



Template for AOH High School Graduation Celebrations

For High School Administrators and Planning Teams

2020

Baccalaureate Mass (Virtual)

- Please invite your chaplain or another priest special to your school to celebrate mass for the Graduating Seniors. You may have up to 10 people present, including the priest. However, the fewer the better.
- We recommend this be recorded in school chapels if possible.
- You may have one or two musicians; one or two vocalists.
- You may have administrators, teachers or students serve as lectors.
- All social distancing guidelines must be followed, including masks, except when singing, reading, etc.
- Please see how ORTV is celebrating the daily tv masses during this time for guidance.
- As for the reception of Holy Communion, please let the priest determine his comfort level for this.
- This mass should be pre-recorded and streamed at the time when you would have had the Baccalaureate Mass.

Commencement* Ceremony (Virtual)

- The commencement ceremony may be recorded in segments and should be posted at the time when the ceremony is scheduled to take place.
- Some components are required; others optional
- You may add your own components and personalize this for your school
- Fr. Matt Gworek and David Elliott will record the archbishop and bishop and coordinate with you
- Some have asked about filming speeches in the cathedral. I spoke with Fr. McLearn (the new rector) and he is fine with this possibility. Please coordinate through David Elliott here at the Pastoral Center or his cell is (203) 980-1277. By the way, he also has drone footage of the cathedral. Recording at the Cathedral or Basilica is optional- your choice to do it or not. Eileen/Butch, I did not speak with Fr. Sullivan so feel free to do so if you wish.

Components of Virtual Commencement Ceremony

1. You should have an administrator, senior teacher or class leader record the welcome to the Commencement Ceremony.
2. Immediately after the welcome, there should be the Invocation, prerecorded by the Most Reverend Juan Miguel Betancourt, SEMV, Auxiliary Bishop of Hartford
3. Salutatorian Speech, if this is your custom





4. School Specific Portion: special awards, acknowledgements, announcement of scholarship dollars (your choice)
5. Valedictorian Speech, if this is your custom
6. Message for the Class of 2020, prerecorded by the Most Reverend Leonard P. Blair, Archbishop of Hartford
7. Graduations Portraits of the Class of 2020 with their names printed should scroll slowly as the names are read
8. Recording of Student Council President turning tassel
9. Recording of small group singing the *Alma Mater* or another selection if it is your custom
10. President/Head of School Addresses the Graduates and concludes program
11. Recording of Pomp and Circumstance with images of school, class, or Congratulatory images are displayed

* *Feel free to use whatever terminology you typically use: Commencement Ceremony, Graduation Ceremony, Graduation Exercises, etc.*

Drive-By Distribution of Diplomas (On Campus, One Graduate at a Time)

- As discussed on the virtual meeting with HS Administrators, students may present one car at a time with their parents/families on an announced day/time for their diplomas and other awards.
- It is the choice of the local school as to whether the student (alone) exits the vehicle. The president/head of school presents the diploma wearing gloves.
- Other administrators may be nearby to assist with distribution, keeping appropriate social distancing. Masks must be worn.
- A photographer or videographer may be present at appropriate social distance wearing mask. Pictures with the receiving of the diploma should still maintain social distance.
- Faculty/Staff (if the planning committee wants this and individuals wish to be there) may line the driveway or drive by area with or without academic attire (school choice). All must clearly understand that no physical contact may be made. If they will be far enough from cars, they may go without masks outdoors so that they may greet families from a distance but that choice is left to school and individual.
- In consultation with some other superintendents, there are some districts/schools where cars will gather in a lot and faculty/staff volunteers give the cars a number and they drive up with that number so those at the diploma distribution area have the correct diploma waiting. This could also be accomplished by texting or other form of communication. This is not the time to give a blank diploma. . . the student should receive the one with his/her name in it so as to avoid another encounter. The logistics of this are up to each school as you know your community best.

Celebration for Class of 2020 (Held when safe to gather all graduates)

- Please select and announce three potential dates/times: 1) mid to late August; 2) Thanksgiving time; 3) Christmas Break. Realistically, August may be too early. If it is still impossible to safely hold a gathering at Christmas Break, later dates should be held at that time.
- This celebration should include food and music to replace prom and the other social events that have been cancelled this year. However, it should not be a prom but rather a gathering for all members of the class. Please make it “your own” but make it very special.

