

# LITURGY UPDATE

## Liturgical Memos

### September 1:

#### World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation

On this World Day of Prayer, a Votive Mass or Mass for Various Needs may be celebrated at the discretion of the Priest-celebrant: e.g., Mass for the Sanctification of Human Labor. Resources for liturgy, preaching, and taking action have been [prepared by the USCCB](#).

### September 9:

#### Memorial of Saint Peter Claver

The USCCB has invited parishes to unite in a "Day of Prayer and Fasting for Peace" in response to ongoing racial tensions and in reparation for sins of racism. Celebrants may wish to give a homily or include [petitions in the Universal Prayer](#) emphasizing the themes of unity and peace. As well, Mass readings may be taken from those "For Peace and Justice" or "For Reconciliation."

### September 27:

#### World Day of Migrants and Refugees

This Day of Prayer is observed annually on the last Sunday in September, when Catholics worldwide are called upon to remember those displaced by conflict and persecution. This year, [Pope Francis has asked the Church](#) to pray for the particular needs of internally displaced persons. More information and resources may be found on the [Vatican website](#).



## Best Practices for Returning to Public Worship

Since the publication of the archdiocesan "[Faith Forward](#)" [Guidelines](#) for returning to public worship, parishes have continued to take appropriate and prudent steps to ensure parishioners' safety during the COVID-19 pandemic. Many lessons have been learned along the way, and liturgical practices continue to be refined. What follows is a listing of several "best practices" that archdiocesan parishes have developed and found to be helpful. They are shared here for the benefit of other communities throughout the Archdiocese:

### Funeral Masses

- When greeting the body of the deceased at the beginning of the funeral, this may take place at the church doors, rather than inside the church itself. Family and friends may then gather just outside the church, allowing for the observance of social distancing.



The *Order of Christian Funerals* says that the greeting of the body “usually” takes place at the entrance of the church (133), so it is also possible to celebrate this rite elsewhere, such as the front of the church near the threshold of the sanctuary. In this case, the family would be “pre-seated” prior to the start of the funeral Mass. However, some of the movements that mirror the baptismal rite are lost when this is done, so it is recommended to take this option only out of necessity (e.g., in times of inclement weather, or when there are no ushers to help the mourners observe social distancing when entering the church and finding their pews).

- Parishes may want to consider limiting the use of incense at the Mass, or not using incense at all. Some [recent studies](#) have shown that incense (and smoke) can carry the COVID-19 virus throughout an enclosed space. The body of the deceased could, instead, be sprinkled with holy water during the Final Commendation.
- Many hands often end up touching the pall during the funeral Mass. For this reason, the celebrant may either handle the placing and removal of the pall entirely himself, or he could ask those who will assist to use hand sanitizer immediately before and after touching the pall. The placing of Christian symbols is optional and may be omitted.
- Robust congregational singing is typically not an issue at funerals. Notwithstanding, a cantor should be always placed at least 12 feet away from others when he/she is singing, per the most [recent state guidelines](#).
- Lay lectors may proclaim the readings, but it is recommended that this take place only if the family requests this, bearing in mind that the *Lectionary* and microphone should be sanitized between speakers. Eulogies, which further lengthen the liturgy, might take place instead in an outdoor venue, such as at the graveside.
- If necessary, the assembly may be dismissed by rows with the help of an usher.

### **Reception of Holy Communion**

Parishes may wish to remind the faithful of the archdiocese’s request that those who will receive Holy Communion do so in the hand at this time, for the health and safety of all. This recommendation comes after consultation with leading health professionals. The reception of Holy Communion on the tongue remains permissible, but since some who are present at Mass may see reception of Communion on the tongue as a greater risk to safety, parishes might ask those who wish to receive on the tongue to kindly

wait until the end of the line to present themselves for Communion. No matter the manner of reception, if the minister senses that his/her fingers have made contact with the communicant's hands or mouth, the minister should pause, place the ciborium on a corporal, and use hand sanitizer before resuming the distribution of Communion.

### **Worship Aids**

Providing access to liturgical texts for those present at Mass has proved to be a particular challenge, especially in light of guidance that worship aids and other printed items (e.g., hymnals and missalettes) should be removed from pews. In response, parishes have taken a number of different approaches:

- Some communities create a weekly digital or single-use paper participation aid. The [USCCB](#) has [granted permission](#) to include the readings in English and the Mass prayers and readings in Spanish in these types of worship aids through the conclusion of the current liturgical year (November 28, 2020). In this case, the texts must be reprinted verbatim and a copyright acknowledgment must be provided. It is anticipated that licenses will be required for print and digital worship aids beginning on the First Sunday of Advent, November 29, 2020. It should be noted that the USCCB has *not* given permission to project the copyrighted texts of the Mass prayers or readings on screens.
- Other parishes encourage families and individuals to bring their own participation aids (e.g., missalettes or *Magnificat*) to Mass.
- Worshippers may also use a phone or tablet to access the readings in English and Spanish, and these are available for free at [USCCB.org](#).



