



ROMAN CATHOLIC  
**DIOCESE**  
**OF CHARLESTON**  
OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

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March 24, 2020

Dear Brother Priests,

Let me express my gratitude for all you have done the past week as we made the unprecedented move to shift our liturgies and devotions to the virtual world. I have heard from so many people that they are grateful for our efforts to bring the faith into their homes.

Please continue to operate your parish under these directives:

- Masses are suspended until further notice.
- Churches will remain open for private prayer, but adoration in an exposed monstrance is not permitted.
- Confirmations are postponed until our churches reopen.
- Penance: An indulgence has been offered by the Holy See, [Care of Souls and Forgiveness of Sins During this Pandemic](#). I ask that you educate your parishioners on this important measure provided to them during the pandemic. The Sacrament of Penance is to be suspended except for those in danger of death. All other means of providing the Sacraments should cease.

Anointing of sick should be administered to those who are in danger of death. Please take extreme precautions and follow directives of medical professionals when administering this to those infected with COVID-19.

Although we hoped to open our church doors to the faithful sooner than later, the ongoing spread of COVID-19 will prohibit us from doing so. We will continue to celebrate Mass virtually until further notice, which includes Holy Week and Easter Sunday.

### **Information for Priests about Holy Week**

Chrism Mass will take place at the Pastoral Center on Tuesday, April 7 at 11:00 a.m. Deans and Vicars are invited to attend the Mass. Afterward, a light luncheon will be served. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, we must limit the number of people present.

Priests are asked to tune in to the live stream, which will be broadcast on the diocesan YouTube channel, [youtube.com/DioceseChas](https://www.youtube.com/DioceseChas), and on Facebook Live, [facebook.com/DioceseChas](https://www.facebook.com/DioceseChas), so they may renew their promises made at ordination. Oils will be sent via deans to the dean's parish where they can be picked up by the various parishes. Extra oils will be available to all deans if individual parishes need more.

Regarding Holy Week, the Vatican has sent directions on how we should celebrate:

- Scrutinies
  - All are dispensed
- Passion Sunday
  - Do not bless or distribute palms
  - Do not hold a procession
- Holy Thursday
  - Do not wash feet
  - Do not hold a procession or Repository (Blessed Sacrament to be returned to Tabernacle)
- Good Friday
  - Veneration of the Cross can either be a simple bow or silent prayer, if viewed on the internet, or you may venerate your personal crucifix
  - Add these prayers to your intercessions: [Good Friday Solemn Intercession XI](#)
- Easter Vigil & Easter Sunday
  - Do not light a fire or hold a procession; Easter candle should be lit at the start followed by the proclamation of the Exultet
  - Postpone baptisms and reception into the church until Pentecost (if an exception for this is needed, please contact me for permission)
  - The Baptismal liturgy may be simply fulfilled with the renewal of the Baptismal promises

### **Information to Share with Parishioners**

Holy Week Masses will be live streamed from the Pastoral Center. Links can be found on the COVID-19 Response page of the diocesan website: [charlestdiocese.org/covid-19-response](http://charlestdiocese.org/covid-19-response).

- Palm Sunday, April 5
  - Mass in English at 11:00 a.m.
  - Mass in Spanish at 12:30 p.m.
- Monday, April 6
  - Mass at 8:30 a.m.
- Tuesday, April 7
  - Chrism Mass at 11:00 a.m.
- Wednesday, April 8
  - Mass at 8:30 a.m.
- Holy Thursday, April 9
  - Liturgy of the Lord's Supper at 8:00 p.m.
- Good Friday, April 10
  - Liturgy at 3:00 p.m.
- Easter Vigil, April 11
  - Mass at 8:00 p.m.
- Easter Sunday, April 12
  - Mass in English at 11:00 a.m.

- Mass in Spanish at 12:30 p.m.

Finally, please communicate to your parishioners that all are dispensed from Fast and Abstinence for the duration of Lent, except for Good Friday.

Again, thank you for your commitment to the faithful in the Diocese of Charleston. Let us continue to pray for each other and for an end to this virus.

In the Lord's Peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Robert E. Guglielmo". The signature is written in a cursive style and is preceded by a small cross symbol.

Most Rev. Robert E. Guglielmo  
Bishop of Charleston

**For further reading**

- [Holy See regarding special indulgence to the faithful](#)
- [Holy See regarding the Sacrament of Reconciliation](#)