

Season of Lent

General Texts

The annual observance of Lent is the special season for the ascent to the holy mountain of Easter.

Through its twofold themes of repentance and baptism, the season of Lent disposes both the catechumens and the faithful to celebrate the paschal mystery. Catechumens are led to the sacraments of initiation by means of the rite of election, the scrutinies, and catechesis. The faithful, listening more intently to the word of God and devoting themselves to prayer, are prepared through a spirit of repentance to renew their baptismal promises.

Ceremonial of Bishops 249

Lent runs from Ash Wednesday until the Mass of the Lord's Supper exclusive.

- The *Alleluia* is not used from the beginning of Lent until the Easter Vigil.

On Ash Wednesday, which is the beginning of Lent and is observed everywhere as a fast day, ashes are distributed.

The Sundays of this season are called the First, Second, Third, Fourth, and Fifth Sundays of Lent. The Sixth Sunday, which marks the beginning of Holy Week, is called Passion Sunday (Palm Sunday).

Holy Week has as its purpose the remembrance of Christ's passion, beginning with his Messianic entrance into Jerusalem.

- At the Chrism Mass on Holy Thursday morning the bishop, concelebrating Mass with his presbyterate, blesses the oils and consecrates the chrism.

General Norms for the Liturgical Year and Calendar 27–31

Baptism

The whole initiation must bear a markedly paschal character, since the initiation of Christians is the first sacramental sharing in Christ's dying and, rising and since, in addition, the period of purification and enlightenment ordinarily coincides with Lent and the period of postbaptismal catechesis or mystagogy with the Easter season. All the resources of Lent should be brought to bear as a more intense preparation of the elect and the Easter Vigil should be regarded as the proper time for the sacraments of initiation. Because of pastoral needs, however, the sacraments of initiation may be celebrated at other times.

During Lent, the period of purification and enlightenment, the faithful should take care to participate in the rites of the scrutinies and presentations and give the elect the example of their own renewal in the spirit of penance, faith, and charity. At the Easter Vigil, they should attach great importance to renewing their own baptismal promises.

The rite of election or enrolment of names should as a rule be celebrated on the First Sunday of Lent.

The period of purification and enlightenment, which the rite of election begins, customarily coincides with Lent. In the liturgy and liturgical catechesis of Lent the reminder of baptism already received or the preparation for its reception, as well as the theme of repentance, renew the entire community along with those being prepared to celebrate the paschal mystery, in which each of the elect will share through the sacraments of initiation.¹ For both the elect and the local community, therefore, the Lenten season is a time for spiritual recollection in preparation for the celebration of the paschal mystery.

This is a period of more intense spiritual preparation, consisting more in interior reflection than in catechetical instruction, and is intended to purify the minds and hearts of the elect as they search their own consciences and do penance. This period is intended as well to enlighten the minds and hearts of the elect with a deeper knowledge of Christ the Saviour. The celebration of certain rites, particularly the scrutinies (see nos. 128–133) and the presentations (see nos. 134–136), brings about this process of purification and enlightenment and extends it over the course of the entire Lenten season.

Because they are asking for the three sacraments of initiation, the elect must have the intention of achieving an intimate knowledge of Christ and his Church, and they are expected particularly to progress in genuine self-knowledge through serious examination of their lives and true repentance.

In order to inspire in the elect a desire for purification and redemption by Christ, three scrutinies are celebrated. By this means, first of all, the elect are instructed gradually about the mystery of sin, from which the whole world and every person longs to be delivered and thus saved from its present and future consequences. Second, their spirit is filled with Christ the Redeemer, who is the living water (gospel of the Samaritan woman in the first scrutiny), the light of the world (gospel of the man born blind in the second scrutiny), the resurrection and the life (gospel of Lazarus in the third scrutiny). From the first to the final scrutiny the elect should progress in their perception of sin and their desire for salvation.