### **Music**

As indicated in the “[Faith Forward](#)” [Guidelines](#), large choirs are not recommended at this time. A cantor and organ (or other accompanying instrument) may be used. As well, a small group of singers may be spaced out very well apart from each other in a choir loft or other area away from the other members of the congregation. Musicians may also wish to purchase [special masks designed for singers](#) which keep the fabric away from the lips and mouth so that a vocalist can draw a deep breath easily.

In an effort to discourage more vigorous congregational singing, some parishes have opted to sing antiphons in lieu of hymns during the processions at Mass. When doing so, any of the following options can be taken:

- i. Simply singing the antiphon (for short processions);

2. Alternate singing between the antiphon and psalm verses (at minimum, one); or,
3. Alternate singing between the antiphon and psalm verses (at minimum, one), with the last verse being the *Glory Be*, followed by the antiphon.

In many parishes, the antiphon is sung, followed by the *Glory Be*, and then concluding with the antiphon. While this is not one of the given choices listed in the liturgical books, this practice is considered permissible for the sake of encouraging sung participation.

There are many different musical settings of the antiphons in English, and the [website for the Church Music Association of America](#) offers a comprehensive listing of resources. Of these, [Simple English Propers](#) is recognized as a particularly accessible option, and [organ accompaniment](#) for these tones is also available. Alternatively, a cantor may sing the antiphon in the *Roman Missal* to a common tone (e.g., [Gregorian](#), [Meinrad](#), or [Chabanel](#)), and the congregation can participate by singing the *Glory Be*.

As parishes continue to look for ways to strike a careful balance between encouraging sung prayer and observing current health protocols, it should be noted that it is *not* permitted to use pre-recorded music in the liturgy (USCCB, *Sing to the Lord*, 93-94). As well, the projection of music or lyrics onto large screens is not generally recommended, as this can become a visual distraction to the liturgical action taking place in the sanctuary.



Enhance the Music at Your Sunday Mass!

## HOW TO ADD ANTIPHONS AND OTHER PROPER CHANTS TO YOUR PARISH SUNDAY MASS

Presenter:  
**Dr. Jennifer Donelson-Nowicka, DMA**

**September 21, 2020**  
**7:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.**  
Online Zoom Presentation  
Learn from the comfort of your own home!

Cost: **\$15** | Tickets: [antiphons.eventbrite.com](https://antiphons.eventbrite.com)



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LITURGY

### *Recent News from the Holy See*

**May 14** · The Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments (CDWDS) gives a *recognitio* to the English translation of hymns for the 2nd edition of the Liturgy of the Hours. Hymns will be published by the USCCB and are authorized for optional use upon publication. The translations of the Psalter and canticles received a *recognitio* in May 2018 and are already authorized for optional use; these are available for purchase from the [USCCB Store](#) for \$24.95.

**May 18** · The CDWDS issues a decree inscribing the celebration of Saint Maria Faustina (Helena) Kowalska, virgin, in the General Roman Calendar. The decree – issued on behalf of Pope Francis – was promulgated on the same day that the Church marked the one-hundredth anniversary of Karol Wojtyła. The future Pope Saint John Paul II canonized Saint Faustina in the year 2000. Her optional memorial will be celebrated around the world on October 5.

**June 20** · Cardinal Sarah, Prefect of the CDWDS, issues a [letter on the addition of three invocations to the Litany of Loreto](#): Mother of Mercy, Mother of hope, and Solace of migrants.

**August 6** · The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith publishes the following response to a *dubium* concerning the baptismal formula:

Whether the Baptism conferred with the formula “We baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” is valid? - Response: Negative [i.e., it is not valid to use this formula]

Whether those persons for whom baptism was celebrated with this formula must be baptized *in forma absoluta*? - Response: Affirmative [i.e., such persons must be baptized *in forma absoluta*]

This response was accompanied by a [doctrinal note](#), in which the Congregation explained that the erroneous and “deliberate modification of the sacramental formula was apparently introduced to emphasize the communitarian significance of Baptism, in order to express the participation of the family and of those present, and to avoid the idea of the concentration of a sacred power in the priest to the detriment of the parents and the community that the formula in the *Roman Ritual* might seem to imply.” However, the Congregation noted that, according to Vatican II’s *Sacrosanctum concilium*, “when one baptizes it is really Christ himself who baptizes... the Lord has the principal role in the event being celebrated(...). When the minister says “I baptize you...” he does not speak as a functionary who carries out a role entrusted to him, but he enacts ministerially this sign-presence of Christ, who acts in his Body to give his grace.”

The Congregation affirmed that “the parents, godparents and the entire community are called to play an active role, a true liturgical office” — nevertheless, “each person, minister or layman, who has an office to perform, should do all of, but only, those parts which pertain to his office by the nature of the rite and the principles of liturgy (*Sacrosanctum concilium*, 28).” The Congregation’s [doctrinal note](#) concluded by noting that arbitrary changes to sacramental formulae inflict a “wound” on the ecclesial community and show a “lack of an understanding of the very nature of the ecclesial ministry that is always at the service of God and His people and not the exercise of a power that goes so far as to manipulate what has been entrusted to the Church in an act that pertains to the Tradition.”

