

Guidance for Palm Sunday and Paschal Triduum 2021

All guidelines and protocols in effect at the time of these liturgies are to be adhered to at all times.

Congregational Singing

According to the current Minnesota Department of Health's [Guidance for Music Activities](#), "Congregational singing, group singing, or chanting by attendees is not recommended in indoor ceremonies or services." Bishop Kettler has already set forth protocols for choirs to return to ministry beginning the First Sunday of Lent. Furthermore, the Minnesota Department of Health does permit exceptions for congregational singing. "If congregational singing is allowed, both of the following requirements must be met:

1. Individuals who are not part of a household group must be separated by a physical distance of at least 6 feet, and household groups must be separated from other household groups by more than 6 feet, whenever possible.
2. Attendees or members of the congregation must wear face coverings during the entire service or ceremony, including when singing or chanting."

"Singing by the gathered assembly and ministers is important at all celebrations. Not every part that can be sung should necessarily be sung at every celebration; rather [according to the *General Introduction of the Roman Missal*, 40] "preference should be given to those [parts] that are of greater importance." (*Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship*, 15). The preference is laid out in order of preference as: Dialogues and Acclamations, Antiphons and Psalms, Refrains and Repeated Responses, and Hymns.

Therefore, beginning on Palm Sunday, Bishop Kettler is permitting the return of congregational singing in a limited capacity as listed here:

1. Dialogues and Acclamations/Litanies (Kyrie, Collects with Amen, Gospel Acclamation, Preface Dialogue, Sanctus, Memorial Acclamation, Amen, Agnus Dei)
2. Antiphons and Psalms (Entrance Antiphons, Responsorial Psalm Refrain, Communion Antiphon)
3. Gloria (although a hymn of praise, permission is granted)

The gathering, preparation of gifts, communion and recessional hymns or songs should be sung by choir or cantor alone. Sequences are to be recited by the congregation.

Masks must be worn at all times with exception of choirs and cantors as laid out in previously released guidelines.

Hymnals

According to the Minnesota Department of Health, “Sharing books, hymnals, and religious texts by people from one service to the next does not pose a significant risk of spreading COVID-19. Limit the sharing of these texts in close proximity to each other at the same time to those in your own household. Consider cleaning the covers of these objects along with other frequently touched items in your worship space as established in your cleaning schedule.”

It is still safer to distribute single-use worship aids that the faithful may take home or else are promptly recycled after use.

Beginning with Palm Sunday, Bishop Kettler is permitting, in all parishes of the diocese, the placement and use of hymnals and books containing texts of the Mass.

Palm Sunday

As a typically well-attended Sunday, it may be wise to utilize some sort of reservation system to monitor anticipated participation.

Palms may be handed out as people enter the church. The Blessing of Palms with Sprinkling should be done by the priest (Second Form: Solemn Entrance), alone. He should wear a mask at all times.

Another option is to place the palms in baskets in the sanctuary where they will be blessed at the beginning of Mass. They can then be given out after Mass, with masked volunteers distributing them as people depart. (Third Form: Simple Entrance).

First Form: The Procession should not be utilized.

The opening Gospel concerning the Lord’s entrance should be proclaimed as usual and should be followed by the Second or Third Form for the entrance.

The shorter form of the Passion Gospel may be used.

The homily should be brief, or a period of silence may also be observed. (cf. *Roman Missal*, Palm Sunday 22).

Holy Thursday

The *Mandatum* (Foot Washing) ritual is to be omitted.

If the faithful is to participate in the Transfer of the Most Blessed Sacrament via a procession, please ensure appropriate physical distancing. Additionally, the place of reservation should be appropriately spaced to observe physical distancing.

Good Friday

While there is no short form of the Johannine Passion, in accord with the rubrics of the *Roman Missal* itself, the homily should be brief.

Only one Cross should be offered for adoration. The Showing of the Holy Cross may take place in either of the two forms provided in the *Roman Missal*. The faithful are then invited forward, with masks on, to venerate the cross. The cross is not to be venerated by touch, especially by a traditional kiss; a genuflection or bow of the head should be utilized.

At Bishop Kettler's request, please insert this intercession into the Solemn Intercessions of Good Friday. It should be inserted between IX. For those in public office, and X. For those in tribulation.

For immigrants and refugees

Let us pray also for all immigrants and refugees,
in our country and throughout the world,
that they may dwell in peace and safety.

Prayer in silence. Then, the Priest says:

Almighty ever-living God,
who are the zealous defender of the oppressed,
by your grace open our hearts
to welcome immigrants and refugees,
that they may be delivered
from every hardship, danger, and need,
and that together we may thank you
for your saving help.
Through Christ our Lord.
R. Amen.

A special intercession should be included as the 11th of the Solemn Intercessions. Unless Rome provides a different text for 2021, the same text from 2020 should be used:

For the current pandemic

Let us pray also for all those who suffer the consequences of the current pandemic,
that God the Father may grant health to the sick,
strength to those who care for them,
comfort to families and salvation to all the victims who have died.

Almighty ever-living God,
only support of our human weakness,
look with compassion upon the sorrowful condition of your children who suffer because of this pandemic;
relieve the pain of the sick,
give strength to those who care for them,
welcome into your peace those who have died and,
throughout this time of tribulation,
grant that we may all find comfort in your merciful love.
Through Christ our Lord.
R. Amen.

Easter Vigil

Consideration should be given to the safe, physically distanced gathering of the faithful at the fire and the procession into the church. If this cannot be done safely, the gathering of people at the fire may be limited to the ministers and the elect (with their godparents).

Should small candles be offered to the faithful during the *Lucernarium* and the Renewal of Baptismal Promises, it would be prudent to acknowledge that candles should be extinguished gently and that people should be aware of paper masks around their open flame candle.

While the reading of the Word of God remains a “fundamental part” of the Vigil, for the purposes of brevity in this unusual year the number of readings from the Old Testament may be reduced. As few as three readings from the Old Testament may be read, both from the Law and the Prophets, and their respective Responsorial Psalms sung. The reading from Exodus 14 with its canticle may NOT be omitted. (cf. *Roman Missal*, Easter Vigil 21)

Candidates for reception into the full communion of the Church may be received at another time.

“Baptism by immersion is the fuller and more expressive sign of the sacrament and therefore, is preferred” (National Statutes 17, Christian Initiation, General Introduction 22). This year, baptisms should be done by infusion (pouring) rather than immersion. The water used for baptizing should afterward be given to the ground (via the *sacrarium* or otherwise). Water should not be “re-used” for multiple baptisms.

For Confirmation, anointing on the forehead is permissible. However, the priest should cleanse his hands between each candidate. The priest who baptizes [and receives into full communion] receives from the law itself the faculty to confirm and is obliged to use it (Canon 885.2).

Easter Sunday

As with Palm Sunday, it may be wise to utilize some sort of reservation system to monitor anticipated participation. If need be, additional Easter Sunday Masses may be added.

The Sprinkling Rite, following the Renewal of Baptismal Promises, may be done by the presider, alone. Consideration should be given to the most direct route possible during this ritual action. The presider is to wear a face mask.