

GUIDELINES FOR HOLY WEEK 2021

Archdiocese of Palo

BASIC CONSIDERATIONS

1. Church celebrations are normally community activities; they involve the participation of others in space and time. This year an important consideration is the pandemic which confronts everybody. And so, for the sake of justice and charity to all, it is a must to follow the health and safety protocols. The guidelines on liturgical celebrations issued earlier are still in force.
2. The broader permission to hold liturgical celebrations in our churches may result in a lax observance of government-issued protocols among those who participate in church activities. Clear reminders should be regularly given to those who come to church. Likewise, in these special and solemn celebrations involving a large number of peoples, it is always important to consult and inform the LGU (and/or barangay officials).
3. Live streaming of the liturgical celebrations should be provided for those who will not be able to participate.

ON PARTICULAR CELEBRATIONS

A. Celebration of the Sacrament of Confession / Reconciliation

1. Confession should be made available to all. And so, parishes should have a regular schedule for confessions, including the chapels.
2. Confessions should be done in well ventilated spaces. Aside from requiring the wearing of the face masks for both the priest and the penitent, a confessional screen should be provided not just for reasons of health but also to protect the anonymity of the penitent.
3. To safeguard the integrity of the sacrament, the use of the electronic devices (video or phone) and writing pads / paper should be avoided.
4. In case a general absolution is given, a Penitential Rite should be celebrated and the conditions should be observed and made known to all, especially the obligation to confess mortal or serious sins once individual confessions is available.

B. Other Solemnities and feasts during Lent

1. *St. Joseph*: since in this Year of St. Joseph the Church is highlighting the 150th anniversary of the Proclamation of St. Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church, parishes should celebrate March 19 with greater solemnity. However, the nation-wide consecration to St. Joseph involving all parishes will still happen on May 1. The Prayer of Consecration will be sent later.

2. *The Annunciation*: The Solemnity of the Annunciation will be on March 25 (on the Thursday before holy week of this year). The celebration of the mystery of the Incarnation of Our Lord is an important perspective to the mysteries we celebrate during Holy Week.

3. *St. Pedro Calungsod*: Since April 2, the day for the commemoration of St. Pedro Calungsod, falls on Holy Week, the celebration should be postponed until after the Easter octave. The parish may choose any day onwards.

C. Palm Sunday

1. It is recommended to use the Second Form of the Blessing of the Palms. This means that the faithful are already in their seats or places holding their palms and the priest may just go around to bless them.

2. Instead of asking a large number of people to congregate in one church, the priests may schedule more masses, even in chapels within the parish.

D. Holy Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday

1. Aside from the masses allowed on these days, our churches should be open for the faithful to avail of the sacrament of Confession and for other devotional practices including the *Visita Iglesia*.

E. Holy Thursday

1. Morning Prayer on Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday should be celebrated with the participation of the faithful provided that they observe the proper protocol inside the church.

2. The Chrism Mass will be celebrated at the Cathedral at nine thirty in the morning. All priests working the Archdiocese of Palo are required to attend.

3. The Mass of the Lord's Supper can only be celebrated starting at five in the afternoon, not earlier.

4. The washing of the feet can be done to less than twelve men. For considerations of health and safety, it is recommended for the pastor/presider to wash the feet of members of his own household (household staff or persons who live with him in the same house/rectory). The kissing of the feet should be avoided.

5. The Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament which follows the Mass of the Lord's Supper should end before the curfew in the particular place.

F. Good Friday

1. The Meditation of the Lord's Passion (*Siete Palabras*) may be given inside or outside the church. Like other liturgies, the faithful who participate should observe proper health protocol. However, in order not to unnecessarily prolong their stay inside the church, this meditation could be shared via radio or live streaming or loud speakers (for the faithful to hear them in their respective homes).
2. The celebration of the Lord's Passion can only be celebrated at three in the afternoon. Only the Presider will kiss the Cross; the rest will just venerate by the usual gestures without touching the cross.
3. The procession after the Liturgy of the Lord's Passion may be held – either by a small number of devotees observing the proper health protocol, or by the images on *carrozas* only (with the people lining in the streets) or by motorcade of the images going around the parish.

G. Easter Vigil

1. The Easter Vigil can be celebrated not earlier than six in the evening. The *Lucernarium* (the Service of the Light) including the blessing of the fire can be done entirely inside the church (so, there is no need for bonfires).
2. If there is a celebration of the baptism, candidates should be limited to two persons. However, the Blessing of Water should never be omitted.
3. The *Sugat* may be simplified and may be done inside the Church immediately after the Easter Vigil.

H. Easter Sunday and beyond

1. The official launching of the celebration of 500 Years of Christianity in our parishes will be done on Easter Sunday. Aside from highlighting the celebration in the homily, the theme song (with the corresponding action) adapted to the reality of the Archdiocese of Palo with some parts in Cebuano and Binisaya (Waray) should be sung after each mass on that day. The youth ministry of the parish should lead the singing.
2. The Opening of the Jubilee doors of the Jubilee churches in the Archdiocese of Palo will start on April 18 beginning with the Palo Cathedral. The schedule and the Rite for the Opening of the Jubilee Door for the other churches will be given by the Chancery.
3. Parish and barangay/chapel fiestas should highlight the 500 years celebration of Christianity in our country.