



THE DIOCESE OF YAKIMA • PASTORAL OFFICE
LA DIÓCESIS DE YAKIMA • CENTRO PASTORAL

Decree Amending Pastoral Directives During the Coronavirus Pandemic

In accord with Canon 223 (CIC), I, the Most Rev. Joseph J. Tyson, Bishop of Yakima, do hereby amend my March 19 decree establishing pastoral directives for the Diocese of Yakima:

WHEREAS:

On April 2, 2020 Washington Governor Jay Inslee updated his “Stay Home – Stay Healthy” order by which all non-essential gatherings are prohibited until midnight, May 4, 2020; (***Amended April 3, 2020***)

AND WHEREAS:

The Congregation for Divine Worship, in a decree date March 19, 2020 offered guidance to the Bishops of the Roman Catholic Church for changes to the celebration of Holy Week in light of the coronavirus pandemic;

AND WHEREAS:

The Washington State Department of Licensing March 28 provided clarification regarding services in funeral home and cemeteries;

THEREFORE, I AMEND MY MARCH 19 DECREE AS FOLLOWS AND PROCLAIM THESE AMENDMENTS AS PARTICULAR LAW WITHIN THE DIOCESE UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE:

Funeral Services

Priests and deacons may lead funeral services in funeral home chapels or at cemeteries, provided they have been invited by the family, and in consultation with the funeral home and cemetery directors to ensure these services can be held safely, following the approved group size, social distancing and health guidelines. Clergy are to exercise sound prudential judgment about their participation, particularly in cases of priests and deacons who are more vulnerable to illness due to age or chronic illness. When possible, funeral services should be postponed until the current restrictions have been relaxed, since funeral services are meant to be liturgical actions of the Church, praying together for the deceased and their families as a community of faith. (***Amended March 29, 2020***)

Chrism Mass

Due to the governor’s order, the celebration with just the deans of the Diocese anticipated for March 31 is cancelled. The Chrism Mass will be postponed until priests are able to gather in groups again. An afternoon of reflection and dinner will be included if possible. Priests may continue to use existing oil stocks until then. St. Paul Cathedral Parish can replenish supplies.

Palm Sunday

The Mass will be celebrated in a non-public way, using the simple entrance, which does not require a blessing of palms. It should be livestreamed if possible. Palms may be blessed and then dried until they can be safely distributed to parishioners. There is to be no public distribution of palms. **(Amended April 3, 2020)**

Rites of Christian Initiation of Adults deferred

In the Diocese of Yakima, the sacraments of initiation will not be celebrated at the Easter Vigil this year. Baptisms and Reception into Full Communion will be deferred to a later date. Given the rapidly changing situation around us, we cannot determine a date at this time. The bishop will designate a date for the sacraments of initiation in the Diocese of Yakima as soon as it is possible to do so. In this way, we can celebrate these important rites together.

Sacred Triduum

Holy Thursday

Mass of the Lord's Supper will be celebrated in a non-public way, in the evening, by the Bishop at St. Paul Cathedral and in parishes by the pastors. These Masses should be livestreamed if possible. **The Washing of Feet is omitted, as is the procession to the chapel of repose.** The Blessed Sacrament is simply reserved in the tabernacle. The faculty to celebrate Mass on this day in a suitable place, without the people, is granted in an exceptional manner to all priests. Such masses should be livestreamed only with permission of the pastor. Those not celebrating an evening Mass should pray Vespers. **(Amended April 3, 2020)**

Good Friday

The Passion of the Lord will be celebrated in a non-public way at 3 p.m. or later hour. It should be livestreamed if possible. There is to be no public veneration of the Cross. Consider livestreaming the Cross used during the celebration, and encourage parishioners to venerate the crosses and crucifixes in their own homes. Devotions such as the Stations of the Cross, or a meditation on the Seven Last Words may be livestreamed as well. To the Good Friday liturgy the following general petition is to be added: **(Amended April 3, 2020)**

IX (b). **For an end to the 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.**

Prayer in silence. Then the priest says:

**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.

IX (b). **Por quienes sufren en tiempo de epidemia**

Oremos también por todos los que sufren las consecuencias
de la epidemia actual: para que Dios Padre conceda
la salud a los enfermos, fortaleza al personal sanitario,
consuelo a las familias y la salvación a todas las víctimas que han muerto.

Oración en silencio. Prosigue el sacerdote:

Dios todopoderoso y eterno,
singular protector de la enfermedad humana,
mira compasivo la aflicción de tus hijos
que padecen esta epidemia;
alivia el dolor de los enfermos,
da fuerza a quienes los cuidan,
acoge en tu paz a los que han muerto
y, mientras dura esta tribulación,
haz que todos puedan encontrar alivio en tu misericordia.
Por Jesucristo, nuestro Señor.

R/. Amen.

Easter Vigil

The Vigil will be celebrated in a non-public way and should be livestreamed if possible. As this celebration is to take place entirely at night, the Mass should begin no earlier than 8 p.m. (15 minutes after sunset). (**Amended April 3, 2020**)

- The blessing of the fire and procession with the Paschal Candle are entirely omitted. The Paschal candle is lit and the Exultet is sung. The Liturgy of the Word follows. The Easter Vigil liturgy must take place with **no more than ten present, who are there to assist with livestreaming or other duties needed for a reverent celebration of the Mass.**
- Given the limited personnel, note that pastors have the option to reduce the number of readings and to omit the psalms. The third reading, however, Exodus 14:15-15:1, may never be omitted. The liturgy proceeds much as usual through the homily. Because the sacraments of initiation will not take place during the Easter Vigil, the Litany of the Saints is omitted.

- The Blessing of the Font and Sprinkling with Holy Water are to be entirely omitted this year. After the homily, go directly to the Renewal of Baptismal Promises. The Prayer of the Faithful follows the Renewal.
- Those who assist with the Mass are to receive Eucharist, following the current directives (under the species of bread, received only in the hand).

Easter Sunday

Masses will be celebrated in a non-public way, they should be livestreamed if possible, with consideration given to using the Emmaus Gospel at afternoon or evening liturgies. The same restrictions on attendance apply to the Easter Sunday liturgy. (***Amended April 3, 2020***)

- In livestreamed Masses, the Renewal of Baptismal Promises is an important way to engage the participation of the community. In Masses that are not livestreamed, the Creed may be substituted. Whether the Creed or the Renewal of Baptismal Promises is used, the Sprinkling Rite is omitted.

Confirmation

All Confirmations scheduled in the Diocese through May 3 are postponed. The next celebration scheduled after that date is May 16 in Prosser (***Amended April 3, 2020***). A decision as to whether a celebration will be postponed will be made one to two weeks prior to each scheduled Confirmation Mass. Pastors should inquire with the Bishop's Office to express their preferences and to explore alternative dates, once the current restrictions have been lifted. Given the possibility that group sizes will continue to be limited, it is likely that many will need to be postponed. Pastors and confirmation coordinators, particularly in parishes with small churches, are asked to research other possible venues for the Masses where proper distancing can be maintained. Consideration also will be given to permitting pastors to confirm their parishioners at several small Masses throughout the Easter season.

These directives will remain in force in the Diocese of Yakima until partially or fully revoked.

**Given this day, March 27, 2020, at the Pastoral Center of the Diocese of Yakima
on Friday of the Fourth Week of Lent.**

Amended as noted March 29, and on this day, April 3, 2020.

"In my distress I called upon the Lord, and he heard my voice." – cf. Psalm 18:7



Most Rev. Joseph J. Tyson
Bishop of Yakima

[signature electronically applied]