By ancient usage, the presentations, since they take place after the scrutinies, are part of the same period of purification and enlightenment. They are celebrated during the week. The presentation of the Creed to the catechumens takes place during the week after the first scrutiny; the presentation of the Lord's Prayer during the week after the third scrutiny. For pastoral reasons, however, to enrich the liturgy in the period of the catechumenate, each presentation may be transferred and celebrated during the period of the catechumenate as a kind of 'rite of passage'.

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults
cf. 8, 9, 19, 21, 125–126, 129–130

Penance

The season of Lent is most appropriate for celebrating the sacrament of penance. Already on Ash Wednesday the people of God has heard the solemn invitation 'Turn away from sin and believe the good news.' It is therefore fitting to have several penitential celebrations during Lent, so that all the faithful may have an opportunity to be reconciled with God and their neighbour and so be able to celebrate the paschal mystery in the Easter triduum with renewed hearts.

Rite of Penance 13

Lent precedes and prepares for Easter. It is a time to hear the Word of God, to convert, to prepare for and remember Baptism, to be reconciled with God and one's neighbour, and of more frequent recourse to the 'arms of Christian penance': prayer, fasting and good works (cf. Mt 6, 1-6. 16-18).

Popular piety does not easily perceive the mystical aspect of Lent and does not emphasize any of its great themes or values, such a relationship between "the sacrament of forty days" and "the sacraments of Christian initiation", nor the mystery of the "exodus" which is always present in the lenten journey. Popular piety concentrates on the mysteries of Christ's humanity, and during Lent the faithful pay close attention to the Passion and Death of Our Lord.

In the Roman Rite, the beginning of the forty days of penance is marked with the austere symbol of ashes which are used in the Liturgy of Ash Wednesday. The use of ashes is a survival from an ancient rite according to which converted sinners submitted themselves to canonical penance. The act of putting on ashes symbolizes fragility and mortality, and the need to be redeemed by the mercy of God. Far from being a merely external act, the Church has retained the use of ashes to symbolize that attitude of internal penance to which all the baptized are called during Lent. The faithful who come to receive ashes should be assisted in perceiving the implicit internal significance of this act, which disposes them towards conversion and renewed Easter commitment.

Notwithstanding the secularisation of contemporary society, the Christian faithful, during Lent, are clearly conscious of the need to turn the mind towards those realities which really count, which require Gospel commitment and integrity of life which, through self denial of those things which are superfluous, are translated into good works and solidarity with the poor and needy.

Those of the faithful who infrequently attend the sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist should be aware of the long ecclesial tradition associating the precept of confessing grave sins and receive Holy Communion at least once during the lenten season, or preferably during Eastertide.

Directory on Popular Piety 124 -125

It is fitting that the Lenten season should be concluded, both for the individual Christian as well as for the whole Christian community, with a penitential celebration, so that they may be helped to prepare to celebrate more fully the paschal mystery.

These celebrations, however, should take place before the Easter Triduum and should not immediately precede the evening Mass of the Lord's Supper.

Psachale Solemnitatis 37

Scripture

It is on this harmony of the two Testaments that the Paschal catechesis of the Lord is built, and then, that of the Apostles and the Fathers of the Church. This catechesis unveils what lay hidden under the letter of the Old Testament: the mystery of Christ. It is called "typological" because it reveals the newness of Christ on the basis of the "figures" (types) which announce him in the deeds, words, and symbols of the first covenant. By this re-reading in the Spirit of Truth, starting from Christ, the figures are unveiled. Thus the flood and Noah's ark prefigured salvation by Baptism, as did the cloud and the crossing of the Red Sea. Water from the rock was the figure of the spiritual gifts of Christ, and manna in the desert prefigured the Eucharist, "the true bread from heaven."

For this reason the Church, especially during Advent and Lent and above all at the Easter Vigil, re-reads and re-lives the great events of salvation history in the "today" of her liturgy. But this also demands that catechesis help the faithful to open themselves to this spiritual understanding of the economy of salvation as the Church's liturgy reveals it and enables us to live it.

