

LITURGYNOTES

"Good celebrations foster and nourish faith. Poor celebrations weaken and destroy it."

December 2025

Diocese of Davenport

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CALENDAR FOR THIS MONTH

- 1: Registrations for the Rite of Election are due; National Day of Prayer for the African-American Family
- 2: Feast of the Presentation of the Lord; World Day of Prayer for Consecrated Life
- 7-14: National Marriage Week
- 8: World Marriage Day; World Day of Prayer and Awareness against Human Trafficking
- 11: World Day of the Sick
- 18: Ash Wednesday
- 20: World Day of Social Justice
- 22: 1st Sunday of Lent, Rite of Election

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JUBILEE YEAR 2025

<https://www.iubilaeum2025.va/en.html>
(<https://www.usccb.org/committees/jubilee-2025>)

Diocesan information is posted at:

<https://www.davenportdiocese.org/liturgy#Jubilee2025>. For example, cards with the Jubilee Prayer are available for download there (bilingual English/Spanish and English/Vietnamese). Information about the Jubilee Indulgence and on pilgrimage churches in the diocese is also available. The Vatican has released a special Mass for the Holy Year, which is posted on the USCCB website: [USCCB.org/prayer-and-worship/the-mass/votive-masses-and-various-needs/mass-for-the-holy-year](https://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/the-mass/votive-masses-and-various-needs/mass-for-the-holy-year)

NEWS & NOTICES

NEWS FROM THE FDLC & BCDW

Pope Leo On Liturgical Formation

On November 17, Pope Leo addressed a group of leaders gathered at San Anselmo. He stressed the need to encourage liturgical and biblical formation not only of the clergy but of the faithful in every diocese and parish. He quoted from Pope Francis' *Desiderio desideravi* and encouraged a better appreciation of the liturgical reforms of the Council.

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2025-11/pope-leo-xiv-liturgical-formation-st-anselmo-institute-worship.html>

News from the USCCB Fall Meeting

- The Dicastery for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments has approved the English translation of the Liturgy of the Hours!
- On November 10, Archbishop Broglio signed a Decree of Publication with the expectation that Volume II – Lent and Easter – will be the first volume to go into production and will be available by Ash Wednesday 2027.

- Bishop Steven Lopes, current chair of the BCDW, announced the name of the English liturgical Bible as *"Catholic American Bible"* (to be available Ash Wed 2027). You will recall that this was approved by the Bishops previously as the translation of the Bible which will be used in liturgy, including the Lectionary for Mass and the Liturgy of the Hours as well as a printed Bible for the USA.
- The USCCB Administrative Committee approved the *Biblia de la Iglesia en America* (to be available Ash Wed 2026). This will impact the development of the *Leccionario* for the USA.

LiturgyNotes – December 2025

“The Eucharist commits us to the poor” (CCC #1397).

The following items were presented to the floor on Tuesday, November 11. Amendments were accepted until 5:00 Tuesday. Voting took place on Wednesday afternoon, November 12. Approval by two-thirds of the Latin-Rite bishops is required for passage. The texts are then subsequently submitted to the Dicastery for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments for approval.

- Action Item #4 -- The USA appendices to the Roman Pontifical were approved by the Bishops with a vote of 205 (yes), 2 (No) and 2 (Abstain). [These appendices include some rituals included in the Ceremonial of Bishops.]
- Action Item #5 -- The *Nuevos santos en el Calendario Romano general* was approved by the Bishops with a vote of 202 (Yes), 4 (No), and 2 (Abstain). [These are the saints that were added from 2014 to 2024.] The source text was from the Mexican Conference with amendments by the Bishops of the USA.]

Order of the Anointing of the Sick and of their Pastoral Care

This ritual book replaces “Pastoral Care of the Sick,” and is being structured in accord with the Latin typical edition. Per the USCCB: These ship on January 1, 2026, first use is February 11, feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, and mandatory use is April 5, 2026, Easter Sunday.

