



CATHOLIC
DIOCESE *of* RALEIGH

**NORMS AND GUIDELINES FOR
THE SACRED PASCHAL TRIDUUM,
AND THE SEASON OF EASTER
2021**

Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord

March 28, 2021

The commemoration on this day with the blessing and the procession of palms is a ritual action that marks our entry into Holy Week.

Pastors should decide on which of the three options given in the Roman Missal for the beginning of the Sacred Liturgy on this day will be celebrated: the Procession, the Solemn Entrance, and the Simple Entrance. Masses beginning with either the Procession or the Solemn Entrance **omit the Penitential Act**.

Palms may be distributed outside of the liturgy but in a manner that respects the requirements of social distancing and masking.

The Passion proclaimed on this day is essential to the Sacred Liturgy and cannot be omitted. The narrative of the Lord's Passion is read without candles or incense, without greeting or signing of the Book of the Gospels. It is read by a Deacon, or when there is no Deacon by a Priest. It may also be read by readers, with the part of Christ reserved to the Priest. For the spiritual good of the faithful the Passion should be proclaimed in its entirety. The First and Second Readings and the Responsorial Psalm should not be omitted.

The Chrism Mass

March 30, 2021 – 10:30 a.m.

The Chrism Mass will be celebrated by Most Rev. Luis R. Zarama, Bishop of Raleigh, on **Tuesday, March 30, at Holy Name of Jesus Cathedral, Raleigh, at 10:30 a.m.**; the Procession will begin at 10:15 a.m. **Please make note of the change in time for the celebration of this liturgy and prepare accordingly.**

Priests and deacons of the diocese are invited to bring **two representatives from their respective parishes** to participate in this liturgy.

No other liturgies should be scheduled in the Diocese at this time.

The Chrism Mass is celebrated every year in every Diocese. During this important preparatory liturgy for the Paschal Triduum, the Bishop blesses the Oil of Catechumens, the Oil of the Sick, and consecrates the Sacred Chrism.

This liturgy, which the Bishop concelebrates with his presbyterate, should be, as it were, a manifestation of the Priests' communion with their Bishop.

At this liturgy, also, the Priests of the Diocese will renew their priestly promises before the Bishop following the homily; which promises are then affirmed by the gathered assembly of the faithful in the name of all the faithful of the Diocese.

The Holy Oils blessed at the Chrism Mass will be distributed to representatives of the parishes of the Diocese after the Post-Communion prayer. These oils will then be received by the parochial communities usually at the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday.

The Sacred Paschal Triduum

In the Sacred Triduum, the Church solemnly celebrates the greatest mysteries

of our redemption, keeping by means of special celebrations the memorial of her Lord, crucified, buried, and risen (*RM, I - The Sacred Paschal Triduum*).

It is very important, especially during this time of pandemic that special care should be given in encouraging the faithful to participate in all three days of the Triduum, whether in person (given restrictions on the number of people who may assemble publicly, masking, and social distancing) or via live streaming.

Thursday of the Lord's Supper (Holy Thursday) **April 1, 2021**

The Liturgy of the Hours, particularly Morning Prayer, is encouraged among the faithful.

Lent concludes with the beginning of the Paschal Triduum, the Mass of the Lord's Supper.

The tabernacle should be entirely empty, but a sufficient amount of bread should be consecrated in this Mass for Holy Communion on this and the following day.

Please note that on Holy Thursday the only Mass permitted is the Mass of the Lord's Supper. In the case of a genuine necessity, the Bishop may permit a second evening Mass of the Lord's Supper or even, in case of genuine necessity, a Mass in the morning for those who are unable to participate in the evening Mass. **Permission for these Masses must be obtained through the Office of the Bishop. Any such request must be sent to the Office of the Bishop prior to March 11, 2021.**

It is appropriate that the Holy Oils and Sacred Chrism blessed and consecrated at the Chrism Mass be received in the parish. The reception of the Holy Oils and the Sacred Chrism may take place either before the celebration of the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper or at another time that seems more appropriate.

