

DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER
2021 GUIDELINES FOR LENT
FROM THE OFFICE OF DIVINE WORSHIP

The annual observance of Lent recalls the twofold theme of **baptism** and **repentance**.

1. Catechumens are led to the sacraments of initiation by means of the rites of election, the scrutinies, and catechesis;
2. Validly baptized non-Catholics are received into the Church by renewal of the baptismal promises, the professions of acceptance of the Catholic Faith and reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation and Holy Eucharist;
3. 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.

CHURCH ENVIRONMENT DURING LENT

- On the Altar at least one cloth, white in color. In the U.S. other cloths are used in addition, provided that the mensa itself is covered in a white altar cloth.
- The Altar is not to be decorated with flowers, though solemnities, feasts and the Fourth Sunday of Lent are exceptions.
- Rose colored vestments may be worn on the Fourth Sunday of Lent.
- **From the Saturday eve of the Fifth Sunday of Lent until the beginning of the Easter Vigil images** in the church may be **covered**.

THE COMMEMORATION OF THE SAINTS DURING LENT

- Solemnities and feasts are celebrated as usual.
- All memorials of Saints occurring during Lent are observed as *optional*.
- Saints are commemorated as follows:
 - ✘ At Mass: (*only the Opening Prayer may reflect the saint's commemoration*).
 - ✓ The color of vestments is always violet.
 - ✓ Opening prayer of the saint may replace that of the Lenten weekday.
 - ✓ Liturgy of the Word remains that of the Lenten weekday.
 - ✓ Prayer over the Gifts remain that of the Lenten weekday.
 - ✓ Preface of Lent remains (*except with Eucharistic Prayers having their own Preface*).
 - ✓ Prayer after Communion remains that of the Lenten weekday.

Commemoration of the Saints during Lent cont'd

- ✘ In the Liturgy of the Hours
 - At the Office of Readings:
After the Lenten weekday second reading and responsory, the reading of the saint and its responsory may be read.
The concluding Prayer of the Saint's commemoration may be offered.
 - At Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer:
The Antiphon for the Saint and the concluding Prayer of the Saint may replace those of the weekday.

ASH WEDNESDAY *February 17, 2021*

- Is a day of universal **Fast**
(observed by all who are 18 to 58 years of age inclusive/ one full meal and two much lighter meals/ nothing to eat in between meals/ liquids such as water, milk and juices are allowed).
- and **Abstinence**
(observed by all who are 14 years of age and older/ no meat is allowed unless required for reasons of health).

Fasting, almsgiving and prayer are the three traditional disciplines of Lent that should be **taken seriously** in a spirit of penance and of preparation for baptism and renewal of baptism by Easter.

- **Blessing and Distribution of Ashes**
May take place:
 - during the celebration of the Eucharist
(*If during the celebration of the Eucharist there is NO PENITENTIAL ACT*),
 - OR at a Liturgy of the Word.

Ashes are blessed and imposed **AFTER the HOMILY** (*in either case*).



Prot. N. 17/21

**NOTE ON ASH WEDNESDAY
Distribution of Ashes in Time of Pandemic**

The Priest says the prayer for blessing the ashes. He sprinkles the ashes with holy water, without saying anything. Then he addresses all those present and only once says the formula as it appears in the Roman Missal, applying it to all in general: "Repent, and believe in the Gospel", or "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return".

The Priest then cleanses his hands, puts on a face mask and distributes the ashes to those who come to him or, if appropriate, he goes to those who are standing in their places. The Priest takes the ashes and sprinkles them on the head of each one without saying anything.

From the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, 12 January 2021.

Robert Card. Sarah
Prefect

+Arthur Roche
Archbishop Secretary

According to the Note, the sprinkling of ashes on the top of the head, without any physical contact, is the normal way during this pandemic.

If there is a reason why a pastor believes that this would not be practical or accepted in his parish, he may impose ashes with a cotton swab or some similar instrument. The swab should be used only once, and a new swab used for each recipient. The swab must be subsequently burned. In any case, the minister must not touch the person receiving ashes. Both parties must be wearing masks. The words should be said once at the beginning for the whole congregation, and not individually. Some parishes may, in fact, decide not to distribute ashes this year. In this case, the internal disposition of the person attending the Mass or service should be stressed.

This article from the National Catholic Register, *Why Do We Put Ashes on Our Heads?* may be helpful: <https://www.ncregister.com/news/why-do-we-put-ashes-on-our-heads>. It covers the roots and meaning of Ash Wednesday, including the Biblical and Jewish origins and its development in Christian culture. An excerpt from this article describes the practice we observe today, and the option to sprinkle the ashes on the "tonsure."

By the end of the [12th] century, the observance of Ash Wednesday becomes a universal practice. Blessings for the ashes enter the Roman Missal, and the common features now familiar to us — ashes made from burning the palms of the previous Palm Sunday and administration, either by sprinkling or making a cross on the forehead or tonsure (the round, shaved area on the top of a monk's head) — spread throughout the Church.

FRIDAYS OF LENT FULL ABSTINENCE FROM MEAT

- All Fridays of Lent are days of full abstinence from meat for all who are 14 years of age and older (unless prohibited for reasons of health).

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT *February 21, 2021*

- Rite of Election – for true Catechumens only: the un-Baptized only.
Rite of Election **at the Cathedral**,
If the Rite of Election or Enrollment of Names of the un-Baptized Catechumens is celebrated **in the parish** church, it is done at one of the Sunday Masses.
- **AT ST. JOSEPH CATHEDRAL**
2:00 P.M. **The Rite of Election for un-Baptized only.**
(Please note that there is only **ONE** ceremony).

SAINT JOSEPH'S DAY *March 19, 2021*

- Friday this year.
- Liturgically, this is the Patronal feast of the Diocese of Manchester and a Solemnity
 - White vestments
 - Propers of St. Joseph, March 19
 - Gloria is sung or said

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT *March 21, 2021*

- **Images in the church may be covered** from the conclusion of the Mass for **Saturday (morning) of the Fourth Week of Lent until the beginning of the Easter Vigil.**

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

- The Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord *Wednesday, March 25, 2021*
 - ✓ All are asked to genuflect at “and by the Holy Spirit” in the Creed.
- Fourth Sunday of Easter *April 25, 2021*
 - ✓ World Day of Prayer for Vocations is celebrated this day. Prayers for vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life should be inserted into the General Intercessions at Mass.
- Transitional Deacon Ordination *May 29, 2021- 10 am St. Joseph Cathedral*
- Ascension Thursday *May 13, 2021*
- Priesthood Ordination *June 5, 2021 – 10 am St. Joseph Cathedral*
The Most Holy Trinity *May 30, 2021*
- Most Sacred Heart of Jesus *June 11, 2021*
 - ✓ Today is World Day of Prayer for the Sanctification of Priests.

Notes on Palm Sunday, Holy Week and Easter will follow in a later notice.

❖ *LITURGICAL QUESTIONS MAY BE DIRECTED TO THE OFFICE OF WORSHIP, 663-0153*