

Norms for the Celebration of the Sacraments – Diocese of Pembroke

- I. We must balance the common good of the people regarding their health and possible exposure to the Covid-19 Coronavirus and their spiritual needs at this time.
- II. **Care for the Priest:** Priests or deacons with compromised health conditions and advanced age should stay at home in isolation. Priests should not be gathering for meals and visits during this time. Priests should be staying in their parishes, quarantined as much as possible, especially if there are two or more living in the same residence.
- III. **Private Celebrations of Mass:** Priests are hereby forbidden to celebrate Masses with small groups in people's homes or in the Church. A "private", in our present context, means that the priest celebrates Mass alone.

IV. **Church Buildings**

- a. All churches and adoration chapels are to be closed and locked. Signs should be posted.
- V. **Baptisms:** Unless there is a danger of death, baptisms should be postponed until a later date. In this case, the formula for the Rite of Baptism in Danger of Death, page 152 of the Rite of Baptism for Children issued. The Ceremonies for Baptism can be supplied at a later date in the Parish church.
- VI. **Confirmations:** All Confirmations are postponed until further notice. In danger of death, priests have the faculty to confirm.

VII. **Holy Mass**

- a. The public celebration of Mass is suspended until further notice by decree of the Archbishop and in accordance with the regulations of the Provinces of Ontario and Quebec.
 - b. Priests are not to go to homes or to have Masses with select groups of people. Such gatherings, which will be discovered by others, will cause hurt in the community, and they defeat the purpose of social distancing so necessary to defeat this virus.
 - c. Videotaping and streaming of Masses: There are already various resources on the internet, Facebook, and on Vision TV, EWTN and Salt and Light Television. Parishioners should be encouraged to use these resources. There is no reason to re-invent the wheel at this time.
- VIII. **Easter Triduum:** Priests are encouraged to celebrate the Triduum rites in accordance with the Decree of the Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship. These celebrations must be carried out in private. (See Appendix A)
- a. A priest may choose not to celebrate the Good Friday Liturgy and the Easter Vigil Mass. If the Easter Vigil is not celebrated, then at least 4 readings from the Breviary for that evening are used.

IX. Sacrament of the Sick

- a. The Sacrament of the Sick is not to be celebrated other than in cases of extreme illness.
- b. The Sacrament for the Dying is the Holy Eucharist – Viaticum. This would be impossible to administer.
- c. Outside of the quarantine, if even allowed in the hospital, ask the person if he or she is sorry for their sins and assume they have heard it and are repentant. Then, give Absolution and the Apostolic Pardon.
- d. Protective eye wear, gowns, medical gloves and a proper mask (usually fitted and a number is given of what type of mask is to be used) must be worn if you are even allowed into the health facility. (Appendix B)
- e. Communion to the Sick: This is suspended until further notice.

X. Funerals

- a. Funerals in the church are suspended until further notice.
- b. In the case of a body, a burial may take place with the priest saying the prayers at the graveside. A memorial Mass can be scheduled later.
- c. In the case of ashes, the Funeral Mass can be scheduled for a later date with burial following.

XI. Marriages

- a. Weddings are suspended until further notice.
- b. NOTE: It is highly unlikely that anyone would wish to proceed with a wedding, given that they will not be able to celebrate it with family and friends.

- XII. **Confessions:** This is the one sacrament we should attempt to have available to the people. Of all the sacraments we can offer, Penance is the one that will soothe the soul. Great care, as always, must be taken to ensure the privacy of the penitent.
- a. Never in the confession box or a confessional room.
 - b. No confessions in the church or any building.
 - c. This could be an opportunity to hear the confessions of those who have long abandoned the Sacrament. Great mercy should be shown.
 - d. It is possible to hear confessions sitting in your vehicle with the people driving up to you in their vehicle. A safe distance must be maintained. A safe distance from others must also be maintained, to protect the confidentiality of the confession. The area must be very private so that no one can hear the confession from their homes. GREAT PRUDENCE MUST BE TAKEN.

Appendix A - Norms for the Easter Triduum

Holy Thursday:

- a) No processions
- b) No Mandatum (Washing of the Feet)
- c) No congregation. Pope Francis has dispensed all priests from this requirement.
- d) The Blessed Sacrament is to be kept in the main tabernacle. No reservation chapel needed.

Good Friday

- a) No processions
- b) Service as usual.
- c) No congregation.

Easter Vigil

- a) No Fire
- b) No Preparation of the Paschal Candle
- c) No Procession
- d) Simply light the Paschal Candle, located beside the Ambo.
- e) Read or sing the Exultet.
- f) Do the Liturgy of the Word (Minimum 3 readings)
- g) For the Baptismal Liturgy, only necessary to pray the Apostles Creed. (You are not prohibited from blessing the water.)
- h) Mass as usual.

Appendix B - Protective Clothing

1. A gown.
2. Goggles to protect the eyes must be used.
3. Medical gloves must be used.
4. The only mask that will give good protection is the special mask that a hospital usually has you fitted for when you begin to serve that hospital. If this has not been done, you should inquire with your local hospital about getting fitted for this mask.
5. You may wish to exercise this amount of caution if called to the sick bed of someone at home.
6. Hardware stores sell some excellent protection masks.