

OREMUS

Journal of the Office of Worship
Roman Catholic Diocese of Oakland



The gifts of this season

In this issue:

- ◆ Lenten Information
- ◆ Understanding the RCIA
- ◆ Note on the Liturgy
- ◆ The Great Three Days: The Triduum
- ◆ Upcoming Events & Info

We usually think of Christmas as the season of the year that full of gifts. But not so much when we think about Lent. However, this year Pope Francis' message for Lent gives us a fresh approach: Lent also brings gifts for us. We can easily think "yes, the gift of Easter, at the end...when the fasting is over" but the Pope's point is in fact more profound: Lent gives us the opportunity to reflect on gifts we may not be too aware of: our conversion journey, which is actually a gift, even if we are not used to think about it in that way, as well the Word of God and our daily encounters with others.

That is why the Pope message for this season, entitled "*The Word is a gift. Other persons are a gift*", enables us to reflect on the impact the Word of God can have in our hearts if we open them, as well as the profound meaning of our human relationships, that many of us overlook so easily in this hectic society we live in. We can see how both are actually essential components of the conversion process our lives continually need and how they are related to the Lenten practices we embrace year after year: pray, fast and almsgiving.

"Dear friends, Lent is the favorable season for renewing our encounter with Christ, living in his word, in the sacraments and in our neighbor. The Lord, who overcame the deceptions of the Tempter during the forty days in the desert, shows us the path we must take. May the Holy Spirit lead us on a true journey of conversion, so that we can rediscover the gift of God's word, be purified of the sin that blinds us, and serve Christ present in our brothers and sisters in need." (Pope Francis, Message for Lent, 2017).

Ok, so let us now unwrap some gifts.

Rev. Fr. Alexander Castillo
Secretary of the Bishop/Episcopal Master of Ceremonies

Upcoming Dates

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|-----------|-------------------------------|
| March 1 | Ash Wednesday (Start of Lent) |
| March 4/5 | Rites of Election (CTL) |
| April 6 | Chrism Mass |
| April 13 | Holy Thursday |
| April 14 | Good Friday |
| April 15 | Holy Saturday |
| April 16 | Easter Sunday |
| June 4 | Pentecost |



Peter Gertner, *Crucifixion*, circa 1537, oil on wood

Lent: a walk through the season

2017 Diocese of Oakland liturgical guidelines for lent

“The annual observance of Lent is the special season for the ascent to the holy mountain of Easter. Through its twofold theme of repentance and preparation for Baptism, the season of Lent disposes both the catechumens and the faithful to celebrate the Pascal Mystery” (*Ceremonial of Bishops*, 249)

The Season of Lent “should be lived more intensely as a privileged moment to celebrate and experience God’s mercy. Many passages of Sacred Scripture are appropriate for meditation during the weeks of Lent to help us rediscover the merciful face of the Father! We can repeat the words of the prophet Micah and make them our own: You, O Lord, are a God who takes away iniquity and pardons sin, who does not hold your anger forever, but are pleased to show mercy. You, Lord, will return to us and have pity on your people. You will trample down our sins and toss them into the depths of the sea (cf. 7:18-19).

The two Eucharistic Prayers for Reconciliation are appropriate for use during Lent. Each one has its own Preface, but they can also be used with the Prefaces of Lent.

During the Season of Lent, we do not sing the Alleluia. The Gloria is omitted during the Sundays of this Season, but it is sung on Solemnities (*i.e. March 19 – Solemnity of Saint Joseph*)

Ash Wednesday, March 1st, marks the beginning of Lent. “This season urgently calls us to conversion. Christians are asked to return to God “with all their hearts” (*Joel 2:12*), to refuse to settle for mediocrity and to grow in friendship with the Lord...Lent is a favorable season for deepening our spiritual life through the means of sanctification offered us by the Church: fasting, prayer and almsgiving. At the basis of everything is the word of God, which during this season we are invited to hear and ponder more deeply. (Pope Francis, Message for Lent, 2017)

The following regulations regarding **fasting and abstinence** are observed in the United States:

Catholics ages 14 and over are to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday, Good Friday and all Fridays of Lent.

