

Dear servants of the liturgy,

Blessed Lent! It is hard to believe that we are already about to celebrate the Scrutinies... which means that Chrism Mass and Holy Week are just around the corner!

Please allow me to once again invite you to, and encourage your attendance at, the Chrism Mass. It would be great if parishioners from around the diocese could join us—especially those in RCIA and Confirmation programs, parents whose infants will be baptized, the sick who will be anointed and those who care for them.... This liturgy is a wonderful opportunity to come together as a diocesan Church.

Speaking of the RCIA, please also remember that this summer we are hosting a *Beginnings Plus* conference in our diocese. Pastors and RCIA team members are strongly encouraged to attend this powerful experience of the rites. As mentioned below, scholarships are available.

Finally, congratulations to the newly-Elect! Let us continue to support them in their journey to the font by our prayer, fasting, and charity.

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FOR YOUR INFORMATION...

THE CONGREGATION FOR DIVINE WORSHIP AND THE DISCIPLINE OF THE SACRAMENTS

I have received a number of inquiries concerning the emptying of holy water fonts during Lent. I offer this response from the Congregation (3/14/03: Prot. N. 569/00/L) in reply:

"This Dicastery is able to respond that the removing of Holy Water from the fonts during the season of Lent is not permitted, in particular, for two reasons:

"1. The liturgical legislation in force does not foresee this innovation, which in addition to being *'praeter legem'* is contrary to a balanced understanding of the season of Lent, which though truly being a season of penance, is also a season rich in the symbolism of water and baptism, constantly evoked in liturgical texts.

"2. The encouragement of the Church that the faithful avail themselves frequently of the sacraments is to be understood to apply also to the season of Lent. The 'fast' and 'abstinence' which the faithful embrace in this season does not extend to abstaining from the sacraments or sacramentals of the Church.

"The practice of the Church has been to empty the Holy Water fonts on the days of the Sacred Triduum in preparation of the blessing of the water at the Easter Vigil, and it corresponds to those days on which the Eucharist is not celebrated (i.e., Good Friday and Holy Saturday)."

THE U.S. BISHOPS' COMMITTEE ON PASTORAL PRACTICES

This USCCB committee has been studying the question of fostering greater attendance at Sunday Mass. After wide consultation, they have published a series of nine suggestions that parishes can implement, including:

#8 Engage youth in the Sunday liturgy. Celebrate a Children's Liturgy of the Word. Actively involve religious education classes in liturgy planning. Invite youth to exercise appropriate liturgical ministries. Be conscious of the concerns of youth in homily preparation [N.B. you may want to check out Wisdom, Andrew Carl. *Preaching to a Multi-generational Assembly*. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2004.]. Explore ways to evangelize teenagers; consider using an inter-generational, lectionary –based program for catechesis [please check with the catechetical office for programs]. Emphasize Mass attendance/participation in the high school curriculum.

I would add: consider sending youth from your parish to:

Youth in Theology and Ministry (YTM), held at St. John's University in Collegeville, MN, "a camp for high school youth who want to deepen their understanding and practice of their Catholic faith." The two-week experience includes theology classes, service learning projects, and prayer. Please see their website at www.ytm-sju.org;

and/or

Youth Liturgical Leadership Program, sponsored by St. Meinrad School of Theology (St. Meinrad, IN), seeks to "reach out to young adults and provide them with the tools necessary to become effective leaders in their parishes and communities...by laying strong foundations in liturgy and prayer." The cornerstone of the program is the week-long One Bread, One Cup Conference, held three times each summer, involving high school participants as well as college interns. Please see http://www.saintmeinrad.edu/programs_youth_ovr.aspx for more information.

FROM THE USCCB'S BISHOPS' COMMITTEE ON THE LITURGY

Contact information for obtaining a copy of the *Roman Missal* in Vietnamese has been changed. Copies of the new Missal may be obtained from Rev. John Tran, Our Lady of the Assumption Church, Claremont, California 91711 (phone 909-626-3596).

The service of producing large-type editions of the Missal (*Sacramentary*) and *Lectionary for Mass* for sight-impaired priests and liturgical ministers has been recently assumed by the National Catholic Partnership on Disability, located at 415 Michigan Avenue, Washington, DC 20017 (phone: 202-529-2933).

CONFIRMATIONS IN THE DIOCESE

A reminder to those who are helping to prepare confirmation liturgies: please make sure to have the planning sheets in to the liturgy office two weeks before the rite is to be celebrated. The planning sheet is available on the diocesan website: go to <http://www.davenportdiocese.org/ddo-offices/page7.html> and then scroll to the bottom of the page.

UPCOMING EVENTS

CONTINUING FORMATION OPPORTUNITIES

Diocese of Des Moines: May 18-19, 2007

Friday, May 18 (7:00-9:00 pm): “Music for the Liturgy: a Music Reading Session”

Saturday, May 19 (9:00-2:30 PM): “The Ministry of Music and Musicians, ‘Full, conscious and active participation by all’”

Presenter for these events will be Mary Beth Kunde-Anderson, former director of music for the archdiocesan Office of Worship in Chicago, now with World Library Publications. Mary Beth will present hymns and musical settings to parish music and liturgy coordinators at the Friday session. The Saturday workshop for liturgy committees, choirs and musicians, presiders and planners, explores the primary focus for liturgical music and musicians—the “full, conscious and active participation” in the liturgy by all members of the church.