Catechism of the Catholic Church 1094-5

Sunday Readings

see page 5

Weekday Readings

The readings from the gospels and the Old Testament were selected because they are related to each other. They treat various themes of the Lenten catechesis that are suited to the spiritual significance of this season. Beginning with Monday of the fourth week of Lent, there is a semi continuous reading of the Gospel of John, made up of texts that correspond more closely to the themes proper to Lent.

Because the readings about the Samaritan woman, the man born blind, and the raising of Lazarus are now assigned to Sundays, but only for Year A (in Year Band Year C they are optional), provision has been made for their use on weekdays. Thus at the beginning of the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Weeks of Lent optional Masses with these texts for the gospel have been inserted and may be used in place of the readings of the day on any weekday of the respective week.

In the first half of Holy Week the readings are about the mystery of Christ's passion. For the chrism Mass the readings bring out both Christ's messianic mission and its continuation in the Church by means of the sacraments.

Lectionary for Mass Introduction 98

Cycle of Prayer

Candidates for the Sacraments

especially on the Sundays of Lent

The Needy and Hungry of the World

especially on Lent Fast Day (Friday after 1st Sunday of Lent)

Women's World Day of Prayer

(1st Friday in March)

Penitents and Wanderers

Season of Lent *Pastoral Notes*

Lent is the 'joyful season' in which we "prepare to celebrate the paschal mystery with mind and heart renewed." In Lent, the community of faith is blessed with a spirit of loving reverence for God and of willing service to neighbour. The season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and concludes before the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday.

Baptismal and Penitential Themes

The liturgy of Lent is marked by two closely related themes, the baptismal and the penitential. It is a time of purification and enlightenment for the Elect, those preparing to receive the Sacraments of Initiation at the Easter Vigil. Their preparation is supported by the ministry of the local Church, the whole community of the faithful – in prayer, catechesis and personal witness. This support is particularly focused in the celebration of the Scrutinies on the 3rd, 4th and 5th Sundays of Lent. At the same time the community of the faithful recall their own baptism and prepare for its renewal. Both the elect and the local community join together in a spirit of repentance and conversion of heart, making Lent a time of spiritual recollection for the whole Church as it prepares for the celebration of Easter.

Therefore Lent is a time for more intense prayer and reflection and for particular attention to the word of God. This takes place above all in the Sunday Eucharist.

Lenten penance is not "only inward and individual, but also outward and social." Prayer, fasting, almsgiving, and other works of charity are the traditional ways of deepening conversion to Christ.

The First Sunday of Lent is the usual day for the celebration of the Rite of Election. During this rite, the Bishop of the Diocese asks the catechists and sponsors of those preparing for sacramental initiation whether the catechumens (and those others seeking to complete sacramental initiation, – for example those baptised in other Christian communities. On receiving the assurance that they are the Bishop formally elects them and gives permission for them to proceed with their final preparation for the sacraments of initiation. The Church's acceptance of the candidates is founded on their election by God, in whose name the Church acts. As a pledge of fidelity, the Elect inscribe their names in the book containing the list of those who have been chosen for initiation.

- Sponsors and godparents, as well as catechists, priests, and deacons have particular responsibilities toward the elect. They show the elect how to practice the gospel in personal and social life, sustain them in moments of hesitancy or anxiety, guide them, and bear witness on their behalf before the whole community.
- The presence of the Elect in the midst of the community provides a powerful reminder of the baptismal character of the season, and of the encouragement to all members of the Church to prepare for the renewal of their baptismal promises at the Masses of the Easter Vigil and Easter Day. The celebration of the scrutinies during the parish Sunday Eucharist not only heals and strengthens the elect, but helps all the faithful to deepen their own conversion. The scrutinies reinforce the significance of the gracious dismissal of catechumens from the Eucharistic assembly throughout the year.
- Because Lent is a time of preparation for the Easter sacraments, parents and godparents of infants to be baptised are also to receive appropriate formation so that the infants can be baptised on Easter Sunday, either at the Vigil or at one of the Masses during the day, or on one of the Sundays of Easter.
- As the season of Lent leads the elect to the sacraments of initiation, so it leads the faithful to celebrate the sacrament of penance, which restores them from sin to baptismal innocence and reconciles them to God and the Church. Opportunities for communal (Form 2) and individual (Form 1) forms of reconciliation should be provided, especially toward the end of Lent.
- Non-Sacramental Penitential rites can be worthily used throughout the Season to help the community prepare for the celebration of the Sacrament of Penance.
- A homily is recommended at weekday Masses during Lent; intercession for the elect and for sinners is especially appropriate in this season; and the Eucharistic Prayers for Masses of Reconciliation may be especially suitable. It is permitted to use these Eucharistic Prayers with other prefaces, such as those of the season of Lent, which highlight the themes of conversion and repentance.

