

## **GUIDANCE – 03/25/20 A (adapted for SMO/SMP)**

### **Friday Abstinence / Good Friday Fast**

While some bishops have dispensed the faithful in their dioceses from the Lenten observance of Friday abstinence, Bishop Thomas is not doing so. He believes that it is important in times such as these that we maintain a sense of normalcy amidst the upheaval. Friday abstinence—and the Good Friday fast—are part of the normal observation of this season, and it is something that we can still do together as a community of faith.

However, in this current crisis, all essential workers, all those ill with COVID-19, and all those caring for them, in order to maintain or regain their health and strength, are dispensed from the requirement of abstinence on the Fridays of Lent, and of fasting and abstinence on Good Friday (cc. 1245, 1251). This dispensation applies to all Catholics of the Diocese of Davenport, whether they are within or outside of the Diocese, and to all travelers within the Diocese on these days. (c. 136).

### **Plenary Indulgence**

The Church has granted a plenary indulgence to those affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. As underlined in the decree, the indulgence applies differently to 3 different groups: the sick and isolated, caregivers, and the faithful in general. In addition, we are reminded of the Church's indulgence for those at the point of death.

The Plenary Indulgence is granted to [1] 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 fulfil the usual conditions (sacramental confession, Eucharistic communion and prayer according to the Holy Father's intentions), as soon as possible.

[2] 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.

This Apostolic Penitentiary also willingly grants a Plenary Indulgence under the same conditions on the occasion of the current world epidemic, also to [3] those faithful who offer a visit to the Blessed Sacrament, or Eucharistic adoration, or reading the Holy Scriptures for at least half an hour, or the recitation of the Holy Rosary, or the pious exercise of the Way of the Cross, or the recitation of the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, to implore from Almighty God the end of the epidemic, relief for those who are afflicted and eternal salvation for those whom the Lord has called to Himself.

The Church prays for those who find themselves unable to receive the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick and Viaticum, entrusting each and every one to divine Mercy by virtue of the communion of saints and granting the faithful a Plenary Indulgence on the point of death, provided that they are duly disposed and have recited a few prayers during their lifetime (in this case the Church makes up for the three usual conditions required). For the attainment of this indulgence the use of the crucifix or the cross is recommended (cf. *Enchiridion indulgentiarum*, no.12).

## **GUIDANCE – 03/25/20 A (adapted for SMO/SMP)**

### **General Absolution**

The “Apostolic Penitentiary believes that, especially in the places most affected by the pandemic contagion and until the phenomenon recedes, the cases of serious need mentioned in can. 961, § 2 CIC... will occur. Any further specification is delegated by law to diocesan bishops, always taking into account the supreme good of the salvation of souls (cf. can. 1752 CIC).” The guidance from the Vatican gives the example of using this form of the sacrament in a hospital ward or triage area.

Bishop Zinkula finds that the conditions required for the celebration of Form III of the Sacrament of Reconciliation (“collective” or general absolution) have not yet been met in this diocese.

The guidance from the Vatican also recognizes that it may not be possible for everyone to receive sacramental absolution. In those cases, pastors ought to remind the faithful to make an “act of perfect contrition” (see CCC, 1452).

Perfect contrition includes an express and sincere desire for the forgiveness of sins as well as the resolution to confess any serious (mortal) sins in the usual way as soon as it is possible. Relying on God’s loving mercy, the Church teaches that such a desire forgives all sins, even mortal ones.

"Where the individual faithful find themselves in the painful impossibility of receiving sacramental absolution, it should be remembered that perfect contrition, coming from the love of God, beloved above all things, expressed by a sincere request for forgiveness (that which the penitent is at present able to express) and accompanied by *votum confessionis*, that is, by the firm resolution to have recourse, as soon as possible, to sacramental confession, obtains forgiveness of sins, even mortal ones (cf. CCC, no. 1452)."

Given in Rome, from the seat of the Apostolic Penitentiary, on March 19, 2020,

### **Diocesan Resource**

The diocesan booklet for rites in an emergency that has been prepared includes information about making an act of perfect contrition, as well as the granted indulgence (<https://www.davenportdiocese.org/documents/2020/3/RitesForEmergencies.pdf>). The resource has been translated into Spanish (<https://www.davenportdiocese.org/documents/2020/3/RitesForEmergencies-Espanol-SmFile.pdf>); the Vietnamese translation is pending. This same information has been posted on the diocesan webpages dedicated to the COVID-19 pandemic (<https://www.davenportdiocese.org/qa>).