For more information... call or e-mail the Des Moines Department of Faith Formation • 515/237-5058 • formation@dmdiocese.org • www.dmdiocese.org (“Faith Formation”)

Notre Dame Center for Liturgy

Information regarding these two opportunities may be found at: <http://www.liturgy.nd.edu>

Annual Conference: June 11-13

This year’s conference—“A Day for the Lord: Sign of Contradiction?”—will address the relationship between cult and culture by considering what it means to “keep a day holy to the Lord.” What does it mean to take seriously the obligation to keep the Lord’s Day?

SummerSong 2007: July 15-27

A two-week intensive experience for liturgical music ministers.

IN OUR DIOCESE – RCIA: Beginnings and Beyond – July 19-22

A Beginnings and Beyond conference will be held in the diocese July 19-22, 2007 at St. John Vianney Parish in Bettendorf. The registration flyer was included with the December newsletter and is on the diocesan website. Please be aware that scholarships to the conference are available.

FORM/REFORM: The National Conference on Environment and Art for Catholic Worship

August 1-4, 2007 in Milwaukee. THEME: Resurrection Witnesses: From Empty Tombs to New Encounters: Biblical Stories in Conversation with Architecture for Worship. Please go to www.FormReformConference.com for more information.

LITURGY PREPARATIONLITURGICAL CALENDAR

The Second Sunday of Easter is also celebrated as Divine Mercy Sunday. The following is taken from the USCCB's BCL Newsletter (February 2003), available at <http://www.usccb.org/liturgy/innews/022003.shtml>:

In a decree dated August 3, 2002, the Apostolic Penitentiary announced that in order "to ensure that the faithful would observe this day (Divine Mercy Sunday) with intense devotion, the Supreme Pontiff himself established that this Sunday be enriched by a plenary indulgence...so that the faithful might receive in great abundance the gift of the consolation of the Holy Spirit. In this way, they can foster a growing love for God and for their neighbor, and after they have obtained God's pardon, they in turn might be persuaded to show a prompt pardon to their brothers and sisters."

In addition, the decree requires that parish priests "should inform the faithful in the most suitable way of the Church's salutary provision. They should promptly and generously be willing to hear their confessions. On Divine Mercy Sunday, after celebrating Mass or Vespers, or during devotions in honor of Divine Mercy, with the dignity that is in accord with the rite, they should lead the recitation of the prayers that have been given above [e.g. *Our Father* and the *Creed*, adding a devout prayer to the merciful Lord Jesus (e.g. Merciful Jesus, I trust in you!)]. Finally, since 'Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy' (Mt 5, 7), when they instruct their people, priests should gently encourage the faithful to practice works of charity or mercy as often as they can, following the example of, and in obeying the commandment of Jesus Christ, as is listed for the second general concession of indulgence in the *Enchiridion Indulgentiarum*."

The Decree in its entirety may be found at:

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/tribunals/apost_penit/documents/rc_trib_appen_doc_20020629_decre_e-ii_en.html

INTERCESSIONS

Below please find three intercessions for each Sunday of the month. The first is an "intercession for life" provided by the USCCB. The second is an intercession for vocations, courtesy of the vocations office. Finally, there is an intercession written by a member of the Diocesan Liturgical Commission and inspired by the readings of the day. Please use and/or adapt them as you see fit.

April 1 PALM SUNDAY OF THE LORD'S PASSION

For all who are burdened with weakness and old age that we might rejoice in their wisdom and treasure the gift of their lives; We pray to the Lord:

That the priests of our diocese, through their promises of celibacy and obedience to our bishop, and their lives of service in our parishes, may present a strong model and faithful example of the priesthood to men today...

That the members of our faith community being willing to carry the cross of the hungry, the homeless, the unemployed, and the immigrants...

April 8 EASTER SUNDAY

That through our love and care, all who are forgotten or lost, might know the joy of the Risen Lord; We pray to the Lord:

That by our service we would fulfill the Church's mission of sharing the Good News in word and deed...

That our Easter Joy gives us the courage and enthusiasm to share the Good News in word and deed...

April 15 2nd SUNDAY OF EASTER

For all who suffer from the memories of abortion: that the mercy of God might bring peace to all who have turned from their sins; We pray to the Lord:

That the different gifts each of us have received from God may serve to build up the Kingdom as we care for the needs of society...

That national and world leaders work together to establish the peace of Christ, especially in Iraq and Afghanistan...

April 22 3rd SUNDAY OF EASTER

For young parents tempted to abort their children: that God might teach us how to love and care for them; We pray to the Lord:

That all Christians will be faithful and fruitful in their witness of the Good News in the world...

That we would recognize Jesus in the poor and be willing to share our blessings with them...

April 29 4th SUNDAY OF EASTER

For the safety of every little child: that love of every mother for her unborn child may grow and deepen each day; We pray to the Lord:

That the common relationship all baptized Christians share as sons and daughters of God may be a source of support to one another in the daily living of the Gospel...

That we open our hearts to hear the voice of the Good Shepherd guiding us in the way discipleship...