

# LENT AND PASCHAL TRIDUUM ~ 2003

## DIOCESE OF TOLEDO

### Fasting and Abstinence Regulations

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the penitential season of Lent. Ash Wednesday, March 5, and Good Friday, April 18, 2003 are days of complete abstinence from meat as well as days of fast. All other Fridays of Lent are days of abstinence from meat. The law of abstinence binds all Catholics 14 years and older. The law of fasting binds all Catholics from their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday until their 59<sup>th</sup> birthday (Canons 97 and 1252).

### The Lenten Season

“The lenten season has a double character, namely to prepare both catechumens and faithful to celebrate the paschal mystery. The catechumens both with the rite of election and scrutinies, and by catechesis, are prepared for the celebration of the sacraments of Christian initiation; the faithful ever more attentive to the word of God and prayer, prepare themselves by penance for the renewal of their baptismal promises.” (Ceremonial for Bishops, #249)

“In Lent the altar should not be decorated with flowers, and musical instruments may be played only to give necessary support to the singing”(Ceremonial for Bishops, #252). This is in order that the penitential character of the season be preserved. Likewise from the beginning of Lent until the paschal Vigil “Alleluia” is to be omitted in all celebrations, even on solemnities and Feasts. (General Norms for the Liturgical Year, #28)

### Ash Wednesday



The season of Lent begins with the ancient practice of marking the baptized with ashes as a public and communal sign of penance. The blessing and distribution of ashes on Ash Wednesday normally takes place during the celebration of Mass. However, when circumstances require, the blessing and distribution of ashes may take place apart from Mass, during a celebration of the word of God.

This rite may be celebrated by a priest or deacon who may be assisted by the Pastoral Leader and/or commissioned Eucharistic Ministers in the distribution of the ashes. The blessing of the ashes, however, is reserved to a priest or deacon.

(Order for Blessing and Distribution of Ashes, #1656, #1659 Book of Blessings)

### Lent and the Sacrament of Penance

The virtue and practice of penance form a necessary part of the preparation for Easter: from that inner conversion of heart, should spring the practice of penance, both for the individual Christian and the whole Community.

The faithful are to be encouraged to celebrate the sacrament of penance during Lent. Pastors should arrange an expanded schedule of confessions as needed in preparation for Easter. The hours scheduled by any parish

should not be so limited that an unreasonable burden would fall on neighboring parishes. It is suggested that parishes, in their respective deaneries arrange their schedules cooperatively so that all the faithful in their area are served adequately.

The faithful should celebrate the sacrament of penance **before the Triduum begins**, and efforts should be made to educate people about the liturgical reasons for this.

At no time is it permitted to schedule a group penance service for the purpose of conferring general absolution without individual confessions.

## Sacraments of Initiation during Lent

Because Lent in its liturgies, its scriptures, its place in parish life, and its history is oriented toward the celebration of the sacraments of initiation at the Easter Vigil, the celebration of the sacrament of baptism is incongruous during Lent itself. It is certainly inappropriate to celebrate adult baptism, except in danger of death, during Lent. The baptism of infants is also far more fitting on Easter and during the Easter season.

## Passion Sunday (Palm Sunday)



On this day the Church remembers Christ's entrance into Jerusalem to accomplish his paschal mystery. The commemoration of this day with the blessing of palms and procession is not an historical reenactment of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem but a ritual action that marks our entry into Holy Week and the celebration of the Christian passover. The Passion proclaimed on this day is essential to the liturgy and cannot be omitted.

The sacramentary provides three forms for the beginning of the liturgy on Passion Sunday. In the first form (Procession), the assembly gathers outside the church for the blessing of palms. Carrying palms, the assembly then moves into the church, singing as they process. The liturgy then continues with the opening prayer of the Mass. The Penitential Rite is omitted.

In the second form (Solemn Entrance) the blessing of palms takes place inside the church. At least a representative number of the assembly holds palm branches and participates in the procession.

In both forms, the presider leads the procession followed by other ministers and the assembly. *[If incense is used, the thurifer goes first with a lighted censer, followed by the cross-bearer between two ministers with lighted candles, then the priest with the ministers, and finally the congregation carrying branches.]*

The third form provided in the sacramentary is called the Simple Entrance and is the ordinary Sunday entrance procession without a blessing of palms. The ritual greeting and penitential rite are as usual. The third form is used only when a blessing palms is not pastorally feasible.

## The Conclusion of Lent

Lent ends as the church begins the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday night. The Easter Triduum begins with the evening Mass of the Lord's Supper, is continued through Good Friday with the celebration of the Passion of the Lord and Holy Saturday, to reach its summit in the Easter Vigil, and concludes with Vespers of Easter Sunday.

