

Guidelines for Lent & Easter 2011

Office of Divine Worship
Reverend Joseph P. Naill, M.A.

www.odwrockford.org

Fast Facts

Ash Wednesday March 9, 2011
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. **There is no penitential rite at the beginning of this liturgy.**

First Sunday of Lent..... March 13, 2011
Rite of Election..... March 13, 2011

Held at the Cathedral of St. Peter, Rockford

1:30 PM for the parishes of the **Aurora, Elgin** and **McHenry Deaneries**

4:00 PM for the parishes of the **DeKalb, Freeport, Rockford,** and **Sterling Deaneries**

SPANISH RITE: Held at the parish of St. Mary, Elgin

3:00 PM in Spanish with Msgr. Vallejo

St. Patrick's Day Thursday, March 17, 2011
Memorials are not celebrated during lent. Please refer to section on "Saints during Lent" on page 7.

St. Joseph Husband of Mary Saturday, March 19, 2011
Solemnity: The Mass color is white and the propers of the day are used for Mass. The Gloria is sung at the appropriate time.

Annunciation of the Lord..... Friday, March 25, 2011
Solemnity: The Mass color is white and the propers of the day are used for Mass. The Gloria is sung at the appropriate time.

Holy Week

Palm Sunday April 17, 2011

Holy Thursday April 21, 2011
Mass of Chrism 11:00am, Cathedral of St. Peter

Good Friday April 22, 2011
Please send the Holy Land Collection to the Chancery by May 5, 2011

Holy Saturday April 23, 2011
Easter Vigil: Sun Set 7:39pm, Chicago

Easter Sunday April 24, 2011

Divine Mercy Sunday, 2nd Sunday of Easter May 1, 2011
Memorial of St. Joseph the Worker is omitted

Ascension Sunday June 5, 2011

Pentecost Sunday June 12, 2011

Holy Trinity Sunday June 19, 2011

Body and Blood of Christ June 26, 2011

✘ Lent Environment

During Lent the altar is not to be decorated with flowers. The Fourth Sunday of Lent (Laetare Sunday), solemnities and feasts are exceptions to this rule. 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. "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 (CL 26 and Ordo).

✘ Holy Oils

"Each year when the bishop blesses the oils and consecrates the chrism, the pastor should see that the oils are properly disposed of by burning and that they are replaced by the newly blessed oils." (Book of Blessings, 1127). "The pastor is to obtain the sacred oils from his own bishop and keep them carefully in a fitting place." (Canon 847) Priests have a responsibility to see to the reverent use and safe custody of the holy oils. (Sacramentary, Appendix II, "Rite of the Blessing of Oils and Consecrating the Chrism", 28) "The oils used for the celebration of the sacraments of initiation, holy orders and anointing of the sick according to ancient tradition are reverently reserved in a special place in the church. This repository should be secured and protected by a lock." (Book of Blessings, 1125)

The plastic bottles containing the oils given to the parishes after the Chrism Mass, are not for display purposes or liturgical use. The plastic containers are used to transport the oils or for non-public storage. If the oils are to be displayed they should be displayed in dignified vessels. When being used in the liturgy the oils should be in proper vessels, not in the plastic containers.

✘ Passion (Palm) Sunday

On this day the Church remembers Christ's entrance into Jerusalem to accomplish his 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 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 using one, three or more readers. Lay persons are allowed to do any of the parts, although the part of Christ should be read by the Deacon or Priest of the Parish.

✘ Chrism Mass

The Chrism Mass will be celebrated on Holy Thursday at the Cathedral of St. Peter in Rockford at 11:00 a.m. No other services that conflict with the Chrism Mass may be scheduled that morning in the diocese.

✘ Holy Thursday

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 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.

The washing of the feet (mandatum) should be celebrated in a way that allows for people to participate visually. Other rites or statements of commitment are not appropriate for Holy Thursday. The custom that those chosen for the washing be men is commendable and should be observed.

It is appropriate that the oils blessed and consecrated at the Chrism Mass be carried in at the presentation of the gifts. The proper rubrics and prayers for the presentation of the oils are found on the Office of Divine Worship website.

✘ Good Friday

The celebration of the Lord's Passion, the principal celebration of this day, should take place between 12:00 noon and 3:00 p.m. If pastoral need dictates, there may be another celebration later in the day, especially in another language for pastoral necessity. The parish priest is the appropriate celebrant for this solemn liturgy. The liturgy for Good Friday makes no provision for any form of concelebration.

The Holy Land Collection is to be taken up before the Veneration of the Cross. Please send the collection to the Chancery by May 5, 2011.