PUBLISHER	SIZE(S)	ENGLISH \$	SPANISH \$	BILINGUAL \$
Catholic Book	Large 7.25" x 10.25" leatherette	34.00		
	Regular 4.25 x 6.25" leatherette	25.00		29.00
Liturgical Press	Ritual edition, Hardcover 6 x 9" 304 pages	59.95	59.95	105.99 (set of 2)
Liturgy Training Publications	Ritual edition, leatherette 5.25" x 8" 336 pages	48.00		68.00 (672 pages)
Magnificat	4.25" x 5.5" pocket size, 280 pages	24.95 (19.95 sale)		
Midwest Theological Forum	7 x 10" leatherette	49.95 (44.95 til 8-31)		69.95 (62.96 til 8-31)

LITURGICAL CALENDAR: THIS MONTH

DECEMBER

- December 8: Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Even though this solemnity falls on a Monday, it retains its obligation. Therefore, there are back-to-back obligations with Sunday. One should fulfill both obligations by assisting at two Masses, one for each of the two days. Ritual and funeral Masses are not permitted. A marriage or funeral may be celebrated outside of Mass using the texts from the Rite of Marriage or the Order of Christian Funerals. On the night of Sunday, December 7, EP II for the 2nd Sunday of Advent is celebrated, as is the Mass for that Advent Sunday.

	Mass before 4pm	Mass after 4pm	Morning Prayer	Evening Prayer
Sunday, Dec 7	2 nd Sunday of Advent	2 nd Sunday of Advent	2 nd Sunday of Advent	EP II of the 2 nd Sunday of Advent
Monday, Dec 8	Immaculate Conception	Immaculate Conception	Immaculate Conception	EP II of Immaculate Conception

- December 12: Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe
- December 25: Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord (see below)
- December 28: Feast of the Holy Family. Close of the Jubilee Year.

LiturgyNotes – December 2025

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December 24-25, 2025

The Missal has five different Masses for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. The Mass for December 24 is the proper text for Masses in the morning of December 24. The proper text for Masses in the evening (= after 4 p.m.) of December 24 is the Christmas – Vigil Mass. The texts for Christmas – Mass during the Night are to be used for Masses beginning “at night,” preferably on or around midnight between December 24 and 25. The proper texts for the first Mass in the morning of December 25 are those for Christmas – Mass at Dawn. Later Masses on December 25 should use the texts for Christmas – Mass during the Day. The Mass during the Night may be preceded by a more prolonged vigil, taken from the Office of Readings (see the General Instruction of the Liturgy of the Hours #71-73, 98, 215). This extended vigil is the preferred time for the blessing of the crèche (Book of Blessings, ch. 48, §1542-44).

The Lectionary for Mass provides 4 sets of readings for Christmas: the Vigil, the Mass at Night, the Mass at Dawn, and the Mass during the Day. It is strongly recommended that the readings be used as assigned, in particular that the Vigil readings be used at the Vigil. That being said, based on pastoral need, and acknowledging that the Mass that any person attends will be “their” Christmas Mass, the *Homiletic Directory* (#110) allows for the use of any of the 4 sets of readings at any of the four Masses.

On December 25, Ritual Masses (i.e., marriage, confirmation) and funeral Masses are prohibited. A marriage or funeral may be celebrated outside of Mass using the texts from the Rite of Marriage or the Order of Christian Funerals.

LITURGICAL CALENDAR: NEXT MONTH

January

- January 1 – Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God – Holy Day of Obligation; Ritual Masses (i.e., marriage, confirmation) and funeral Masses are prohibited. A marriage or funeral may be celebrated outside of Mass using the texts from the Rite of Marriage or the Order of Christian Funerals.
- January 4 – Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord
- January 11 – Feast of the Baptism of the Lord
- January 18-25 – Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
<https://www.christianunity.va/content/unitacristiani/en/news/2025/2025-06-23-texts-for-2026-week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity.html>
<https://www.atonementfriars.org/2026-week-of-prayer-theme-announced/>
- January 22 – Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children
<https://www.usccb.org/january-22>
- January 25 – Sunday of the Word of God
<https://www.usccb.org/committees/divine-worship/sunday-word-god>
- January 27 – International Holocaust Remembrance Day
<https://www.ushmm.org/remember/international-holocaust-remembrance-day>

LITURGICAL CALENDAR: LOOKING AHEAD

FEBRUARY

- February 1 – registrations for the Rite of Election are due (please see below)
National Day of Prayer for the African-American Family
<https://www.usccb.org/committees/african-american-affairs/national-day-prayer-african-american-family>
<https://www.usccb.org/resources/day-prayer-african-american-and-african-family>