### The Liturgies of the Easter Triduum

The rites for Holy Thursday, Good Friday and the Easter Vigil as found in the sacramentary and lectionary are to be used in all parishes of the Diocese of Toledo. Clergy, planners and musicians should study the texts and rubrics carefully.

The ideal is to have only one parish celebration on each of these days. Services for small, homogenous groups or religious communities are generally discouraged and, in some cases, not permitted. When a parish has more than one language group, a second service in the other language is permitted if judged pastorally necessary. In some situations it may be possible and beneficial to have a single service making use, in text and song, of both languages. This can help to unify a community in celebrating together the heart of the Christian year.

These days—from Thursday evening until Sunday afternoon—are to be a time apart: “The Easter Triduum of the passion and the resurrection of Christ is thus the culmination of the entire liturgical year” (General Norms for the Liturgical Year, #18). As far as possible, all preparation should be done beforehand so that for all – clergy, liturgical ministers, sacristans, musicians—these may be days of peace, of prayer and vigil.

Lectors, musicians, servers, homilists and all ministers who participate in these liturgies should be selected because of excellence in their ministry. They should be well trained. Planners, musicians and clergy should give first attention to the liturgy of the Vigil, then to the liturgical services of Holy Thursday and Good Friday. Nonliturgical services, such as concerts, should in no way detract from the preparation of music and liturgy for the Vigil, for Thursday's Mass of the Lord's Supper and Friday's Celebration of the Lord's Passion.

Lent and Eastertime are centered by and in the Triduum. The very heart of the Triduum is the Vigil; for there the fasting, prayer and scripture culminate in the celebration of initiation: baptism, confirmation and eucharist. This celebration by the local church presumes that the faithful and catechumens have journeyed together toward this night. Parishes that have not yet begun the full practice of the catechumenate are reminded that the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* is mandated for use in all parishes of the Diocese of Toledo.

### *Funerals and Marriages*

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 to the church for a *Funeral Liturgy Outside Mass* (Order of Christian Funerals, #177-203). At the request of the family, this rite may be held, instead, at the funeral home. The funeral Mass for the deceased should be offered as soon as convenient after Easter Sunday. At this Eucharist, the final commendation is omitted. The celebration of marriage is not permitted during the Triduum.

## *The Paschal Fast*

The whole time from Thursday evening to Sunday evening is to be kept by the Church and not only in the liturgies. From Thursday evening until after the Easter Vigil, the whole Church is invited to fast: “Let the paschal fast be kept sacred. Let it be observed everywhere on Good Friday and, where possible, prolonged throughout Holy Saturday, as a way of coming to the joys of the Sunday of the Resurrection with uplifted and welcoming heart” (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, #110).

This fast is not to be confused with the penitential fasting of Lent. The fast of Good Friday and of Holy Saturday should be encouraged and explained as the anticipatory fasting of the Church that awaits the full celebration of the paschal feast, and especially the baptism of the elect.

## Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

Parishes and communities that have recently instituted perpetual exposition of the Blessed Sacrament should be aware that perpetual exposition and solemn adoration is prohibited during the Sacred Triduum (from Holy Thursday evening through Vespers of Easter Sunday) except on the evening of Holy Thursday when solemn reservation and adoration (not exposition) is permitted from after the Mass of the Lord’s Supper until midnight. The 1988 Circular Letter directs that the Blessed Sacrament be reserved on Holy Thursday evening “in a closed tabernacle or pyx. Under no circumstances may it be exposed in a monstrance.” (BCL Newsletter Feb. 1996)

## Holy Thursday

The Mass of the Lord’s Supper is celebrated in the evening, at a time that is convenient for the full participation of the whole local community. Masses during the day on Thursday are highly discouraged. It would be appropriate for school children to take part in other services marking the end of Lent and the approach of the Triduum.

Thus the ideal is a single Holy Thursday Mass in a parish, and only the inability of space to accommodate those who wish to attend should suggest the possibility of a second Mass. In no way should the scheduling of a second liturgy cause either liturgy to be rushed or celebrated poorly. The private offering of any Mass is strictly forbidden.

