

**Office of Worship**  
**Diocese of Honolulu**

---

## Memorandum

TO: Clergy, RCIA Coordinators and Parishes

FROM: Deacon Modesto Cordero, Director  
Office of Worship

DATE: May 8, 2020

RE: Liturgical Directives for the Celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation after the reopening of our churches for public worship

On April 25, 2020 Hawaii Governor David Ige extended the Covid-19 “stay at home” order through May 31, 2020. Even after the order is lifted, we should anticipate that limits will be placed upon the number of persons allowed to gather for public and private events. These Liturgical Directives are being issued to assist you with the planning, scheduling, and celebration of the sacraments of initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, First Holy Communion) in the Diocese of Honolulu after the order is lifted.

I understand that these Directives call for a change from the “normal” observances, but these measures are necessary and have been approved and mandated by Bishop Larry Silva. A separate memorandum will be generated with specific safety guidance (e.g. social distancing, use of masks, etc.) once the “all clear” is given to re-open our churches.

### **Original Order of the Sacraments of Initiation: Transition Group 3**

- Celebrations of the sacraments of Confirmation and First Holy Communion scheduled for **Pentecost Sunday, May 31, 2020** are postponed until further notice.
- When the “stay at home” order is lifted, pastors in Transition Group 3 may renew their plans to confirm and give First Holy Communion at the parish. Pastors are to contact Fr. Mark Gantley at the Tribunal Office ([mgantley@rcchawaii.org](mailto:mgantley@rcchawaii.org)) to once again request delegation to confirm and submit the parish’s new plan for the celebration of the sacraments. Confirmation and First Holy Communion must be celebrated before November 28, 2020. A pastor who wishes to invite Bishop Larry Silva or Msgr. Gary Secor to confirm and give First Holy Communion at his parish may contact Brendan Porick (after May 15) at [bporick@rcchawaii.org](mailto:bporick@rcchawaii.org). Please understand that their availability may be limited.

Approved by Bishop Larry Silva – May 7, 2020

## **Confirmation/First Holy Communion previously scheduled for the months of April and May 2020**

- All celebrations of Confirmation/First Holy Communion scheduled for April and May 2020 with Bishop Larry Silva or Msgr. Gary Secor have been postponed. Those parishes affected can contact Brendan Porick (after May 15) at [bporick@rcchawaii.org](mailto:bporick@rcchawaii.org) to reschedule their Confirmation/First Holy Communion as soon as possible, but before December 31, 2020. Since there will be so much catching up to do, please be open to the possibility of a weeknight celebration.
- If, after checking with Brendan Porick for a date, scheduling conflicts arise, a pastor may request delegation to confirm at his parish. (It is presumed that First Holy Communion would be given at the same Mass.) Pastors are to contact Fr. Mark Gantley at the Tribunal Office ([mgantley@rcchawaii.org](mailto:mgantley@rcchawaii.org)) to request delegation to confirm and submit the parish's plan for the celebration of the sacraments. Confirmation and First Holy Communion must be celebrated before December 31, 2020.

## **Celebration of the Reception of the Sacraments of Initiation for the Elect (RCIA) Outside the Usual Times**

The celebration of the sacraments of initiation of adults (and unbaptized children of a catechetical age) is normally during the Easter Vigil each year. However, under "unusual times" the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* (RCIA), paragraphs 26-30, provides guidelines on how to celebrate them outside the Easter Season. The authority to choose a date to celebrate the sacraments of initiation outside of the Triduum belongs to the bishop of the diocese (RCIA 34.2).

Bishop Silva has delegated to each pastor this authority (except for the Cathedral Basilica and the Co-Cathedral of St. Theresa, for which Bishop Silva wishes to personally celebrate the sacraments as soon as possible). The date should be on a Sunday or Solemnity (or its Vigil Mass) within the first two months of reopening of the churches. **[NOTE:** Delegation is not needed for a priest to confirm those he baptizes, and he should confirm them and give First Holy Communion at the same Mass. Nor does he need delegation to confirm a person baptized in another ecclesial community whom he receives into the Catholic Church, whom he confirms and to whom he gives First Holy Communion at the same Mass as the Reception into Full Communion with the Catholic Church. However, if he wishes to confirm a baptized Catholic, he **MUST** have delegation for the Confirmation to be valid. Delegation can be requested by emailing Fr. Mark Gantley (Tribunal Office) at [mgantley@rcchawaii.org](mailto:mgantley@rcchawaii.org).]

## **Scrutinies and Presentations:**

These Directives presume that our Elect have received sufficient catechesis and preparation for the reception of the sacraments. The quarantine regulations did not go into effect until after our catechumens participated in the Rite of Election (First Sunday of Lent) and the celebration of the first scrutiny (Third Sunday of Lent). If the Elect celebrated their first scrutiny, there is no need to repeat it. If you did not celebrate the presentations, consider celebrating the Presentation of the Creed and the Lord's Prayer

following the proper intervals. Catechumens should also be anointed with the Oil of Catechumens well before they receive the sacraments of initiation.

