

DIOCESE OF BROOKLYN

We soon will enter the Season of Lent during an extraordinary time as we continue to face the pandemic which has caused so much suffering already. In some ways, it is itself a penance as is all suffering if we can unite it to the sufferings of Christ as we live in hope for the victory of the Resurrection.

The penitential and grace-filled Lenten Season begins with Ash Wednesday on February 17. It is a time of hope-filled renewal as the Church journeys towards Easter. In order to assist the faithful of the Diocese of Brooklyn, our Bishop, the Most Reverend Nicholas DiMarzio wishes to draw attention to the following:

ABSTINENCE

All the faithful who have reached 14 years of age are required to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday and all the Fridays of Lent.

FASTING

All the faithful between the ages of 18 and 59 inclusive are bound to fast on Ash Wednesday and on Good Friday. Fasting means limiting oneself to one full meal and avoiding food between meals. Light sustenance may be taken on two other occasions during the day.

EASTER DUTY

After they have been fully initiated into the Most Holy Eucharist, all the faithful are bound to receive Holy Communion at least once a year. This precept must be fulfilled in the Easter Season unless, for a good reason, it is fulfilled at another time. By special permission, in the USA, the period for fulfilling this precept is extended to include the period from the first Sunday of Lent (February 21) until Pentecost (May 23).

It should be noted that the dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass is still in effect; therefore, the obligation to receive Holy Communion reasonably can be transferred to another time this year.

The obligation to observe, as a whole or substantially, the penitential days specified by the Church is a serious one. Days of penance are not merely individual exercises but rather ones observed by the whole Church as the Body of Christ.

The faithful are urged to celebrate the sacraments of the Eucharist and Penance frequently during Lent as well as reading the Word of God, praying the Stations of the Cross, praying before the Blessed Sacrament, and performing acts of charity especially to the poor.

Pastors and parents are responsible for teaching young people, who are

not bound by the above regulations, an authentic sense of penance.

All other Fridays of the year remain days of penance. The Bishops of the USA have recommended that abstinence from meat remain a penitential practice for those days but another practice of voluntary self-denial, personal penance, or charity is also encouraged.

In prayerful communion with the candidates and catechumens, let us accompany the Lord on His way to the cross and the empty tomb. May this time of Lent unite us all more closely to the Lord in His death and His Resurrection!

THE SOLEMNITY OF SAINT JOSEPH

The day should be observed with the proper solemnity even though it falls on a Friday of Lent this year (March 19). The law of abstinence does not apply on that day.

EASTER VIGIL

Sunset on April 3 will be at 7:23 pm. The Easter Vigil could begin at 7:30 pm or later and must end before dawn on Easter Sunday (April 4).

Also to be noted: The "Alleluia" is not sung or said from the beginning of Lent until the Easter Vigil. Musical instruments are to be used during Lent and the Paschal Triduum only to give necessary support to the singing.

The Church should not be decorated with flowers during Lent.

Funeral Masses are not permitted during the Paschal Triduum. Funeral Rites carried out during those days make use of a Liturgy of the Word with a Rite of Farewell.



Lenten Regulations 2021