

Pastoral Directives for Holiday Celebrations 2020

General Directives for Physical Spaces in Purple Tier

Outdoor

1. No indoor church services, devotions or religious celebrations are permitted.
2. No church building, permanent or temporary, including the parish hall, school classrooms, school and parish offices may be used for any worship service, private devotion/private prayer or religious celebration.
3. Masks are mandatory for all attendees. Those without masks will not be allowed to participate and are encouraged to LiveStream at home.
4. All processions, celebrations and related feast-day activities must remain on Diocesan/parish/school property.
5. Gloves must be worn by all procession organizers, ushers, volunteers and participants, as these individuals will be moving throughout the attendees and may touch/handle many items during the celebration.
6. No kissing, touching or embracing of pictures, icons, statues etc. is allowed. Attendees should be advised of this requirement prior to the start of the celebration/service.
7. No singing/humming/chanting is allowed at any time.
8. Hospitality is permitted after the celebration/service, but all hospitality must be pre-packaged. No self-service buffet, food platters generally accessible to all etc. are permitted.
9. No social gathering on Diocesan/parish/school property, after the service/celebration is allowed. Attendees should be advised of this prior to the start of the celebration/service.
10. Announcements of the service/celebration should include an advisory to attendees to remain at home and LiveStream, if they are ill or if a member of their household is ill.
11. Attendees should be advised of the CDC advisory regarding individuals with high-risk conditions, who should continue to 'shelter-at-home' and participate via LiveStream. (CDC Guidelines attached.)
12. Parishes should designate an usher/volunteer to oversee a first aid kit, AED and sufficient bottles of water, should an emergency arise. Ensure that the usher/volunteer possesses a cell phone to Dial 911, if necessary.

13. Social distancing of six (6) feet minimum must be maintained, at all times, during any procession, including any outdoor seating.
14. Follow requirements for tents, heating units, fire extinguishers, etc., sent by the EOC in a separate email to parishes.
15. Adhere to all other outdoor directives, as previously issued for Mass and sacraments, when conducting such in an outdoor venue.

Pastoral Guidelines

All Saints, November 1st

1. Many parishes have children dress as their patron saint and process around the church. This will not be possible since no indoor activity is allowed at parishes under 'purple' tier. Children may walk in procession, but must wear masks at all times, and process in lines which maintain a *minimum* of six (6) feet distance between each person.
2. Processions must remain on Diocesan/parish/school property. A safer and viable option may be to acknowledge the children by having them stand and be introduced at the beginning of Mass.
3. Attendees should be advised, *prior to registering for celebration/event*, to bring statues/religious articles of saints to be displayed and/or blessed, if desired. However, holy water will not be used; a blessing of the statue/religious article will be made without the sprinkling.
4. Priests may also consider blessing the statues/articles at the end of Mass by requesting congregants with statues/articles to stand; raise the statue/article for general blessing.
5. Either of these options will ensure the continuation of these traditions, which are a significant part of the culture of many of our parishioners.
6. All Saints is on a Sunday this year and replaces the 31st Sunday in ordinary time.

All Souls, November 2nd

1. Due to limitations under 'purple' tier, no publicly accessible Book of Remembrance or personal framed pictures are possible due to the fact that all services must be held outdoors. As an alternative, parishioners could be encouraged to set-up home altars with pictures of their loved ones throughout the month of November.
2. Another viable alternative is to permit the family member(s) attending the All Souls Mass to write the names of their departed loved ones on a piece of paper and drop them into a

basket, positioned in front of the altar or ambo. This basket can then be brought out for each Sunday celebration during the month of November.

3. Similar to the guidance for *All Saints*, parishioners may elect to bring pictures of deceased loved ones to be blessed individually or at the end of Mass. Placing the pictures on a separate table, which can remain throughout the month of November, is also an option. Such pictures may be retrieved at a later date by parishioner, if placed within a plastic Ziploc-type bag, labeled with name of both the parishioner and the deceased.

Thanksgiving, November 26th

1. Many parishes have become accustomed to serving a formal meal after Mass. Hospitality, under 'purple' tier requires that all food, beverage must be distributed prepackaged. No 'indoor' parish meal or food distribution is permitted at this time.
2. Parishes may still receive donated food items, which can be distributed to the poor and needy, as is traditionally done by many during this time of year. Separate 'drop-off' boxes should be placed at strategic locations on-site, where parishioners may leave pre-packaged items such as canned goods (i.e. fruit, vegetables, condiments); dry good items (i.e. flour, sugar, cake and breakfast mixes); pre-packaged snacks (i.e. chips, popcorn, candy, protein bars); paper/packaging goods (i.e. plates, napkins, aluminum foil, paper sacks). Donors should be advised that due to risk of food spoilage, no fresh/frozen fruit, vegetables, meat, fish or poultry can be accepted at this time. Contact EOC directly for any questions in this regard.
3. The practice of blessing Thanksgiving meal baskets may continue. Parishioners should be advised that individual/household baskets/boxes/bags may be brought to Mass for blessing at the appropriate time by the celebrant. These items must be retained by the individual attendee at his/her seat until time for the blessing. Celebrants may wish to bless the baskets at the end of Mass, or may wish to instruct those with baskets/boxes to process at a designated location and time, prior to – during – or post worship service. Any procession must adhere to the six (6) feet distancing requirement.
4. Any lunch/dinner, prepared by parish volunteers for distribution to the poor/needy must adhere to the EOC/Catholic Mutual risk management guidelines for home food preparation and must be distributed outdoors, similar to the procedures used for food pantry pick-up. Contact EOC directly for these requirements.
5. Due to the limits on outdoor worship to 100 maximum, parishes may wish to consider scheduling more than one Mass on Thanksgiving. However, parishes must ensure sufficient time between services for sanitizing chairs, benches, tables etc.

Sundays in Advent

1. Advent wreaths may be blessed and displayed during the Masses. All candles must be LED due to extreme fire season presently throughout the State.
2. Personal candles should not be brought to procession, but should be in place prior to the beginning of Mass. All four (4) candles may be in place on the first Sunday; or, one may be added during each of the four Sundays in Advent.
3. If three purple and one pink LED candles are not available, it is permissible to use all white candles. A colored ribbon may be tied around the candles to indicate which week in Advent is being celebrated.

Immaculate Conception, December 8th

1. This year, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception falls on a Tuesday and is a holy day of obligation. Parishioners should be reminded to LiveStream at home if it is a risk to their health or the health of their household to attend.
2. Although there are many traditional hymns for this holyday, no singing is permitted at this time. Nor should any humming to instrumental music, cheering or any loud proclamations be allowed, as occasionally happens for this feast.
3. Instrumental music may be used as long as musicians maintain social distancing. Limit the musicians to between three (3) to (5). No wind instruments of any kind are allowed at this time. Keyboard, guitar, other stringed instruments, or percussion are permitted.
4. If the parish uses a special image of the Immaculate Conception, it should be in place at the beginning of the celebration. It may be decorated by someone from the parish before Mass, but participants should not bring additional flowers to place at the altar. Encourage attendees to contribute to a parish 'flower' fund in anticipation of the Nativity celebration to follow that month.