



**ROMAN CATHOLIC
DIOCESE of ORANGE**

PASTORAL CENTER: OFFICE FOR WORSHIP
13280 CHAPMAN AVENUE, GARDEN GROVE, CA 92840

MEMORANDUM

TO: Clergy, Liturgical Directors, Staff of Catholic Schools, and Beloved Faithful

FROM: Deacon Modesto Cordero, Director Office for Worship

DATE: January 11, 2024

SUBJECT: Diocese of Orange 2024 Lenten Regulations

The upcoming Lenten season, commencing on Ash Wednesday, **February 14, 2024**, and concluding with the commencement of the Easter Triduum and the observance of the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday, **March 28, 2024**, invites us to engage in a period of spiritual reflection and preparation for the joyous celebration of Easter. Lent provides a valuable occasion for us to ready ourselves for the Easter festivities, to accompany catechumens as they prepare for the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist, and for the already baptized to renew our commitment through acts of penance, prayer, and charitable giving. During Lent, there is a special emphasis on dedicating ourselves to both spiritual and corporal works of mercy. These actions serve as tangible expressions of our faith, demonstrating our commitment to assisting our neighbors in both physical and spiritual dimensions.

Enclosed, please find guidelines outlining the practices that Catholics in the Diocese of Orange are called to observe during this sacred season of Lent.

FASTING

- ❖ In the dioceses in the United States, Catholics aged 18 through 59 are bound to fast on both Ash Wednesday (**February 14, 2024**) and Good Friday (**March 29, 2024**).
- ❖ To *fast* means a person is permitted to eat one full meal, as well as two smaller meals that together are not equal to a full meal. Food and drink between meals (excepting water and medicine) is not permitted on fast days.

ABSTINENCE FROM MEAT

- ❖ Catholics aged 14 and up are to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday, all Fridays of Lent, and Good Friday.
- ❖ To abstain means refraining from eating beef, veal, pork, or poultry at least, although eggs and milk products are acceptable. The consumption of fish and shellfish is permitted, though the penitential character of the abstinence should be kept in mind.

EASTER DUTY

- ❖ All the faithful, after they have been initiated into the Most Holy Eucharist, are bound by the obligation of receiving Communion at least once a year. This precept is to be fulfilled during the Easter Season unless it is fulfilled, for a just cause, at some other time during the year.



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This period is extended to include all the weeks of Lent and the Easter Season up to Pentecost Sunday (**May 19, 2024**).

LENTEN PRACTICES

- ❖ The faithful are encouraged during Lent to attend daily Mass, receive Holy Communion, participate in penance services, and receive sacramental absolution; to take part in public and private exercises of piety, give generously to works of religion and charity, perform acts of kindness toward the sick, aged, and the poor; to practice voluntary self-denial, especially regarding food, drink, and worldly amusements; and to pray more fervently, particularly for the intentions of the Holy Father.
- ❖ Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, falls this year on **February 14th**. Ashes are to be blessed as a sign of our entry into a season of conversion, repentance, and reconciliation. Ashes are to be blessed by a bishop, priest, or deacon. Others may be associated with the clergy in the distribution of ashes.
- ❖ Lent is an admirable time to preach the Gospel message of reconciliation and for Pastors to make available frequent communal celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. In this way the social and ecclesial aspects of sin and reconciliation may be underscored. It should be noted, however, that at such communal celebrations, general absolution may not be given.
- ❖ Funeral Masses may not be celebrated on Holy Thursday, Good Friday, or Holy Saturday, nor on the Sundays of Lent. When pastoral reasons require that a funeral be celebrated on these days, only a Funeral Outside of Mass may be held.
- ❖ To afford the faithful opportunities to participate in Lenten prayer services, pastors are encouraged to have such prayer services at least twice a week, including the Way of the Cross on Fridays, Exposition and Benediction, Evening Prayer, and evening Masses. A homily or instruction should be included.
- ❖ Marriages may take place during Mass and the Nuptial Blessing may be given, but it is contrary to the penitential spirit of the Season of Lent to have elaborate weddings and celebrations.
- ❖ Those responsible for the religious formation of the young should bring their children, whenever it is possible, to Church in Lent for the devotion of the Way of the Cross. It is commendable to have a separate devotion to the Way of the Cross accommodated to children, insofar as circumstances permit.
- ❖ There is to be no morning Mass celebrated on Holy Thursday. Morning Prayer is recommended. After the Holy Thursday of the Lord's Supper Mass the Blessed Sacrament is to be reposed in a tabernacle. The Blessed Sacrament is not to be carried in a monstrance to the altar of repose, nor to be exposed in a monstrance.



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THE SACRED PASCHAL TRIDUUM

- ❖ “Since Christ accomplished his work of human redemption and of the perfect glorification of God principally through his Paschal Mystery, in which by dying he has destroyed our death, and by rising restored our life, the sacred Paschal Triduum of the Passion and Resurrection of the Lord shines forth as the high point of the entire liturgical year” (*Universal Norms on the Liturgical Year and the Calendar, #18*). Three major liturgical principles may be of help here:
 - The Triduum may be viewed a single liturgical action that occurs over a period of three days.
 - The Triduum is not part of Lent, but in its entirety, celebrates the Easter event.
 - The entire focus of the Triduum is on the Triumph of the Cross and the Resurrection.

- ❖ Good Friday has become a day specially consecrated to prayer and meditation on the passion and death of Christ. Where the devotion of Three Hours is observed, however, it should not conflict with the primary importance of the liturgy of Good Friday. Morning Prayer is recommended.

- ❖ In compliance with (1) the liturgical norms of the Roman Missal on "Easter Vigil" #3, (2) the Circular Letter Concerning the Preparation and Celebration of the Easter Feasts #78 and (3) published Diocesan regulations, the Easter Vigil must begin after nightfall (not before 7:50 PM).