



OFFICE OF DIVINE WORSHIP

Archdiocese of Newark

Holy Week Questions & Answers

Below please find answers to some commonly asked questions regarding Holy Week that have been submitted to the Office of Divine Worship in response to the Directives for Holy Week 2021.

Q: On Palm Sunday, since all parishes are mandated to use the “Third Form: The Simple Entrance,” how does Mass begin?

A: “The Simple Entrance” requires the Introductory Rites of the Mass to be celebrated “in the usual way,” which includes the Sign of the Cross, Greeting, Penitential Act, and Collect.

Q: On Holy Thursday, may the Reception of the Holy Oils be celebrated during the Mass of the Lord’s Supper?

A: The Reception of the Holy Oils may be omitted, and the oils simply placed in the ambry before the Mass begins. If the reception is celebrated, it must be without formal procession and adapted to the pandemic safety requirements. (See <https://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/liturgical-year-and-calendar/triduum/order-for-the-reception-of-the-holy-oils>.)

Q: May we have more than one Mass on Holy Thursday?

A: No, only one Mass is permitted on Holy Thursday, the evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper. All restrictions from the February 25 Directives for Holy Week 2021 must be observed.

Q: Since at the end of the evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper the procession is omitted and the Blessed Sacrament is to be kept in the tabernacle, how does the Mass conclude?

A: After Communion is distributed, the Eucharist is reposed in the tabernacle and the Prayer after Communion is prayed. Announcements, if any, are made. The priest says a simple blessing over the people and the deacon or priest dismisses the people in the usual way. A concluding song may be sung.

Q: May there be more than one Easter Vigil?

A: “Of this night’s Vigil, which is the greatest and most noble of all solemnities, there is to be **only one** celebration in each church.” (See *Roman Missal*.) This rubric is to be observed in 2021 without exception.

Q: May there be Easter Masses before the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday?

A: “The Church abstains from the Sacrifice of the Mass, with the sacred table left bare, until **after** the solemn Vigil, that is, the anticipation by night of the Resurrection, when the time comes for paschal joys, the abundance of which overflows to occupy fifty days.” (See *Roman Missal*.) This rubric is to be observed in 2021 without exception. Therefore, no Easter Masses may be celebrated before the Easter Vigil, which may not begin before 8:15 p.m. on Holy Saturday.

Once the Easter Vigil is complete, Easter Masses may be celebrated, even on Saturday night. Additional Masses may be scheduled on Easter Sunday to accommodate the faithful.

“Directives for Holy Week 2021” issued February 25, 2021 by the Archdiocese of Newark, Office of Divine Worship, is available at:
<https://www.rcan.org/sites/default/files/files/Holy%20Week%20Guidelines%202021.pdf>.