

Guidelines for Lent and Easter 2012

Office of Worship Diocese of Richmond

The annual observance of Lent is the special season for the ascent to the holy mountain of Easter. Through its twofold theme of repentance and baptism, the season of Lent disposes both the catechumens and the faithful to celebrate the paschal mystery. Catechumens are led to the sacraments of initiation by means of the Rite of Election, the Scrutinies, and catechesis. The faithful, listening more intently to the word of God and devoting themselves to prayer, are prepared through a spirit of repentance to renew their baptismal promises. (Ceremonial of Bishops, 249).

REGULATIONS FOR FAST AND ABSTINENCE

The following may be reproduced in parish bulletins for the purpose of reminding the faithful of the regulations for fast and abstinence:

Ash Wednesday, February 22, 2012 and **Good Friday, April 6, 2012**, are days of fast and abstinence. Fridays of Lent are also days of abstinence.

Fasting is to be observed by all 18 years of age and older, who have not yet celebrated their 59th birthday. On a fast day one full meal is allowed. Two other meals, sufficient to maintain strength, may be taken according to each one's needs, but together they should not equal another full meal. Eating between meals is not permitted, but liquids, including milk and juices, are allowed.

Abstinence is observed by all 14 years of age and older. On days of abstinence no meat is allowed. Note that when health or ability to work would be seriously affected, the law does not oblige. When in doubt concerning fast and abstinence, the parish priest should be consulted.

Ash Wednesday, February 22, 2012 and Good Friday, April 6, 2012, are days of fast and abstinence. All the Fridays of Lent are days of abstinence.

Fasting, almsgiving, and prayer are the three traditional disciplines of Lent. The faithful and catechumens should undertake these practices seriously in a spirit of penance and of preparation for baptism or of renewal of baptism at Easter.

THE CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS AND THE RITES

The Sacraments of Initiation

Because Lent is oriented toward the celebration of the sacraments of initiation at Easter, care must be taken to maintain this central focus. Honoring the most ancient of customs, the baptism of infants normally should not take place during Lent except in the case of emergency or pastoral necessity. Infant baptisms during the Easter Season follow the traditional custom of the Church. As such, the celebration of confirmation and the reception of first communion are discouraged during Lent, but most appropriate during the Easter Season.

For those involved in the RCIA, the *Rite of Election* will be celebrated in three locations, outside of Mass:

Saturday, February 25, 2012 at St. Bede, Williamsburg, at 10:00 am
Saturday, February 25, 2012 at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Richmond, at 2:00 pm
Sunday, February 26, 2012 at Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Salem, at 2:00 pm

- Bishop Francis DiLorenzo will call those preparing for Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist to Easter Sacraments which will be celebrated at the coming Easter Vigil. (*CB 250, 408-419 and RCIA 118-127*).
- The *Rite of Sending of the Catechumens for Election* may be celebrated in parishes (*RCIA 106 - 117*). **The rite is to include the signing of a Parish Book of the Elect which will be brought to the Cathedral for presentation to the Bishop.**
- Once again this celebration will be only the Rite of Election of Catechumens and not the combined rite involving the candidates for Full Communion.

The *Penitential Rite* for baptized candidates preparing for Confirmation and Holy Communion during the Easter Season may be celebrated on the Second Sunday of Lent, March 4, 2012 (*RCIA 459-472*).

The *Scrutinies* for the Elect are celebrated on the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Sundays of Lent. The Mass at which the scrutiny takes place uses the texts from the *Ritual Mass for the Celebration of the Scrutinies* found in the Roman Missal. The Readings for Year A are used in these Masses (*RCIA 146, G:RCIA C: 1-4*).

