

## IMPORTANT UPDATES AND DIRECTIVES FROM THE DIOCESE

Here, we have for you some of the bishop's directive that involves the faithful of our parishes and diocese as he said them:

**Chrism Mass:** Though the Holy See has granted to bishops the faculty to postpone the Chrism Mass to a later date, I have decided to still celebrate it during Holy Week with our Vicar General and Vicars *Forane*, who will then distribute the holy oils to parishes. The Chrism Mass will be live-streamed on Holy Thursday at 10:00 AM from the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. And you are encouraged to watch the live-streamed Chrism Mass and liturgy. I decided not to delay the Chrism Mass for two reasons: we have run very low on the Sacred Chrism and it would be difficult to celebrate at a later date that we cannot yet determine. I also think we will all be very busy after the lifting of the suspension of Masses with celebrating delayed baptisms, weddings, etc. I will also be celebrating many delayed confirmations (I may have to schedule more parishes together for Confirmations). Already I have postponed four Confirmations that were scheduled before Easter and will probably have to postpone more.

**Diocese-wide Stations of the Cross:** Please be aware that there will be a diocesan-wide Stations of the Cross which I will lead live-streamed on Friday, April 3rd, at 7:00 PM. Please encourage your parishioners to join in this great prayer which our diocese will offer up to the Lord for an end to the coronavirus epidemic, relief for those who are afflicted and eternal salvation for those whom the Lord has called to Himself.

**Baptism and Reception into full communion:** Pastors will decide a date for their parishes to celebrate the sacraments of initiation for the elect during a Mass after public Masses resume. Of course, you cannot set a definitive date until we know when public Masses will resume. I recommend a Saturday evening or Sunday during the Easter season. Also, Candidates for full communion can be received into full communion, confirmed, and receive first Communion at any time after public Masses resume.

**Online giving:** Thankfully, a good majority of our parishes have Online Giving services, given the financial strain all are facing during this crisis. I strongly encourage those parishes without online giving to sign up for it. All the remote services of OSV, including online giving, are in operation, so parishes can sign up for their online giving services. Also, OSV provides not only parish support in setting up online giving, but also parishioner support (e.g. help for parishioner donors to set up their giving via credit card, etc.).

*So, as we appreciate those that have been giving online or sending in their weekly envelopes, we encourage our parishioners to keep on with their giving either way. And as we approach the Holy Week and Easter ceremonies and celebrations at these uncertain times, remember that there are already many live-streaming Masses on the internet as the new normal, both for weekdays and Sundays. We encourage you to 'attend' these online Masses.*

## **SPECIAL INDULGENCES RELATED TO COVID-19 ANNOUNCED**

(From the Apostolic Penitentiary on March 20, 2020)

“The gift of special Indulgences is granted to the faithful suffering from COVID-19 disease, commonly known as Coronavirus, as well as to health care workers, family members and all those who in any capacity, including through prayer, care for them.”

### **About Plenary Indulgences:**

A plenary indulgence removes all of the temporal punishment due to sins and may be applied to oneself or to the souls of the deceased. In addition to being in a state of grace, the following are the three requirements that must be met to attain a plenary indulgence:

1. Performance of the indulgenced work with the intention of gaining an indulgence
2. Meeting the three usual conditions:
  - 1) Being truly repentant and receiving absolution in the Sacrament of Penance
  - 2) Reception of Holy Communion
  - 3) Praying for the Holy Father’s intentions.
3. Total detachment from any inclination to sin, even venial sins.

“A single sacramental confession suffices for gaining several plenary indulgences; but Holy Communion must be received and prayer for the intention of the Holy Father must be recited for the gaining of each plenary indulgence” (Manual of Indulgences, N20 §2.).

Even if all the requirements for a plenary indulgence are not met, if one is in a state of grace then it is possible still to gain a partial indulgence while seeking to perform a prescribed work.

Only one plenary indulgence can be gained in a day, except for when one is at the point of death, in which case it is always possible to gain another plenary indulgence.

The following are the four new indulgences being offered:

### **1.) Plenary indulgence for those who are ill with COVID-19**

The plenary indulgence “is granted to the faithful suffering from Coronavirus, who are subject to quarantine by order of the health authority in hospitals or in their own homes.”

This indulgence can be gained by the sick who “offer this trial in a spirit of faith in God and charity towards their brothers and sisters,” are in a state of grace, and meet the three requirements:

1. Performance of the indulgenced work:

-Unite spiritually through the media to the celebration of Holy Mass, the recitation of the Holy Rosary, to the pious practice of the Way of the Cross or other forms of devotion

-Or at least recite the Creed, the Lord's Prayer and a pious invocation to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

2. The three usual conditions, "with the will to fulfill them as soon as possible": 1) Being truly repentant and receiving absolution in the Sacrament of Penance 2) Reception of Holy Communion 3) Praying for the Holy Father's intentions.

3. Total detachment from any inclination to sin, even venial sins.

**2.) Plenary indulgence for health care workers and for family members caring for those ill with COVID-19**

This indulgence is available to "health care workers, family members and all those who, following the example of the Good Samaritan," are in a state of grace and meet the three requirements:

1. Performance of the indulgenced work:

-If, exposing themselves to the risk of contagion, they care for the sick of Coronavirus according to the words of the divine Redeemer: "Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends" (Jn 15: 13).

2. The three usual conditions, "with the will to fulfill them as soon as possible": 1) Being truly repentant and receiving absolution in the Sacrament of Penance 2) Reception of Holy Communion 3) Praying for the Holy Father's intentions.

3. Total detachment from any inclination to sin, even venial sins.

**3.) Plenary indulgence for those who offer certain prayers for an end to the pandemic**

This indulgence is available for as long as the pandemic lasts to any member of the faithful who is in a state of grace and meets the three requirements:

1. Performance of the indulgenced work:

-Offer one of the following "to implore from Almighty God the end of the epidemic, relief for those who are afflicted and eternal salvation for those whom the Lord has called to Himself":

i. A visit to the Blessed Sacrament or Eucharistic adoration

ii. Reading the Holy Scriptures for at least half an hour

iii. Recitation of the Holy Rosary

iv. Pious exercise of the Way of the Cross

v. Recitation of the Chaplet of Divine Mercy

2. The three usual conditions, “with the will to fulfill them as soon as possible”: 1) Being truly repentant and receiving absolution in the Sacrament of Penance 2) Reception of Holy Communion 3) Praying for the Holy Father’s intentions.

3. Total detachment from any inclination to sin, even venial sins.

#### **4.) Plenary indulgence at the point of death for those unable to receive Anointing of the Sick or Viaticum**

“The Church prays for those who find themselves unable to receive the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick and of the Viaticum, entrusting each and every one to divine Mercy by virtue of the communion of saints and granting the faithful a Plenary Indulgence on the point of death, provided that they are duly disposed and have recited a few prayers during their lifetime.”

The following are the requirements:

1. Someone in a state of grace is at the point of death and is unable to receive Anointing of the Sick or Viaticum, and he or she has recited a few prayers at any point during his or her lifetime.

-For the attainment of this indulgence, it is recommended that a crucifix or cross be provided to the dying person.

2. For this indulgence, the Church makes up for the three usual conditions of Confession, Communion, and prayer for the Holy Father’s intentions – so they are not required.

3. Total detachment from any inclination to sin, even venial sins.