LiturgyNotes – December 2025

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- February 2 – Feast of the Presentation of the Lord (see Missal for procession options and blessing of candles)
World Day of Prayer for Consecrated Life
<https://www.usccb.org/committees/clergy-consecrated-life-vocations/world-day-consecrated-life>
- February 7-14: National Marriage Week / February 8 – World Marriage Day
<https://wwme.org/community/sponsored-events/world-marriage-day/> and
<https://www.usccb.org/topics/marriage-and-family-life-ministries/national-marriage-week>
- February 8 – World Day of Prayer and Awareness against Human Trafficking
<https://www.usccb.org/committees/administrative/february-8th-international-day-prayer-and-awareness-against-human>
- February 11 – World Day of the Sick
<https://www.chausa.org/prayers/world-day-of-the-sick> and <https://www.nacc.org/resources/spirituality-and-prayer-resources/world-day-of-the-sick/>
- February 18 – Ash Wednesday – Day of Fast and Abstinence (see below); also, first day of Ramadan
- February 20 – World Day of Social Justice
- February 22 – First Sunday of Lent, Rite of Election (see below)

HOLY WEEK / TRIDUUM / EASTER 2026

- The *Chrism Mass* is scheduled for March 30, the Monday of Holy Week.
- The *Triduum* falls on Thursday, April 2 through Sunday, April 5 – with the Easter Vigil falling on the night of Saturday, April 4. On that night, sunset is at ~7:30 pm. In order to insure sufficient darkness, at least 45 minutes (preferably one hour) should elapse after sunset before the Vigil may begin. Therefore, the earliest that the Vigil may begin is 8:15 pm CDT.

THE ORDER OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS

Please see: <https://www.davenportdiocese.org/ocia>

OCIA: THE PERIOD OF PURIFICATION

As the name implies, the *Order* of Christian Initiation of Adults is marked by the liturgical celebration of the journey towards full initiation through the Easter Sacraments. Lent is also known as the Period of Purification and Enlightenment, and is marked by the celebration of several important rites.

For Catechumens

Typically, on the First Sunday of Lent, the Rite of Election is celebrated. In order to be admitted to the Easter Sacraments, individuals must be elected by the bishop (or his delegate). By this rite, catechumens become “the elect” and enter the “period of purification and enlightenment” that culminates in the sacraments of initiation (see OCIA # 118-28). The Rite of Sending of the Catechumens for Election should be celebrated in the parish prior to the Rite of Election. Please remember that only catechumens (not candidates) sign the Book of the Elect.

On the 3rd, 4th, and 5th Sundays of Lent, the Scrutinies are celebrated. These required rites should take place within the ritual Mass “For the Celebration of the Scrutinies” and use the Lectionary readings for Year A (see OCIA #146). The Prefaces for the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Sundays of Lent are used—and these are now found in Proper of Seasons and not with the other Prefaces. The Eucharistic Prayers include specific inserts for the godparents (I) and the elect (I, II, III).

Typically, requests to dispense an individual from a Scrutiny must be made in writing to the bishop, explaining the reason for the request. Only the bishop “may dispense from one of them for serious reasons or, in extraordinary circumstances, even from two” (OCIA #20). However, in our diocese, pastors and those like them have the faculty delegated to them by the bishop. The faculty may not be subdelegated. All others must request the faculty from the bishop.

IF SCRUTINIES CELEBRATED	IF SCRUTINIES NOT CELEBRATED		
	Year A	Years B and C	
Readings Cycle A	Readings Cycle A	Readings Cycle B or C (depending on year)	As an alternative, may use Cycle A readings.
Preface for the 3 rd , 4 th , and 5 th Sundays of Lent (match gospel)	Preface for the 3 rd , 4 th , and 5 th Sundays of Lent (match gospel)	Preface for Lent I or II	Preface for the 3 rd , 4 th , and 5 th Sundays of Lent (match gospel)
Prayers for the 1 st , 2 nd , and 3 rd Scrutinies (Ritual Masses)	Prayers for the 3 rd , 4 th , and 5 th Sundays of Lent (Proper of Seasons)	Prayers for the 3 rd , 4 th , and 5 th Sundays of Lent (Proper of Seasons)	Prayers for the 3 rd , 4 th , and 5 th Sundays of Lent (Proper of Seasons)
Final blessing includes the Prayer over the People proper for that Sunday	Final blessing includes the Prayer over the People proper for that Sunday	Final blessing includes the Prayer over the People proper for that Sunday	Final blessing includes the Prayer over the People proper for that Sunday