The **washing of feet** or mandatum is the norm for all parishes. This rite should not be seen as a mime in which the washing of the disciples’ feet is reenacted. Rather, it is a rite in which the presiding priest so closely joins himself with Christ’s act of perfect love, that the true nature of Christian love and discipleship is revealed. This is not just any act of service but is specifically a Gospel sign. Through this gesture, the community is encouraged to follow more closely the one who “came not to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Matthew 20:28). (BCL Newsletter January 1988)

Parish staffs should strive to carry out the mandatum reverently and graciously and should avoid other rites and statements of commitment, which are inappropriate at the liturgy of Holy Thursday. The renewal of priestly commitment from the Chrism Mass is not to be used at the Mass of the Lord’s Supper, nor should there be any attempt to imitate the Jewish Seder on Holy Thursday.

The sacramentary instructs that the collection of gifts and money today be for the poor.

The tabernacle should be empty before the liturgy today. Enough bread should be consecrated at this Mass for Communion today and tomorrow. Though Holy Communion may be brought to the sick today, Communion may be distributed at the church itself only within Mass.

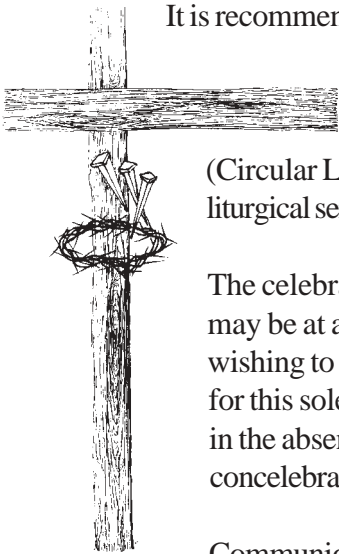
Communion under both kinds is the norm for the Diocese of Toledo. It is better to use a single cup and appropriate flagon for the wine, bringing additional cups to the altar only at the breaking of the bread. A sufficient number of ministers should be used, and the whole of the communion rite should be carefully practiced so that it can be done with great dignity.

Following the prayer after Communion, the Holy Eucharist is transferred to the place of reposition. This place is prepared and “adorned in such a way as to be conducive to prayer and meditation. When the tabernacle is in a chapel separated from the central part of the church, it is appropriate to prepare the place of repose and adoration there. (Circular Letter #49)

“The faithful should be encouraged to continue adoration before the Blessed Sacrament for a suitable period of time during the night, according to local circumstances, but there should be no solemn adoration after midnight.” (Sacramentary) The nature of the Triduum before the Easter Vigil is that of prayer and vigil. The faithful are encouraged to keep the paschal fast and to engage in private and communal prayer, carrying over into their homes the spirit of these sacred days.

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 images of saints. (Circular Letter, #57)

## Good Friday



It is recommended that there be a communal celebration of the Office of Readings and Morning Prayer on Good Friday and Holy Saturday. This Office, formerly called *Tenebrae*, held a special place in the devotion of the faithful, as they meditated upon the passion, death and burial of the Lord, while awaiting the announcement of the Resurrection. (Circular Letter, #40) Evening Prayer is not celebrated by those who participate in the afternoon liturgical service.

The celebration of the Lord’s Passion should take place about 3:00 PM but for pastoral reasons may be at a later hour or as early as 12 noon. The service may be repeated only when the number wishing to attend would be too large for the church. The parish priest is the appropriate minister for this solemn liturgy. The deacon and/or Pastoral Leader may lead the Good Friday Liturgy only in the absence of a priest. The liturgy for Good Friday makes no provision for any form of concelebration.

Communion is distributed only within the Liturgy of the Lord’s Passion but may be taken to the sick at any time of the day.

A collection is taken today for those pastoral, charitable, educational and social works that the church supports in the Holy Land for the welfare of Christians and local communities as well as the upkeep of the holy places. This collection may best be taken through a basket placed near the entrance, because the liturgy itself has no collection. Proceeds are to be forwarded to the Finance Office of the Diocese of Toledo.

The readings are to be read in their entirety. The Passion according to John is not to be replaced by other Passion narratives, nor should it be turned into a dramatization that distorts the message of John's narrative. The homily should not overlook the positive thrust of John's gospel in portraying Christ as victor and Lord.

The general intercessions are to follow the wording and form handed down by ancient tradition, maintaining the full range of intentions, so as to signify clearly the universal effect of the passion of Christ, who hung on the cross for the salvation of the whole world. (Circular Letter, #67)

Only one Cross should be used for the veneration, as this contributes to the full symbolism of the rite. Both the invitation pronounced at the unveiling of the Cross, and the people's response should be made in song, and a period of respectful silence is to be observed after each act of veneration.