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

✘ The Easter Vigil

The Easter Vigil should begin at a time that allows for new fire to break the darkness of night. In the Diocese of Rockford the Easter Vigil may not be scheduled before 7:39 P.M.

The Exsultet (Easter Proclamation) should be sung by one who can do so with grace and beauty. At least three of the seven Old Testament readings should be used, including reading number three from Exodus. The Glory to God should be sung. Communion under both forms is to be encouraged.

Adults (and children of catechetical age) being baptized or brought into Full Communion during the Vigil (RCIA 562-594) are to be confirmed by the presiding priest (RCIA 588).

LENT

Praenotanda

Guidelines for Lent 2011
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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, March 9, 2011, and Good Friday, April 22, 2011, are days for 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. (CCL 1251-1252)

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 Sacraments of Initiation

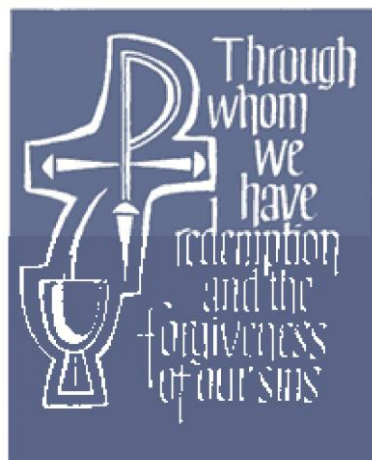
For those involved in the RCIA, the Rite of Election will be celebrated at the Cathedral of St. Peter on Sunday February 21 at 1:30pm & 4:00pm by Most Rev. Thomas G. Doran. He will welcome those preparing for baptism (CB 250, 408-419 and RCIA 118-127.) The rite of sending of the Catechumens for Election may be celebrated in parishes (RCIA 106-117).

In addition, the Penitential Rite for baptized candidates preparing for Confirmation and Eucharist may be celebrated on the Second Sunday of Lent (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 Scrutinies found in the Sacramentary, pp. 826-829. (RCIA 146).

The Sacrament of Penance

The faithful should be clearly and positively 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 areas, arrange their schedules cooperatively so that all the faithful in their area are

served adequately. It would also be appropriate to offer this sacrament on Good Friday following the practice of the Holy Father. Under no circumstances is the sacrament to be administered using General Absolution.



Ideally, the faithful would celebrate the sacrament of penance before the Paschal Triduum begins, and efforts should be made to educate people about the liturgical reasons for this. However, there needs to be sensitivity toward those people, who because of long-standing devotional customs or practical reasons, will request the Sacrament of Penance during the Paschal Triduum. Therefore, reasonable times for the Sacrament of Penance are to be provided to the faithful during the Paschal Triduum.

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 purple (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 the 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 and the parish environment should not be altered from that of Lent. No flowers are allowed in the sanctuary (CB 252).

The celebration of marriage (and the convalidation of marriage) is not permitted during the Easter Triduum (RM 11).



Communion for the Sick and Viaticum

Communion may be brought to the sick on all days except Holy Saturday. On Holy Saturday communion may be given only as viaticum. Communion services outside of the liturgy are not held on Thursday, Friday, or Saturday. "According to the Church's ancient tradition, the sacraments are not celebrated on Good Friday or Holy Saturday" (Roman Missal).

LENT AND THE WORSHIP ENVIRONMENT

During Lent the altar is not to be decorated with flowers. The Fourth Sunday of Lent (Laetare Sunday), solemnities and feasts are exceptions to this rule. 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. "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 (CL 26 and Ordo).

PARTICULAR LITURGIES DURING THE SEASON OF LENT AND THE EASTER TRIDUUM

St. Joseph, Husband of Mary, March 19

The Mass color is white and the propers of the day are used for Mass. The Gloria is sung at the appropriate time. The preface is that of St. Joseph.

Annunciation, March 25

The Mass color is white and the propers of the day are used for Mass. The Gloria is sung at the appropriate time. All are asked to genuflect at "and became Man" in the Creed. The preface is that of the Annunciation.

THE SAINTS DURING LENT

Solemnities and feasts are celebrated as usual. Memorials of the saints are not celebrated during Lent. The saints may be commemorated during Lent as follows:

➤ AT MASS

- The opening prayer of the saint may replace the opening prayer of the Lenten weekday.
- The scripture readings are always those of the Lenten weekday.
- The prayer over the gifts and prayer after communion are always the prayers of the Lenten weekday.

- The Lenten Preface is always used (except with Eucharistic Prayers that have their own proper preface).
- The color is always violet.