Ash Wednesday

<p><i>Cf. Wis 11:24–25, 27</i></p> <p><i>You are merciful to all, O Lord, and despise nothing that you have made. You overlook people's sins, to bring them to repentance, and you spare them, for you are the Lord our God.</i></p> <p><i>Ps 55 (the psalm may be used for verses)</i></p>			
Entrance Antiphon	Responsorial Psalm		Gospel
Liturgy of the Word	First Reading	Second Reading	Gospel Acclamation
<p>Joel 2: 12–18 <i>Let your hearts be broken, not your garments torn.</i></p>	<p>Ps 50: 3–6, 12–14, 17 r. 3 <i>Have mercy on us, O Lord, for we have sinned.</i></p>	<p>2 Cor 5: 20–6: 2 <i>Be reconciled to God... now is the favourable time.</i></p>	<p>Ps 50: 12, 14 <i>A pure heart create for me, O God, and give me again the joy of your help.</i></p> <p>Ps 94: 8 <i>Harden not your hearts today, but listen to the voice of the Lord.</i></p>
<p><i>He who ponders the law of the Lord day and night will yield fruit in due season.</i></p> <p>Ps 1</p>			
Communion Antiphon			

Antiphons

Entrance		Communion	
Sunday 1	<p>Ps 90: 15–16 <i>When he calls on me, I will answer him; I will deliver him and give him glory, I will grant him length of days.</i></p>	<p>Matt 4: 4 <i>One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God</i></p> <p>Ps 90: 4 <i>The Lord will conceal you with his pinions, and under his wings you will trust.</i></p>	<p>Ps 118: 8–15 or Ps 118: 105–112 Ps 120 or Ps 16</p>
Sunday 2	<p>Ps 24: 6, 3, 22 <i>Remember your compassion, O Lord, and your merciful love, for they are from of old. Let not our enemies exult over us. Redeem us, O God of Israel, from all our distress.</i></p> <p>Ps 26: 8–9 <i>Of you my heart has spoken: Seek his face. It is your face, O Lord, that I seek; hide not your face from me.</i></p>	<p>Matt 17: 5 <i>This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.</i></p>	<p>Ps 2: 7–12 or Ps 85: 6–19 or Ps 96 1–6, 11–12</p>
Sunday 3	<p>Ps 24: 1–2, 15–22 or Ps 56 <i>My eyes are always on the Lord, for he rescues my feet from the snare. Turn to me and have mercy on me, for I am alone and poor.</i></p> <p>Ezek 36: 23–26 <i>When I prove my holiness among you, I will gather you from all the foreign lands; and I will pour clean water upon you and cleanse you from all your impurities, and I will give you a new spirit, says the Lord.</i></p>	<p>Year A — John 4: 13–14 <i>For anyone who drinks it, says the Lord, the water I shall give will become in him a spring welling up to eternal life.</i></p> <p>Years B & C — Ps 83: 4–5 <i>The sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for her young: by your altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God. Blessed are they who dwell in your house, for ever singing your praise.</i></p>	<p>Isaiah 12: 1–6 or Isaiah 55: 1–5 or Ps 22 Ps 83</p>
Sunday 4	<p>Cf. Isa 66: 10–11 <i>Rejoice, Jerusalem, and all who love her. Be joyful, all who were in mourning; exult and be satisfied at her consoling breast.</i></p>	<p>Year A — cf. John 9: 11 <i>The Lord anointed my eyes: I went, I washed, I saw and I believed in God.</i></p> <p>Year B — Ps 121: 3–4 <i>Jerusalem is built as a city bonded as one together. It is there that the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, to praise the name of the Lord.</i></p> <p>Year C — Luke 15: 32 <i>You must rejoice, my son, for your brother was dead and has come to life; he was lost and is found.</i></p>	<p>Ps 26 or Ps 50 Ps 121 Ps 31</p>
Sunday 5	<p>Ps 42: 1–2 <i>Give me justice, O God, and plead my cause against a nation that is faithless. From the deceitful and cunning rescue me, for you, O God, are my strength.</i></p>	<p>Year A — John 11: 26 <i>Everyone who lives and believes in me will not die for ever, says the Lord.</i></p> <p>Year B — John 12: 24–25 <i>Amen, Amen I say to you: Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains a single grain. But if it dies, it bears much fruit.</i></p> <p>Year C — John 8: 10–11 <i>Has no one condemned you, woman? No one, Lord. Neither shall I condemn you. From now on, sin no more.</i></p>	<p>Ps 115 Ps 24: 1–14 or Ps 125 Ps 31</p>