The Sacrament of Penance

During Lent the faithful should be urged to take a greater and more fruitful share in the Lenten liturgy. It is very appropriate for the Sacrament of Reconciliation to be celebrated during Lent in a more solemn form, as described in the *Rite of Penance (CB 251)*. The faithful should be clearly and positively encouraged to receive this sacrament during Lent. Schedules for confessions and communal celebrations should be arranged in each parish so that all may be served adequately. Ideally, the faithful would celebrate the sacrament of Penance before the Sacred Paschal Triduum begins; however, it is also permitted to offer this sacrament also on Good Friday. Efforts should be made to educate and plan accordingly (*RP 13*). Priests are encouraged to make the Sacrament of Reconciliation generously available to our people. Under no circumstances is the sacrament to be celebrated using Form 3 (General Absolution).

Funerals during the Season of Lent and the Easter Triduum

Good liturgical practice would suggest reflecting the liturgical season in the choice of music and scripture. The season of Lent may also reflect a change in the color of vesture and employ the option to use violet (*OCF 39*).

On Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday, a Funeral Mass may not be celebrated. On these days the body of the deceased may be brought into the church for *Funeral Liturgy outside Mass* using the *Order of Christian Funerals*, Part I Chapter 4. A Mass for the deceased should be offered as soon as is convenient after Easter Sunday (*OCF 107-203*).

Marriages during the Season of Lent and the Triduum

Marriages during the season of Lent are not to be encouraged. However, if a marriage does take place, there should be a marked moderation in festivity. No flowers are allowed in the sanctuary (*CB 252*).

The celebration of marriage (and the convalidation of marriage) is not permitted during the Sacred Paschal Triduum (*RM*).

Communion for the Sick and Viaticum

Communion may be brought to the sick on all days of Holy Week **except** Holy Saturday. On Holy Saturday Communion may be given only as viaticum.

Anointing of the Sick

The sick may be anointed on any day of Lent and throughout the Sacred Paschal Triduum.

LENT AND THE WORSHIP ENVIRONMENT

During Lent the altar should not to be decorated with flowers. The Fourth Sunday of Lent (Laetare Sunday), solemnities and feasts are exceptions to this norm. On the Fourth Sunday of Lent rose-colored vestments may be used (*CB 252*). The practice of covering statues, images and crosses during the season of Lent is no longer suppressed in the United States. Crosses are uncovered following the celebration of the Lord's Passion on Good Friday. Images in the church may be covered from the conclusion of the Mass for Saturday of the Fourth Week of Lent until the beginning of the Easter Vigil."(*Ordo*.) The cross is covered on Good Friday (*Roman Missal: 5th Sunday of Lent and CL 26 and Ordo*).

HOLY WATER AND BAPTISMAL FONTS

In the past, some parishes have emptied the baptismal font and other receptacles for holy water during the entire Lenten Season. While well intentioned, this does not reflect a sound liturgical theology or practice. The use of holy water as a sacramental is a primary symbol of our baptism and has long been encouraged by the Church for the devotion of the faithful. Liturgical norms indicate that the fonts may be emptied of holy water only at the beginning of the Triduum.

PARTICULAR LITURGIES DURING THE SEASON OF LENT AND THE EASTER TRIDUUM

Ash Wednesday, February 22, 2012

The blessing and distribution of ashes may take place at either a celebration of the Eucharist or at a Liturgy of the Word.

- The blessing and distribution of ashes follow the homily.
- **The Penitential Act** is omitted in all celebrations of the Eucharist on this day.
- **The Season of Lent begins at MIDNIGHT on the morning of Ash Wednesday. It is not possible to anticipate Ash Wednesday with a Vigil Mass (or a Liturgy of the Word with the Distribution of Ashes) on Tuesday evening.**

Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord, April 1, 2012

On this day the Church remembers Christ's entrance into Jerusalem to accomplish the Paschal Mystery. The commemoration on this day, with the blessing of palms and the procession, is not an historical re-enactment of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem but rather a ritual action that marks our entry into Holy Week and the celebration of the Christian Passover.

- Three forms are offered for the beginning of the liturgy on this day: the procession, the solemn entrance, and the simple entrance. Masses beginning with either the solemn entrance or the procession omit the penitential rite.
- The Passion proclaimed on this day is essential to the liturgy and cannot be omitted. It may be proclaimed (either read or chanted) using one, three, or more readers. Lay persons are allowed to do any of the parts.
- Red Vestments are worn for both the Procession and the Eucharistic Liturgy which follows.