➤ **IN THE LITURGY OF THE HOURS**

- **At the Office of Readings:** After the second reading (with its responsory) from the Lenten weekday the readings of the saint (with its responsory) may be added with the concluding prayer of the saint.
- **At Morning and Evening Prayer:** The ending of the concluding prayer may be omitted and the antiphon and the prayer of the saint may be added.

SACRED TRIDUUM

Holy Thursday

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 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.

Please note that on Holy Thursday the only Masses permitted are the Mass of the Lord's Supper and the Chrism Mass. All efforts should be made that there be only one Mass of the Lord's Supper (Roman Missal) which would include the many languages and cultures of a particular parish community to meet parish needs. However, if pastoral need dictates a second Mass of the Lord's Supper in a different language may be scheduled.

The washing of the feet (mandatum) should be celebrated in a way that allows for people to participate visually. Other rites or statements of commitment are not appropriate for Holy Thursday. The custom that those chosen for the washing be men is commendable and should be observed unless serious pastoral reasons dictate otherwise.

This rite should be characterized by its simplicity, allowing the gesture of the servant Christ to show us the charity and humility required of all Christ's disciples. Parishes should strive to carry out the mandatum reverently and graciously after the manner used by Our Lord Jesus 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.

It is appropriate that the oils blessed and consecrated at the Chrism Mass be carried in at the presentation of the gifts. The proper rubrics and prayers for the presentation of the oils are found in the Appendix of this document.

Following the prayer after communion, the Holy Eucharist is transferred to the place of reposition. This may be the usual tabernacle if it is in a separate chapel or area removed from the sanctuary. The place of reposition should be simply decorated. Under no circumstances is the Blessed Sacrament to be exposed in a monstrance. 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 violet veil. Votive candles should not be lit before the images of saints (CL 57).

❖ THE NEW MISSALE ROMANUM AND THE EVENING MASS OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Ceremonial of Bishops sets the context in no. 297: "With this Mass, celebrated in the evening of the Thursday in Holy Week, the Church begins the sacred Easter Triduum and devotes herself to the remembrance of the Last Supper. At the supper on the night he was betrayed, the Lord Jesus, loving those who were his own in the world even to the end, offered his Body and Blood to the Father under the appearance of bread and wine, gave them to the apostles to eat and drink, then enjoined the apostles and their successors in the priesthood to offer them in turn. This Mass is, first of all, the memorial of the institution of the Eucharist, that is, of the Memorial of the Lord's Passover, by which under sacramental signs he perpetuated among us the sacrifice of the New Law. The Mass of the Lord's Supper is also the memorial of the institution of the priesthood, by which Christ's mission and sacrifice are perpetuated in the world. In addition, this Mass is the memorial of that love by which the Lord loved us even to death..."

The rubrics, by way of exception, allow for the local Ordinary to permit another Mass in churches and oratories to be celebrated in the evening, and, in the case of genuine necessity, even in the morning. Such Masses are provided for those who are in no way able to participate in the evening Mass and not for the advantage of individuals or (newly added) special small groups (Missale Romanum, "Rubrics for The Evening Mass" (EM, no.3).

The rubrics then make a mention of the liturgical decoration. "The altar may be decorated with flowers with a moderation that reflects the character of the day" (EM, no.5).

The Church bells are rung during the singing of the Gloria and then remain silent unless the "diocesan Bishop, as circumstances suggest, decides otherwise" (EM, no.7). The decision about this matter no longer involves the conference of bishops. A further musical specification is provided: "the organ and other musical instruments may be used only to support the singing" (EM, no. 7).

The rubric following the washing of the feet is more descriptive than the presently existing one: “After the washing of the feet, the priest washes and dries his hands, puts the chasuble back on, and returns to the chair, and from there he directs the General Intercessions. The Creed is not said” (EM, no. 13).

In a new rubric it is noted that “at an appropriate time during Communion, the priest may entrust the Eucharist from the table of the altar to the deacons or acolytes or other extraordinary ministers, so that afterwards it may be brought to the sick who must communicate at home” (EM, no. 33). This may require that parishes do some preliminary planning for this to successfully happen.

It is explicitly stated that the prayer after Communion is said by the priest “standing at the chair” (EM, no. 35).

The order of procession is more carefully described for the transfer of the Blessed Sacrament to the place of reposition. Newly added is the description : “A lay minister with a cross between two others with lit candles follow. Before the priest carrying the Blessed Sacrament comes the censer bearer with a smoking censer” (EM, no. 38).

