

## Archdiocese of Seattle

# Liturgy Guidelines for Holy Week 2020

Holy Week is the heart of our liturgical life, gathering us, year after year, to celebrate the Paschal Mystery of Christ's life, death, and resurrection. Church documents on the liturgies of Holy Week speak repeatedly of the importance of the presence of the faithful along with their priests and deacons for the proper celebration of Holy Week: "The celebrations of the Sacred Triduum are to be carried out... with a good attendance of the faithful, an appropriate number of ministers, and the means to sing at least some of the parts" (*Roman Missal*).

Clearly, as we continue to fight Covid-19 in our local communities and our world, we will not be able to celebrate Holy Week in its fullness this year. However, the principal liturgies will still take place, with the following adaptations for our present circumstances. These guidelines have been developed for our local Church through the lens of "an abundance of caution," acknowledging our need to keep people safe as well as the physical absence of our parish families. They incorporate the mandates included in the March 19, 2020 decree of the Congregation of Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments (included at the end of this guide) and have been written in light of Governor Inslee's "Stay Healthy, Stay Home" decree of March 24, 2020. *These guidelines are subject to change based on the latest directives from local and state authorities. We will keep you abreast of any changes to the following guidelines via the Archdiocesan website and C2P newsletter.*

### **Rites of Christian Initiation of Adults deferred**

In the Archdiocese of Seattle, the sacraments of initiation will not be celebrated at the Easter Vigil this year. Baptisms and Reception into Full Communion will be deferred to a later date. Given the rapidly changing situation around us, we cannot determine a date at this time. The Archbishop will designate a date for the sacraments of initiation in the Archdiocese of Seattle as soon as it is possible to do so. In this way, we can celebrate these important rites together.

### **Gatherings are not allowed**

Since gatherings of any size are banned, according to the "Stay Healthy, Stay Home" order from Governor Inslee, we cannot begin to replicate our usual parish celebrations of Holy Week, nor should we attempt to do that. All we can do is celebrate the liturgies as simply and prayerfully as we can.

### **Communion Services not permitted**

Communion services of any kind, before, during, or after Holy Week, are not permitted. This is a tough but necessary precaution, given how liturgies, including Catholic liturgies in Brooklyn, Yakima, and elsewhere, have been shown to contribute to the

spread of the virus. We must do our part by waiting to gather for Eucharist until we can be sure it is safe to do so.

Receiving Holy Communion at Easter is a privilege and obligation treasured by countless Catholics. The Archbishop invites all the faithful of the Archdiocese of Seattle to make their “Easter Communion” as soon as we are free to gather together again.

### **Palm Sunday**

Because we cannot be confident that we can safely distribute the blessed palms, there is to be **no distribution of blessed palms. Outdoor processions on Palm Sunday may not take place this year.** Parishes should use the “Third Form: The Simple Entrance” in the Missal for Palm Sunday. *If desired, a priest may bless palms for distribution to the parish later on, when restrictions on gathering have been lifted.*

### **Holy Thursday – Chrism Mass**

The Chrism Mass will be deferred until the priests and people of the Archdiocese of Seattle can gather together at St. James Cathedral. The oils will be blessed and distributed at that time. Priests may continue to use their existing oils until they receive the new oils.

### **Holy Thursday – Evening Mass**

In the new guidelines from the Vatican, the restrictions on Masses celebrated by the priest alone on Holy Thursday have been lifted. If it is possible to livestream the liturgy, each priest/pastor could share streaming information with their own community.

- The Washing of Feet, which is an optional element, is to be entirely omitted this year.
- The Transfer of the Blessed Sacrament is entirely omitted and the Eucharist is simply placed in the tabernacle in the usual way at the conclusion of Mass.