Season of Lent

Sundays of Lent

The gospel readings are arranged as follows:

The first and second Sundays retain the accounts of the Lord's temptations and transfiguration, with readings, however, from all three Synoptics.

On the next three Sundays, the gospels about the Samaritan woman, the man born blind, and the raising of Lazarus have been restored in Year A. Because these gospels are of major importance in regard to Christian initiation, they may also be read in Year B and Year C, especially in places where there are catechumens.

Other texts, however, are provided for Year B and Year C: for Year B, a text from John about Christ's coming glorification through his cross and resurrection and for Year C, a text from Luke about conversion.

On Passion Sunday (Palm Sunday) the texts for the procession are selections from the Synoptic Gospels concerning the Lord's triumphal entrance into Jerusalem. For the Mass the reading is the account of the Lord's passion.

The Old Testament readings are about the history of salvation, which is one of the themes proper to the catechesis of Lent. The series of texts for each Year presents the main elements of salvation history from its beginning until the promise of the New Covenant.

The readings from the letters of the apostles have been selected to fit the gospel and the Old Testament readings and, to the extent possible, to provide a connection between them.

Lectionary for Mass Introduction: 97

Year A

	First Reading	Responsorial Psalm	Second Reading	Gospel Acclamation	Gospel
Sunday 1	Gen 2:7-9; 3:1-7 <i>The creation and sin of our first parents.</i>	Ps 50:3-6, 12-14 17 r. 3 <i>Have mercy on us, O Lord, for we have sinned.</i>	Rom 5:12-19 or 5:12, 17-19 <i>However great the number of sins committed, grace was even greater.</i>	Matt 4:4 <i>Man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.</i>	Matt 4:1-11 <i>Jesus fasts for forty days and is tempted.</i>
Sunday 2	Gen 12:1-4 <i>The call of Abraham, father of the People of God</i>	Ps 32:4-5, 18-20. 22 r. 22 <i>May your love be upon us, O Lord, as we place all our hope in you.</i>	2 Tim 1:8-10 <i>God calls and enlightens us.</i>	Matt 17:5 <i>From the bright cloud the Father's voice was heard: 'This is my Son, the Beloved. Listen to him.'</i>	Matt 17:1-9 <i>His face shone like the sun.</i>
Sunday 3	Exod 17:3-7 <i>Give us water to drink.</i>	Ps 94:1-2, 6-9 <i>O that today you would listen to his voice: 'Harden not your hearts.'</i>	Rom 5:1-2, 5-8 <i>The love of God has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit which has been given us.</i>	John 4:42. 15 <i>Lord, you are really the saviour of the world; give me living water, so that I may never get thirsty.</i>	John 4:5-42 (or 4:5-15, 19-26, 39-42) <i>A spring of water welling up to eternal life.</i>
Sunday 4	1 Sam 16:1, 6-7, 10-13 <i>David is anointed king of Israel.</i>	Ps 22 r. 1 <i>The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.</i>	Eph 5:8-14 <i>Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you,</i>	John 8: 12 <i>I am the light of the world, says the Lord; anyone who believes in me will have the light of life.</i>	John 9:1-41 (or 9:1, 6-9, 13-17, 34-38) <i>He went off and washed himself, and came away with his sight restored.</i>
Sunday 5	Ezek 37:12-14 <i>I shall put my spirit in you, and you will live.</i>	Ps 129 r. 7 <i>With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.</i>	Rom 8:8-11 <i>The Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you.</i>	John 11: 25-26 <i>I am the resurrection and the life, says the Lord, whoever believes in me will never die.</i>	John 11:1-45 (or 11:3-7, 17, 20-27, 33-45) <i>I am the resurrection and the life.</i>

