



February 2023

Liturgical Notes for Spring of 2023

Upcoming Dates

- March 14 — The Light Is on for You: The Sacrament of Penance is to be made available in all parishes of the diocese from 6:00-8:00 PM on Tuesday, March 14.
- Chrism Masses:
 - **South Bend:** Monday, April 3, 7:00 PM — St. Matthew Cathedral
 - **Fort Wayne:** Tuesday, April 4, 7:00 PM — Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception
- Easter Vigil Start Time:

On Saturday, April 8, 2023, the end of civil twilight is at 8:40 PM EDT on the Fort Wayne side, and 8:46 PM EDT on the South Bend side. Therefore, around 8:45 PM would be the earliest possible time to begin the Easter Vigil in the diocese.

Since the USCCB encourages waiting an extra 15-30 minutes (because total darkness occurs after civil twilight ends), 9:00 PM or later would really be the most appropriate start time. The Roman Missal states that the Vigil must begin in true darkness, “after nightfall.”

Regular Reminders for Lent, Holy Week, & Easter

- Confirmation Prayer
 - This is a reminder of the new translation of the Order of Confirmation that took effect in 2016. Until the impending new OCIA ritual book is published, the old Confirmation prayer wording found in the RCIA for catechumens and candidates for full communion (and also in Pastoral Care of the Sick for emergency Confirmations) remains valid and licit.

However, Bishop Rhoades encourages incorporating the new prayer at the laying on of hands if at all possible. That prayer appears four times in the U.S. edition of the RCIA: initiation of catechumens (no. 234), initiation of



children of catechetical age (no. 325), reception of baptized Christians into full communion with the Catholic Church (no. 493, and referenced at no. 502), and the combined rite of initiation of catechumens and reception of baptized Christians (no. 590). In those cases, the new prayer may be printed and inserted. You can [download the new prayer here](#).

➤ **Faculties for Conferring Confirmation**

- While planning the Sacraments of Initiation this spring, please keep in mind that priests in this diocese do not possess faculties to confirm someone who is already a baptized Catholic. An attempt to do so would be an invalid Confirmation. The only exceptions involve someone who had apostatized from the faith, or someone who, through no personal fault, was instructed in or adhered to a non-Catholic religion. Please consult the Priestly Faculties handbook for additional details.

➤ **Baptisms during Lent**

- Lent is indeed a time of preparation for initiation, with an eye towards Easter baptisms. However, nothing prohibits infant baptisms during Lent, and delaying until Easter is not always reasonable. The *Code of Canon Law* #867 states that “parents are obliged to take care that infants are baptized in the first few weeks.” The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* #1250 says: “The Church and the parents would deny a child the priceless grace of becoming a child of God were they not to confer Baptism shortly after birth.”

➤ **Candidates Not Dismissed at Mass**

- Unlike for catechumens, the Rites do not call for candidates to be dismissed prior to the Liturgy of the Eucharist during their preparation for full initiation (RCIA 433, 545, 560), on account of their existing baptism. Of course, they still do not receive Holy Communion until their initiation is complete.

➤ **Use of the Oil of Catechumens During the RCIA**

- As per RCIA 33.7, the anointing with the Oil of Catechumens ought to be done during the catechumenate period—ideally during the Lenten period of purification and enlightenment. However, if for some reason this anointing was not done at that time, then it is still appropriate to do it during the preparation rites on Holy Saturday or even at the Easter Vigil (as noted in the Missal’s Vigil rubric no. 48)—but this should not be the norm.



➤ Veiling of Crosses & Images

- Crosses in the church may be covered from the end of the Mass for Saturday of the Fourth Week of Lent until the end of the celebration of the Lord's Passion on Good Friday. Images in the church may be covered from the end of Mass for Saturday of the Fourth Week of Lent until the beginning of the Vigil. However, Stations of the Cross and stained-glass images are not veiled. The USCCB describes the practice of veiling as a sort of fasting from sacred images, whereby the fasting culminates in a profound sense of veneration on Good Friday and in a renewed sense of awe at paschal glory on Easter.

➤ The Reading of the Passion

- Changes to the flow and structure of the Passion Gospel reading on Palm Sunday and Good Friday are to be avoided. The *Circular Letter Concerning the Preparation and Celebration of the Easter Feasts* (Congregation for Divine Worship, 1988) states in #33: "The Passion narrative occupies a special place. It should be sung or read in the traditional way, that is, by three persons who take the part of Christ, the narrator and the people. The Passion is proclaimed by deacons or priests, or by lay readers; in the latter case, the part of Christ should be reserved to the priest. The proclamation of the Passion should be without candles and incense, the greeting and the sign of the cross on the book are omitted." While certain sung settings of the Passion itself may be appropriate, interjecting hymn texts or otherwise altering the reading is not.

➤ Holy Thursday

- Bells are rung during the Gloria at the Mass of the Lord's Supper. Afterwards, the bells should remain silent until the Gloria at the Easter Vigil.

➤ Footwashing

- As decreed by the Congregation for Divine Worship in 2016, the optional footwashing rite on Holy Thursday is no longer restricted only to male participants. Rather, "pastors may select a small group of the faithful to represent the variety and the unity of each part of the people of God. Such small groups can be made up of men and women." (The update goes on to say that participants could "consist of people young and old, healthy and sick, clerics, consecrated men and women and laity.")

The priest still must carry out the actual washing of feet himself, as described in the Roman Missal.



➤ Good Friday

- During the veneration of the cross, any cross containing a relic of the True Cross would be ideal, if a parish is fortunate enough to have one. Otherwise, either a crucifix or a plain cross may be used.

➤ Sacraments During the Triduum

- “Throughout the Sacred Paschal Triduum, it is important to emphasize that the Sacraments of Penance and the Anointing of the Sick may continue to be celebrated (see rubrics for Good Friday, no. 1). Holy Communion may be given to the sick and homebound immediately after the liturgies of Holy Thursday and Good Friday, and only as viaticum to the dying on Holy Saturday” - USCCB Newsletter, May 2011.

➤ Renewal of Baptismal Promises on Easter Sunday

- “On Easter Sunday, the optional nature of the Renewal of Baptismal Promises is emphasized in the rubrics, and the text itself is not included on Easter Sunday. If it is to be used, the text is taken from the appropriate place in the Easter Vigil, and the Creed is omitted. In any event, the Penitential Act still takes place as usual” - USCCB Newsletter, May 2011.

➤ The Sequences

- The prescribed Sequences must be used at Mass before the Alleluia on Easter Sunday and on Pentecost Day (GIRM #64). The Easter Sequence is *Victimae Paschali Laudes* (“Christians, to the Paschal Victim...” in the Lectionary) and may also be used during Masses throughout the Easter Octave. The Pentecost Sunday Sequence is *Veni Sancte Spiritus*. These may be sung by the cantor alone, and should be recited if singing is not possible.

➤ “Double Alleluia”

- The melismatic “double Alleluia” is prescribed for the dismissal during the Easter Octave and then on Pentecost. It is not used on other days in the Easter Season or the rest of the year.

➤ Disposal of Old Oils and Paschal Candles

- A simple yet reverent way to dispose of old remaining holy oils or paschal candles is to have them burned in the pre-Easter Vigil fire.