



FROM THE OFFICE OF WORSHIP

LENT AND HOLY WEEK NOTES FOR 2012

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Lenten Season

- ✘ Lent for 2012 begins on February 22 (Ash Wednesday) and ends just before the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on April 5 (Holy Thursday).
- ✘ Catholics 18 to 59 years of age are obliged to fast on Ash Wednesday.
- ✘ Catholics 14 years of age and up are obliged to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday and the Fridays of Lent.
- ✘ The *Alleluia* is not sung or said during the Lenten liturgies.
- ✘ The *Gloria* is not sung or said during Lent except on the Solemnities of Saint Joseph (March 19) and the Annunciation of the Lord (transferred to March 26).
- ✘ Violet is the color of the season. Rose may be used on the 4th Sunday of Lent (*Laetare* Sunday).
- ✘ In order to help emphasize the penitential character of the Lenten season (with the exception of *Laetare* Sunday), the altar and sanctuary should not be decorated with flowers. In addition, musical instruments should only be used to support the singing.
- ✘ Crosses in the church may be covered from the conclusion of Mass for the Saturday of the Fourth Week of Lent until the end of the Celebration of the Passion of the Lord on Good Friday. Images in the church may be covered from the conclusion of Mass for the Saturday of the Fourth Week of Lent until before the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday.
- ✘ Holy water must not be removed from the fonts or replaced with anything else (sand, gravel, etc.) during the Lenten season. While Lent is a time of fasting, it is not a time to fast from our sacramentals. The holy water is removed after the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday and replaced with the waters blessed at the Easter Vigil.

Time of Easter Vigil

- ✘ Because one of the primary elements of the Easter Vigil is darkness, the time to begin the Easter Vigil is after nightfall.
- ✘ In the Diocese of Evansville, sunset on April 7 is approximately 7:19 PM CDT, with civil twilight ending at approximately 7:46 PM CDT. Depending on location, complete darkness comes about 15-20 minutes after the end of civil twilight.
- ✘ Therefore, for the sake of unity in the diocese, **celebrations of the Easter Vigil in the Diocese of Evansville should begin no earlier than 8:00 PM CDT (9:00 PM EDT).**
- ✘ The celebration of the Easter Vigil will take place at Saint Benedict Cathedral beginning at 8:00 PM CDT.

Lenten Fasting and Abstinence

Q.: What is the purpose of fasting and abstinence during Lent?

A.: Both fasting and abstinence can trace their usage back to Old Testament times, and the concept of intentionally limiting the amount or types of food eaten was not foreign to the first Christians. To them, it was not only a sign of one's sorrow and penance before God, but it was also a pious work that helped unite them more closely to the passion of Jesus.

Today Lent is seen in two ways. First, it is the time of final preparation for those who will enter the Church at Easter, so it has a baptismal character. Second, it is the time when all of the faithful prepare for the passion, death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ at Easter through added prayer and listening to the Word of God, giving it a penitential character. To physically deny oneself by fasting and abstaining serves as a tangible reminder of the suffering endured by Christ at His Passion.

Every Friday is still a penitential day in the Church, but the mandate to abstain from meat (outside of Lent) is no longer an obligation in the United States.

Good Friday

On Good Friday:

- ✘ Catholics 14 years old and up are obliged to abstain from meat on Good Friday.
- ✘ Catholics 18 to 59 years old are obliged to fast on Good Friday and should continue this Easter fast on Holy Saturday, as well.



If, therefore, we ought to be humble of heart with sentiments of most sincere piety throughout the entire period of our earthly sojourn when we live in the midst of temptations, how much more necessary is humility during these days when we not only pass the time of our humiliation by living but signalize it by special devotion?

—Saint Augustine, *Sermon 206*, 1

Funerals, Weddings, and Other Sacraments During Lent and Holy Week

- ✘ Funeral Masses are not permitted on the Sundays of Lent, Holy Thursday, or during the Easter Triduum. The Funeral Liturgy outside Mass should be used on these days if needed.
- ✘ Marriages celebrated during Lent should be planned keeping in mind the special nature of the season (especially in terms of decoration and musical selection).
- ✘ The ritual Mass for Marriage is not permitted on Ash Wednesday or the Sundays of Lent. The Rite of Marriage Outside of Mass can be used these days.
- ✘ No Rite of Marriage at all is permitted during the Easter Triduum.
- ✘ The sacraments of Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick may be celebrated on Good Friday and Holy Saturday.



Particular Feasts in the Lenten Season

Saint Joseph

The Solemnity of Saint Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary (March 19), takes precedence over the Lenten weekday. The *Gloria* is to be sung at this Mass, and the Creed is used.

Saint Patrick

In a privileged season like Lent, all memorials of saints are observed as optional. Therefore, unless Patrick is the patron of a particular church or parish, the day would either be omitted or observed as a commemoration, with the proper saint collect replacing the collect of the day.

Annunciation of the Lord

The Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord is transferred to March 26 in 2012, since March 25 is a Sunday and a Sunday of Lent takes precedence over the Solemnity. Even with the transfer of days, the Annunciation takes precedent over the Lenten weekday. The *Gloria* is to be sung at this Mass, and the Creed is used with a genuflection at the words recalling the Incarnation ("...and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.").

USCCB Lent/Easter Resources

The USCCB's Committee on Divine Worship has once again assembled a web page offering resources for Lent and Easter:

<http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/liturgical-resources/lent/resources-for-lent-and-easter.cfm>

On this site one can find resources such as:

- ✘ "Eighteen Questions on the Paschal Triduum"
- ✘ Selected homilies of Popes Benedict XVI and John Paul II for Ash Wednesday, Holy Thursday, and the Easter Vigil
- ✘ *Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy* information on Lent and Holy Week

This will prove to be an invaluable source of information for you as you prepare the celebration of your Lenten and Holy Week liturgies, write homilies or catechetical pieces, etc.