Chrism Mass, Monday, April 2, 2012

The Chrism Mass will be celebrated on Monday, April 2, 2012, at the **Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in Richmond** at **6:00 p.m.** No other services that may conflict with the Chrism Mass are to be scheduled that evening in the diocese.

- Priests and deacons should arrive at the Cathedral no later than **5:20 p.m.**
- Priests and deacons must bring their own alb and a white stole.
- The Holy Oils will be distributed in the Cathedral Hall following the Chrism Mass.

Holy Thursday, April 5, 2012

Lent ends with the beginning of the Mass of the Lord's Supper, which is the principal Liturgy of the day. The tabernacle is empty (and open) before the Liturgy begins. Communion under both forms is highly recommended. Enough bread should be consecrated at this Mass for the Liturgy of Good Friday as well.

Only the celebration of the Mass of the Lord's Supper is permitted. All efforts should be made that there be only one Mass of the Lord's Supper which would include the many languages and cultures of a particular parish community. If pastoral needs of a particular ethnic group in a parish so dictate, another Mass of the Lord's Supper may be celebrated in their language.

During the singing of the *Glory to God* the church bells, both outdoors and indoors, are rung. The bells remain silent until the *Glory to God* at the Easter Vigil.

The washing of the feet (mandatum) should be celebrated in a way that allows for people to participate visually. The custom that those chosen for the foot washing be men is still normative and should be observed unless pastoral reasons dictate otherwise.

The reception of the Holy Oils may take place in individual parishes either before the celebration of Mass or at another time that seems more appropriate.

Following the *Prayer after Communion*, the *Blessed Sacrament* is transferred to the place of Reservation. This may be the usual tabernacle if it is in a separate chapel or area removed from the sanctuary. The place of reservation should be noble yet simply decorated.

Under no circumstances is the *Blessed Sacrament* to be exposed in a monstrance or ciboria. (CL 55, 56)

The faithful should be encouraged to spend some time in adoration throughout the remainder of the evening. There is no adoration after midnight (CL 55, 56).

Under no circumstances is it permitted to reserve the Precious Blood for adoration on Holy Thursday and for distribution on Good Friday (Norms #30).

After Mass, the altar is stripped. It is fitting that any crosses in the church be covered with a red or purple veil. Votive candles should not be lit before the images of saints (CL 57).

Good Friday, April 6, 2012

The Liturgy of the Hours, particularly Morning Prayer, is strongly encouraged.

The celebration of the Lord's Passion, the principal celebration of this day, should take place about 3:00 pm. If pastoral need dictates, there may be another celebration later in the day, especially in another language for pastoral necessity.

The Passion may be proclaimed or chanted using one, three, or more readers. Lay persons are allowed to do any of the parts.

During the veneration of the cross, only one cross should be used. However, if the number of people is too great to permit individual veneration, other crosses may be used.

Red Vestments are worn for all liturgical celebrations on this day including Morning Prayer and the Stations of the Cross.

This Liturgy, by its very nature, may not be celebrated in the absence of a priest.

Holy Saturday, April 7, 2012

The Liturgy of the Hours, particularly Morning Prayer, is strongly encouraged.

According to custom, the **Blessing of Food** may be blessed before or after the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday or on Easter morning for consumption at the first meal of Easter, when fasting is ended and the Church is filled with joy. The rite found in the *Book of Blessings* (Chapter 54) is to be followed replacing all other variations of this customary blessing. According to Liturgical Norms, it is not appropriate to sing Easter Hymns or verses containing the "Alleluia" before its' solemn intonation at the celebration of the Easter Vigil.

The Easter Vigil should begin at a time that allows for new fire to break the darkness of night. Sunset will occur at 7:47 pm and complete darkness will be at approximately 8:11 pm; therefore, **in the Diocese of Richmond the Easter Vigil may not be scheduled before 8:00 pm**. In an ideal situation the Vigil should be scheduled to begin at 8:30 pm. Questions on scheduling and multiple celebrations should be directed to the Office of Liturgy.

