

Archdiocese of Santa Fe
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OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

DECREE CONCERNING THE CELEBRATION OF CONFIRMATIONS AND THE RCIA PROCESS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

In face of the gravity of the COVID-19 pandemic, and in the interest of fostering the sacramental life of the Church during these uncertain times, and with due regard for those who are to receive the sacraments of initiation and those continuing their journey of faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ, I decree the following to be effective until September 30, 2020:

- I. **Young persons prepared for Confirmation:** So that those properly disposed (Canon 843, §1, §2, 890) and who were to receive the sacrament of Confirmation during the period of Easter 2020 may not suffer in their journey of faith, I decree a special grant to the Pastor as well as all presbyters in active ministry within the domicile of our Archdiocese, with the mandate of the proper Pastor, to confer the Sacrament of Confirmation by virtue of canons 882, and 884, §1.
- II. **Catholic adults prepared for Confirmation:** The special grant under canon 882 and 884, §1, is extended to these cases, and includes all presbyters in active ministry within the domicile of our Archdiocese, with the mandate of the proper Pastor.
- III. **Catechumens, Elect and Candidates:** These indeed being unusual circumstances (No. 26 of Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults), I hereby grant permission to the Pastor to use the rite of Christian Initiation of Adults in Exceptional Circumstances (RCIA No. 331-369; Cf. 34, 4; cf. Canon 883,2°), and the same is extended to all presbyters in active ministry within the domicile of our Archdiocese, with the mandate of the proper Pastor. Though Pastors have the faculty in law of administering Confirmation to “baptize one who is no longer an infant or admit one already baptized into full communion of the Catholic Church” (Canon 883, 2°), this faculty, by this decree, is extended to all presbyters in active ministry within the domicile of our Archdiocese and with the mandate of the proper Pastor. The Rite of Baptized Christians into the Full Communion of the Catholic Church (473ff) is to be followed with appropriate modification where need be, and the same mandate is extended to all presbyters in active ministry with the permission of the proper Pastor (Canon 883,2°). Pastors and those mandated are called to familiarize themselves with the aforesaid paragraphs of the Rite of Christian Initiation, keeping in mind the precepts of canon 846.

Furthermore, where it is difficult (whether in the case of the Sacrament of Confirmation or for the Rite of Initiation) for a sponsor to be present because of travel restriction or otherwise, a proxy will be allowed, provided the pre-requisites of canon 874 are followed concerning sponsors. Nonetheless, to establish the proof of Baptism/Confirmation (canon 875, 876, 894, 895), in cases where the proxy stood in place of the Sponsor, both the names of the proxy and sponsor should be noted.

A copy of this decree for future reference is to be attached to the sacramental register of each parish exercising its provisions.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe on this 20th day of May, 2020 in the Year of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Most Reverend John C. Wester
Archbishop of Santa Fe

Reverend John B. Trambley-II
Priest-Ecclesiastical Notary Archdiocese of Santa Fe