The Cross is to be presented to each of the faithful individually for their adoration, since the personal adoration of the Cross is a most important feature in this celebration. (Circular Letter #68, 69)

After the celebration, the altar is stripped, the Cross remaining however, with four candles. An appropriate place (for example the chapel of repose used for reservation of the Eucharist on Holy Thursday) can be prepared within the church, and there the Lord's Cross is placed so that the faithful may venerate and kiss it, and spend some time in adoration. (Circular Letter #71)

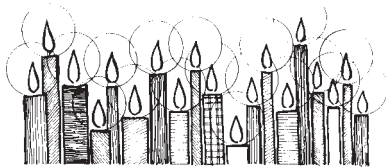
Though parishes may plan other services during the day and evening of Good Friday, it should be clear from the announcement of the schedule and from the care taken for the liturgy that the Celebration of the Lord's Passion has priority.

## Holy Saturday

Holy Communion may be given on this day only as viaticum. Communion visits to the sick are best done earlier in the week and on Easter.

There is strong encouragement that the fasting prescribed for Friday continue voluntarily through Saturday until the Vigil.

## The Easter Vigil



“The entire celebration of the Easter Vigil takes place at night. It should not begin before nightfall; it should end before daybreak on Sunday” (Sacramentary). **In 2003, sunset on April 19 in Toledo will occur at 8:20 PM. The Easter Vigil therefore should not begin before 9:00 PM.**

The Easter Vigil is the only liturgy that may be celebrated this night. All other Easter Masses are to be celebrated on Sunday morning or afternoon.

The order for the Easter Vigil is arranged in four parts:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Part....the service of light and the Easter Proclamation
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Part.... Liturgy of the Word
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Part....baptismal liturgy
- 4<sup>th</sup> Part....Liturgy of the Eucharist

This Liturgical Order must not be changed by anyone on his own initiative. (Circular Letter #81)

The paschal candle should be worthy in size and beauty of its role in the liturgy this night, throughout the Easter season, and at the celebration of baptism and burial throughout the year. Candles that are metal or plastic forms refilled by smaller candles are inconsistent with the candle's symbolic role. The paschal candle remains lit during liturgical celebrations from the Easter Vigil until after Evening Prayer on Pentecost.

The reading of the Word of God is, in the words of the sacramentary, "one of the fundamental elements of the Easter Vigil." Though the number of readings from the Hebrew Scriptures may be reduced, this is discouraged. No one should look on this night's liturgy as simply a "long Mass." It is a Vigil and should be conducted as such (with appropriate catechesis through the bulletin and elsewhere beforehand). The readings and psalms should be given the greatest care in preparation and execution.



When adults are baptized at the Vigil, the liturgy attains its fullness, for there is the paschal mystery of the Lord's dying and rising present in our midst. When there are no adults to be baptized, the parish may celebrate the baptism of infants at the Vigil. The preparation of the baptismal liturgy should provide for its beauty, dignity, and for the full participation of the assembly. Planners and clergy will need to work with both the sacramentary and the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. The fullness of the rite of baptism is experienced when immersion is possible, or at least the pouring of water over the entire body.

Those who are baptized (except infants) or received into the full communion with the Catholic Church are to be confirmed immediately by the priest at the Vigil liturgy. This includes children of catechetical age. (Canon 8.42 and U.S. Statutes, #14)

Any persons who were baptized into the Catholic Church but were never catechized, and who have participated in a process related to the catechumenate, may be confirmed by the priest at the Vigil liturgy. (Pastoral Policy Handbook p. S-7)

Adults who are being received into the full communion of the Catholic Church during the Vigil liturgy appropriately receive the Sacrament of Penance at an earlier time (before the Triduum).

The tabernacle is empty for the Vigil. All bread for Holy Communion is to be consecrated at the Vigil.

Communion under both kinds is the norm for the Diocese of Toledo.

The Triduum is concluded liturgically with Vespers on Easter evening.

## The Easter Season

The Paschal Triduum leads us to the Easter season, the fifty days from Easter Sunday until Pentecost. This is the church's most festive season, and it deserves to be kept as a special time of joy and celebration for Catholics with its special prayers and music, its customs and its scriptures.

The rite of blessing and sprinkling holy water may be celebrated in all churches and chapels at all Sunday Masses celebrated on Sunday or on Saturday evening. (Sacramentary) This rite is most appropriate during the Easter Season. The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults includes two options for Prayers of Thanksgiving over Water already blessed that can be used on the Sundays of Easter over the Easter Water. (RCIA, #222 option D and E)

In our diocese it has been customary for Bishop Hoffman and Bishop Donnelly to celebrate a Mass of Thanksgiving with the newly initiated during the Easter season. This will take place this year on **May 4, 2003 at the Cathedral at 3:00 PM**. All the newly initiated of the diocese, their sponsors and communities are invited.