Individuals between 18 and 59 are also obliged to fast – eat one full meal – on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Eating two smaller meals is permitted if necessary to maintain strength, but eating between meals should be avoided.

These obligations, however, do not apply to those whose health or ability to work would be seriously affected.

TO READ THE FULL ARTICLE, AND FOR MORE RESOURCES AND INFORMATION ABOUT LENT, AND FOR OTHER RESOURCES FOR WORSHIP, AND MORE, PLEASE VISIT:

<http://www.oakdiocese.org/ministries-pastoral/worship>



FROM THE MISSAL: Notes on the Liturgy

Here we present some information on the rubrics and practices of different elements of the Eucharistic Liturgy.

Part III: The Liturgy of the Eucharist

The Liturgy of the Eucharist begins with the preparation of the gifts and the altar. As the ministers prepare the altar, representatives of the people bring forward the bread and wine that will become the Body and Blood of Christ. The celebrant blesses and praises God for these gifts and places them on the altar, the place of the Eucharistic sacrifice. In addition to the bread and wine, monetary gifts for the support of the Church and the care of the poor may be brought forward. The Prayer over the Offerings concludes this preparation and disposes all for the Eucharistic Prayer.

Eucharistic Prayer

The Eucharistic Prayer is the heart of the Liturgy of the Eucharist. In this prayer, the celebrant acts in the person of Christ as head of his body, the Church. He gathers not only the bread and the wine, but the substance of our lives and joins them to Christ's perfect sacrifice, offering them to the Father.

The introductory dialogue, establishes that this prayer is the prayer of the baptized and ordained, is offered in the presence of God, and has thanksgiving as its central focus. Following this dialogue, the celebrant begins the Preface.

The Eucharistic Prayers make clear that these prayers are offered, not to Christ, but to the Father. It is worship offered to the Father by Christ as it was at the moment of his passion, death and resurrection, but now it is offered through the priest acting in the person of Christ, and it is offered as well by all of the baptized, who are part of Christ's Body, the Church. *This* is the action of Christ's Body, the Church at Mass.

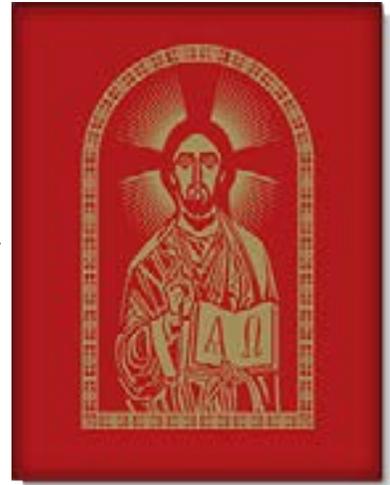
The priest offers the Eucharistic Prayer in the first person plural, for example, "Therefore, O Lord, **we** humbly implore you..." This "we" signifies that all the baptized present at the Eucharistic celebration make the sacrificial offering in union with Christ, and pray the Eucharistic Prayer in union with him. And what is most important, we do not offer Christ alone; we are called to *offer ourselves*, our lives, our individual efforts to grow more like Christ and our efforts as a community of believers to spread God's Word and to serve God's people, to the Father in union with Christ through the hands of the priest. Most wonderful of all, although our offering is in itself imperfect, joined with the offering of Christ it becomes *perfect* praise and thanksgiving to the Father.

The *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (no. 79) provides the following summary of the Eucharistic Prayer:

The main elements of which the Eucharistic Prayer consists may be distinguished from one another in this way:

- a) The *thanksgiving* (expressed especially in the Preface), in which the Priest, in the name of the whole of the holy people, glorifies God the Father and gives thanks to him for the whole work of salvation or for some particular aspect of it, according to the varying day, festivity, or time of year.
- b) The *acclamation*, by which the whole congregation, joining with the heavenly powers, sings the *Sanctus* (*Holy, Holy, Holy*). This acclamation, which constitutes part of the Eucharistic Prayer itself, is pronounced by all the people with the Priest.
- c) The *epiclesis*, in which, by means of particular invocations, the Church implores the power of the Holy Spirit that the gifts offered by human hands be consecrated, that is, become Christ's Body and Blood, and that the unblemished sacrificial Victim to be consumed in Communion may be for the salvation of those who will partake of it.