In a prior memo Bishop Silva gave a dispensation from the obligation of celebrating the Second and Third Scrutiny in accordance with RCIA 20. However, no one is prohibited from celebrating one or both of them. The church also teaches that when the initiation rites are celebrated outside the usual time, “care should be taken to ensure that the celebration has a markedly paschal character” (Ceremonial of Bishops # 426). The scrutinies are important rites that firmly ground the initiation process in the paschal mystery, so it is desirable that pastors consider celebrating them with their proper intervals.

During these “unusual times” the scrutinies and presentations could be celebrated on Sundays or even on weekdays (RCIA 146) during a Mass or a Liturgy of the Word. They should still be celebrated one week apart from each other, about three to two weeks before Baptism. Whenever they are celebrated, the required Lectionary texts from Year A are used (First Scrutiny – gospel of the Samaritan woman; Second – gospel of the man born blind; Third – gospel of the raising of Lazarus), as are the prayers from the Roman Missal and ritual.

The two presentations (Creed and the Lord’s Prayer) may follow the pattern above. The presentations cannot be combined with a scrutiny. For the celebration of the Presentation of the Creed use the readings from the Lectionary for Mass, ritual Masses “Christian Initiation: Presentation of the Lord’s Prayer.” These readings are listed at RCIA 179-180. You can substitute the readings with the readings listed at the RCIA 158. The Presentation of the Lord’s Prayer could be celebrated on Saturday during the day before the celebration of the sacraments (RCIA #'s 185, 149, and 178-180).

The Scrutiny may take place within a Liturgy of the Word also led by a priest or deacon. The Presentations may be celebrated in a Liturgy of the Word led by a priest only.

### **Celebration of the Sacraments (RCIA)**

The sacraments of initiation are to be celebrated at a Mass on a Sunday or Solemnity, using, as occasion suggests, the Mass of the day or one of the ritual Masses (e.g. “For the Conferral of Baptism”) from the Roman Missal. For the readings at this ritual Mass, you may use the one of the Old Testament readings and the epistle reading from the Easter Vigil. Strictly speaking, you would choose the psalm (or psalms) and the gospel reading from those listed in the Lectionary for Mass: Ritual Masses, 753 and 755.

If a ritual Mass is permitted the following should be observed:

- The color of the Mass should be white or a festive color.
- The Penitential Act, the Kyrie and the Creed are omitted.
- The “*Gloria in excelsis*” (Gloria to God in the highest) is said or sung.

- The Litany of Saints is sung before the Baptism rite, and water in the baptismal font is blessed using the blessing from the Easter Vigil (Roman Missal, nos. 44-46).
- Preface I of the Sundays in Ordinary Time is used.
- In the Eucharistic Prayer, a commemoration of the newly baptized is included according to the formulas on the Roman Missal.

**For the Baptismal Liturgy, Baptism by immersion is not permitted.** When the time for the Baptism occurs, the presider should use water from the vessel set aside to pour over the head of the Elect. We are accustomed to dipping into the font and pouring water from the font over the head of the person being baptized, and letting the water run off the forehead back into the font. It is important that the water not be recycled in this way in order to preserve a stricter hygiene than would be necessary under normal circumstances. [Note: This Directive applies to the celebration of Infant Baptisms as well.]

### **Period of Mystagogy**

Pastors and RCIA teams should not fail to provide proper mystagogy to the neophytes for at least several weeks after the initiation.

Please feel free to contact me at the Office of Worship, 808-585-3342 or email at [mcordero@rcchawaii.org](mailto:mcordero@rcchawaii.org) should you have any questions.

Our Lady of Peace, patroness of the Diocese of Honolulu, pray for us!

Easter Blessings!

**DIOCESE OF HONOLULU  
PRAYER FOR THE COVID-19 CORONA VIRUS PANDEMIC  
[by Bishop Larry Silva; March 12, 2020]**

Dear God of all the living, you sent your Son Jesus to heal us from illness and sin. We turn to his healing power in this time of anxiety over the pandemic of this potentially deadly virus.

St. Damien and St. Marianne Cope dedicated their lives to service of those who had an infectious disease. St. Marianne Cope said, "I am not afraid of any disease," because she was confident of your power to save. At the same time, she took prudent precautions of hygiene to assure that she and her Sisters would not be infected.

Let us learn from this example to put our trust in you to save us from the ravages of disease and to take prudent measures to prevent its spread. Guide us to know when to isolate ourselves from the possibility of infection, but never let anyone be left without the care and concern of others in the community.

As our Diocese of Honolulu has been dedicated to the Divine Mercy, we pray with confidence, "Jesus, I trust in you."