



LENT

(FEBRUARY 17TH – APRIL 1ST)

LITURGICAL SUPPLEMENT

Diocese of Syracuse 2021

TABLE OF LITURGICAL DAYS

February 2021		
17	Ash Wednesday	
21	First Sunday of Lent	Rite of Election in parishes
28	Second Sunday of Lent	Optional Rite of Calling the Candidates to Continuing Conversion in parishes
March 2021		
7	Third Sunday of Lent	Scrutiny I
14	Fourth Sunday of Lent	Scrutiny II
17	Saint Patrick	Commemoration
19	Saint Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary	Solemnity <i>Note: there is no obligation on this Friday during Lent to abstain from meat</i>
21	Fifth Sunday of Lent	Scrutiny III
25	Annunciation of the Lord	Solemnity
28	Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord	
29	The “Light Is On For You” campaign	4:00 PM – 7:00 PM in parishes throughout the Diocese
30	Chrism Mass	12:00 Noon The Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception Attendance limited to priests only

LENT – Frequently Asked Questions:

The season of Lent– what is its purpose?

It is a time of preparation for both catechumens and the faithful to celebrate the Paschal Mystery. Catechumens are led to the sacraments of initiation by the Rite of Election, the Scrutinies, and catechesis. The faithful are led to renew their baptismal promises through a spirit of repentance brought about by prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.

The season of Lent – when does it begin and end?

It begins on Ash Wednesday, February 17th. It ends on Holy Thursday, April 1st, before the celebration of the evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper.

The season of Lent – are solemnities and feasts celebrated?

Yes. For example, the Solemnities of Saint Joseph and the Annunciation. When these are celebrated the Lenten weekdays are not commemorated.

The season of Lent – are memorials of saints observed?

All memorials during Lent, including obligatory memorials, are optional. If they are observed, it is only as commemorations (*see below*).

The season of Lent – no *Te Deum, Gloria, or Alleluia*?

The *Gloria* and the *Te Deum* are not said on the Sundays of Lent. However, they are said when prescribed, for example, on the Solemnities of Saint Joseph and the Annunciation and at the celebration of certain ritual Masses (e.g., Matrimony and Confirmation). The *Alleluia* is omitted from the beginning of Lent until the Easter Vigil.

The season of Lent – what is *Laetare* Sunday?

The Fourth Sunday of Lent. *Laetare* means “rejoice!” It is a joyful anticipation of Easter. Rose-colored vestments may be used, instruments may be played at Mass, and the altar may be adorned with flowers.

The season of Lent – can the celebration of Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Matrimony take place?

Yes. Baptism can be celebrated anytime, but its celebration may be discouraged in certain circumstances during Lent because this season is a time of preparation for Baptism. When Confirmation is celebrated on Sundays during Lent the Mass of the Day is celebrated, the readings of the day are used, and violet vestments are worn. Couples celebrating the Sacrament of Matrimony are to be reminded that wedding plans should respect the nature of this austere liturgical season (e.g., flowers, music, etc.).

LENT – Frequently Asked Questions:

Lent in practice – who must abstain from meat and when?

Catholics ages 14 and older are required to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday (February 17th) and Good Friday (April 1st) as well as on all Fridays during Lent.

Lent in practice – who must fast and when?

Catholics between the ages of 18 and 59 are required to fast (eat only one full meal; two smaller meals may be taken but may not be equal to the one full meal) on Ash Wednesday (February 17th) and Good Friday (April 1st). When possible, the fast from Good Friday should continue until the Easter Vigil. This is called the “Paschal Fast.” It is done to enter into the suffering and death of the Lord Jesus and to prepare more fully to celebrate his Resurrection.

Lent in practice – how should the sanctuary be decorated?

The altar should not be decorated with flowers except on the Fourth Sunday of Lent.

Lent in practice – what music is appropriate?

The proper antiphons of *Lent* or other suitable *Lenten* hymns that stir up a spirit of repentance. Musical instruments may only be played to support singing. Therefore, there should be no preludes or postludes; rather, sacred silence that invites prayer and mediation.

Lent in practice – how is memorial of a saint observed as a commemoration?

At the Office of Readings: add a third reading and a third responsory (of the saint) before the concluding prayer. At Morning Prayer or Evening Prayer: omit the ending of the concluding prayer (Through our Lord Jesus Christ...) and add the saint’s antiphon for the *Benedictus* or *Magnificat* (from the proper or common) and the saint’s prayer. At Mass: the collect of the saint may be used as the collect and the collect of the Lenten weekday may be used to conclude the universal prayer.

Lent in practice – how / when is the Prayer Over the People offered?

These prayers are either obligatory (i.e., on Ash Wednesday and Sundays of Lent) or optional (i.e., on the weekdays of Lent.) The priest says, “*The Lord be with you.*” The people respond, “*And with your Spirit.*” The deacon or priest says, “*Bow down for the blessing.*” With hands outstretched over the people, the priest offers the prayer. After the people respond, “*Amen,*” the priest adds, “*And may the blessing of almighty God, the Father, and the Son, + and the Holy Spirit, come down on you and remain with you forever.*” The people respond, “*Amen.*” The deacon or priest then offers one of the formulas for the dismissal (e.g., “*Go forth, the Mass is ended*”).

Lent in practice – are statutes and images covered?

They may be covered beginning with the fifth Sunday of Lent. Crosses remain covered until the end of the celebration of the Lord’s Passion on Good Friday. Images remain covered until the beginning of the Easter Vigil.