Year B

	First Reading	Responsorial Psalm	Second Reading	Gospel Acclamation	Gospel
Sunday 1	Gen 9:8-15 God's covenant with Noah after he had saved him from the waters of the flood.	Ps 24:4-9 r. 10 Your ways, Lord, are faithfulness and love for those who keep your covenant.	1 Pet 3:18-22 That water is a type of baptism which saves you now.	Matt 4:4 Man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.	Mark 1:12-15 Jesus was tempted by Satan, and the angels looked after him.
Sunday 2	Gen 22:1-2, 9-13, 15-18 The sacrifice of Abraham, our father in faith.	Ps 115:10, 15-19 r. Ps 114:9 I will walk in the presence of the Lord in the land of the living.	Rom 8:31-34 God did not spare his own Son.	Matt 17:5 From the bright cloud the Father's voice was heard: 'This is my Son, the Beloved. Listen to him.'	Mark 9:2-10 This is my Son, the Beloved.
Sunday 3	Exod 20:1-17 (or 20:1-3, 7-8, 12-17) The Law was given through Moses.	Ps 18:8-11 r. Jn 6:68 You, Lord, have the message of eternal life.	1 Cor 1:22-25 Here we are preaching a crucified Christ, an obstacle to men, but to those who are called, the wisdom of God.	John 11:25-26 I am the resurrection and the life, says the Lord, whoever believes in me will never die. John 3:16 God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son; everyone who believes in him has eternal life.	John 2:13-25 Destroy this sanctuary, and in three days I will raise it up.
Sunday 4	2Chr 36:14-16, 19-23 The wrath and mercy of God are revealed in the exile and in the release of his people.	Ps 136 r. 6 O let my tongue cleave to my mouth if I remember you not!	Eph 2:4-10 You who were dead through your sins have been saved through grace.	John 3:16 God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son; everyone who believes in him has eternal life.	John 3:14-21 God sent his Son so that through him the world might be saved.
Sunday 5	Jer 31:31-34 I will make a new covenant and never call their sin to mind.	Ps 50:3-4, 12-15 r. 12 A pure heart create for me, O God.	Heb 5:7-9 He learnt to obey and became for all the source of eternal salvation.	John 12:26 If a man serves me, says the Lord, he must follow me; wherever I am my servant will be there too.	John 12:20-33 If a grain of wheat falls on the ground and dies, it yields a rich harvest.

