

## January 2012 Liturgical Memo

### LENT

Our observance of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, a day of fast and abstinence for Catholics. At Mass on Ash Wednesday (Feb 22, 2012), the imposition of ashes replicates an ancient penitential practice and symbolizes our dependence upon God's mercy and forgiveness.

During Lent, the baptized are called to renew their baptismal commitment as others prepare to be baptized through the [Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults](#), a period of learning and discernment for individuals who have declared their desire to become Catholics.

The three traditional pillars of Lenten observance are prayer, fasting and almsgiving. The Church asks us to surrender ourselves to prayer and to the reading of Scripture, to fasting and to giving alms. The fasting that all do together on Fridays is but a sign of the daily Lenten discipline of individuals and households: fasting for certain periods of time, fasting from certain foods, but also fasting from other things and activities. Likewise, the giving of alms is some effort to share this world equally—not only through the distribution of money, but through the sharing of our time and talents.

The key to fruitful observance of these practices is to recognize their link to baptismal renewal. We are called not just to abstain from sin during Lent, but to true conversion of our hearts and minds as followers of Christ. We recall those waters in which we were baptized into Christ's death, died to sin and evil, and began new life in Christ.

### What is the Church's official position concerning penance and abstinence from meat during Lent?



In 1966 Pope Paul VI reorganized the Church's practice of public penance in his "Apostolic Constitution on Penance" (*Poenitemini*). The 1983 revision of the Code of Canon Law incorporated the changes made by Pope Paul. Not long after that, the U.S. bishops applied the canonical requirements to the practice of public penance in our country.

**To sum up those requirements, Catholics between the ages of 18 and 59 are obliged to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. In addition, all Catholics 14 years old and older must abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday, Good Friday and all the Fridays of Lent.**

Fasting as explained by the U.S. bishops means partaking of only one full meal. Some food (not equaling another full meal) is permitted at breakfast and around midday or in the evening—depending on when a person chooses to eat the main or full meal.

Abstinence forbids the use of meat, but not of eggs, milk products or condiments made of animal fat.

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Please go to the Liturgy section to access the January 2012 memo.

### Exemptions from the Lenten Fast

**Besides those outside the age limits, those of unsound mind, the sick, the frail, pregnant or nursing women according to need for meat or nourishment, manual laborers according to need, guests at a meal who cannot excuse themselves without giving great offense or causing enmity and other situations of moral or physical impossibility to observe the penitential discipline.**

## ***The Gloria in excelsis . . .***

A quick journey through the *Roman Missal, Third Edition* presents the priest with some new Rubrics.

**The section on Ritual Masses – specifically Ritual Masses for Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Orders and Matrimony – indicates that the *Gloria in excelsis* (Glory to God in the highest) is said. These Ritual Masses are now to be accorded the rank of “Feast” and are to be celebrated with proper ritual solemnity.**

Previously, the *Gloria* was recited/sung at Confirmation Masses only on Sundays and Feast days or at the discretion of the pastor. Now at all Confirmations, with the exception of Confirmations that take place on the Sundays of Advent or Lent, the *Gloria* is to be sung. Yes – this includes the weekdays of Advent and Lent. The Sundays of Advent and Lent take precedence over the Ritual of Confirmation so the omission of the *Gloria* is followed accordingly.

**If you have not already done so – please begin the recitation/singing of the *Gloria* at all Wedding Masses that do not occur on a Sunday of Advent or Lent.**

The Ritual Mass for Baptism may be celebrated in accordance with the Table of Liturgical Precedence. Sundays of Advent and Lent take precedence over the Ritual Mass for Baptism so the question of reciting the *Gloria* at those occasions is moot.

## ***Together for Life***

This great marriage aid has been updated with the new translation of the Roman Missal and is available for purchase. One may purchase both the insert cards as well as the catechetical/marriage prep booklets at either [www.avemariapress.com](http://www.avemariapress.com) or [www.togetherforlifeonline.com](http://www.togetherforlifeonline.com)

If you are celebrating a Ritual Mass for Matrimony, you must use the new translation of the prayers. The only exception for Matrimony involves the sacramental celebration outside of Mass, in which case the translation found in the *Rite of Marriage* ritual may be used. At all celebrations of Mass however, the new translation of the prayers must be used, regardless of the translation found in the ritual books that have not been updated.