The proper form of this optional rite for the presentation of the Holy Oils and Sacred Chrism is available through the USCCB website:

<http://usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/liturgical-year/triduum/order-for-the-reception-of-the-holy-oils.cfm>.

Given the pandemic-related restrictions on personal contact imposed by social distancing, it is once again not advisable to celebrate the Washing of Feet ritual (*Mandatum*), which ritual is optional in the Roman Rite.

Aside from the presider and concelebrants Holy Communion is received in only one form this year – the Body of Christ.

Following the Prayer after Communion, the Holy Eucharist is transferred to an Altar or Place of Repose. This may be the Tabernacle regularly used for reservation if it is in a separate Chapel or an area removed from the Sanctuary. The Altar or Place of Repose should be decorated simply. The Blessed Sacrament is not to be exposed in a Monstrance.

If a pastor deems it is appropriate and all social distancing, masking, and other restrictions are followed, the faithful may be invited for a short period (or short periods) to continue adoration before the Blessed Sacrament during the night. Adoration should only take place till midnight this year. *It is not permitted to reserve the Precious Blood for adoration on Holy Thursday or for distribution on Good Friday* (CN, 30).

At an appropriate time, the Altar is stripped, and whenever possible the crosses and crucifixes in the Church are removed. Any crosses that remain should be covered. Votive candles should not be lit before the images of saints (CL, 57). Holy water should be removed from all fonts. They are refilled with the Easter water blessed at the Easter Vigil.

If the celebration of the Passion of the Lord on the following day does not take place in the same church, the Mass is concluded in the usual way without a procession or reposition. The Blessed Sacrament is placed in the tabernacle.

Friday of the Passion of the Lord (Good Friday)

April 2, 2021

The order for the Solemn Celebration of the Lord's Passion, the Liturgy of the Word, the Solemn Intercessions, the Adoration of the Holy Cross and Holy Communion, stems from an ancient tradition of the Church and should be observed faithfully.

The Paschal Fast should be kept from Friday of the Lord's Passion and, when appropriate, prolonged also through Holy Saturday as a way of coming, with spirit uplifted, to the joys of the Lord's Resurrection.

The Liturgy of the Hours, particularly Morning Prayer, is encouraged among the faithful.

The celebration of the Lord's Passion **should take place at or about 3:00pm**. If pastoral need dictates, this celebration may take place later in the day. This liturgy is ideally celebrated only once for each parish community. It may not be celebrated in the absence of a priest.

The Readings are to be proclaimed in their entirety. The Passion is to be read in the prescribed way, previously outlined for Palm Sunday.

The Solemn Intercessions are to follow the form and text as found in the Roman Missal. Continued from last year a special intention for those whose lives have been affected and disrupted by the Coronavirus pandemic is included as Intercession IXa. A sample copy of the intercession is attached to this memo.

Because of the requirements of social distancing and the restrictions on repeated personal contact it is not possible individual adoration and veneration of the Cross. For this reason, the priest, after it has been revealed to the assembly, takes the cross and, standing in the middle of the sanctuary, invites the faithful gathered to adore the Holy Cross and elevates it for a short time for the faithful to adore in silence.

While it is permissible to adore a Cross with a corpus upon it, from ancient tradition it has been the custom of the Church to adore “the wood” of the Cross without the body of Christ, and so a Cross and not a Crucifix may best convey the symbolic nature of this part of the liturgy.

When adoration has been concluded, the Cross is placed at the altar with two to four candles around it.

After the Dismissal, the ministers genuflect to the Cross and depart in silence.

After the celebration, the altar is stripped but the Cross and candles remain so that the faithful may venerate it and spend some time in adoration.

Evening Prayer is not celebrated by those who have been present at the Solemn Celebration of the Lord’s Passion.

Holy Saturday

April 3, 2021

The Liturgy of the Hours, particularly Morning Prayer, is encouraged among the faithful.

The celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage is not permitted, nor is the celebration of other sacraments, except those of Penance and Anointing of the Sick.

Easter Sunday of the Lord's Resurrection – The Easter Vigil in the Holy Night

“Today is the day of Easter joy! May the Risen Lord breathe on our minds and open our eyes that we may know him in the breaking of the bread and follow him in his risen life.”

