

GUIDANCE REGARDING HOLY WEEK and the PASCHAL TRIDUUM – 3/25/20 (adapted for SMO/SMP)

INTRODUCTION

At this time, SMO/SMP plans on celebrating Holy Week and the Paschal Triduum without the faithful being able to gather. The Holy See has provided guidance as to how this might take place, and the ritual books also provide direction regarding the Sacraments of Initiation. The Decree from the Holy See provides two key principles that we need to keep in mind. First, the date of Easter stands as it is. The entire liturgical year is linked to this date, and to move it would disconnect Easter from the rest of the calendar. Therefore, the Church is being asked to celebrate the Triduum on the proper dates.

Without an assembly present, the Triduum is to be celebrated at the cathedral and in every parish church. The directions for doing so are given below. The times when these liturgies are to be celebrated are to be publicized, so the faithful at home can join themselves in prayer to the liturgy being celebrated at the cathedral and at their parish church. Resources will be made available to help the faithful to do so. The liturgies are to be celebrated at the times prescribed: in the evening for Holy Thursday, at the usual time on Good Friday (3pm; later if necessary), and after dark for the Vigil.

The Decree states that it is “helpful” to livestream or broadcast these liturgies for the benefit of the faithful. However, there is no obligation to do so; SMO/SMP do not have this capability; certainly not in as a professional manner as professional broadcast services. The Decree does not regard the recording of the liturgies and then posting them to be helpful, since doing so extracts the liturgy from its proper context. While not ideal, especially with limited bandwidth in rural parts of our diocese, parishes may elect to record and post the liturgies as they have been doing.

Some parishes have been celebrating Mass with staff present. As long as this remains compliant with state protocols this is permitted, while music would be a welcome addition to these liturgies this may not be possible. This would not be possible if a shelter-in-place order is given or parish offices are closed.

PALM SUNDAY

According to directives from the Holy See, the Mass without an assembly has only a simple entrance rite and there is no blessing of palms. Palms are not to be blessed nor distributed at parishes. Otherwise, the liturgy is celebrated as usual.

HOLY THURSDAY

If the non-obligatory evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper is celebrated, the washing of the feet and the procession of the Blessed Sacrament to a separate place of reposition are omitted. The Blessed Sacrament is simply kept in the tabernacle. On this day the faculty to celebrate Mass in a suitable place, without the presence of the people, is granted to all priests. Priests who do not celebrate this Mass are to pray Evening Prayer for this day.

GOOD FRIDAY

If the non-obligatory, the liturgy of the Passion of the Lord is celebrated in its entirety. The Decree directs the local bishop to add an intention to the Universal Prayer for the sick, the dying, and all who are dismayed. In the Diocese of Davenport, this intention is to be added:

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XI. For those suffering from the current pandemic.

Priest (or Deacon or lay minister if still possible):

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.

EASTER VIGIL

The celebration of the Vigil is to take place with a number of rituals omitted. Priests who are unable to celebrate the Vigil are to pray the Office of Readings for Easter Sunday instead.

Sacraments of Initiation

Candidates for Full Communion / Catholics Completing Initiation

Since the Reception of Candidates for full communion and the completion of initiation of those already baptized as Catholics are not tied to the Easter Vigil, when an assembly is able to gather again for liturgy, these rites should be celebrated then as soon as possible.

The Elect

According to RCIA #26-30 (Initiation “Outside the Usual Time”), in extraordinary circumstances, a day other than the Easter Vigil may be chosen for the celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation. If done, the Mass of that Day (or, if allowed, one of the ritual Masses “Christian Initiation: Baptism”) is used. At this point in time, the Bishop has not made a decision as to a specific date; there are just too many unknowns.

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The Rite of Election

The SMP catechumens participated in the Rite of Election are now Elect.

The Scrutinies

The Elect of SMO/SMP have already celebrated the First Scrutiny on the Third Sunday of Lent and no other rite is required.

The Presentations

If not already done, the Creed and Lord's Prayer should be presented to the Elect at an appropriate time and in an appropriate place.

Emergencies

Please keep in mind that the RCIA includes rites for initiation in the danger of death.

IDEAS FOR THE DOMESTIC CHURCH

Resource

FDLC Region 7 is preparing a resource for use at home.

Observing Holy Week at Home

Families may be encourage to participate in the Stations on-line or on TV. In addition, they may do the same as a family at home.

Observing Holy Thursday at Home

In addition to joining in prayer at the time of the parish's Mass, or participating in it by electronic means, families may want to consider other ways to observe this day as well:

- Baking bread as a family.
- Reading the gospel account together and then washing one another's feet before supper.

Observing Good Friday at Home

In addition to joining in prayer at the time of the parish's liturgy, or participating in it by electronic means, families may want to consider other ways to observe this day as well:

- Reading the Passion
- Venerating a Cross or Crucifix present in the home
- Praying the Solemn Intercessions

Observing the Easter Vigil at Home

In addition to joining in prayer at the time of the parish's Mass, or participating in it by electronic means, families may want to consider other ways to observe this day as well:

- Keeping the house dark, and lighting candles
- Praying the Exsultet together
- Reading the Vigil readings together or pray the Office of Readings
- Singing the Gloria while ringing bells

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- Renewing their baptismal promises
- Blessing one another with water
- Pulling out and displaying mementos of their baptisms