



DIOCESE *of* GAYLORD

DATE: February 11, 2021
TO: All Clergy, Directors of Parish Life and Parishes Leaders
FROM: Beth Hicks, Director, Office of Worship
RE: **Lent and Holy Week Regulations – Updated with Additional Information**

Communal Penance Services

Communal penance services may be celebrated using the Rite of Reconciliation of Several Penitents with Individual Confession and Absolution (*Rite of Penance*, Chapter II).

The Rite of Reconciliation of Individual Penitents (*Rite of Penance*, Chapter I) remains the preferred form of celebration for the safety of people during the pandemic.

The conditions for the use of General Absolution (*Rite of Penance*, Chapter III) are not present in the diocese and may not be used.

Stations of the Cross

Stations of the Cross may be celebrated with safety protocols being observed.

Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord

The distribution of palms may take place before Mass. The palms should be spread out on tables where the faithful take their own palm. It may be helpful to have a sign reminding people to only touch the palm they are taking. Alternatively, a few volunteers with sanitized hands or wearing gloves could assist in distribution.

The Second Form, The Solemn Entrance is to be used for the first Mass of Palm Sunday.

Holy Thursday Mass of the Lord's Supper

There is to be only one Mass of the Lord's Supper celebrated in the evening.

The Washing of the Feet is always optional. This year, for the safety of both the people and the priests, Washing of the Feet should be omitted.

The transfer of the Most Blessed Sacrament shall be done with necessary ministers only in the procession to the location of repose. If necessary, the route should be modified to allow for proper distancing. The area for adorers who remain near the place of repose for prayer should be set up to maintain appropriate and comfortable distancing.

Good Friday of the Passion of the Lord

There is to be only one celebration of the Passion of the Lord on this day.

Individual adoration of the cross is permitted. The people are to process forward, socially distanced, to venerate the cross with a bow. Only the celebrant may touch and kiss the cross during Adoration.

A special intercession should be included as the 11th of the Solemn Intercessions. The same text from 2020 may 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.

The Easter Vigil in the Holy Night

This year, the Easter Vigil may begin as early as 8:00 pm.

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 should be limited to the ministers the elect and godparents, candidates and sponsors.

Since all would need to remove their masks and exhale forcefully to extinguish them, the use of small candles by the faithful during the Lucernarium and the Renewal of Baptismal Promises is discouraged. Should you choose to offer the small candles to the faithful, it would be prudent to acknowledge the circumstances ahead of time, giving directions for a timely and orderly process of sharing the light and the safest manner of extinguishing them.

Baptism is by infusion (pouring) only this year. Fresh water is to be used for each baptism.

Holy water fonts will need to be left unfilled.

The priest is to sanitize his hands between each anointing during the Rite of Confirmation. The anointing may also be done using a cotton ball or swab. If cotton is used, please be sure it is burned afterwards for appropriate disposal of the Chrism oil.