



UPDATE ON DIRECTIVES FOR THE SACRAMENTS OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION
OFFICE FOR DIVINE WORSHIP
ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA
FRIDAY, April 3, 2020

The Sacraments of Christian Initiation of adults and children are intimately associated with the Sacred Paschal Triduum, especially the Easter Vigil, and Easter Time. The celebration of the Sacred Paschal Triduum in a private manner and the ongoing suspension of public Masses requires a postponement of these Sacraments until it is possible to assemble safely again with public celebrations. It is always possible in case of emergency and for a serious pastoral reason to celebrate the Sacraments of Christian Initiation of adults and children even during this period of precaution in the face of the Coronavirus (COVID-19).

SACRAMENTS OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS AND CHILDREN

Archbishop Perez gives permission for the full sacramental initiation—Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist—of adults (those who have completed fourteen years of age and older) that ordinarily takes place at the Easter Vigil to be celebrated at a time mutually convenient for all even beyond Easter Time.

The full sacramental initiation—Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist—of school age children (over seven years of age) can take place at any time mutually convenient for all even beyond Easter Time.

- The Vigil of Pentecost, if possible, is a recommended occasion for the Baptism and full initiation of adults and children. The Vigils of Epiphany, Easter and Pentecost were the usual times in the tradition when adult baptism were celebrated. This would also be an opportunity to observe the Vigil in the extended form in the *Roman Missal*.
- On other occasions, when the liturgical day permits, the Mass for the Conferral of Baptism is used and the readings come from the Lectionary (Volume 4) for Christian Initiation apart from the Easter Vigil.
- The plan for the celebration of the Sacraments is found in the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, Part II, Number 2, Christian Initiation of Adults in Exceptional Circumstances (nn. 340-369).
- The celebration of these Sacraments are recorded in the Baptism Register.

BAPTISM OF CHILDREN

The Baptism of Children is to take place one child at a time with due attention given to the number of participants and social distancing. Fresh water is to be used for each Baptism during this period. The use of the new *Order of Baptism of Children* is mandatory as of Easter Sunday, April 12, 2020.

CONFIRMATION OF CATHOLIC ADULTS

The Archbishop grants the faculty to priests of the Archdiocese to confirm Catholic adults (those who have completed fourteen years of age and older) even beyond Pentecost until further notice. The 2016 edition of the *Order of Confirmation* must be used for the Conferral of the Sacrament. A copy can be provided by the Office for Divine Worship.

- Catholic adults can also be confirmed when the Bishop visits the parish for the Confirmation of school age children.
- The celebration of Confirmation is recorded in the parish Confirmation Register and at the church of Baptism.
- *The conferral of Confirmation for adults (those who have completed fourteen years of age and older) from throughout the Archdiocese is still planned for Pentecost Sunday, May 31, 2020, during the 6:30 PM Mass at the Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul. Registration information for this celebration will be available on the website of the Office for Divine Worship beginning April 13, 2020.*

CONFIRMATION OF SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

The celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation for school age children throughout the Archdiocese of Philadelphia is further postponed until April 30, 2020. The Bishop celebrant of the conferral of Confirmation, in consultation with the pastor, will make arrangements for a new date for the celebration. Pastors are asked to inform their parishioners and all those involved with the Confirmations scheduled during this additional period of the postponement.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION

First Holy Communion can be rescheduled as soon as the suspension of public Masses is lifted and at a time mutually convenient for all. Please allow sufficient time from this date in order for the children to be properly prepared and have the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation.

RECEPTION OF BAPTIZED CHRISTIANS INTO THE FULL COMMUNION OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

The Reception of Baptized Christians into the Full Communion of the Catholic Church for adults and children over seven years of age can take place at any time mutually convenient to all at any time of the year.

- Priests, by faculty of the universal law, confirm in this circumstance without any further permission from the Archbishop.
- The plan for Reception into Full Communion is found in the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, Part II, Number 5.
- Reception into Full Communion is recorded in the Full Communion Register and not in the Baptism Register.

Thank you so very much for your generous assistance during these most unusual times in the life of our local church. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at fr.dgill@archphila.org.

In Christ,
Father Dennis Gill,
Director, Office for Divine Worship