

SUMMARY OF DIRECTIVES ON THE CELEBRATION OF SACRAMENTS & LITURGIES DURING COVID-19 IN THE DIOCESE OF CALGARY

MARCH 24, 2020

PUBLIC GATHERINGS

Apart from Funeral Masses, previously-scheduled weddings and baptisms, there are to be no other public gatherings permitted in the church.

As of March 24, 2020, all public gatherings cannot have more than 50 attendees. Depending on the size of the church space, this number may need to be smaller in order to observe the required social distancing requirements.

Any event that expects to have international participants, or involves critical infrastructure staff, seniors, or other high-risk populations, should be cancelled.

SANITIZE SURFACES

All high-contact surfaces in the church including but not limited to pews, door handles, liturgical items, hymnals and musical instruments, should be sanitized between services.

BLESSING WITH HOLY WATER

When holy water is required for blessing, fill a clean vessel with fresh water. Bless the water either before or during the celebration. Immediately following the celebration, pour the remaining water down the sacrarium. You should not touch the water with your hands but use an aspergillum.

BAPTISMS

Baptisms may still take place but modifications should be made to minimize physical contact between individuals or contamination of oils and water.

Water: Rather than at the baptismal font, a vessel of water should be prepared in the sanctuary beforehand. There should be a second empty vessel over which the water will be poured so that the water poured over the person being baptized does not return to the original vessel holding the blessed



water. The priest should use a pitcher to pour the water, not his hands. Following the baptism the water should be poured down the sacrarium or into the ground.

Signing with the Cross: The celebrant should sign the child without physically touching the child. The same can be asked of godparents should the parents prefer.

Anointings: Before the celebration a cotton ball should be dipped into the Oil of Salvation and placed oil-side-down in a separate vessel. This should be used to anoint the child on the breast. Another cotton ball with the Sacred Chrism should be similarly prepared and used to anoint the child on the crown of the head. Both cotton balls should be burned after the celebration.

Ephphtheta: The celebrant should bring the thumb near the ears and mouth but not touch the ears and mouth while saying the text.

FUNERAL MASSES & WEDDINGS WITH MASS

Gifts of Bread and Wine

Omit the procession with the gifts. Keep the gifts of bread and wine covered on the credence table in the sanctuary until they are to be brought to the altar.

Sign of Peace

Refrain from shaking hands. A simple bow or “Peace be with you” to your neighbour is appropriate.

Hand contact

Avoid all hand contact. Individuals should not hold hands during the Lord’s Prayer.

Recognizing Non-Communicants

In accordance with diocesan policy, ministers may offer a brief prayer for those in the Assembly who come forward in the communion procession and who are not receiving Holy Communion, such as “May God bless you” or “May God continue the good work in you.” This prayer is to be offered audibly and may not be accompanied by the gesture associated with a blessing e.g., the raising of the hand or the sign of the cross. The minister of communion should not touch the individual.

https://www.catholicyc.ca/uploads/6/5/5/7/65570685/2019_11_21_communion_policy_510_001.pdf

Holy Communion

Holy Communion will only be distributed under the species of bread. Only priests are to consume the Precious Blood. Only priests may distribute Holy Communion to those who choose to receive on their tongue at a designated area apart from the main aisle. Those who choose to receive Holy Communion in the hand will be asked to approach the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion or a priest who is not distributing Communion to those receiving on the tongue. All ministers distributing Holy Communion, including the celebrant, should sanitize their hands before and after distribution. Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion who feel uncomfortable distributing Holy Communion at this time should be excused from this ministry.

PASTORAL CARE

Pastoral care ministers are to refrain from bringing communion to shut-ins. In health care facilities, ministers are to strictly follow the facility directives and protocols. Please forward requests for visitations to the priest.

SACRAMENT OF PENANCE

The Sacrament of Penance may be celebrated in a manner that fulfils the requirements mandated by Alberta Health Services:

- Confessions from behind a screen: the required distance needs to be maintained between the penitent and confessor and the confessional screens should be sanitized after each use. Due to the small space of some confessionals, it may be necessary to set up a separate reconciliation room to ensure the required distance between the penitent and confessor. The screen should still be sanitized after each use unless there is a distance kept between the penitent and the screen as well.
- Face-to-face confessions: these are permitted as long as the required distance is maintained between the penitent and the confessor.
- There should be no physical contact between the penitent and the confessor.
- Public penitential services are prohibited.

ANOINTING OF THE SICK

Anointing of the Sick may be celebrated according to the following directives:

- Only immediate family, if present, may gather with the priest and sick person.
- If confession is to be celebrated before the anointing, please maintain the required distance.
- Use a cotton ball to apply the oil for the anointing. The cotton ball should be burned later.
- If the person to be anointed is in a health care facility, the priest has the obligation to follow the facility directives and protocols.

HOLY WEEK

Information will be forthcoming concerning the celebrations of Holy Week.

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS

Formation gatherings with catechumens and candidates are suspended. The celebration of the rites of initiation and reception into full communion is postponed until a time later in the year to be determined by the bishop. More information will be forthcoming.

CONFIRMATION

The schedule for Confirmation will be reviewed and adjusted as necessary. More information will be forthcoming.

FIRST COMMUNION

Parishes may have to reschedule the celebration of First Communion.

OTHER ITEMS

Lenten Missions

Only live-streamed Lenten missions are permitted.

Sacrament Preparation

All sacrament preparation workshops or sessions are cancelled and are prohibited until further notice. Parents, as the first teachers of the Faith, are responsible for the formation of their children using the prescribed program materials and are to attest to the readiness of the candidates for the sacraments. If you have questions, please contact Huy Nguyen, 403-218-5547, huy.nguyen@calgarydiocese.ca or Dorothy Burns, 403-218-5503, dorothy.burns@calgarydiocese.ca.

Access to Churches

Parishes are asked to keep the churches open during the day so that individuals may visit and pray before the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle. However, groups are not allowed to assemble in churches. The number of people present in Adoration Chapels should be restricted so as to observe the AHS recommendations for social distancing.