

# Official Guidelines for Lent and Easter 2018

## Archdiocese of Seattle

“Lent is a new beginning, a path leading to the certain goal of Easter, Christ’s victory over death. This season urgently calls us to conversion. Christians are asked to return to God “with all their hearts” (Joel 2:12), to refuse to settle for mediocrity and to grow in friendship with the Lord. Jesus is the faithful friend who never abandons us. Even when we sin, he patiently awaits our return; by that patient expectation, he shows us his readiness to forgive. Lent is a favorable season for deepening our spiritual life through the means of sanctification offered us by the Church: fasting, prayer and almsgiving. At the basis of everything is the word of God, which during this season we are invited to hear and ponder more deeply.” (From the Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for Lent 2017)

### Regulations for Fast and Abstinence

Ash Wednesday, **February 14, 2018**, and Good Friday, **March 30, 2018**, are days of fast and abstinence. Fridays of Lent are also days of abstinence.

Fasting is to be observed by all eighteen years of age and older, who have not yet celebrated their sixtieth birthday. On a fast day one full meal is allowed. Two other meals, sufficient to maintain strength, may be taken according to each one’s needs, but together they should not equal another full meal. Eating between meals is not permitted, but liquids, including milk and juices, are allowed.

Abstinence is observed by all fourteen years of age and older. On days of abstinence no meat is allowed. Note that when health or ability to work would be seriously affected, the law does not oblige. When in doubt concerning fast and abstinence, the parish priest should be consulted.

Fasting, almsgiving, and prayer are the three traditional disciplines of Lent. The faithful and catechumens should undertake these practices seriously in a spirit of penance and of preparation for Baptism or of renewal of Baptism at Easter. (*Code of Canon Law, 1249-1252*).

### Penitential Practices

In addition to the universal Lenten disciplines of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, *Paschale Solemnitatis* specifically commends the celebration of the form of the Rite of Penance according to the rite of reconciliation of several penitents with individual confession and absolution (*PS 15, CB 281*).

### Particular Liturgies during the Season of Lent and Easter

#### Ash Wednesday, February 14, 2018

Ashes of branches of the olive tree or the palm tree are blessed and imposed on this day.

#### Chrism Mass, Thursday, March 22, 2018

The Chrism Mass will be celebrated at St. James Cathedral, Seattle, at 7:00 PM. The faithful are invited to attend this liturgy where Archbishop Sartain will bless the Oil of the Catechumens and the Oil of the Sick, and consecrate the Sacred Chrism to be used in the Sacramental life of the Church.

### **Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord, March 25, 2018**

On this day the Church remembers Christ's entrance into Jerusalem to accomplish his paschal mystery. The commemoration on this day with the blessing of palms and the procession is not an historical re-enactment of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem but a ritual action that marks our entry into Holy Week and the celebration of the Christian Passover.

### **Holy Thursday, March 29, 2018**

With the celebration of the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper, "the church begins the Easter triduum and recalls the Last Supper, in which the Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, showing his love for those who were his own in the world, gave his body and blood under the species of bread and wine, offering to his Father and giving them to the apostles so that they might partake of them, and he commanded them and their successors in the priesthood to perpetuate this offering." (CB, 297).

### **Good Friday, March 30, 2018**

"The Church meditates on the Passion of her Lord and Spouse, adores the cross, commemorates her origin from the side of Christ asleep on the cross and intercedes for the salvation of the whole world. (PS, 58).

The Liturgy of the Hours is strongly encouraged.

### **Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord and the Easter Time**

#### **Holy Saturday, March 31, 2018**

The Easter Vigil in the Holy Night must begin in the dark, to allow for the new fire to break the darkness of night. (*Roman Missal*, Easter Vigil, 3).

#### **Easter Sunday, April 1, 2018**

The fifty days from Easter Sunday (April 1) to Pentecost, audibly and visually, are celebrated in joyful exultation as one feast day, or better as one "great Sunday." The first eight days of the Easter Season make up the Octave of Easter and are celebrated as solemnities of the Lord. The Paschal Candle evokes the truth that Christ is the light of the world and, remaining near the ambo throughout Easter Time, is lighted for all liturgical celebrations of the season.

### **Ascension of the Lord**

In Region XII, the Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord has been transferred to Sunday and will therefore be celebrated on **May 13, 2018**.

### **Pentecost**

Pentecost Sunday is on **May 20, 2018**. Easter Time ends with the conclusion of Evening Prayer (Vespers) on Pentecost.