### **Good Friday**

- There are to be no public celebrations of the Way of the Cross, “Living Stations,” etc., whether indoors or outdoors, which could draw a crowd.
- Please add the following intention to the Solemn Intercessions at the Friday of the Passion of the Lord liturgy:

Introduction: **Let us pray also for those suffering because of the coronavirus – for those who are sick and their families, for those who are frightened and alone, and for all doctors, nurses, and researchers who are serving the common good. (Let us kneel. Let us stand.)**

Collect: **Almighty ever-living God, source of life and hope, hear our prayers, and stretch out your hand to protect us. Grant healing to the sick, banish disease from our midst, and speed the day when**

**we can gather to give you thanks in the midst of your Church.  
Through Christ our Lord.**

- Following the showing of the cross (either form may be used), the priest venerates with a genuflection or bow and the sign of the cross, not touching the cross. After the priest's veneration, the individual veneration of the cross is to be omitted.
- If the church is opened for prayer before or after the liturgy, pastors should ensure that crowds do not gather. People should be asked to venerate the cross without touching it.

### **Holy Saturday**

- The Easter Vigil should begin no earlier than 8:30 p.m.
- The blessing of the fire and procession with the Paschal Candle are entirely omitted. The Paschal candle is lit and the Exsultet is sung. The Liturgy of the Word follows.
- Given the limited personnel, note that you have the option to reduce the number of readings and to omit the psalms. The third reading, however, Exodus 14:15-15:1, may never be omitted.
- The liturgy proceeds much as usual through the homily. Because the sacraments of initiation will not take place during the Easter Vigil, the Litany of the Saints is omitted.
- The Blessing of the Font and Sprinkling with Holy Water are to be entirely omitted this year. After the homily, go directly to the Renewal of Baptismal Promises. The Prayer of the Faithful follows the Renewal.
- The Liturgy of the Eucharist proceeds as usual.

### **Easter Sunday**

- In livestreamed Masses, the Renewal of Baptismal Promises is an important way to engage the participation of the community. In Masses that are not livestreamed, the Creed may be substituted. Whether the Creed or the Renewal of Baptismal Promises is used, the Sprinkling Rite is omitted.

Corinna Laughlin, Pastoral Assistant for Liturgy at St. James Cathedral, will lead a webinar on Holy Week during this year of Covid-19 on **Friday, March 27 from 11:00am-12:00pm**. Any pastors or parish liturgical leaders are welcome to participate. (See registration instructions below.) It may be useful for both pastors and lay liturgical leaders as you prepare for Holy Week in your parishes.

These guidelines are quite restrictive, but these are unprecedented circumstances and we all want to keep our communities safe. We must seek out ways to help our parish communities feel close to God and to one another as they keep these holy days at home this year. A **guide for celebrating Holy Week in the domestic Church will be coming soon.**

Celebrating Holy Week without being able to gather with the holy people of God will be difficult this year. As we prepare for this Holy Week like no other, let us join in praying the words of Psalm 42, with its message of sadness, trust, and hope.

*Like the deer that yearns  
for running streams,  
so my soul is yearning  
for you, my God.*

*My soul is thirsting for God,  
the living God;  
when can I enter and appear  
before the face of God?*

*These things will I remember  
as I pour out my soul:  
for I would go to the place  
of your wondrous tent,  
all the way to the house of God,  
amid cries of gladness and thanksgiving,  
the throng keeping joyful festival.*

*Why are you cast down, my soul;  
why groan within me?  
Hope in God; I will praise him yet again,  
my saving presence and my God.*

Psalm 42:2-3, 5-6 (Revised Grail)

*Webinar: Holy Week in the Context of Covid-19*

Corinna Laughlin, Pastoral Assistant for Liturgy at St. James Cathedral, will walk us through the Vatican and Archdiocesan guidelines for the major liturgies of Holy Week this year, reviewing what's different and answering questions you might have about what's possible in these extraordinary circumstances.

**Use this link to join the meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.**

<https://www.gotomeet.me/CorinnaLaughlin>

**You can also dial in using your phone.**

United States: [+1 \(571\) 317-3122](tel:+15713173122)

**Access Code:** 205-577-365

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