



FROM THE OFFICE OF WORSHIP

LENT AND HOLY WEEK NOTES FOR 2024

Contents

Lenten Season _____	1	Holy Oils & Chrism Mass 2024 _____	4
Other Sacraments in Lent/Holy Week _____	1-2	Holy Thursday Place of Repose _____	5
Ash Wednesday _____	2	Perpetual Exposition & the Triduum _____	5
USCCB Lent/Easter Resources _____	2	Deacons and Good Friday _____	5
Lenten Fasting/Abstinence _____	2	To Confirm or Not To Confirm _____	6
FAQs on Scrutinies _____	3	Triduum in Linked/Merged Parishes _____	6-7
Lenten Feasts _____	4	Multiple Paschal Candles and the Vigil _____	6
Veiling of Images in Lent _____	4	Confirmation and Other Rites _____	7
Time for Easter Vigil _____	4	Confirmation Prayer _____	8

Lenten Season

- ✘ Lent for 2024 begins on February 14 (Ash Wednesday—Happy Valentine’s Day!) and ends just before the Evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper on March 28 (Holy Thursday).
- ✘ Catholics 18 to 59 years of age are obliged to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, and should continue this Easter fast on Holy Saturday, as well.
- ✘ Catholics 14 years of age and up are obliged to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday, the Fridays of Lent, and Good Friday.
- ✘ The *Alleluia* is not sung or said during the Lenten liturgies.
- ✘ The *Gloria* is not sung or said during Lent except on the Feast of the Chair of Peter (February 22), Solemnity of Saint Joseph (March 19), and at any ritual Masses that call for the *Gloria* (Confirmation or Matrimony).
- ✘ Violet is the color of the season. Rose may be used on the Fourth 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 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.

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

- ✘ Funeral Masses are not permitted on the Sundays of Lent, anytime on Holy Thursday, or during the Easter Triduum. The Funeral Liturgy outside Mass should be used on these days if needed.
- ✘ Marriages celebrated during Lent, be they in Mass or out of Mass, should be planned keeping in mind the special nature of the season (especially in terms of decoration and musical selection). *(continued on next page)*

Sacraments During Lent and Holy Week

(continued from page one)

- ✦ The ritual Mass for Marriage is not permitted on Ash Wednesday or the Sundays of Lent. “The Order of Celebrating Matrimony without Mass” can be used these days if needed.
- ✦ No Rites of Marriage at all, in or out of Mass, are permitted during the Easter Triduum.
- ✦ The Sacraments of Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick may be celebrated on Good Friday and Holy Saturday.

Ash Wednesday

Q.: How should the distribution of ashes on Ash Wednesday be handled?

A.: While not a holy day of obligation, Ash Wednesday Masses are often some of the most well-attended every year. What follows are some suggestions on how to celebrate this day:

- ✦ Ashes may be distributed either by making the sign of the cross on the forehead or sprinkled on top of the head.
- ✦ The formula for the imposition of ashes (“Repent, and believe in the Gospel” or “Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return”) is said to each recipient while the ashes are distributed to them.
- ✦ Ashes may be distributed during Mass or outside of Mass. The order of service for outside of Mass can be found in the *Roman Missal* at the end of “Ash Wednesday,” or in the *Book of Blessings*, Chapter 52: Order for the Blessing and Distribution of Ashes.
- ✦ While the custom in the USA is to mark the forehead with a cross, sprinkling the ashes on the head remains the custom in other parts of the world such as Spain and Italy. Sprinkling ashes on the top of the head recalls the biblical practice of putting on “sackcloth and ashes” as an act of penance.
- ✦ However the ashes are received, the interior repentance expressed by this exterior act is at the heart of the action.
- ✦ Celebrations of Ash Wednesday should be limited to Wednesday itself. There is not an “anticipatory Mass” of Ash Wednesday like we would have for Sundays or other holy days that have a proper vigil or are days of obligation.

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:

- ✦ [Lenten Reflection Calendar](#)
- ✦ [Fasting and Abstinence](#)
- ✦ [Baptism and RCIA](#)
- ✦ [Six Ways to Evangelize During Lent](#)
- ✦ [Questions on the Paschal Triduum](#)
- ✦ [Rediscovering the Sacrament of Penance](#)

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.

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.

And just as a reminder—**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.