CONTINUED on PAGE 5



Sacred Music: Treasure of the Church

What is Sacred Music?

Sacred music is “that which, being created for the celebration of divine worship, is endowed with a certain holy sincerity of form,” according to the Sacred Congregation of Rites in its Instruction on Music and the Liturgy, *Musicae Sacram* (1967, ¶4). As defined by the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (1963), sacred music surpasses merely religious music when it is joined to the liturgical rite to become “a necessary and integral part of the solemn liturgy,” whose purpose is “the glory of God and the sanctification of the faithful” (¶112).

“As a manifestation of the human spirit,” said Pope St. John Paul II in 1989, “music performs a function which is noble, unique, and irreplaceable. When it is truly beautiful and inspired, it speaks to us more than all the other arts of goodness, virtue, peace, of matters holy and divine. Not for nothing has it always been, and will it always be, an essential part of the liturgy.”

What are the characteristics of sacred music?

On the centenary of its promulgation, St. John Paul II urged us to revisit and learn from St. Pius X’s letter *motu proprio* on Sacred Music, *Tra le sollecitudini* (1903). Pope Pius distinguished three characteristics of sacred music: “it must possess holiness and beauty of form: from these two qualities a third will spontaneously arise — universality” (§2).

Concerning holiness, for music to be sacred means it is not the ordinary, not the every-day. It is set aside for the purpose of glorifying God and edifying and sanctifying the faithful. It must therefore exclude all that is not suitable for the temple — all that is ordinary, every-day or profane, not only in itself, but also in the manner in which it is performed. The sacred words of the Liturgy call for a sonic vesture that is equally sacred. Sacredness, then, is more than individual piety; it is an objective reality.



Concerning beauty, the Latin speaks more precisely of *bonitate formarum* or “excellence of forms.” This refers to the tendency of sacred music to synthesize diverse ritual elements into a unity, to draw together a succession of liturgical actions into a coherent whole, and to serve a range of sacred expressions. Excellence of forms also serves to differentiate those elements, to distinguish the various functions of liturgical chants by revealing their unique character. Sacred music must be true art, says Pope Pius, “otherwise it will be impossible for it to exercise on the minds of those who listen to it that efficacy which the Church aims at obtaining in admitting into her liturgy the art of musical sounds.” Beauty is what holds truth and goodness to their task. To paraphrase Hans Urs von Balthasar, without beauty, the truth does not persuade, goodness does not compel (*The Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics*, I: 19). Beauty, as expressed in the Church’s liturgy, synthesizes diverse elements into a unified whole: truth, goodness, and the human impulse to worship. Concerning universality, sacred music is supra-national, equally accessible to people of diverse cultures. The Church does admit local indigenous forms into her worship, but these must be subordinated to the general characteristics of the received tradition. By insisting on the continuous use of her musical treasures, the Church ensures her members grow up hearing this sacred musical language and receive it naturally as a part of the liturgy.

Why should we care?

Celebrating the liturgy involves the whole person: intellect and will, emotions and senses, imagination, aesthetic sensibilities, memory, physical gestures, and powers of expression. Appropriate feeling is necessary for the communication and assimilation of religious truth. The Church’s insistence on music of a unique sort is intended not merely to stimulate feelings in a general way, but to exemplify Christian truth and convey transcendent mysteries using an appropriate form of expression. As Pope Benedict XVI has written, sacred music “elevates the spirit precisely by wedding it to the senses, and it elevates the senses by uniting them with the spirit” (Cardinal Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 150).



Isn't this just really a matter of taste?

Nothing prevents us from preferring one form of music to another. What's more, nothing prevents us from preferring one form of popular religious song to another. But music that is suitable for sacred liturgy must be of a special sort. No longer can personal preference be the sole criterion. "Not all musical forms can be considered suitable for liturgical celebrations," says Pope St. John Paul II in his Chirograph on sacred music (2003). He quotes Pope Paul VI: "If music — instrumental and vocal — does not possess at the same time the sense of prayer, dignity, and beauty, entry into the sphere of the sacred and the religious is [thereby] precluded."