The directions for what the priest should do once he reaches the place of reposition have been supplemented. “...the priest, with the help of the deacon if necessary, places the ciborium in the tabernacle, the door of which remains open” (EM, no.39). He then incenses the Blessed Sacrament while Tantum Ergo Sacramentum or another Eucharistic song is sung. Then the “deacon or the priest himself places the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle and closes the door” (EM, no. 39).

The previous Missale Romanum seemed to indicate that the stripping of the altar followed immediately whereas the new Missale Romanum notes that “at an appropriate time” the altar is stripped (EM. no. 41).

The faithful are “invited” in the new Missale Romanum to spend time in adoration. It was formerly indicated that the faithful “should be encouraged” (EM, no. 43).

A totally new rubric is found at the end of Holy Thursday. “If in the same church the celebration of the Lord’s Passion on the following Friday does not take place, the Mass is concluded in the usual way and the Blessed Sacrament is placed in the tabernacle (EM, no. 44).

Good Friday

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 between 12 noon and 3p.m. If pastoral need dictates, there may be another celebration later

in the day, especially in another language for pastoral necessity. The parish priest is the appropriate celebrant for this solemn liturgy. The liturgy for Good Friday makes no provision for any form of concelebration.

The Holy Land Collection is to be taken up before the Veneration of the Cross. **Please send the collection to the Chancery by May 5, 2011.**

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

❖ **THE NEW MISSALE ROMANUM AND THE LITURGY OF THE LORD'S PASSION AND DEATH**

The very first rubric for Good Friday indicates that only the sacraments of the Anointing of the Sick and Penance are celebrated on Good Friday and Holy Saturday (Missale Romanum, "Rubrics for Good Friday" (GF, no.1).

The rubric for the celebrant's and deacon's reverence has been somewhat changed. "After making a reverence to the altar, they prostrate themselves or, according to circumstances humble themselves on their knees and pray for a while. All others humble themselves on their knees" (GF, no. 5). The "Circular Letter Concerning the Preparation and Celebration of the Easter Feasts" describes the significance of this action as "the abasement of 'earthly man' and also the grief and sorrow of the Church" (no. 65).

The new rubric in the Missale Romanum makes it explicitly clear that the celebrant says the opening prayer with hands outstretched "omitting the invitation, Let us pray" (GF, no.6).

Liturgy of the Word

The rubrics indicate that at the end of the homily, "the faithful may be invited to spend a brief period of time in prayer" (GF, no. 10).

General Intercessions

The General Intercessions come down to us in a form derived from ancient tradition and they reflect the full range of intentions. In case of serious public need, the diocesan Bishop may either permit or decree the addition of a special intention (GF, no. 13).

The previous rubrics spoke of the deacon as giving the introductions to the General Intercessions. The Missale Romanum indicates that a "lay minister" may do this in the absence of a deacon (GF, no. 11).

The deacon's invitation 'Let us kneel-Let us stand' may be used as an invitation to the priest's prayer. The Conference of Bishops may provide other invitations to introduce the prayer of the

priest (GF, no. 12). The Missale Romanum notes that when the deacon's invitations are used then the prayer is sung in a solemn tone by the priest (GF, no. 13). These tones are given in the Missale Romanum in the Appendix.

Adoration of the Holy Cross

The rubrics for this section begin immediately with the first form of Showing the Cross. The deacon or another suitable minister goes to the sacristy and obtains the veiled cross. Accompanied by two ministers with lighted candles, the veiled cross is brought to the center of the sanctuary in procession. The priest accepts the cross and standing before the altar (not "at the altar" as previously indicated) and facing the people, uncovers the upper part of the cross, the right arm and then the entire cross. Each time he sings This is the wood of the cross...(GF, no. 15).

The second form of the adoration of the cross which takes place at the door of the church, in the middle of the church and before entering the sanctuary has not changed (GF, no.16).

The priest or deacon may then carry the cross to the entrance of the sanctuary or another suitable place (GF, no.17).

The first person to adore the Cross is the priest celebrant. If circumstances suggest, he takes off his chasuble and his shoes. The clergy, lay ministers and the faithful then approach (GF, no.18).

The personal adoration of the cross is an important feature in this celebration and every effort should be made to achieve it. The rubrics remind us that "only one cross" should be used for adoration. If the numbers are so great that all cannot come forward, the priest, after some of the clergy and faithful have adored the cross, can take the cross and stand in the center before the altar. In a few words he invites the people to adore the Cross. He then elevates the cross higher for a brief period of time while the faithful adore it in silence (GF, no. 19). Pastorally, it should be kept in mind that when a sufficiently large cross is used even a large community can reverence it in due time. The foot of the cross as well as the right and left arm can be approached and venerated. Coordination with ushers and planning the flow of people beforehand can allow for this part of the liturgy to be celebrated with decorum and devotion.

