exultet then sung. Please note that the rubrics stipulate that the lights in the church (but not the altar candles) are to be lit once the Paschal Candle is set in its place in the sanctuary (n. 17). Given the unusual circumstances, I would suggest that the lights may be turned on after the candle is lit. In any event, they are to be on during the singing of the Exultet.

b) It is the parish’s discretion to choose the suitable number of readings according to the rubrics in the Roman Missal (nn. 20-21), as usual.

c) ***There is to be no celebration of the Initiation sacraments (i.e., no Baptisms, Confirmations or First Communions) during the Baptismal Liturgy (Third Part). Christian Initiation and Reception into Full Communion will instead be postponed to the Vigil of Pentecost, if and to the extent the circumstances at that time allow. Further instructions will be forthcoming as the time approaches.***

d) Instead, during the Baptismal Liturgy, the Easter water is to be blessed (RM nn. 54), and the Renewal of Baptismal Promises celebrated with the ministers present.

e) Those who cannot attend the Easter Vigil should pray the Office of Readings for Easter Sunday.

f) On both Easter Sunday and the Easter Vigil, pastors may wish to make an announcement at the usual collection time inviting their people who wish to make an Easter offering to the parish to mail their checks for this purpose to the parish office.

6. Confirmation

a) Confirmations scheduled during the “shelter in place” order will have to be postponed to later in the year. Confirmations scheduled for after the time the “shelter in place” order will be lifted will continue as scheduled, with the possible exception indicated below (c).

b) Parishes that will have had their Confirmations postponed will be asked to submit three new dates to the Archbishop’s Office for rescheduling, as usual. Any dates between the lifting of the order and the end of the calendar year will be entertained.

c) The uncertainty of when the “shelter in place” order will be lifted may create logistical difficulties for some parishes. Any parish that *wishes* to have its Confirmation rescheduled between now and the lifting of the “shelter in place” order is kindly asked to contact the Archbishop’s Office. This is in no way a request on my part. Rather, it is a way to allow parishes the maximum flexibility possible in order to accommodate a wide variety of circumstances.

Thank you for your attention to these instructions, and for all you are doing to help your people cope and remain connected to the Church’s pastoral care during these very trying weeks.