Year C

	First Reading	Responsorial Psalm	Second Reading	Gospel Acclamation	Gospel
Sunday 1	Deut 26:4-10 The creed of the chosen people.	Ps 90:1-2, 10-15 r. 15 Be with me, O Lord, in my distress.	Rom 10:8-13 The creed of the Christian.	Matt 4:4 Man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.	Luke 4:1-13 Jesus was led by the Spirit through the wilderness and was tempted there.
Sunday 2	Gen 15:5-12, 17-18 God enters into a Covenant with Abraham, the man of faith.	Ps 26:1, 7-9, 13-14 r. 1 The Lord is my light and my help.	Phil 3:17-4:1 (or 3:20-4:1) Christ will transfigure our bodies into copies of his glorious body.	Matt 17:5 From the bright cloud the Father's voice was heard: 'This is my Son, the Beloved. Listen to him.'	Luke 9:28-36 As Jesus prayed, the aspect of his face was changed.

	First Reading	Responsorial Psalm	Second Reading	Gospel Acclamation	Gospel
Sunday 3	Exod 3:1-8, 13-15 <i>I Am has sent me to you.</i>	Ps 102:1-4, 6-8, 11 r. 8 <i>The Lord is compassion and love.</i>	1 Cor 10:1-6, 10-12 <i>The life of the people under Moses in the desert was written down to be a lesson for us.</i>	Matt 4: 17 <i>Repent, says the Lord, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand.</i>	Luke 13:1-9 <i>Unless you repent you will all perish as they did.</i>
Sunday 4	Josh 5:9-12 <i>The People of God keep the Passover on their entry into the promised land.</i>	Ps 33:2-7 r. 9 <i>Taste and see that the Lord is good.</i>	2 Cor 5:17-21 <i>God reconciled us to himself through Christ.</i>	Luke 15: 18 <i>I will leave this place and go to my father and say: 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you.'</i>	Luke 15:1-3, 11-32 <i>Your brother here was dead and has come to life.</i>
Sunday 5	Isa 43:16-21 <i>See, I am doing a new deed, and I will give my chosen people drink.</i>	Ps 125 r.3 <i>What marvels the Lord worked for us! Indeed we were glad.</i>	Phil 3:8-14 <i>Reproducing the pattern of his death, I have accepted the loss of everything for Christ.</i>	Amos 5:14 <i>Seek good and not evil so that you may live, and that the Lord God of hosts may really be with you.</i> Joel 2: 12-13 <i>Now, now—it is the Lord who speaks—come back to me with all your heart, for I am all tenderness and compassion.</i>	John 8:1-11 <i>If there is one among you who has not sinned, let him be the first to throw a stone at her.</i>

Sunday 6 — Passion (Palm) Sunday

Entrance Antiphon	<small>Matt 21:9,27</small> <i>Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, the King of Israel. Hosanna in the highest.</i>				
Gospel	Year A Matt 21:1-11 <i>Blessing on him who comes in the name of the Lord!</i>	Year B Mark 11:1-10 <i>Blessing on him who comes in the name of the Lord!</i> or John 12:12-16 <i>Blessing on him who comes in the name of the Lord!</i>	Year C Luke 19:28-40 <i>Blessing on him who comes in the name of the Lord!</i>		
Liturgy of the Word	First Reading Isa 50:4-7 <i>I did not cover my face against insult—I know I shall not be shamed.</i>	Responsorial Psalm Ps 21:8-9, 17-20, 23-24 r. 2 <i>My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?</i>	Second Reading Phil 2:6-11 <i>He humbled himself, but God raised him high</i>	Gospel Acclamation Phil 2:8-9 <i>Christ was humbler yet, even to accepting death, death on a cross. But God raised him high and gave him the name which is above all names.</i>	Gospel A: Matt 26:14-27:66 (27:11-54) B: Mark 14:1-15:47 (15:1-39) C: Luke 22:14-23:56 (23:1-49) <i>The passion of our Lord Jesus Christ</i>
Communion Antiphon	<small>Matt 26:42</small> <i>Father, if this chalice cannot pass without my drinking it, your will be done.</i> <small>Psalm 115 or Psalm 39:7-12 or Psalm 41</small>				

- Music should reflect the more sober mood of Lent and thus provide a contrast with the festive music of the Easter season which follows. The Gloria is not used in the Introductory Rites at Mass and the Alleluia is replaced by other gospel acclamations.
- The use of violet or purple vestments and the simplicity of decoration in the church reflect the penitential nature of this season.
- Any decoration of the Church or its altar during the season of Lent should be modest.
- The Liturgy of the Hours, and devotions such as the Stations of the Cross can play a part in stirring up a spirit of repentance during the season of Lent.