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.
- ✦ Whenever a scrutiny is celebrated, the proper given Year A readings must always be used, no matter what Sunday cycle it currently is. The Church does not permit adapting a scrutiny to suit other readings or prayers, since scrutiny texts are intimately tied to the Gospels. But the Church does permit the Year A readings of the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Sundays of Lent to replace the ones given for Years B and C – even if a scrutiny is not celebrated. See the rubrics in the Lectionary for Mass, nos. 29B, 30C, 32B, 33C, 35B, and 36C.
- ✦ 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*, nos. 141-146; 150-156; 164-177.
- ✦ Music: The ritual text gives the places and recommendations for necessary singing during the celebrations. See also *Sing to the Lord*, no. 205.

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."

Particular Feasts in the Lenten Season

February 22—Chair of Saint Peter

The Feast of the Chair of Saint Peter the Apostle takes precedent over the Lenten weekday. The *Gloria* is to be sung at this Mass.

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, takes precedence over the Lenten weekday. The *Gloria* is to be sung at this Mass, and the Creed is said.

March 25—Annunciation of the Lord

March 25 is the Monday of Holy Week, which takes precedent in this case. The celebration is therefore transferred to the first available day, which due to Holy Week and the Easter Octave, ends up being Monday, April 8. Please do not overlook this important feast!

Time of Easter Vigil

- ✦ Because one of the primary elements of the Easter Vigil is darkness (“May the light of Christ rising in glory dispel the darkness of our hearts and minds” (*Roman Missal*, The Easter Vigil. No. 14), the time to begin is after nightfall.
- ✦ In the Diocese of Evansville, sunset on March 30 is approximately 7:11 PM CDT, with civil twilight ending at approximately 7:38 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 on March 30 beginning at 8:00 PM CDT.

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, March 26**, beginning at **5:30 PM CDT**.
- ✦ Do not bring empty oil stocks to the Mass. Vessels for your holy oils will be provided.
- ✦ Please reverently clean and recycle your vessels from last Chrism Mass.
- ✦ Holy oils from the previous year should be burned or buried.
- ✦ The remaining holy oils are kept at the cathedral. If you are in need of more oils during the year (especially the Sacred Chrism), you can obtain more during normal business hours.

Holy Thursday Place of Repose & Period of Adoration

The end of the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday with its procession with the Blessed Sacrament is a beautiful conclusion to the first of the Triduum liturgies. Here are some things to keep in mind in preparing for this evening:

- ✠ The regular tabernacle of the church should be completely empty before Mass. Be sure to also extinguish the sanctuary lamp.
- ✠ The place of reservation for the Blessed Sacrament should be suitably adorned with flowers and other decorations (since the Lenten season has ended with start of the Evening Mass). It should also allow for the prayer and meditation of the people. It should not take on the appearance of a tomb or be presented as the place of the Lord's burial. The focus should be on the Blessed Sacrament reserved for Holy Communion the next day.
- ✠ If the regular tabernacle of the church is located in a chapel separate from the central part of the church, it may be used as the place of repose.
- ✠ Regardless of location, the Blessed Sacrament is reserved in a closed tabernacle. It is never put into a monstrance for exposition.
- ✠ The faithful should be encouraged to spend time in adoration before the reserved Eucharist this evening.

Perpetual Exposition and the Triduum

A few reminders for those parishes or institutions that have perpetual adoration chapels or celebrate exposition of the Blessed Sacrament on a regular basis:

- ✠ Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament does not take place from the beginning of the Triduum until after the Easter Vigil Mass. This means discontinuing exposition sometime before the beginning of the Evening Mass on Holy Thursday and then resuming it sometime after the conclusion of the Vigil.
- ✠ Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament during this time of the Triduum only takes place in the context of the reserved Sacrament at the place of repose after the Holy Thursday Mass through the beginning of the Celebration of the Lord's Passion on Good Friday. The Eucharist is not exposed in the monstrance during this time but left in the tabernacle of repose.
- ✠ After the Good Friday celebration, any hosts that remain may either be consumed or taken to a suitable place (such as a sacristy cabinet) to be used for viaticum.
- ✠ For those places that will resume exposition right after the Easter Vigil, do not forget to consecrate a host at Mass that can be used for exposition.

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 such as the Stations of the Cross, or at public celebrations of the Liturgy of the Hours.

To Confirm or Not To Confirm—Adults and Children in the RCIA

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

A.: According to canon law and diocesan policy, the priest (pastor or parochial vicar) has the faculty (and also the 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.