The Presentations of the Creed and the Lord’s Prayer take place during the 3rd and 5th weeks of Lent, respectively. In the context of this pandemic, it is good to recall that the rite does not call for the handing of a physical copy of these texts to the Elect. They are to *listen* to the community as the texts are recited.

For Candidates

Candidates are those who have already been validly baptized but wish to come into full communion with the Catholic Church. For a previous baptism to be considered valid, it must involve the use of water and the Trinitarian formula (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) – and express the same belief in the Trinity as defined by the Church. Communities that baptize only in the name of Jesus (e.g. some Pentecostal communities) and those who do not share our belief in the Trinity (e.g., Mormons) are not considered to have valid baptisms. If there is a question regarding the validity of an individual’s baptism please call this office.

Typically, on the First Sunday of Lent, Candidates take part in the diocese’s celebration of the Call to Continuing Conversion—to be celebrated as part of the combined diocesan rites this year (for the rite alone, see OCIA #446-458). A special Penitential Rite (similar to the Scrutinies) may be celebrated on the 2nd Sunday of Lent; it is not combined in any way with the rites for catechumens (see OCIA #459-63).

The Rite of Election & Call to Continuing Conversion in our Diocese

See below for the dates/times for the celebration of these liturgies. As in the past, we will need your help in getting registration information back to us. In the meantime, please remember that the Rite of Election is not optional: catechumens must be “elected” for the Easter Sacraments by the bishop (or his delegate)... and those already baptized are not “re”-elected!

Please note: those who are not yet eligible for the Easter Sacraments (e.g., those in an irregular union who have not yet received a declaration of nullity) should not celebrate the Rite of Sending or the Rite of Election (or Call to Continuing Conversion).

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CONFIRMATION AND THE OCIA

(See the *Code of Canon Law* cc.882-888; OCIA 216, 481; *Priest Faculties for the Diocese of Davenport*)

Please review your faculties carefully.

Faculty	Pastor Parochial Administrator	Parochial Vicar	Priest Moderator; Sacramental Minister; Chaplain (University)	Chaplain (Other)	Others
1.7 Confirm in danger of Death	X	X	X	X	X
3.1 Confirm anyone 7 or older that you baptize or receive into the Church	X	X	X	<i>Note: will need letter from Bishop to do this.</i>	<i>Note: will need letter from Bishop to do this.</i>
4.5 Baptize those 7 or older (must then Confirm)	X	X	X	<i>Note: will need letter from Bishop to do this.</i>	<i>Note: will need letter from Bishop to do this.</i>
4.10 Confirm baptized Catholics older than the usual age of Confirmation	X	<i>Note: will need letter from Bishop to do this.</i>	X	<i>Note: will need letter from Bishop to do this.</i>	<i>Note: will need letter from Bishop to do this.</i>

In order to respect the integrity of the three Sacraments of Initiation, the priest who presides over Eucharist and Confirmation is also the one who is to baptize. Therefore, another minister (e.g., a deacon or even another priest) must not baptize in this situation (see c.883.2; for an exception if large numbers are involved, see OCIA # 226). Also, priests who will be presiding at the Easter Vigil outside the territory of their assignment, or if they are not assigned a pastoral charge, need the explicit (and not merely tacit) permission of the one in whose territory they are baptizing (pastor) in order to baptize (see cc. 530 & 862) and confirm (see c. 887).

Finally, according to the law of the Church, children who have reached the use of reason (around 7 years of age) are considered, for the purposes of Christian initiation, to be adults. Therefore, if someone who is to be baptized or received into the Catholic Church is deemed ready (i.e., old enough) to receive Eucharist they are to be confirmed. In other words, the faculty to confirm must be used (c. 885.2).