Veiling of Images during Lent

Q.: What is the purpose of veiling images in church during Lent?

A.: The current option to cover the crosses and other images (such as statues, but not stained glass windows or the Stations of the Cross) has been a practice of the Church for many centuries. While there are a few early practices that may have contributed to this custom, the most likely origin is the tradition in the Middle Ages to cover the beautiful pieces of artwork depicting images of the mysteries of our faith and the representations of the saints. Just as we fast in other ways during the Lenten season in preparation for the Easter celebration, the Church would offer this "fast" for the eyes that is broken with our adoration of the cross on Good Friday and celebration on Easter of the new life Christ won for us and in turn those who are enjoying their fruits of their participation in the life of Christ.

Customarily, violet/purple cloths have been used to cover the images. The practice today still follows the custom since the 17th century of covering the images during "Passiontide," the last two weeks of Lent prior to Easter. If images and crosses are not covered for Passiontide, they may instead be covered after the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday in preparation for the Good Friday and Easter Vigil liturgies. Each parish/pastor has the discretion to decide on this practice.

Holy Oils & Chrism Mass

- ✘ The Mass of Chrism will be celebrated at Saint Benedict Cathedral on **Tuesday, April 3**, beginning at **5:30 PM CDT**.
- ✘ Please bring your clean, empty oil stocks to the "bride's room" of the cathedral (east side of the church, to the right of the sanctuary) prior to Mass so they can be filled with the new oils.
- ✘ In order to ensure that each parish receives the amounts of oil they need, please mark the outside of your stocks (with a piece of tape) to show approximately how full they need to be. This will help to remove some of the guesswork from the process.
- ✘ Holy oils from the previous year should be burned or buried. The new oil should not be added to it to "top it off."
- ✘ The former practice of adding unblest oil to the holy oils to increase the amount should not be done.
- ✘ The holy oils received at the Chrism Mass may be ritually received by your parish at the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper using the rite found in the *Sacramentary Supplement* – "Reception of Holy Oils Blessed at the Chrism Mass." (available online at <http://old.usccb.org/liturgy/holyoils.shtml>)
- ✘ The remaining holy oils are kept at the cathedral. If you are in need of more oils during the course of the year (especially the Sacred Chrism), you can obtain more at the cathedral during normal business hours.

Deacons and the Good Friday Liturgy

Q.: May a deacon preside at the Good Friday Celebration of the Passion of the Lord in place of a priest?

A.: Deacons are not permitted to lead the Good Friday Celebration of the Passion of the Lord. The rubrics of the liturgy do not foresee this as an option, and looking at the history and development of the Good Friday liturgy as a “Mass of the Pre-Sanctified” shows it has not been a part of the tradition. In addition, the Triduum liturgies can be seen as one continuous event, since there is no formal liturgical dismissal after Holy Thursday and Good Friday, and no greeting or welcome at the start of the Good Friday liturgy. This would seem to imply that the same priest who presided on Thursday would preside on Friday and Saturday as well!

Deacons, however, should fulfill their proper role in all of the Triduum liturgies including Good Friday. This would include assisting in the proclamation of the Passion, the introductions to the Solemn Intercessions, the Adoration of the Holy Cross, and Holy Communion. Also, a deacon may preside at other devotions that may be celebrated on Good Friday such as the Stations of the Cross, or at public celebrations of the Liturgy of the Hours.

Receiving and Confirming

Q.: Whom may the priest Confirm in the context of the Easter Vigil celebration?

A.: According to canon law and diocesan policy, the priest (be they pastor or associate) **already has the faculty** to Confirm in the following cases:

1. Anyone seven years old and up whom has just received Baptism at the Vigil.
2. Any baptized person seven years old and up (Catholic or otherwise) whom he receives into full Communion at the Vigil.

The priest **must request the faculty** to Confirm from the bishop in this case:

1. A baptized Catholic who did not receive Confirmation at the usual time and now wishes to receive it.*

* Because people in these situations are more so completing the initiation sacraments rather than coming into the Church, it would seem more appropriate to celebrate Confirmation in this case at a different time than the Easter Vigil to avoid confusion.

To Confirm or Not To Confirm—Children and the RCIA

Q.: When celebrating the sacraments of initiation with a child at the Easter Vigil, should they be Confirmed at this time as well?

A.: If a child has reached the age of seven (the “age of reason” or “age of discretion”) they are to be considered as adults for initiation purposes. According to diocesan policy, the directives in the *Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults* (nos. 304-329), and canon law (canon 866), the sacraments of initiation for adults are not to be separated unless for a grave reason. Wanting the young person to be able to be Confirmed with their class years later does not qualify as a “grave reason.”

Therefore, a child seven years of age or older would receive all of the initiation sacraments at the Easter Vigil. Priests would already have the faculty to Confirm in these cases.

If a child is less than seven years of age and there is no danger of death, the child would only be Baptized and would then celebrate First Communion and Confirmation later.

Communion with Christ in this life prepares us to overcome the barrier of death, so that we may live eternally with him. Faith in the resurrection of the dead and hope in eternal life open our eyes to the ultimate meaning of our existence: God created men and women for resurrection and life, and this truth gives an authentic and definitive meaning to human history, to the personal and social lives of men and women, to culture, politics and the economy. Without the light of faith, the entire universe finishes shut within a tomb devoid of any future, any hope.

—Pope Benedict XVI, *Message for Lent 2011*