

DIRECTIONS FROM THE ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK: updated March 24, 2020

1. Baptisms administered by the ordinary minister of the sacrament within the parish setting are to be deferred, except in case of emergency. In these extreme instances, the faithful should contact a priest immediately.
2. Funeral Masses or services in the church or funeral home will no longer be conducted until further notice. Burial prayers may be said in an open air setting in a cemetery, as long as proper distancing of the ten people allowed by state regulation is maintained. They may not be held in a mortuary chapel. The family is to be assured that a memorial Mass will be offered as soon as possible after restrictions are lifted.
3. Weddings are not allowed, unless absolutely necessary. If a wedding must take place for some serious reason, only the bride, groom, two witnesses and the officiant may be present, all maintaining the proper physical distance. Permission to celebrate a wedding must be obtained from the office of the vicar general.
4. Individual confession may be offered upon request, as long as hygiene and physical distancing requirements are observed (i.e., a barrier between the penitent and the priest, such as a grille and cloth).
5. Holy Communion may be administered as viaticum only. The minister of communion must observe the safety protocols dictated by the civil authorities for the prevention of the spread of infection. Masses in convents will no longer be celebrated. The pastor or parochial vicar may consecrate a sufficient supply of hosts for the chapel tabernacle. One of the sisters may be mandated as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion. A proper ritual will be followed for the distribution of the Eucharist.
6. If a pastor chooses to keep the parish church open for prayer:
 - Definite hours must be announced. 0630 - 600pm
 - No public ceremonies such as the Mass or group devotions may take place so as to prevent any assembling of people.
 - Exposition may take place, but there is to be no Benediction or group devotions.
 - The church must be cleaned and sanitized frequently in accord with the guidelines to prevent infection.
7. Parishes should suspend all office activity. Be certain that a priest can be reached in case of an urgent need for the sacrament of the anointing of the sick and viaticum.
8. Parishioners who are in hospitals will be attended to by the Catholic chaplain on staff.