The Role of the Bishop

The celebration of the Easter mystery is the high point of the Church's year and is accomplished with the utmost solemnity. The intimately related seasons of Lent and Easter are therefore an eminently suitable time for the bishop as chief shepherd of the diocese to gather the flock of God's people for special liturgical celebrations. Thus it becomes clear that initiation, reconciliation, and healing are essentially ecclesial acts.

- As the focal point of the church's concern for the catechumens, admission to election belongs to the bishop. The presiding celebrant for the rite is the bishop himself or one who acts as his delegate.
- Following the ancient custom of the Church of Rome, the bishop is strongly encouraged to gather the faithful on Sundays or on other days during Lent, in the principal parish churches or places of pilgrimage in the diocese, to celebrate the liturgy with them.
- Toward the end of Lent, the bishop gathers the clergy and the people of the diocese to bless the oils for the Church's ministry to catechumens and the sick and to consecrate the chrism used in the sacraments of Easter initiation and holy orders. Although priests may bless oil before anointing catechumens in the initiation of adults and, in case of necessity, before anointing the sick, use of the oil blessed by the bishop expresses more strongly the ministry of the whole local Church. The bishop may take this opportunity to instruct the priests about the reverent use and safe custody of the holy oils.

The Days of Lent

The season of Lent leads to the Easter Triduum, which begins with the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday and ends with Evening Prayer on Easter Sunday. The final days of Lent together with the Easter Triduum make up Holy Week. Beginning on Passion Sunday (Palm Sunday) with Jesus' messianic entry into Jerusalem, Holy Week recalls the passion and resurrection of Christ.

- The Sundays of Lent, Ash Wednesday, and the weekdays of Holy Week take precedence over all feasts and solemnities; only feasts and solemnities take precedence over the weekdays of Lent.

Ash Wednesday, a day of fast and abstinence, sets the tone for Lent through the call to turn away from sin and to be faithful to the gospel.

The Sundays of Lent each have a special character drawn from the gospel of the day. On the first Sunday, the Church remembers how the Lord is led into the wilderness for forty days where he is tempted, and on the second, how Christ is transfigured on the mountain. On the next three Sundays, three great Johannine passages of major importance for Christian initiation are read: the Samaritan woman at the well, the man born blind, and the raising of Lazarus. While alternatives are given for years B and C, these gospels from year A may always be used with the other readings from year A, especially where the elect are preparing for Easter. Finally, on the last Sunday of Lent, the account of the Lord's passion is proclaimed from one of the synoptic gospels.

- The first readings for the Sundays of Lent present the main elements of the history of salvation from its beginning until the promise of the new covenant. The readings from the letters of the apostles have been selected to complement the gospel and the first readings and, as far as possible, to make a connection between them.
- The opening prayers and prefaces for the Sundays of Lent serve to reinforce the power of the readings for these Sundays. The Scrutinies, which are celebrated on the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Sundays of Lent, draw from and build upon the gospel reading in particular for each of these Sundays.

Other material

- *Paschale Solemnitatis* — On preparing and celebrating the Easter Feasts: 6–37
 - www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Calendar/Documents/LentPF.html
- Rite of Penance: Introduction 36–37, *Penitential Celebrations; Appendix 2 Sample Penitential Services — Penitential Celebrations during Lent*
 - Resources for Lenten Celebrations: www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Resources/Penance/LentRec.html
- Cycle of Prayer
 - www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Calendar/Cycle/LentCP.html
- General Instruction of the Roman Missal: *Use of flowers — 305; use of musical instruments — 313; choice of texts — 353–355*
- Celebrating the Mass: *choice of texts — 133*
- Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy
 - www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Calendar/Documents/LentPP.html

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