



**UPDATE ON THE CELEBRATION OF THE SACRED LITURGY
OFFICE FOR DIVINE WORSHIP
ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA
THURSDAY, APRIL 21, 2022**

As of this Sunday, the Second Sunday of Easter (or of Divine Mercy), April 24, 2022, the invitation to offer the sign of peace during the Communion Rite of the Mass may be resumed throughout the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

The sign of peace gives expression to the peace of Christ that arrives with the Eucharistic Prayer, the “Sacrifice of our reconciliation” (Eucharistic Prayer III), and prepares for the deepest possible communion with the reception of the Body and Blood of Christ. Although there are no prescribed gestures or words for this sign in the United States, it is expressed typically with shaking hands. The *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (hereafter GIRM), number 154, adds, “[w]hile the Sign of Peace is being given, it is permissible to say: *The peace of the Lord be with you always*, to which the reply is *Amen*. The gesture should be fitting and sober and extended to those who are nearest (see GIRM, number 82). Waving and the victory sign would be incompatible gestures with the intended expression of communion with those nearest to one another. The invitation to offer the sign of peace always remains optional (see GIRM, number 154, and the *Order of Mass*, number 128). An example for the use of this option is when the faithful are scattered throughout the church and sitting at a distance from one another.

Thank you so very much for your generous assistance in observing this updated directive. 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