If a child has reached the age of seven (the “age of reason” or “age of discretion”) they are 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 Vigil

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 later celebrate First Communion and Confirmation.

Priests do not have the faculty (outside danger of death) to Confirm Baptized Catholics, catechized or uncatechized, during the Vigil or any other time. The priest should request the faculty to Confirm from the bishop, and then celebrate the sacrament at another time — perhaps one of the Sundays of Easter Time or Pentecost.

Multiple Paschal Candles & 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 has made the following suggestions:

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 principal candle) by someone at their place in the assembly. Once all the candles are extinguished after the Exsultet, the other paschal candles are put aside.

On Easter Sunday, those candles could be taken to each of the missions and carried, lit, in the entrance at the first Mass to be put in place in the sanctuary.

Holy Week and Triduum in Linked Parishes/ Multiple Churches

While we have had the circumstances of linked parishes in the diocese for many years, we also 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.

General Considerations

- ✠ 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 in a parish, 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,” fitting multiple celebrations into these already busy days. *(continued on the next page)*

Linked Parishes/Multiple Churches *(continued)*

- ✘ In a 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 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 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 Holy Thursday?
- ✘ 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 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.

The Order of Confirmation and Other Liturgical Rites

As a reminder—a new bilingual edition of *The Order of Confirmation / Ritual para la Confirmación* was put into use in the Dioceses of the United States of America in 2016. As with the *Roman Missal* back in 2011, there are texts in this revised edition that overlap with other rites, most notably the prayer for the Laying on of Hands.

Following the pattern established by the USCCB Committee for Divine Worship with the release of the Missal, the “general principle to be followed in an interim period such as this is that an approved liturgical book may continue to be used, even if some parts of its text have been retranslated in another book, until such time as a new version of the book is approved” (Committee on Divine Worship Newsletter, February 2016).

Although it is not obligatory, it would be appropriate that the new text for the Laying On of Hands also be used in the following places:

- ✘ *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* [RCIA]: initiation of catechumens (no. 234), initiation of children of catechetical age (no. 325), reception of baptized Christians into full communion with the Catholic Church (no. 493 and referenced at no. 502), and the combined rite of initiation of catechumens and reception of baptized Christians (no. 590).
- ✘ When the Bishop gives permission for a Priest in individual cases to use RCIA Part II, Chapter 2, Christian Initiation of Adults in Exceptional Circumstances (no. 365).
- ✘ RCIA Part II, Chapter 3, Christian Initiation of a Person in Danger of Death (no. 390).
- ✘ *Pastoral Care of the Sick* [PCS], in the ritual “Christian Initiation of the Dying” (no. 290) and “Continuous Rite of Penance, Anointing, and Viaticum” (no. 246).

Making this change would mean that the words heard at the laying on of hands by all candidates for Confirmation, no matter their status, would be consistent. Please note—the exhortation before the prayer at the Laying on of Hands is different in the RCIA, the PCS, and *The Order of Confirmation*, so one would just use that text as it is found in each respective rite.

For your convenience, the revised prayer for the Laying on of Hands is included on page 8 of this newsletter.

The Laying On of Hands

Order of Confirmation, no. 25. Then the Bishop lays hands over all those to be confirmed (as do the Priests who are associated with him). But the Bishop alone says:

**Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
who brought these your servants to new birth
by water and the Holy Spirit,
freeing them from sin:
send upon them, O Lord, the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete;
give them the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and fortitude,
the spirit of knowledge and piety;
fill them with the spirit of the fear of the Lord.
Through Christ our Lord.**

R. Amen.

The musical notation is written on seven staves, each with a treble clef. The notes are simple, using quarter and half notes, with some rests. The lyrics are written below each staff, aligned with the notes. The first staff begins with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The music concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots on the seventh staff.

Al-mighty God, Father of our Lord Je-sus Christ, who brought these
your servants to new birth by water and the Holy Spirit, freeing
them from sin: send upon them, O Lord, the Holy Spir-it, the
Par-a-clete; give them the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of coun-sel and for-ti-tude, the spirit of knowl-edge and
pi-e-ty; fill them with the spirit of the fear of the Lord.
Through Christ our Lord. **R.** A-men.

Text is taken from *The Order of Confirmation*; Chapter I: The Order for the Conferral of Confirmation within Mass (2015)