



**ARCHDIOCESE OF CACERES**  
**OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP**  
Archbishop's Residence  
Naga City

## CIRCULAR

Number 0027  
Series of 2020

**TO: ALL THE PRIESTS AND FAITHFUL IN THE ARCHDIOCESE OF CACERES**  
**RE: INSTRUCTIONS ON THE CELEBRATION OF AGUINALDO MASSES, MISA DE GALLO OR SIMBANG GABI**

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During this time of the pandemic, the Church has adjusted the forms of important seasonal celebrations of the Sacraments and the liturgy. It is also in this context that we are issuing these guidelines concerning the Aguinaldo Masses or Simbang Gabi and Christmas celebrations.

These adjustments are applicable **only** during this time of the Pandemic. These adjustments are done because of the great number of mass-goers during the Aguinaldo Masses, and the limitations in the number of mass-goers due to the strict social distancing demanded by the IATF as a safety protocol in the prevention of the spread of the virus.

1. It is important to understand and consider the original nature of the Aguinaldo Masses, Misa de Gallo or Simbang Gabi as nine consecutive early morning or dawn Masses.
2. Since it is necessary to implement social distancing even in our liturgical celebrations, and this will prevent us from accommodating the many who would participate in these Masses, we recommend that for Simbang Gabi, the Masses in the evening can start as early as 6:00pm and for the morning the last Aguinaldo Masses, Misa de Gallo or Simbang Gabi Mass can be at 6:00 am.
3. The pastors of the parishes could schedule more Simbang Gabi Masses in Barangay Chapels, Oratories and different venues, which can be large enough to accommodate more people and still observing social distancing.
4. As a pastoral accommodation during this time of the pandemic, the “anticipation” of the following day during evening Simbang Gabi Masses will be allowed, with the exception of the “anticipation” of Monday during the evening Masses of Sunday. This is to emphasize the primacy of the Sunday over the weekday celebration.
5. During the evening Simbang Gabi Masses of the Sunday, the readings and prayers of the Sunday ought to be used. While during the weekday evening Simbang Gabi Masses, the readings and prayers of the following day will be used. The Gloria is prayed/sung and white vestments are used. The Creed is said only on Sundays of the Simbang Gabi, not on weekdays.
6. On Christmas Eve, the Vigil Mass of Christmas may be celebrated from 6:00 in the evening. The last Mass of December 24 would take the liturgy of the Midnight Mass of Christmas. The dawn Mass of Christmas may also be celebrated early morning of December 25.

7. Since the kissing or touching of images is still prohibited during this time of the pandemic, families may be encouraged to bring their family image of the infant Jesus during the Christmas Masses.
8. It is highly encouraged to make the live streaming of these liturgical celebrations for our faithful who are still unable to join us, physically, in our Aguinaldo Masses, Misa de Gallo and Simbang Gabi.

The celebration of Christmas may be different this year. But we pray and help our faithful to see the heart and the essence of the season in the simple, sober, silent but strong and loving truth of the God who comes to us in Jesus' incarnation. He became one with us even in suffering and darkness of human sinfulness, helplessness, and illness to bring us to the kingdom of light and salvation of the Father.

Given at the Chancery, Pilgrim City of Naga, Republic of the Philippines, this 1st day of December in the Year of our Lord, 2020.

In Christ,

  
✠ ROLANDO J. TRIA TIRONA, O.C.D., D.D.  
Archbishop of Caceres