The Missale Romanum gives specific directions as to the music used during the adoration. The antiphons We worship you, Lord, the reproaches, the hymn Faithful Cross, or other suitable songs are sung. Totally new is the indication: "According to local circumstances or traditions of the people and pastoral appropriateness, the *Sabat Mater* may be sung, according to the *Graduale Romanum*, or another appropriate chant in memory of the compassion of the Blessed Virgin Mary" (GR, no. 20).

The cross is then carried by the deacon or other suitable minister to its place at the altar. Lighted candles are then placed around or on the top of the altar or near the cross (GF, no. 21).

Holy Communion

The rubric is specific that either the deacon or priest bringing the Blessed Sacrament to the altar puts on a humeral veil. Rather than indicate there is no procession, the rubric says the deacon or priest brings the Blessed Sacrament back from the place of reposition “by a shorter route”. All stand in silence. The rubric for the priest has been shortened, indicating that “the priest goes to the altar and genuflects” (GF, no. 22).

The priest communicates after This is the Lamb of God. There is a new rubric that notes the priest is to say privately, May the Body of Christ bring me to everlasting life. (GF, no. 27).

Mention is made that Psalm 22 (21) may be sung during the distribution of communion or another appropriate chant (GF, no. 28). After Communion either the deacon or another suitable minister takes the ciborium to a place prepared outside the church, or, if circumstances require, may place it in the tabernacle (GF, no. 29).

The priest then says Let us pray and, “after observing, according to circumstances, some period of sacred silence, says the prayer after Communion” (GF, no. 30). The Missale Romanum in this instance emphasizes the period of silence after Let us pray.

Before the Prayer Over the People the priest, if there is no deacon, may say the invitation: Bow your heads and pray for God’s blessing (GF, no. 31).

The previous rubric mentioned only that all depart in silence. The new rubric notes “after genuflecting toward the Cross,” all depart in silence (GF, no. 32).

It is then indicated that the altar is stripped after the celebration. “The cross remains upon the altar with two to four candles” (GF, no. 33).

Holy Saturday

The Liturgy of the Hours, particularly Morning Prayer, is strongly encouraged. The celebration of marriage (and the convalidation of marriage) is not permitted during the Easter Triduum (RM 11).

The Easter Vigil

The Easter Vigil should begin at a time that allows for new fire to break the darkness of night. In the Diocese of Rockford the Easter Vigil may not be scheduled before sunset. Please refer to page 2 for the appropriate time. Questions on scheduling and multiple celebrations should be directed to the Office of Liturgy.

The Exsultet (Easter Proclamation) should be sung by one who can do so with grace and beauty. At least three of the seven Old Testament readings should be used, including reading number three from Exodus. The Glory to God should be sung. Communion under both kinds is to be encouraged.

Adults (and children of catechetical age) being baptized or brought into Full Communion during the Vigil (RCIA 562-594) are to be confirmed by the presiding priest (RCIA 588).

Many parish RCIA processes include participants who are already Catholic but were never confirmed. Therefore, the faculty to confirm must be given by the Bishop. Other questions about the delegation of authority to confirm, or who is to be confirmed, should be directed to the Office of Liturgy.

❖ THE NEW MISSALE ROMANUM AND THE EASTER VIGIL

The rubrics for Holy Saturday found in the Missale Romanum, editio typica tertia address several matters which will be helpful to those involved in the preparation of the celebration of the Easter Vigil.

Introduction to the Easter Vigil

The rubrics of the Missale Romanum remind us that this “mother of all vigils” is the “greatest and most noble of all solemnities and it is to be unique in every single Church” (Missale Romanum, “Rubrics for the Easter Vigil” (EV, no.2). On this holy night, the Church keeps watch, celebrating the resurrection of Christ in the sacraments and awaiting his return in glory. It is the turning point of the Triduum, the Passover of the new covenant, which marks Christ’s passage from death to life. Therefore, the Easter Vigil does not correspond to the usual Saturday evening Mass and its character is unique in the cycle of the liturgical year.

The Vigil, by its very nature, “ought to take place at night” (EV, no. 3). It is not begun before nightfall and should end before daybreak on Easter Sunday. The celebration of the Easter Vigil takes the place of the Office of Readings (EV, no. 5).

The role of the deacon assisting the priest is highlighted in the new Missale, although it is noted that in his absence his duties may be exercised by the priest celebrant himself or by a concelebrant (EV, no. 6).

