



FROM THE OFFICE OF WORSHIP

LENT AND HOLY WEEK NOTES FOR 2015

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Lenten Season

- ✘ Lent for 2015 begins on February 18 (Ash Wednesday) and ends just before the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on April 2 (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 (March 25).
- ✘ 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. Other sacred 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 fountains 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 sacraments. 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 is after nightfall.
- ✘ In the Diocese of Evansville, sunset on April 4 is approximately 7:16 PM CDT, with civil twilight ending at approximately 7:42 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.

Particular Feasts in the Lenten Season

March 17-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.

March 19-Saint Joseph

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

March 25-Annunciation of the Lord

On the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord, the *Gloria* is to be sung at this Mass, and the Creed is said 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 web pages offering resources for Lent, the Triduum, and the Easter season:

<http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/liturgical-year/index.cfm>

On this site one can find resources such as:

- ✦ [Questions and Answers on Lent](#)
- ✦ [Reflections on Fasting and Abstinence](#)
- ✦ [RCIA](#)
- ✦ [Six Ways to Evangelize During Lent](#)
- ✦ [Eighteen Questions on the Paschal Triduum](#)
- ✦ [Rediscovering the Sacrament of Penance](#)
- ✦ [Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy](#)

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.

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.

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.

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.

FAQs on the Scrutinies

Q.: What are the Scrutinies?

A.: The scrutinies are a series of liturgical rites that are part of the Lenten preparations for the spiritual benefit of the elect, those who will celebrate the three Sacraments of Christian Initiation during the Easter Vigil. The Scrutinies ritually celebrate the central mystery of life, death, and resurrection in the lives of the elect.

From the RCIA, no. 141.: “...The scrutinies are meant to uncover, then heal all that is weak, defective, or sinful in the hearts of the elect; to bring out, then strengthen all that is upright, strong, and good....to give them strength in Christ...and deepen their resolve to hold fast to Christ and to carry out their decision to love God above all.”

Q.: What and where are the proper texts for the three Scrutinies?

A.: Some liturgies are so important that the given texts must be used without any change for “pastoral reasons”. The three Scrutinies fit this category.

- ✘ Readings: The *Lectionary for Mass*, nos. 745-747 provides no texts in place. The rubrics refer the minister to the readings and chants as given for the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Sundays of Lent, Year A – LM, nos. 28A, 31A, and 34A. There is one option given for the Second Scrutiny; Exodus 13:21-22 may replace the First Reading. It is not, however, found in the Lectionary.
- ✘ Mass Prayers: The *Roman Missal, Third Edition* provides the texts in two places. In the Ritual Masses section are found the proper presidential prayers (Collect, Prayer over the Offerings, and Prayer after Communion); proper inserts for Eucharistic Prayers I, II, and III; as well as the two antiphons. In the Proper of Time section for Lent are found the proper Prefaces for the Samaritan Woman (First Scrutiny on the Third Sunday of Lent), the Man Born Blind (second on the Fourth Sunday), and Lazarus (third on the Fifth Sunday). Note: these Prefaces are always used when the Year A readings are used whether the Scrutiny is celebrated or not.
- ✘ Ritual Prayers: Both the pastoral notes and the ritual texts for all three Scrutinies are found in the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*.
- ✘ Music: The ritual text gives the places and recommendations for necessary singing during the celebrations. See also *Sing to the Lord*, no. 205.

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FAQs on the Scrutinies (cont.)

Q.: How many Scrutinies are celebrated?

A.: Three are always celebrated. Only the Bishop may dispense from one for a serious obstacle or two in extraordinary circumstances. Pastoral reasons alone are not sufficient.

Q.: When are the Scrutinies celebrated?

A.: Sundays Masses on the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Sundays of Lent are the proper days. “When, for pastoral reasons these ritual Masses cannot be celebrated on their proper Sundays, they are celebrated on other Sundays of Lent or even convenient days during the week” [RCIA, no. 146]. They may be celebrated outside Lent. This, however, requires permission of the Bishop in each instance.

Q.: There is no “combined rite” in RCIA Appendix I for a single celebration with the elect and baptized candidates. Is that a mistake?

A.: No. Scrutinies, which includes an exorcism, are pre-baptismal rites. RCIA, no. 463 reads in part: “Because the prayer of exorcism in the three scrutinies for catechumens who have received the Church’s election properly belongs to the elect and uses numerous images referring to their approaching baptism, those scrutinies of the elect and this penitential rite for those preparing for confirmation and eucharist have been kept separate and distinct. Thus, no combined rite has been included in Appendix I.”

Holy Oils & Chrism Mass

- ✘ The Mass of Chrism will be celebrated at Saint Benedict Cathedral on **Tuesday, March 31**, beginning at **5:30 PM CDT**. All are invited to this diocesan celebration.
- ✘ Please bring your **clean, empty** oil stocks to the parish office building on the east side of the cathedral 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 or some other designation) 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 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://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/liturgical-year/triduum/reception-of-holy-oils.cfm>)
- ✘ 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 or other days in Lent Triduum such as the Stations of the Cross, or at public celebrations of the Liturgy of the Hours.