LENT – Frequently Asked Questions:

Stations of the Cross and the Most Holy Eucharist

Stations of the Cross are not to be done while the Blessed Sacrament is exposed on the altar. Likewise, the Eucharist is not to be distributed to the faithful at the end of the Stations of the Cross.

Stations of the Cross during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Stations of the Cross may still take place. Masks must be worn, and social distancing must be maintained. Booklets / resources should not be reused but rather disposed of or given to the faithful to keep for their own continued use.

“Penance service” – what is it?

The Sacrament of Penance is one of the primary ways to “return to the Lord with your whole heart” (Joel 2:13). A “penance service” is a communal celebration of the sacrament of Penance, which “shows more clearly the ecclesial nature of penance” (*Rite of Penance*, 22). Moreover, a “penance service” has a particular structure set forth in the *Rite of Penance: Rite for Reconciliation of Several Penitents with Individual Confession and Absolution* (i.e., Introductory Rites, The Celebration of the Word of God, The Rite of Reconciliation, and the Dismissal of the People).

“Penance Service” – can general absolution be given or received?

When it is either morally or physically impossible for presbyters to hear individual confessions, they are to grant general absolution. This can be done by law only: (1) in danger of death, (2) when there is not enough time, and (3) there are not enough confessors for individual confession. Likewise, in situations of grave necessity presbyters are to grant general absolution. For example, a presbyter in the missions – but not one on a pilgrimage or at a parish penance service – may grant general absolution when there are not enough confessors to hear confessions within a suitable time and penitents will be deprived of the grace of this sacrament or of Holy Communion for some time, (c. 961 §1, 1° and 2°). For the *valid* reception of general absolution, the faithful must be (1) suitably disposed and (2) intend to confess individually any grave sins as soon as possible (*Rite of Penance*, 34). Accordingly, general absolution is ***not permitted*** at a scheduled penance service.

“Anointing service” – is this the same as the Sacrament of Penance?

No. An “anointing service” is the communal celebration of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. When celebrated communally, presbyters are to ensure that the sick are suitably prepared and properly disposed (c. 1002). For example, they should instruct those present concerning who can receive the sacrament (i.e. those who begin to be in danger of death because of sickness or old age). Note: the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick forgives only those sins that cannot be confessed because of physical or moral constraints (*Pastoral Care of the Sick*, 6).

ASH WEDNESDAY – Frequently Asked Questions:

How does Mass begin?

It begins with the Sign of the Cross, the Greeting (“The Lord be with you.”), “Let us pray,” and the Collect. The Penitential Act is omitted.

When are ashes blessed and distributed?

After the Homily.

Who may distribute ashes?

A priest or deacon is the ordinary minister. Others (e.g., extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion) may assist when there is a genuine need.

What is to be said during the distribution of ashes?

“Repent and believe in the Gospel.” Or “Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return.”

How are the Ashes to be distributed during the COVID-19 Pandemic?

Step one: the Priest blesses the ashes after the Homily and sprinkles them with holy water in the usual manner (*Roman Missal*).

Step two: the Priest says the formula for the distribution of ashes only once, applying it to all in general: “Repent and believe in the Gospel” or “Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return.”

Step three: the Priest and those assisting with the distribution of ashes sanitize their hands and put on a face mask (and shield if preferred).

Step four: the faithful come forward as they do for the reception of Holy Communion to receive ashes. They bow their heads while the minister sprinkles ashes on them. Then they return to their places. Note: this is done without saying anything; the proper antiphon or another appropriate chant is sung.

Step five: the Priest and those who have assisted with the distribution of ashes wash and sanitize their hands. The Universal Prayer is said and Mass continues in the usual way.

(Source: *Note on Ash Wednesday: Distribution of Ashes in Time of Pandemic*, Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, 12 January 2021)

Note: this procedure should be explained to the faithful before Mass begins.

Why are ashes being distributed “differently” during the COVID-19 Pandemic?

The purpose of the “different” manner of distributing ashes this year is to ensure the health and safety of all who wish to receive them on Ash Wednesday. The measures being taken are similar to the precautions currently in place for the reception of Holy Communion and the conferral of the Sacraments of Confirmation and the Anointing of the Sick. Ultimately, they are meant to limit contact and the potential exchange of droplets/aerosols.

Since blessed ashes are typically traced in the form of a cross on the foreheads of those who receive them in the United States, the manner in which they will be distributed this year may seem “different” to some. However, in many parts of the world, including Italy, blessed ashes are typically

sprinkled on the heads of those who receive them. In fact, this is how our Holy Father, Pope Francis, receives his ashes! The *Roman Missal* instruction for the distribution of ashes actually says: “The Priest places ashes on the head of all those present.” Moreover, in the first reading proclaimed at Mass the Lord says, “Return to me with your whole *heart*...Rend your *hearts*, not your garments and return” (Joel 2: 12-13). Therefore, a “different” reception of ashes for some is an occasion for all to begin and maintain Lent as a season not of outward appearances, but of renewal in matters of the heart – faith, hope, and love – through prayer, fasting, and almsgiving done before the Father who sees in secret and repays (Matt 6:1-6, 16-18).

May ashes be blessed and distributed outside of Mass during the COVID-19 Pandemic?

Yes. See the attached resource for the “Distribution of Ashes outside Mass by a Lay Minister.” Priests and Deacons are to use the *Book of Blessings*, 1656-1678. The distribution of ashes is done in the same manner as during Mass (*see steps one through five above*).