

2010 LENTEN / HOLY WEEK / EASTER GUIDELINES

Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany

FAST AND ABSTINENCE

Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of fast and abstinence. As a sign of our penance, we preserve for the Diocese of Albany the custom of abstinence from meat on the Fridays of Lent. Abstinence binds all Catholics who are 14 years of age and older. Fast binds all Catholics who are 18 years of age but not yet 59. Fasting refers to the quantity of food eaten. Traditionally, fasting calls for only one full meal per day. By retaining these traditions for our Diocese we do not intend that they be interpreted as laws binding under pain of sin, but as customs from which we will not hold ourselves lightly excused. They are expressions of our desire to be converted in our hearts, to be reconciled with each other, and to love our neighbor.

ASH WEDNESDAY

Ashes are blessed and distributed after the homily. When this blessing takes place outside of Mass, the entire Liturgy of the Word precedes the Rite and the Service concludes with General Intercessions and the Lord's Prayer. Distribution of ashes is not permitted in classrooms, offices, etc. Ashes are not to be distributed before, during, or after Mass on other days of that week or on the First Sunday of Lent. In the case of true pastoral need, other persons may be delegated to assist in the imposition of ashes, e.g. deacons, special ministers of Holy Communion, or other persons (Congregation for Divine Worship, January, 1979). Deacons, special ministers of Holy Communion, and family members of the sick, or of others confined to their homes, may bring the blessed ashes to them in their homes (Book of Blessings # 1657-1658). The formulas found in the Sacramentary may be used to impose the ashes (B.C.L. Newsletter, January, 1980). Ashes may be received by those who are not yet baptized.

WEEKDAY SOLEMNITIES AND FEASTS

Solemnities usually celebrated in March, the Feasts of St. Joseph and the Annunciation, are observed on March 19 and March 25 respectively as is customary.

PASSION SUNDAY (PALM SUNDAY)

The blessing and distribution of palm branches is to take place at all Masses. At least one Mass should begin with a Major Procession. All three readings should be used at Mass. For the genuine needs of some congregations, e.g. nursing home residents, only one reading may precede the Passion, or, if necessary, only the Passion account needs to be read, even the shorter form.

HOLY THURSDAY

The evening celebration of the Lord's Supper is the main liturgy. For pastoral reasons, one other Mass of the Lord's Supper may be celebrated. Only in case of genuine necessity may this second Mass take place in the morning. This single extra Mass should not detract from the main evening celebration.

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is to take place on Holy Thursday after the evening Mass for a suitable period of time. "The Blessed Sacrament should be reserved in a closed tabernacle or pyx. Under no circumstances may it be exposed in a monstrance" (Congregation for Divine Worship, January, 1988). Adoration is not to take place on Good Friday.

VEILING STATUES

In the dioceses of the United States, crosses in the church may be covered from the conclusion of the Mass for the Saturday of the Fourth Week of Lent until the end of 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.

THE FUNERAL MASS

The Funeral Mass is not to be celebrated on Holy Thursday, Good Friday or Holy Saturday (Congregation for Divine Worship Circular Letter Concerning the Preparation and Celebration of the Easter Feasts #'s 47, 59) . A funeral celebrated on Holy Thursday morning or during the Easter Triduum takes the following form: rites at the door of the church, procession, opening prayer, liturgy of the word (as at a funeral mass), homily, general intercessions, Lord's Prayer, final commendation (as at a funeral Mass), procession from the church (see ORDER OF CHRISTIAN FUNERALS, Funeral Liturgy Outside of Mass, nos. 183-203). The Holy Eucharist is not to be distributed.

THE SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE

In keeping with the spirit of the Holy Triduum, the Sacrament of Matrimony ought not to be celebrated. The celebration of a Nuptial Mass is not permitted on Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday.

THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

In the past few years many parishes have developed the practice of providing ample opportunity for the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation prior to the Holy Triduum. This has been done by way of communal services as well as times set aside and published for the individual celebration of reconciliation. Parishes are encouraged to continue to offer these options for their parishioners.