The Elements and Parts of the Easter Vigil

- **The Service of Light**

In a suitable place outside the Church, a “blazing fire” (rogus ardens) is to be prepared so that the people may gather around it and experience the flames dispelling the darkness and lighting up the night. Thus do the beauty of the fire, its warmth and its light, draw the liturgical assembly together. The rubrics, however, acknowledge that when this cannot be done adaptations may be made. The Missale also states that cross and candles are not to be carried in this procession (EV, no. 8).

Having reached the fire, the celebrant and faithful sign themselves with the sign of the cross while the priest says: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit (EV, no. 9). After this new beginning, he greets the people and then gives the instruction (EV, no. 9). As the celebrant blesses the fire he says the prayer “with hands outstretched” (EV, no. 10).

The Paschal Candle is brought forward. This candle should 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 convey the truth that Christ is the light of the world. This description is developed in no. 94 of *Built of Living Stones* which reminds us that the Paschal Candle is the symbol of the “light of Christ, rising in glory,” scattering the “darkness of our hearts and minds.” “Above all, the Paschal Candle should be a genuine candle, the pre-eminent symbol of the light of Christ. Choice of size, design, and color should be made in relationship to the sanctuary in which it will be placed...” (Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, Circular Letter Concerning the Preparation and Celebration of the Easter Feasts [1988], no. 82).

The candle is then prepared in rites which are no longer optional. The celebrant cuts a cross into the candle with a stylus. Then he makes the Greek letter Alpha above the cross, the letter Omega below it, and the four numerals of the current year between the arms of the cross, saying the words indicated. After these rites, the priest lights the candle from the new fire and says: May the light of Christ, rising in glory, dispel the darkness of our hearts and minds (EV, no.14).

The organization of the procession is more clearly described in the new *Missale Romanum*. One of the ministers takes burning coals from the fire and places them in a censer (thurible) and the priest, in the usual way, places incense into it. The deacon, or in his absence another appropriate minister accepts the Easter candle from the celebrant and a procession is formed. The order of procession is the thurifer with smoking thurible, preceding the minister holding the candle, followed by the ministers and the priest and the people. All hold unlit candles (EV, no. 15). Just as the children of Israel were guided at night by the pillar of fire, so Christians follow the risen Christ.

The places at which the proclamation, Light of Christ, are sung now differ from what was in the previous *Missale*.

The new places are: at the door of the Church (after which the priest lights his candle), in the middle of the Church (after which all light their candles), and before the altar, facing the people. The *Missale* instructs the deacon to place the candle in a large candle stand prepared either next to the ambo or in the middle of the sanctuary (EV, no. 17). The lights of the Church are then lit with the exception of the altar candles which are lit just before the intonation of the Gloria (EV, nos. 17 and 31).

Before the Easter Proclamation, the priest gives his candle to one of the ministers and blesses incense as at the Gospel during Mass. Having asked for and received the blessing, the deacon

announces the Easter proclamation from the ambo or at a lectern. This poetic text captures the whole Easter mystery placed within the context of the economy of salvation. In the absence of a deacon the priest himself or another concelebrating priest may announce the Easter proclamation. If, however, a lay cantor announces the proclamation, the words, My dearest friends, up to the end of the invitation are omitted, along with the greeting, The Lord be with you (nos. 18-19). The reference to the Conference of Bishops adapting the text by inserting acclamations is no longer mentioned.

- Liturgy of the Word

One of the unique aspects of the Easter Vigil is the recounting of the outstanding deeds of the history of salvation. These deeds are related in seven readings from the Old Testament chosen from the law and the prophets and two readings from the New Testament, namely from the apostles and from the gospel. Thus, the Lord “beginning with Moses and all the prophets” (Lk 24.27, 44-45) meets us once again on our journey and, opening up our minds and hearts, prepares us to share in the breaking of the bread and the drinking of the cup. The faithful are encouraged to meditate on these readings by the singing of a responsorial psalm, followed by a silent pause, and then by the celebrant’s prayer. The Missale adds a sentence about the nine readings proposed, saying that “all of these must be read whenever it can be done, so that the character of a Vigil which takes place over some duration of time can be observed” (EV, no. 20).

The new Missale recognizes that “nevertheless, where grave pastoral circumstances demand it, the number of readings from the Old Testament may be reduced (EV, no. 21). At least three readings from the Old Testament should be read always including Exodus 14 (EV, no. 21). The reference found previously in the Missale to the possibility of having only two Old Testament readings in extreme necessity is omitted.

