

23/04/2021

Instructions to the Clergy of the Holy Metropolis of Sweden for Holy Week



Stockholm, 22 April 2021

Dear Brothers and Fathers in Christ,

As the coronavirus pandemic still exists, torments and subverts the day-to-day life so far, I contact you on the occasion of Holy Week, as this year, the sequences will not take place, like last year behind “closed doors,” but with special conditions and numerical limitations.

Our local Church, from the appearance of the pandemic until now, fully supports the decisions of the competent state officials regarding the taking of the necessary measures for the protection of public health.

For this reason, you personally, as well as the members of your parish councils and the volunteers who contribute to the work of our local Church and its parishes, must apply with absolute accuracy and care what is pointed out below, which concerns our parishes in Sweden.

Clergymen serving our parishes in other Scandinavian countries, please observe the local state special measures in force.

- According to current state law, there should not be more than eight (persons inside the church, including Clergy, Chanters, Parish Council Members, Volunteers and the faithful (the number includes minors/children).
- Complying with the relevant state recommendation, the Clergy, the Members of the Parish Councils, the volunteers and the faithful, should wear a face protection mask when entering and staying inside the church.
- During the Divine Liturgy or other church services, the Parish Council Members, the volunteers and the Clergy should verify that you do not all exceed the total number of eight (persons inside the church, otherwise you will take care of its observance. Ignorance or non-application of it leads to the following measures: a) a fine, b) detention of the Priest and c) closure of the church indefinitely, until the repeal of these restrictive measures, which entails the derailment of our local Church. For all of the above reasons, you need to be very careful and precise.
- The Holy Communion for reasons of church economia/discretion, as is applies in the Stockholm Cathedral, can be offered to the faithful at the end of the Divine Liturgy, near the entrance of the church, i.e. in the pronaos/portico, together with the distribution of the antidoron/blessed bread, so that the faithful should not go through the whole church, to avoid overcrowding.
- The same status, in terms of the number of participants and protection measures, applies, until further notice, for the Holy Sacraments, except for the funeral service, where the state allows the presence of a total of twenty (20) persons inside the church.
- I urge you, for the precise observance of what is mentioned in this encyclical, to consult ahead of time with the Members of your Parish Councils and the volunteers, in order to inform them, but also to avoid misunderstandings on behalf of the faithful.
- Along with the Holy Week and Easter church schedule, I advise you to post on the social media of your parish the present episcopal encyclical.
- Finally, the Holy Week church services will be broadcast live, through the official Facebook page of the Holy Metropolis of Sweden, exclusively from the St. George Cathedral in Stockholm:

Facebook page: [Metropolisofsweden@metropolisofsweden1](https://www.facebook.com/Metropolisofsweden@metropolisofsweden1)

I wish you all health and good strength in the fulfilment of your clerical duties, especially during these holy days. Heartfelt wishes for a blessed Easter to you, your families and the flock of the Mother Church of Constantinople in Scandinavia.

Prayerfully and brotherly Yours,

+ Metropolitan Cleopas

Saint Joseph the Hesychast



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