The Mass of the Vigil is celebrated through four parts: the *Lucernarium* and Easter Proclamation; the Liturgy of the Word; the Baptismal Liturgy; and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. The Vigil is celebrated in its entirety. It is encouraged that Communion be offered under both species.

The entire celebration of the Vigil must take place at night: that is, it should begin after nightfall. The Easter Vigil should begin at a time that allows for the Easter Fire to break the darkness of night. This rule is to be taken according to its strictest sense. On Saturday, April 3, 2021, sunset is 7:38 pm EDT and nautical twilight commences at 8:04 pm EDT. Therefore, for parishes **in the Diocese of Raleigh, the Easter Vigil may not be scheduled before 8:15 p.m.**

Note that the Easter Vigil is not to be celebrated at the time of day that the anticipated Sunday Mass on Saturday ordinarily takes place. There is to be only one celebration of the Vigil. Questions on scheduling should be directed to the Office of Divine Worship.

The Paschal Candle must be made of wax, not be artificial, be renewed each year, be only one in number, and be of sufficiently large size, so that it may evoke the truth that Christ is the light of the world (CL, 82). The Paschal Candle is lit for all liturgies during the Easter Season. (CB, 372)

The preparation rites of the Paschal Candle are not optional and must be included in the celebration.

To accommodate parishes that have mission churches where the Vigil is not celebrated, the Secretariat of the Committee on Divine Worship of the USCCB suggests that Paschal Candles prepared beforehand could be present at the church where the Vigil is celebrated and blessed alongside the principal Paschal Candle.

As the candles are lit throughout the church, the Candle could be lit and held by a representative of the mission church who will take it to the church for Mass on Easter Sunday. It should be carried lit in the Entrance Procession of the first Mass at each church and put in a place in the sanctuary.

The Easter Proclamation (*Exsultet*) is sung by the Deacon, in the absence of a deacon, by the Priest-Celebrant or another concelebrating priest, or a lay Cantor.

For the Easter Vigil, “the mother of all Vigils,” nine Readings are provided – seven from the Old Testament, and two from the New Testament – all of which should be read whenever this can be done, so that the character of the Vigil, which demands an extended period of time, may be preserved.

The reading of the Word of God is a fundamental part of the Easter Vigil; however, for serious pastoral considerations, fewer Readings may be chosen. There should be at least three Readings from the Old Testament, taken from the Law and the Prophets. The Reading from Exodus with its canticle must never be omitted.

With the exception of the Reading from Exodus and its Canticle, any of the Responsorial Psalms may be replaced by a period of sacred silence.

The parts unique to the Vigil which should always be sung are the acclamations during the Procession with the Paschal Candle, the Easter Proclamation, the responsorial *Alleluia* after the Epistle, the Litany of the Saints, and the acclamation after the Blessing of the Easter Water.

In addition to Eucharistic Acclamations which are ordinarily sung, the *Gloria* should be sung, rather than merely recited, because of the festive nature of the Vigil.

The priest celebrant solemnly intones the *Alleluia* three times raising his voice a step each time before the Gospel. If necessary, the psalmist intones the *Alleluia* in the same manner.

The Sacraments of Initiation, particularly for the Church's Elect, may be celebrated according to the ritual prescribed in the liturgical texts. Social distancing in as far as it is possible should be observed with the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation. The use of an instrument, a cotton swab, for applying the Sacred Chrism is permitted for the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Adults (and children of catechetical age) receiving the Sacrament of Baptism or being brought into full communion in the Church during the Easter Vigil (RCIA, 562-594) must be confirmed by the Priest-Celebrant (RCIA, 588).

“Pastoral considerations that suggest that along with the celebration of the sacraments of Christian initiation the Easter Vigil should include the rite of reception of already baptized Christians into the full communion of the Catholic Church must be guided by the theological and pastoral directives proper to each rite. In its actual arrangement the celebration itself must reflect the status of candidates for reception into the full communion of the Catholic Church as having already been incorporated into Christ in baptism and anything that would equate them with catechumens is to be absolutely avoided” (see RCIA, 562-565).

