

FOR THE INFORMATION OF PARISHIONERS
LENT 2026

109. *The Lenten season has a twofold character:*

- 1) *it recalls baptism or prepares for it;*
- 2) *it stresses a penitential spirit.*

By these means especially, Lent readies the faithful for celebrating the paschal mystery after a period of closer attention to the Word of God, and more ardent prayer. In the liturgy itself and in the liturgy-centred instructions, these baptismal and penitential themes should be more pronounced. Hence:

- a) *Wider use is to be made of baptismal features proper to the Lenten liturgy.*
- b) *The same approach holds for the penitential elements.*

110. *During Lent, penance should not be only internal and individual but also external and social.*

In any event, let the paschal fast be kept sacred. It should be observed everywhere on Good Friday and, where possible prolonged throughout Holy Saturday, so that the joys of the Sunday of the resurrection may be visited on uplifted and responsive spirits.

Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, Vatican II

Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of Fasting and Abstinence from meat.

On all other Fridays, except solemnities, the law of the common practice of penance is fulfilled by performing any one of the following:

- (a) **Prayer** - for example, Mass attendance; family prayer; a visit to a church or chapel; reading the Bible; making the Stations of the Cross; praying the Rosary; or in other ways.
- (b) **Self-Denial** - for example, not eating meat; not eating sweets or dessert; giving up entertainment to spend time with the family; limiting food and drink so as to give to the poor of one's own country or elsewhere; or in other ways. Project Compassion is a major means of expressing our self-denial in Australia.
- (c) **Helping Others** - for example, special attention to someone who is poor, sick, elderly, lonely or overburdened; or in other ways.

- All who have completed their eighteenth year and have not yet begun their sixtieth year are bound to fast. All who have completed their fourteenth year are bound to abstain (Canon 1252).

- The Season of Lent is a time of penance. During this season the faithful are exhorted to devote themselves in a special manner to prayer, to engage in works of piety and charity, and to deny themselves.

- Each of the faithful is obliged to receive Holy Communion at least once a year. This precept must be fulfilled between Ash Wednesday 18 February and Trinity Sunday, 31 May 2026 unless for a good reason it is fulfilled at another time during the year.

- The wonderful gift of the Lord's merciful love is offered in a special way in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Lent is a most appropriate time to receive this Sacrament.

All the faithful who have reached the age of discretion are bound faithfully to confess their grave sins at least once a year.

HOLY WEEK - The 2026 Ordo contains instructions for the Rites of Holy Week.

FUNERALS – On Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday all Masses for the Dead, including Funeral Masses, **are forbidden**. Funerals on these days are celebrated with the Liturgy of the Word and without the Eucharistic Sacrifice.

WEDDINGS - Weddings should be discouraged during the Easter Triduum: Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday. Should a couple be particularly insistent on a wedding for one of these days, then please indicate that no decorations (including flowers), no music nor Nuptial Mass will be permitted.

Very Reverend Anthony Kerin JCL VG
VICAR GENERAL