- The Lucernarium calls for a "blazing fire" to be prepared outside of the Church. Prudence dictates that this fire must be supervised, that there a fire extinguisher in the vicinity of the fire, that there be a responsible person who is capable of extinguishing the fire, and that there be a means of readily contacting the fire department if the fire gets out of control.
- The Preparation of the Easter Candle is no longer optional. The Easter Candle must be made of wax, never be artificial, be renewed each year, be only one in number, and be of sufficiently large size, that it may evoke the truth that Christ is the light of the world (CL 82).

- The Easter candle is lighted for all liturgical celebrations of the season (CB 372).
- The Exsultet (Easter Proclamation) should be sung by one who can do so with grace and beauty at the Ambo.
- At least three of the seven Old Testament readings must be proclaimed. The reading from Chapter 14 of the Book of Exodus with its canticle may never be omitted.
- The Glory to God should be sung. The ringing of the Church bells accompanies this hymn.
- Communion under both kinds is to be encouraged.
- Adults and children of catechetical age being baptized during the Easter Vigil (RCIA 562-594) are to be confirmed by the presiding priest (RCIA 588).
- Only those Candidates for Full Communion with natural connections to the Elect to be Baptized may be brought into Full Communion at the Easter Vigil. All questions regarding this should be addressed to the Office of Worship.

Easter Sunday and the Easter Season

The fifty days from Easter Sunday (April 8, 2012) to Pentecost (May 27, 2012), audibly and visually, are celebrated in joyful exultation as one feast day, or better, as one "great Sunday." The first eight days of the Easter Season make up the Octave of Easter and are celebrated as solemnities of the Lord (CB 371, 373).

- At all Masses on Easter Sunday the *Renewal of Baptismal Promises* and its accompanying *sprinkling rite* replace the Creed. A *Rite of Sprinkling* may appropriately replace the more usual *Penitential Act* during the Easter Season, at the very least on the Sundays of Easter including Pentecost..
- The *Ordo* reminds us that the Easter Sequence is to be sung or recited during the entire Octave of Easter (Easter Sunday through the Second Sunday of Easter inclusive).
- Instead of the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed, especially during Lent and Easter Time, the Baptismal Symbol of the Roman Church known as the Apostles' Creed may be used. (OM)
- The double *Alleluia* is added to the *sung* dismissal during the octave (Easter Vigil through the Second Sunday of Easter inclusive) and on Pentecost and the Vigil of Pentecost (CB 373).

The Solemnity of the Ascension

In the Diocese of Richmond, the Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord is celebrated on Sunday, May 20, 2012.

The Solemnity of the Ascension now has a Vigil Mass with proper orations assigned for use.

Pentecost

The Solemnity of Pentecost is celebrated on May 27, 2012.

The Solemnity of Pentecost now has a proper (extended) Vigil Mass. As many as four Old Testament readings (with Responsorial Psalms and proper orations) may be used before the intonation of the Glory to God.

The sequence of Pentecost is sung or recited at all Masses, both of the vigil and the day. After Pentecost, the Easter candle is returned to its place near the baptismal font. It is not extinguished after the Gospel of either Ascension or Pentecost.

The double *Alleluia* is added to the *sung* dismissal during Masses of Pentecost and its Vigil.

REFERENCE ABBREVIATIONS

CB Ceremonial of Bishops

CL Circular Letter concerning the Preparation and Celebration of the Easter Feasts (Congregation for Divine Worship, 1988)

GIRM General Instruction of the Roman Missal

Norms for the Celebration and Distribution of Holy Communion under Both Kinds in the Dioceses of the United States of America

OCF Order of Christian Funerals

OM Order of Mass

RCIA Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

RM Rite of Marriage

RP Rite of Penance

G: RCIA Diocesan Guidelines:

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults