2014 Lenten Regulations & Admonitions for the Diocese of Jefferson City

As another Lenten journey of conversion begins on Ash Wednesday, March 5, 2014, and ends with the Mass of the Lord’s Supper on Holy Thursday, April 17, 2014, Holy Mother Church calls all Catholics to a deeper spirit of penance, fasting, almsgiving and prayer, “which express conversion in relation to oneself, to God, and to others” (Catechism of the Catholic Church # 1434 & 1969).

In order to foster a greater spirit of penance, of reparation for sin, to encourage self-denial, and so guide us more closely in the footsteps of Christ, Holy Mother Church reminds us of the following obligations of fast and abstinence during Lent and also admonishes us all to deeper prayer and worship.

1. Abstinence: all persons who have already celebrated their 14th birthday are bound to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday, all Fridays of Lent and Good Friday.

2. Fasting: everyone, from the celebration of their 18th birthday to their 59th birthday, is bound to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Fasting is generally understood to mean eating only one full meal each day. Two other partial meals, sufficient to maintain strength, may be taken; but together they should not equal another full meal. Eating between meals is not permitted, but liquids are allowed.

Voluntary fasting on other weekdays of Lent is highly recommended. But please note: when health or ability to work would be seriously affected, neither the law of fasting nor the law of abstinence obliges. These are minimal penitential practices and should not be lightly excused. If in doubt, please consult your parish priest.

Other recommended forms of fasting, as regards alcoholic drink, needless television, video games, internet use, and social entertainment, are of true spiritual value and strongly encouraged.

3. Almsgiving: The act of giving to the poor, in the most ancient tradition of the Church, is an expression of penance, a witness of fraternal charity, and an expression of Lenten conversion. Therefore, all Catholics are encouraged to support generously the charitable works of the whole Church: through regular stewardship to their parish, support of charities, and their generous response to the diocesan Catholic Stewardship Appeal.

4. Prayer: In order to deepen one’s love for Christ, Catholics are urged all the more to participate in the Sacramental life of the Church during Lent by attending daily Mass and frequent the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation.
**Baptism:** Infants are properly baptized on Easter Sunday or during the Easter Season.

Any persons who were baptized Catholic but never catechized and who now wish to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, may be confirmed by a priest at the Easter Vigil (or any other time) only if written delegation is given to the priest by the Diocesan Bishop. The priest is asked to contact Bishop Gaydos in writing well in advance of the Easter Vigil outlining the candidate’s full name; the date and church of baptism, and explain the reason for this request. Bishop Gaydos will gladly consider each pastoral request on an individual basis.

Lent is also a privileged time for celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation, including its communal celebration. At communal celebrations of Reconciliation, however, general absolution is not permitted by the Law of the Church.

Regarding the Sacrament Of Penance For Baptized Adults Seeking Full Communion With The Church, any previously baptized adult to be received into the full communion of the Catholic Church should appropriately celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation before the Easter Vigil.

Mass may not be celebrated on Holy Saturday, April 19, 2014, except the Easter Vigil, which may be celebrated only after nightfall.

**Easter Duty:** All Catholics who have been initiated into the Holy Eucharist are bound to receive Holy Communion worthily at least once during the Easter Season. Of course Catholics are encouraged to receive Communion as often as possible, not only during Eastertide. However, anyone conscious of a grave sin must receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation before approaching to receive Holy Communion.

**Covering of Crosses and Images in Lent:** From a rubric of the Roman Missal for the Fifth Sunday of Lent: “In the Dioceses of the United States, the practice of covering crosses and images throughout the church from this Sunday of Lent may be observed. Crosses remain covered until the end of the Celebration of the Lord’s Passion on Good Friday, but images remain covered until the beginning of the Easter Vigil.”