The Missale is very specific about the priest singing the Alleluia before the Gospel: “After the Epistle has been read, all rise, and the priest solemnly intones the Alleluia three times, raising his voice a step each time. All repeat the Alleluia each time. If necessary, the psalmist intones the Alleluia. Mention is then made of the psalmist or cantor singing Psalm 117 and the people responding, “Alleluia” (EV, no. 34). This psalm is often recited by the apostles in their Easter preaching (Acts 4.11-12; Mt 21.42; Mk 12.10; Lk 20.17).

The Missale directs explicitly that the homily, even if it is brief, is not to be omitted (EV, no. 36). This requires that the homilist carefully prepare and craft the homily so that it captures the tremendous mysteries being celebrated on this most holy of nights.

- Liturgy of Baptism

The Missale has reorganized the rubrics for this entire section of the Vigil (nos. 37-58). Nevertheless, the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults should always be consulted in

conjunction with the rubrics mentioned here in the Missale. This is especially true when Baptisms are taking place by means of immersion.

Christ's Passover and ours are given full expression when baptismal water is blessed in the font and when the Christian initiation of adults, or, at least the baptism of infants, takes place at the Easter Vigil. Even if there are no candidates for baptism, the blessing of baptismal water should take place in parish churches. At the very least, baptism should be commemorated by the blessing of water intended for sprinkling upon the people.

The rubrics describe two instances of Baptism at the Vigil. If there is a procession to the baptistery or the font, the catechumens are called forward and presented by their godparents. If there are children, they are carried by their parents and godparents to the front of the assembly. Those who are to be baptized, along with their godparents, are led first by a minister with the Easter candle; the other ministers, deacons and priest follow after them. This procession is accompanied by the singing of the Litany of the Saints. The priest then gives the introductory statement.

If the Baptisms take place in the sanctuary, the priest makes the introductory statement and this is followed by the singing of the Litany of the Saints.

When there are no Baptisms and the font is not to be blessed, the litany is omitted and the blessing of water takes place at once (EV, nos. 39-41).

The Missale reminds the celebrant that during the blessing of the water his hands are outstretched (EV, no. 44).

Numbers 48 to 53 of the rubrics for the Easter Vigil of the Missale Romanum describe the initiation process. As was mentioned before, it is important to closely consult the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults on this matter. Number 48 of the rubrics for the Easter Vigil mentions that after the renunciation and profession of faith "if the anointing with the Oil of Catechumens did not take place beforehand, as part of the immediate preparatory rites, it takes place at this moment." Of course no. 33 of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults points out: "The National Conference of Catholic Bishops approves the omission of the anointing with the oil of catechumens both in the celebration of baptism and in the optional preparation rites for Holy Saturday. Thus, anointing with the oil of catechumens is reserved for use in the period of the catechumenate and in the period of purification and enlightenment, and is not to be included in the purification rites on Holy Saturday or in the celebration of initiation at the Easter Vigil or at another time."

Number 49 of the rubrics for the Easter Vigil notes that when there are many to be baptized, the priest may ask for the renewal of baptismal promises of all present immediately after the profession of faith made by those to be baptized, along with the godparents and parents.

The celebration of Confirmation is to take place in the sanctuary as indicated in the Pontifical or the Roman Ritual.

- Liturgy of the Eucharist

Care should be taken that, particularly in regard to this night's celebration of the Eucharist, the liturgy is not done in haste and that all the rites and words should be given their full force.

The Missale has incorporated into itself rubrics found in nos. 241-243 of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. These allow for a commemoration of the baptized and their godparents to be made in the Eucharistic Prayer. Proper formulas are found in the Roman Missal for each of the Eucharistic prayers (EV, no. 63). The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults indicates that these formulas are found in the section for ritual Masses, "Christian Initiation: Baptism."

The Missale reminds the priest that before he says, "This is the Lamb of God...", he may make a brief remark to the neophytes about their first Communion and "about the preciousness of so great a mystery, which is the climax of initiation and the center of the Christian life" (EV, no. 64). In no. 65 the rubrics for the Easter Vigil indicate the desirability for the neophytes as well as all the faithful, if the diocesan Bishop consents, to receive Communion under both kinds.

The Missale provides a solemn blessing to conclude the liturgy (EV, no. 69). It is used in place and can presently be found in the Sacramentary at no. 6, "Easter Vigil and Easter Sunday". It is also possible to use the formula of the final blessing in the Order of Baptism for Children, according to circumstances.

The very last rubric reminds us that "the Easter candle is lighted in all of the more solemn liturgical celebrations in the Season of Easter" (EV, no. 70).

Easter Sunday and the Easter Season

The fifty days from Easter Sunday to Pentecost, 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).

