



2025 Lent Liturgical Notes

Circular Letter

In 1988 the Congregation for Divine Worship issued a Circular Letter “Concerning the Preparation and Celebration of the Easter Feasts” that includes the periods of Lent, the Sacred Triduum, and Easter season: <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/circular-letter-concerning-preparation-and-celebration-of-easter-feasts-2168>

The heart of the Paschal Mystery lies in the celebration of the Sacred Triduum. A parish that celebrates the Triduum well prepares itself to celebrate the Paschal Mystery better every Sunday throughout the year. Although your preparations are already under way, Parish Liturgy Committees are encouraged to read and discuss this letter for use in 2025 and beyond. Use these questions to direct your discussion:

- Based on the letter, name the three most important liturgical concepts for each of Lent, Holy Week (incl. Triduum), and Easter?
- Identify three ways your parish reflects these concepts and three ways in which it falls short
- Identify together elements that can be integrated into the parish observance for 2025
- Don't forget to meet at the end of Easter season to evaluate and set your goals for the celebration of the Easter Feasts in 2026!

National Lenten Resources

The ACBC website has numerous seasonal resources including these comprehensive pastoral notes on the liturgy for Lent, the Sacred Triduum, and Easter: [Lent and Easter \(Commentary\)](#)

Lenten Season

Music

In Lent through to the Gloria of the Easter Vigil the playing of the organ or other musical instruments is intended only to support the singing of the assembly except on Laetare Sunday, Solemnities, and Feasts (*General Instruction to the Roman Missal*, no. 313).

Obligations

In Australia and New Zealand:

- Catholics aged 18–59 should fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday
- Catholics aged 14 and older should abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday
- Catholics aged 14 and over should abstain from meat on every Friday of the year, including Lent, or substitute this with another form of penance, either in prayer, fasting or almsgiving.
- Taking up some form of voluntary penance throughout the season of Lent is expected.
- Catholics are obliged to receive holy communion at least once a year between Ash Wednesday and Trinity Sunday.

What do fasting and abstinence look like?

- **Fasting:** On a day of fasting, Catholics are supposed to have one normal-sized meal and two ‘snacks’ (or ‘smaller meals’), which cannot, put together, equal a full meal.
- **Abstinence:** On a day of abstinence, Christians are asked to abstain from meat (although seafood is allowed).
- Illustrated guide to fasting and abstinence: <https://catholic-link.org/why-do-we-practice-fasting-and-abstinence-illustrated-guide/>

Ash Wednesday | March 5, 2025

- When ashes are blessed, the format of the Mass is changed. Refer to the *Roman Missal* beforehand p. 233ff. When ashes are blessed outside Mass, it is proper to do this in a service based on today’s liturgy. See the rubric at bottom of p. 236 of the *Roman Missal*.
- Ash Wednesday is a universal day of fasting and a day of abstinence from meat.

Rite of Election | March 9, 2025 at 4pm

The Rite of Election is for catechumens: **unbaptised** adults and **unbaptized** children of catechetical age. This liturgy does not include the celebration of the Eucharist.

Catechumens and parish representatives are to **arrive at the Cathedral Hall at 2pm** for afternoon tea and a program with the Archbishop and Community Life and Worship team.

If you have any Catechumens preparing for baptism at the Easter Vigil, please register [HERE](#) before February 28th, 2025 and download the information packet.

RCIA

Following the Rite of Election on the First Sunday of Lent, the catechumens enter into the period of Purification and Enlightenment and the candidates for full communion enter into Lenten renewal. Additional rites may be part of the liturgies during this time. Please plan ahead.

- **Dismissal** to the Rite of Election for catechumens
- **Scrutinies** are on the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Sundays of Lent with Year A readings
- **Presentations** of the Our Father and of the Creed can be made during the Sunday liturgies, see the “Blue Book”, Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

Solemnities and Memorials in Lent

Please check the ordo for liturgical details on these days.

- Monday March 17, Solemnity of **St. Patrick**
- Wednesday March 19, Solemnity of **St. Joseph**
- Tuesday March 25, Solemnity of the **Annunciation of the Lord**
- Memorials of Saints: During Lent, Memorials of Saints are celebrated only as Optional Memorials. When an Optional Memorial falls during Lent, it is either omitted or the Collect of the Saint may be used instead of the Lenten Collect at Mass.

Covering Images and Crosses

- The practice of covering crosses and images throughout the church from the **Fifth Sunday of Lent** onward may be observed.
- Crosses remain covered until the end of the celebration of the Lord’s Passion on Good Friday. They are uncovered before beginning the Easter Vigil.

Holy Water Fonts

- Removing water from holy water fonts during Lent is not permitted until after the Holy Thursday liturgy. It would be re-filled in preparation for the Easter Vigil (CDWDS Prot. N. 569/00/L, March 2000). Removing water from fonts during Lent is contrary to a balanced understanding of the season of Lent because Lent is marked by the themes of both penance and baptism (SC 109).

Flowers

During Lent it is not permitted to decorate the area around the altar (and never on the altar table) with flowers except for *Laetare* Sunday (4th Sunday of Lent), Solemnities, and Feasts (GIRM no. 305).

Weddings

If a wedding is to be celebrated during the season of Lent, the couple should be reminded that their wedding plans must respect the penitential nature of the liturgical season: musical instruments are only used to sustain singing, and floral decorations are very simple.

Baptisms

The season of Lent is characterized as baptismal and penitential. Catechumens prepare during Lent to celebrate Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist at the Easter Vigil. According to Canon 867 of the Code of Canon Law, the **baptism of infants should not be delayed and can take place during Lent**. It is recommended that baptisms take place on Sundays when the Church commemorates the Lord's resurrection.

Chrism Mass

Instructions concerning the return and distribution of oils.

UNUSED OIL

On the day of the Chrism Mass, return to the Cathedral the bottles you received last year and any unused oil. If you transferred the oils to other vessels, you can pour any remaining oil back into the bottles and return them to the cathedral. The cathedral staff will properly dispose of the oil and clean the plastic bottles.

If you will be cleaning your own vessels and disposing of the oils, please ensure that you follow the correct procedure:

- any unused oil should be burned or buried
- vessels should be washed with soap and water and the water poured into the sacrarium or into the ground

PICKING UP NEWLY BLESSED AND CONSECRATED OILS

Parish representatives will collect only ONE SET of oils during the liturgy. For those parishes that require additional sets, these can be collected from the sacristy after the liturgy.