

## Frequently Asked Questions on Lent

Liturgy Commission - Diocese of Tyler  
February 2, 2005

What time can the Easter Vigil start this Holy Saturday?

The Vigil Mass should not start before nightfall, which is 7 PM this year in our area. The U.S. Naval observatory has the precise times: [www.usno.navy.mil](http://www.usno.navy.mil)

Sacramental Records for RCIA

Please note that there needs to be a record of anyone who is Received into Full Communion with the Church. This must be done either in the parish's Profession of Faith Register (if the parish has one) or in the parish Baptismal Register (every parish must have an official registry book for Baptisms). When the date of the Profession of Faith is recorded, there needs to be noted clearly what Sacraments they received, i.e.: First Communion and Confirmation. Also, if they are married, a notation must also be made in the registry.

The Profession of Faith record serves the place of a Baptismal record for the new Catholic as the place of official record. The parish will be notified of any future sacraments to be noted in the registry. If the parish does not have "Profession of Faith certificates" one can simply use a Baptismal Certificate, but clearly note on it Profession of Faith. (See Canon 877; Diocesan Pastoral Manual see F I c 3 page F-12. Also Baptismal records F II G page F-39.)

When should Holy Water be removed from the Fonts?

Holy Water is a reminder of Baptism and should NOT be removed from the fonts before the end of the Holy Thursday liturgy (see Ordo). It would then be replaced with new Easter water after the Vigil Mass of Easter. The idea of removing Holy Water throughout Lent is not proper theologically nor liturgically, and is not to be done.

On Holy Thursday does the priest have to wash the feet of 12 men?

Traditionally it is 12 men (males), calling to mind in a very direct way Jesus washing the feet of the 12 Apostles (See John 13). The rubrics in the Sacramentary would suggest it should be 12 men, but some parishes in the United States have the practice of using women as well as men. The rationale for using both men and women seems to shift the significance of this action from what Christ did at the Last Supper. The men symbolize the Apostles, whereas a group of men and women has to symbolize the whole Church. The Congregation of Divine Worship and Sacraments has not reprobated the practice of using both men and women, so Bishop Corrada has allowed the practice of using men and women to continue for the present moment. It would seem appropriate that if children are used, they would be over the age of seven. Only the priest who is the main celebrant washes the feet of the 12.

Can someone who is over the age of 7 be Baptized and then prepared for Confirmation at a later time?

NO. (See Canon 883, 885) The priest should confirm whenever he Baptizes someone who has reached the age of reason, unless there is a very particular reason why an exception to this practice which is mandated in universal law with the Rites of Christian Initiation of Adults. The person seeking Baptism over the age of 7, should be admitted to the Catechumenate, and can then receive both marriage and burial from the Church. The

person needs to be prepared for Baptism, Confirmation and First Communion, this preparation may take over a year, but at the point they are ready for Baptism, they are to be ready for the other sacraments as well. Similarly anyone who is admitted to Full Communion with the Church that is over the age of 7, should be confirmed at that time and then receive Communion.

Can a crucifix be used on Good Friday:

Either a cross or a crucifix maybe used for veneration on Good Friday. Only one cross should be used, and it should to be noble. That is while not ornate, it should be of high quality so as to inspire reverence. It should be of significant size to be readily seen and easily venerated.

Can the Passion on Good Friday be replaced by a drama or by Stations of the Cross?

NO. The reading of the Passion is an essential part of the Good Friday Liturgy. One can have a Passion Play and/or Stations of the Cross at some other time, even immediately before the Good Friday Liturgy, but the Passion Play can not take the place of the proclamation of the Passion in the Liturgy of Good Friday.

What about duplicate services on the Triduum?

Holy Thursday: There should only be one celebration of the Mass of the Lord's Supper. This Mass particularly focuses on the union in the Eucharist. In a bilingual community, this Mass can be done bilingually.

Good Friday: Pastorally in a community that has both English and Spanish speakers, there should be two separate celebrations of the Good Friday Liturgy, one in English and one in Spanish. Also, there probably should be Stations of the Cross in both languages. This respects the very different cultural expressions of devotion and piety.

Holy Saturday: The Easter Vigil, which should always be held after dark, could be celebrated bilingually, or maybe celebrated only in English or Spanish, depending on the community. For pastoral reasons an additional Mass could be celebrated after the Easter Vigil, in either English or Spanish. The Sacramentary notes such a Mass could use the expanded Liturgy of the Word from the Vigil and should include the renewal of Baptismal promises.

Do we have to use broken pots, sand, & cactus for the Liturgical environment during Lent?

NO. We do not have to create a diorama of a desert! The environment should call them to this through the scriptures. Not tell them it is a "desert"!! Keep it simple. A single cross with Lenten purple fabric. Even though we don't have flowers during Lent, we don't have to replace thsm with "something!" Lent is about the reality that something is missing...the season calls each of us to seek out what is missing in our own journey to holiness.

Also, the Lenten environment for the Liturgy might be created by looking at what to take "out" of the sanctuary and not what to clutter it up with. Having people reflect on what they need to take "out" of their lives. What is missing from their lives is their desert experience. It is different for everyone. If items are used, please take time to READ the SCRIPTURES and prayerfully reflect before you do anything. Try to use items that are already symbols used in the liturgy on Ash Wednesday or Holy Thursday, such as ashes, the bowl and pitcher (maybe the ones that will be used Holy Thursday).

See GIRM #305 and it briefly states about flowers and musical instruments in the Ordo pg 51.