

**Norms for Holy Week, the Paschal Triduum, and Easter
in the Diocese of Paterson
By Mandate of the Bishop**

By mandate of the **Supreme Pontiff, Francis**, the diocesan bishop has been given wide discretion by Decree of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments (Prot. N. 153/20) regarding the observance of Holy Week, the Paschal Triduum, and Easter for the year 2020 in the local church entrusted to his apostolic care.

In keeping with the provisions of the aforementioned decree and as moderator of liturgical life among the faithful entrusted to my care (Code of Canon Law: c. 835 §1) I make the following provisions for all parishes and institutions of the Diocese of Paterson:

1. **The date of Easter** is the linchpin of the entire liturgical year and is declared immovable by the Apostolic See through mandate of the Supreme Pontiff. The date of Easter remains [April 12, 2020](#).
2. **The Chrism Mass is postponed** to a date following Easter. The announcement of the date of the celebration will be given at a later time. The Sacred Chrism and Holy Oils consecrated and blessed last year remain for the administration of the sacraments. The administration of sacraments are completely valid and licit with the use of the Sacred Chrism and Holy Oils consecrated and blessed last year.
3. **Holy Week, the Paschal Triduum, and Easter** will be celebrated without the physical participation of the faithful.
4. **To the degree that they are able, parishes are to live stream** the liturgical celebrations of the Holy Week and Easter to the faithful without the physical presence of the faithful.
5. **Liturgical celebrations are to be live streamed and not recorded** so that the faithful may prayerfully unite themselves from their homes with the sacred action taking place in the parish church or chapel.

Further specific norms regarding individual celebrations:

1. **Passion (Palm) Sunday**: Palm is not to be blessed for distribution at this time; it will be blessed and distributed at a later time. The third form for the Entrance, i.e., The Simple Entrance as designated in the Roman Missal is to be used. All forms of the procession are suspended but the designated antiphon in the form of the Simple Entrance may be used.

2. **Holy Thursday:** The priests of the parish may celebrate the evening Mass of the Lord's Supper at any hour of the day and in any suitable place without people. The washing of feet, already optional, is omitted in every celebration this year. The procession to the place of adoration is omitted and the Blessed Sacrament is not available for adoration.

It is appropriate for the parish priest to spend some time before the Blessed Sacrament following the Mass in prayer for the people of his parish. The parish church should not be kept open on the evening of Holy Thursday to prevent the gathering of large crowds.

3. Priests unable to celebrate Mass on Holy Thursday should not fail to offer the Vespers of the day from the Liturgy of the Hours.

4. **Good Friday:** To the measure that it is possible, the parish priest should celebrate the Liturgy of the Lord's Passion without people present. There is no veneration of the cross by the people. A special intention for the sick, the dead, and those who feel lost or dismayed is to be added to the Universal Prayer. The parish church should not be kept open on Good Friday to prevent the gathering of large crowds.

5. **The Easter Vigil:** Where there is a real possibility of doing so, determined by the pastor responsible, the Easter Vigil is celebrated in the parish church. The Solemn Beginning of the Vigil or Lucernarium is omitted. The Paschal Candle is simply lit and the Easter Proclamation (Exsultet) follows. The Liturgy of the Word then takes place. For the Baptismal Liturgy only the Renewal of Baptism Promises is necessary. The font is not blessed.

6. All expressions of popular piety and processions, i.e., live Stations of the Cross, processions with the Sorrowful Mother or other types of processions are suspended. Such expressions of piety may be moved to later dates which will be announced at an appropriate time.

7. Easter food is not blessed at the parish or any other public setting. The faithful may be referred to an adaptation made by the pastor and distributed via the internet of the Order for the Blessing of Food for the First Meal of Easter in the Book of Blessings.

8. **The Mass of Easter Day** may be celebrated and the faithful joined spiritually with the liturgical action through live stream.

9. All the above guidelines apply to religious houses, institutes and communities.

A Plenary Indulgence

The Apostolic Penitentiary, through the authority of the Supreme Pontiff, has granted a Plenary Indulgence to all of those who are suffering from the coronavirus or those who are caring for those who are ill, and additionally to all those subject to quarantine during this time of grave difficulty. In order to obtain the Indulgence, which is the remission before God of guilt for sins already forgiven, the faithful are to observe the devotions and disposition outlined in the decree:

The Plenary Indulgence is granted to 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.

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" (John 15: 13), will obtain the same gift of the Plenary Indulgence under the same conditions.

The Holy Father has provided this Plenary Indulgence in order for the suffering and those who selflessly labor in the care of the sick are united ever more closely with Christ the healer and reliant on the all-powerful and never failing mercy of God.

All to the contrary notwithstanding.

Given this 20th day of March, 2020.