In his general audience of February 26, 2003, St. John Paul II called on musicians to "make an examination of conscience so that the beauty of music and hymnody will return once again to the liturgy. It is necessary to purify worship of ugliness of style, careless forms of expression, ill-prepared music and texts, which are not worthy of the great act that is being celebrated."

Which Church documents should I read?

Church musicians need to be thoroughly familiar with *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, the General Instruction on the Roman Missal, *Musica Sacram*, John Paul II's Chirograph on Sacred Music, and Pius X's *Tra le sollecitudini*. The entire history of Papal legislation on sacred music is a worthy study. Its unifying theme points to a distinct body of music that can be called sacred in contradistinction to profane music, which is utterly unsuitable for the church, or religious music, which is suitable for non-liturgical use only.

Director of Music at The Cathedral of Christ the Light, Dr. Rudy de Vos maintains an active career as organist and choir conductor. A native from South Africa, he has appeared in concerts and masterclasses in South Africa, Europe, and the United States. He is an active member of the American Guild of Organists, American Choral Directors Association, and the Conference of Roman Catholic Cathedral Musicians. De Vos holds undergraduate and graduate degrees and diplomas from the University of South Africa, University of Pretoria, University of North Texas, and the Eastman School of Music at the University of Rochester.

FROM THE MISSAL: Notes on the Liturgy (cont'd)

- d) The *Institution narrative and Consecration*, by which, by means of the words and actions of Christ, that Sacrifice is effected which Christ himself instituted during the Last Supper, when he offered his Body and Blood under the species of bread and wine, gave them to the Apostles to eat and drink, and leaving with the latter the command to perpetuate this same mystery.
- e) The *anamnesis*, by which the Church, fulfilling the command that she received from Christ the Lord through the Apostles, celebrates the memorial of Christ, recalling especially his blessed Passion, glorious Resurrection, and Ascension into heaven.
- f) The *oblation*, by which, in this very memorial, the Church, in particular that gathered here and now, offers the unblemished sacrificial Victim in the Holy Spirit to the Father. The Church's intention, indeed, is that the faithful not only offer this unblemished sacrificial Victim but also learn to offer their very selves, and so day by day to be brought, through the mediation of Christ, into unity with God and with each other, so that God may at last be all in all.
- g) The *intercessions*, by which expression is given to the fact that the Eucharist is celebrated in communion with the whole Church, of both heaven and of earth, and that the oblation is made for her and for all her members, living and dead, who are called to participate in the redemption and salvation purchased by the Body and Blood of Christ.
- h) The *concluding doxology*, by which the glorification of God is expressed and which is affirmed and concluded by the people's acclamation "*Amen*."

LENTEN INFORMATION

The season of Lent begins March 1, 2017 with Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are obligatory days of universal fast and abstinence. Fasting is obligatory for all who have completed their 18th year until the beginning of their 60th year. Fasting allows a person to eat one full meal. Two smaller meals may be taken, not to equal one full meal. Abstinence (from meat) is obligatory for all who have completed their 14th year of age (c. 1252). If possible, the fast on Good Friday is continued until after the Easter Vigil (on Holy Saturday night) as the “Paschal fast” to honor the suffering and death of the Lord Jesus and to prepare to share more fully and celebrate more readily his Resurrection (see *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 109). Fridays in Lent are obligatory days of abstinence (from meat) for all who have completed their 14th year. As always, anyone for whom fasting or abstinence would pose a health risk is excused.

All Catholic priests are urged to ensure that every Catholic has the opportunity to celebrate the sacrament of penance during Lent. In the past, in addition to a communal penance service, parishes have obtained good results from a modification of the “Light Is On For You” program: i.e. making confession available at additional fixed times during Lent. “Through fasting and praying, we allow him to come and satisfy the deepest hunger that we experience in the depth of our being: the hunger and thirst for God.” (Pope Benedict XVI)

Chrism Mass – Chrism Mass will take place on Thursday, April 6 at 6:30 p.m. The Presbyterate of the Diocese will gather earlier that day for prayers, spiritual discussions and camaraderie.

During the Chrism Mass, two of the Seminarians of the Diocese will be admitted as Candidate to Sacred Orders.



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