Given restrictions on the number of people who may be able to gather indoors, the celebration of Reception into Full Communion for those candidates to receive only Confirmation and Eucharist may be delayed to another day in the Easter Season (see RCIA, 26-30). If it is at all possible, the Solemnity of Pentecost should be avoided as day on which to celebrate Reception into Full Communion.

Easter Sunday of the Lord's Resurrection –
Mass during the Day
April 4, 2021

The holy water fonts at the entrance to the church should be filled with the Easter Water blessed at the Easter Vigil.

On Easter Sunday (*Victimae paschali laudes*) and Pentecost Sunday (*Veni Sancte Spiritus*), the Sequence is required and is sung before the *Alleluia* (STTL, 165). The Sequence may be sung by all together or alternating between the congregation and cantor/choir, or by the choir or cantor alone (STTL, 166).

The *Double Alleluia* is added to the Dismissal Rite for Masses during the Octave of Easter and on Pentecost Sunday (CB, 373).

At all Masses on Easter Sunday, the *Renewal of Baptismal Promises* and its accompanying *Rite of Sprinkling of Water* takes place after the Homily and replaces the Creed.

Easter Season

The fifty days from Easter Sunday (April 3, 2021) to Pentecost (May 23, 2021), audibly and visually, are to be celebrated with a particular joy and exultation at the gift of the Resurrection. They are celebrated in joyful exultation as one feast day, or better, as “one great Sunday.” These above all others are the days for the singing of the *Alleluia* (GIRM, 22).

The first eight days of the Easter Season are the Octave of Easter and are celebrated as Solemnities of the Lord and as Easter Day (CB, 371 and 373).

During the Easter Season the *Rite of Blessing and Sprinkling of Water* may replace the Penitential Act (GIRM, Appendix II).

Throughout the Easter season the Neophytes, those who were baptized at the Easter Vigil, should be assigned their own special place among the faithful. Intercession should be made in the Eucharistic Prayer for the newly baptized during the Easter Octave.

Infant baptisms fittingly are celebrated on any Sunday of the Easter Season, including Pentecost Sunday. It is also appropriate that children receive First Communion on one or other of the Sundays of Easter.

The Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord

May 16, 2021

In the Ecclesiastical Province of Atlanta, the Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord has been transferred to Sunday and will be celebrated on Sunday, May 16, 2021, suppressing the Seventh Sunday of Easter.

The Solemnity of Pentecost

May 23, 2021

The Vigil Mass is celebrated on Saturday evening (May 22, 2021). The Roman Missal now provides an option for an extended Vigil with six Readings. Four Readings are proclaimed with their psalms and prayers after the Penitential Act and before the *Gloria* is sung. At the conclusion of the *Gloria*, the Collect is prayed, and the Mass continues with the Second Reading prescribed in the Lectionary (Romans 8: 22-27), and the Gospel prescribed for the Mass. After the Homily, the Mass continues in the usual way. The Missal also provides for a simple Vigil which does not include the additional Readings before the *Gloria*. However, whether or not the extended Vigil is used, the Propers and Readings of the Vigil are always celebrated for the Masses on Saturday evening.

There is no Sequence at the Celebration of the Vigil. The Sequence of Pentecost is sung at all Masses on Sunday only.

After Pentecost, the Paschal Candle may be returned to a less prominent place, but always placed near the Baptismal Font.

Referenced Abbreviations

CB – Ceremonial of Bishops; CN – Norms for the Distribution and Reception of Holy Communion; CL – Circular Letter concerning the Preparation and Celebration of the Easter Feasts (Congregation for Divine Worship, 1988); GIRM – General Instruction of the Roman Missal; OCM – Order of Celebrating Matrimony; OCF – Order of Christian Funerals; RCIA – Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults; RM: Roman Missal; RP – Rite of Penance; STTL – Sing to the Lord.

Approved for publication on 5th day of February 2020

**Most Reverend Luis Rafael Zarama
Bishop, Diocese of Raleigh**