## *Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments Specifies Liturgical Observances for 2022*

On May 11, the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments issued a response to questions concerning the celebration of Mass and the Divine Office on several days in 2022. The Congregation's commentary included the following observations and indications:

1. In 2022, the Solemnity of Saint Joseph (March 19) will fall on a Saturday, and the Third Sunday in Lent will be observed the following day. The Congregation stated that, in the evening of March 19, Vespers I and the Mass of the Sunday should be celebrated.
2. On Friday, June 24, the Solemnities of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus (Friday after the Second Sunday after Pentecost) and the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist (June 24) fall on the same date in 2022. Both celebrations hold the same rank on the Table of Liturgical Days, and liturgical law does not provide any guidance as to which feast should be celebrated on this Friday. In response, the Congregation has determined for the universal Church that the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart will be observed on Friday, June 24, and the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist will be transferred to the preceding Thursday, June 23. However, where Saint John the Baptist is the patron saint of a nation, diocese, city, or religious community, the order of the two celebrations is to be reversed, keeping the Nativity on June 24 and transferring Sacred Heart to June 23 instead. Since this exception does not apply to churches, those parishes whose church's titular saint is Saint John the Baptist will celebrate their patronal solemnity on Thursday, June 23, in 2022.

## *Music During the Pandemic: Archdiocesan Musician Roundtable - October 15*

On Thursday, October 15, from 7pm-8:30pm, the Office of Liturgy will host an online webinar to discuss musicians' experiences of providing sung liturgy during this time of returning to public worship. Topics to be explored will include the latest scientific findings on singing and the transmission of COVID-19 virus, a reflection on the experience of implementing the archdiocesan guidelines on sacred music, and a sharing of "best practices."

Panelists will be members of the archdiocesan Music Commission, including:

- Father George Hafemann, Pastor of Saint John the Evangelist Parish, Goshen
- Dr. Jennifer Donelson-Nowicka, DMA, Professor and Director of Music at Saint Joseph's Seminary
- Anthony Marcella, Music Director at Saint Stephen the Martyr Parish, Warwick
- Sarah Jane Starcher Germani, Music Director at Saint Mary Gate of Heaven Parish, Queens

Registration for this event is \$15. Visit [musicianroundtable.eventbrite.com](https://musicianroundtable.eventbrite.com) to find out more and register today!

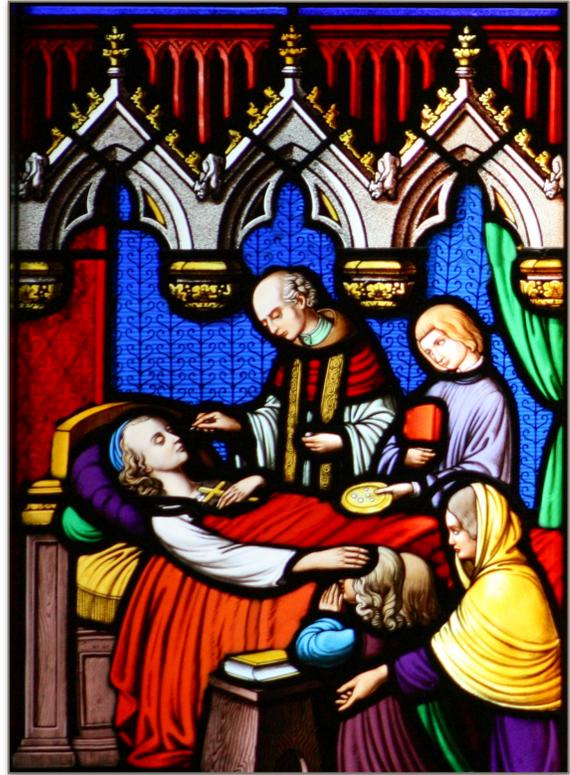


*Contemporary Questions About the Anointing of the Sick - Online Webinar, November 21*

During the current COVID-19 pandemic, the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick has taken on a renewed focus amongst Catholics. New questions concerning the manner of celebrating this Sacrament have arisen as Catholics look for opportunities to receive God's sacramental healing in a time marked by illness and distress. This webinar will review the Catholic teaching on the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick and discuss recent developments and clarifications concerning its celebration.

Presented by Father Matthew Ernest, S.T.D., Director of the archdiocesan Office of Liturgy, this webinar will explore:

- the Scriptural basis for the Anointing of the Sick
- when a Catholic should seek out the Anointing of the Sick
- the effects of the Anointing of the Sick
- the role of the minister and recipient of the Sacrament
- common questions and answers in light of the COVID-19 pandemic
- the important spiritual role that Anointing of the Sick can play in the lives of Catholics whenever they face a serious illness



This online presentation will take place on Saturday, November 21, from 10am-11:30am. Registration is \$15. Visit [anointingwebinar.eventbrite.com](https://anointingwebinar.eventbrite.com) for more information and to register.

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