

Updated Sacramental Information for the Archdiocese of Hartford

April 15, 2020

Cancellation of Public Masses Extended

In light of the continued assessment of the spread of the coronavirus within Connecticut and Governor Lamont's Executive Order of April 10th mandating the cancellation of school classes and the extension of closures of non-essential businesses through May 20, 2020, the Archdiocese has deemed it necessary to update the cancellation of public Masses and liturgies that had previously been extended through April 30, 2020. Given the constantly changing landscape, and the decisions of civil authorities in this regard, the cancellation of public Masses and liturgies in the Archdiocese of Hartford (the counties of Hartford, Litchfield, and New Haven) will remain in effect until further notice.

Priests are to continue celebrating a daily Mass alone with no congregation, remembering in prayer all who are affected by the pandemic, and pastors are encouraged to continue making provision for their churches to be open at some time so that individuals can still come and pray.

Cancellation of All Publicly Scheduled Confessions

On April 1, 2020, Archbishop Blair directed that all publicly scheduled confessions be suspended until further notice. This mandate remains in effect until further notice.

People who wish to receive the sacrament and cannot should take comfort from what the Church teaches about these situations, as follows:

“Where the individual faithful find themselves in the painful impossibility of receiving sacramental absolution, it should be remembered that perfect contrition, coming from the love of God, beloved above all things, expressed by a sincere request for forgiveness (that which the penitent is at present able to express) and accompanied by *votum confessionis*, that is, by the firm resolution to have recourse, as soon as possible, to sacramental confession, obtains forgiveness of sins, even mortal ones (cf. CCC, no. 1452).”

Divine Mercy Sunday

With Divine Mercy Sunday taking place on Sunday, April 19th, concerns have been expressed about the loss of the special graces of that day since this year it is not possible to go to Confession or receive Holy Communion. The National Shrine of the Divine Mercy has provided a response which can be found on their website:

www.thedivinemercy.org/articles/what-do-divine-mercy-sunday.

The response offered by the National Shrine can be summarized as follows:

Even though churches are closed and you cannot go to Confession and receive Holy Communion, you can receive these special graces this Sunday, April 19, Divine Mercy Sunday.

To do so, the faithful should do three things:

1. Make an Act of Contrition - This should be made with the firm resolution to have recourse to sacramental Confession as soon as possible.
2. Make a Spiritual Communion - One example: “My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Blessed Sacrament. I love You above all things and I desire You in my soul.

Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. As though You were already there, I embrace You and unite myself to You; permit not that I should ever be separated from You. Amen.”

This should be made with the intent to return to the sacrament of Holy Communion as soon as possible.

3. Say a prayer similar to the following: “Lord Jesus Christ, You promised St. Faustina that the soul that has been to Confession [I’m unable, but I made an Act of Contrition] and the soul that receives Holy Communion [I’m unable, but I made a Spiritual Communion] will receive the complete forgiveness of all sins and punishment. Please, Lord Jesus Christ, give me this grace.”