The Synod of Reconciliation held in Rome in late 1983 re-emphasized the importance of this Sacrament in the life of the Church. Every opportunity is to be given for people to avail themselves of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Therefore, should a parish deem it appropriate, definite times to celebrate the individual confession of the faithful may be set aside during the Holy Triduum. Thus, individuals who wish to request the Sacrament would find it convenient to do so without ever feeling that they are imposing. It is very appropriate, however, to encourage participation in the communal celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation or in the individual celebration prior to the Holy Triduum.

DISTRIBUTION OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST

The Holy Eucharist may be taken to the sick and homebound on Holy Thursday and Good Friday according to the Ritual. On Holy Saturday, before the celebration of the Vigil Mass, the Eucharist is given only to the sick as Viaticum.

THE EASTER VIGIL

The Easter Vigil is to be celebrated in its entirety in all parish churches and other communities. However, in the circumstance of multiple parishes being served by one priest, the communities should share in one celebration. Care is to be given so that both or all the communities are identified. This may be done by ministerial representation and / or alternating the celebration of the Triduum services among the parishes. The Easter Vigil begins and ends in darkness. The entire celebration should take place at night, that is, it should either begin after nightfall or end before the dawn of Sunday (General Norms, no. 21). This rule is to be taken according to its strictest sense. On April 3, the date of the Easter Vigil, sunset will occur at 7:30 p.m. DST with full darkness estimated to be at 8:00 p.m. The Vigil celebration should not begin before that time. The Easter Vigil is not to be celebrated at the time of day that is customary to celebrate anticipated Sunday Masses. No Easter Mass is to be celebrated prior to, or in place of, the Easter Vigil. The Vigil is not to be celebrated more than once in its entirety at a given church. An additional Mass may be celebrated after the Vigil for reasons of necessity. This Mass may use the Liturgy of the Word and the other texts of the Vigil Mass and should include the Renewal of Baptismal Promises.

EASTER SUNDAY

The Rite of Renewing Baptismal Promises and the sprinkling of the assembly with Holy Water takes place after the homily, in place of the Profession of Faith, at all Masses.

OF SPECIAL NOTE: CONFIRMATION

In the Latin Church the ordinary minister of Confirmation is a bishop.

EXCEPTIONS TO THIS TRADITION, WHERE A PRIEST MAY CONFIRM ARE:

1. **During the Easter Vigil, adults and children of catechetical age (at least age 7)** who are initiated into the Church through the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, receive the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist administered by a priest.
2. At the Easter Vigil, on Pentecost Sunday and at other times of the year, a priest may administer the Sacrament of Confirmation to:
 - a. an adult baptized person being **received into full communion** with the Catholic Church from another Christian tradition.
 - b. an adult **baptized but uncatechized** in any Christian tradition.
 - c. an adult **baptized Catholic (not confirmed) brought up in, or who joined, another Christian tradition and who now seeks full reception into the Church.** If such an individual had been confirmed prior to joining another Christian tradition, they are not confirmed again.
Exception "a." is granted through Canon 882 and exceptions "b." and "c." are granted by Bishop Hubbard 1 January 1985.
3. **For pastoral reasons,** those previously baptized in the Catholic faith who prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation by joining Catechumens and Candidates for Full Communion through the RCIA process in a parish setting.
The faculty to confirm these adults must be requested in each instance from the bishop. See inserted form.

CONFIRMATIONS RESERVED TO THE BISHOP

1. A Baptized Catholic raised in the faith, but who had lapsed over many years and now desires to be actively involved in the Church.
2. A baptized Catholic raised in the faith, but who, for some reason i.e., youth, was never confirmed.

THE EASTER DUTY

All of the faithful, after they have received their First Communion, are bound by the obligation of receiving the Eucharist at least once each year.

Elizabeth Amico

Chancellor for Pastoral Services

Date: February 2,2010

**REQUEST FOR THE FACULTY
TO ADMINISTER THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION
IN ACCORD WITH CANON 882**

Date: _____

I, _____, request the faculty to administer the sacrament of Confirmation to the following, who was/were previously baptized in the Catholic Church, but was/were never confirmed. Preparation for the sacrament has been provided through the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults.

**We plan to celebrate this sacrament on _____
(e.g. the Easter Vigil, Pentecost)**

Candidates:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Signature of Priest: _____

Parish/Institution: _____

Please return completed form to: **Bishop's Office** 40 North Main Ave. Albany, NY 12203