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.

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) has the faculty (and obligation) to Confirm in the following cases:

- ✘ Anyone seven years old and up whom has just received Baptism at the Vigil.
- ✘ Any non-Catholic baptized person seven years old and up whom he receives into full Communion at the Vigil.

Baptized Catholics, be they catechized or uncatechized, **should not** be Confirmed during the Vigil. This should be celebrated at another time—perhaps one of the Sundays of Easter Time or Pentecost.



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 canon law (canon 866), the directives in the *Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults* (nos. 304-329), and diocesan policy, 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.

Multiple Paschal Candles and the Easter Vigil

Q.: When multiple parishes or churches come together at one church to celebrate the Easter Vigil, can multiple paschal candles for the other churches be used for the Service of Light?

A.: The *Roman Missal*, not envisioning the pastoral situation of cluster parishes, specifies that only one paschal candle is used. To accommodate the particular circumstances, the USCCB Secretariat of Divine Worship makes the following suggestion: Candles from the other churches could be present at the Vigil, having been prepared in advance, and blessed alongside the main candle (perhaps having deacons or other representatives holding them). In keeping with the rubrics, for the lighting and procession only one candle should be lit (the principal one which will remain in that particular church). As the other candles in the congregation are lit after the second “Lumen Christi” proclamation, the other paschal candles could be lit and held (but not high, in order to maintain the prominence of the one principal candle) by someone at their place in the assembly. Once all the candles are extinguished after the singing of the Exsultet, the other paschal candles are put aside. On Easter Sunday morning, those candles could be taken to each of the missions and carried, lit, in the entrance procession at the first Mass at each church and put in place in the sanctuary.

Holy Week and Triduum in Linked and Merged Parishes

“Just as the week has its beginning and climax in the celebration of Sunday, which always has a paschal character, so the summit of the whole liturgical year is in the sacred Easter Triduum of the Passion and Resurrection of the Lord, which is prepared for by the period of Lent and prolonged for fifty days” (Circular Letter Concerning the Preparation and Celebration of the Easter Feasts, 2).

“...where the number of participants and ministers is so small that the celebrations of the Easter Triduum cannot be carried out with the requisite solemnity, such groups of the faithful should assemble in a larger church. Also where there are small parishes with only one priest it is recommended that such parishes should assemble, as far as possible, in a principal church and there participate in the celebrations” (Circular Letter, 43).

General Considerations

While we have had the circumstances of linked parishes in the diocese for several years, for the first time in recent memory we have the situation of parishes with multiple churches still in use. What follows are some guidelines for the preparation of the Triduum liturgies and how these can be applied to our linked and merged settings.

- ✘ Typically, there is only one celebration per parish for Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Easter Vigil. The permission of the bishop is required to celebrate more than one Mass on Holy Thursday or to repeat the Good Friday service, and these are done only in extraordinary circumstances. There should only be one celebration of the Easter Vigil.
- ✘ Linked parishes should strive to celebrate the Triduum liturgies together (see #43 in the Circular Letter cited above). This not only allows for the sharing of liturgical resources to enhance the Triduum celebrations, but also keeps the priest and many of the other ministers from having to pull “double duty,” running to fit multiple celebrations into these already busy days.
- ✘ In a merged parish, there should be only one celebration of each of the Triduum liturgies. If there is a serious concern of space or being able to accommodate all of the faithful who usually attend the Triduum liturgies (outside of the Easter Vigil), the pastor may request permission from the bishop to celebrate another Holy Thursday or Good Friday liturgy. However, the strong preference is to celebrate only one of each of the proper Triduum liturgies.
- ✘ It would be preferable to celebrate all of the Triduum liturgies from Holy Thursday through the Easter Vigil in the same church building. If one looks at the Triduum liturgies of Thursday through Saturday as three parts of one celebration, it makes sense that they would all be held in the same place.
- ✘ In selecting which church to use, both size of the church (how many people it can hold) as well as having what is needed for all of the celebrations should be considered.
 - > Examples (not an all-inclusive list)
 - > Is the font and its location in the church large enough to accommodate the number of baptisms at the Vigil?
 - > Is there a proper place for the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament at the end of the Holy Thursday liturgy?
- ✘ If possible, it may be helpful to set up a rotation of the Triduum between the available church buildings from year to year (keeping all of the liturgies in one place one year, and then moving them to the other church the next year).
- ✘ In those church buildings not being used for the Triduum liturgies, it would be acceptable to celebrate other Holy Week prayers and devotions in them, such as Liturgy of the Hours, Stations of the Cross, etc. Any celebrations such as these, however, should not detract from the celebrations of the primary Triduum liturgies. Easter Sunday Masses may also be celebrated in these churches.
- ✘ For information on how to handle paschal candles at the Easter Vigil for multiple parishes or churches, please see page 5 of this newsletter.