The Paschal Candle must be made of wax, never be artificial, be renewed each year, be only one in number, and be of sufficiently large size, so 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).

At all Masses on Easter Sunday the Renewal of Baptismal Promises and its accompanying sprinkling rite replace the creed and the penitential rite. In addition to following the homily, these rites may also take place as part of the introductory rites. A Rite of Sprinkling

appropriately replaces the more usual Penitential Rite during the Easter Season, at the very least on the Sundays of Easter including Pentecost (Foreword GIRM).

The Ordo reminds us that the Easter Sequence is to be sung or recited during the Octave of Easter.

The double Alleluia is added to the sung dismissal formulary during the octave (CB 373).

2nd Sunday of Easter: Divine Mercy Sunday

In a decree dated August 3, 2002, the Apostolic Penitentiary announced that in order “to ensure that the faithful would observe this day (Divine Mercy Sunday) with intense devotion, the Supreme Pontiff established that this Sunday be enriched by a plenary indulgence ... so that the faithful might receive in abundance the gift of the consolation of the Holy Spirit. In this way, they can foster a growing love for God and for their neighbor, and after they have obtained God’s pardon, they in turn might be persuaded to show a prompt pardon to their brothers and sisters.”

Ascension Sunday

In the Province of Illinois, the Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord has been transferred to Sunday. The Solemnity of the Ascension occurs within the Easter Season and, as such, is not a separate celebration. The readings are in the Lectionary for the Ascension. The Mass propers for the Ascension are found in the Sacramentary at the end of the Sixth Week of Easter; the preface is proper, P26 or P27.

Pentecost Sunday

The sequence of Pentecost is sung or recited at all Masses except when the vigil readings are used. After Pentecost, the Easter Candle is returned to its place near the baptismal font. It is not extinguished after the Gospel Reading of either Ascension or Pentecost.

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 to the Roman Missal

Norms - 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

RCIA - Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

RM - Rite of Marriage

RP - Rite of Penance

Plenary Indulgence for Divine Mercy Sunday

In a decree dated August 3, 2002, the Apostolic Penitentiary announced that in order “to ensure that the faithful would observe this day (Divine Mercy Sunday) with intense devotion, the Supreme Pontiff established that this Sunday be enriched by a plenary indulgence ... so that the faithful might receive in abundance the gift of the consolation of the Holy Spirit. In this way, they can foster a growing love for God and for their neighbor, and after they have obtained God’s pardon, they in turn might be persuaded to show a prompt pardon to their brothers and sisters.”

The plenary indulgence is granted under the usual conditions (sacramental confession, Eucharistic communion and prayer for the intentions of Supreme Pontiff) to the faithful who, on the second Sunday of Easter or Divine Mercy Sunday, in any church or chapel, in a spirit that is completely detached from the affection for a sin, even a venial sin, take part in the prayers and devotions held in honor of Divine Mercy, or who, in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament exposed or reserved in the tabernacle, recite the Our Father and the Creed, adding a devout prayer to the merciful Lord Jesus (e.g. Merciful Jesus, I trust in you!).

Additional provisions are offered for those who are impeded from fulfilling these requirements, but wish to acquire the plenary indulgence. The full text of the decree of the Apostolic Penitentiary may be found in English at the Vatican website under Curia, Tribunals, Penitenzieria Apostolica, June 29, 2002.

The Second Sunday of Easter in the new Missale Romanum bears the name, “DOMINICA II Paschae seu divina Misericordia.” While the readings and prayers for Mass on this day remain unchanged, the decree of the Apostolic Penitentiary gives guidance to preachers as they reflect on the mystery of Divine Mercy.

The Gospel of the Second Sunday of Easter narrates the wonderful things Christ the Lord accomplished on the day of the Resurrection during his first public appearance: “On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, ‘Peace be with you.’ When he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad to see the Lord. . . Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you,’ and then he breathed on them, and said, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained’” (Jn 20,19-23).

In addition, the decree requires that parish priests “should inform the faithful in the most suitable way of the Church’s salutary provision. They should promptly and generously be willing to hear their confessions. On Divine Mercy Sunday, after celebrating Mass or Vespers, or during devotions in honor of Divine Mercy, with the dignity that is in accord with the rite, they should lead the recitation of the prayers that have been given above. Finally, since ‘Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy’ (Mt 5,7), when they instruct their people, priests should gently encourage the faithful to practice works of charity or mercy as often as they can, following the example of, and in obeying the commandment of Jesus Christ, as is listed for the second general concession of indulgence in the Enchiridion Indulgentiarum.”