RITE OF ELECTION

The Rite of Election is celebrated on the First Sunday of Lent: February 22, 2026. Bishop Walsh will preside at the Cathedral and Fr. Jason Crossen, our Vicar General, will preside at a bilingual (English-Spanish) rite in Ottumwa; both Masses will begin at 2pm. Registration is now open: www.davenportdiocese.org/rite-of-election.

UPCOMING EVENTS: DIOCESAN LITURGIES

DECEMBER 28: CLOSING OF THE JUBILEE YEAR



Bishop Walsh will celebrate the closing of the Jubilee Year on Sunday, December 28, at Sacred Heart Cathedral at 9:00 a.m. Priests who wish to concelebrate, and deacons who wish to vest, are asked to ask to let Deacon Agnoli know at agnoli@davenportdiocese.org. Likewise, if pastors know that a group will be coming from their parish, please do let us know so we can plan accordingly.

UPCOMING EVENTS: FORMATION OPPORTUNITIES

See the Liturgy Events webpage at: <http://www.davenportdiocese.org/liturgy-events>.

SUNDAY OF THE WORD OF GOD – JANUARY 25, 2026

The Church observes the 3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time as the Sunday of the Word of God. Please join us on the afternoon (1-3:30 pm) of Sunday, January 25, when Rev. Dr. Matthew Coomber from St. Ambrose University will explore the connection between the scriptures we proclaim and profess, and our advocacy for the vulnerable in our world. A timely topic, given the [Iowa Bishops' recent letter on immigration](#), the [USCCB's statement on the same issue](#), and Pope Leo's Apostolic Exhortation, *Dilexi Te*.

To register, and for more information, please visit: <https://www.davenportdiocese.org/sunday-of-the-word-of-god>.

LITURGY PREPARATION

LITURGICAL CALENDAR

FDLC Annual Resources for Advent and Christmastime

Once again, the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions (FDLC) is making available their annual liturgical preparation aid for the seasons of Advent and Christmas. Available in both English and Spanish, It contains:

- The Order of Reconciling Several Penitents with Individual Confession and Absolution (with Sample Examination of Conscience, Sample Readings, Sample Penances, and Music Suggestions)
- Liturgical Calendar Advisories for the Seasons of Advent and Christmas
- The Lectionary for Mass – Year A
- The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ and the Announcement of Easter and the Moveable Feasts (to be sung on the Solemnity of the Epiphany)

These resources are posted on our website (<https://www.davenportdiocese.org/liturgical-seasons#AdventChristmas>) and on the FDLC website (<https://fdlc.org/2025/11/2025-advent-christmas-liturgical-preparation-aid/>).

Lent Fast and Abstinence

FAST—Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of fast. On days of fast, one full meal and two lesser meals are allowed. Eating between meals is not permitted. Catholics between the ages of 18 and 59 (60th birthday) are bound to fast.

ABSTINENCE—Ash Wednesday and all of the Fridays of Lent are also days of abstinence. On days of abstinence, meat may not be taken. The law of abstinence binds all Catholics fourteen years of age or older. If members of the Faithful are unable to observe the fast and abstinence regulations because of ill health or other reasons, they are urged to practice other forms of penance and self-denial suitable to their condition.

Preparing for Lent

Please see our Liturgical Seasons page (<http://www.davenportdiocese.org/liturgical-seasons>) for more information on the seasons; in particular, you may want to use the Lenten Bulletin inserts (direct URL: <http://www.davenportdiocese.org/documents/2016/6/litLentBulletinAnnouncements-1.pdf>) to help inform your parish about the various rites in the OCIA.

Some reminders regarding liturgies in Lent:

1. No Gloria is said or sung (GIRM #55); specific solemnities during Lent (or the celebration of particular ritual Masses, such as weddings, as detailed in the Missal’s rubrics) are the exception.
2. We abstain from “Alleluia” during Lent, during the Gospel Acclamation (#62) and in other music as well.
3. It is forbidden for the altar (sanctuary) to be decorated with flowers (*Laetare* Sunday [4th], solemnities and feasts are an exception) (#305). Flowers are never to be placed on top of (on the mensa of) the altar. Because ritual Masses are treated as feasts, flowers would also be allowed at weddings. Flowers may be allowed at funerals at the pastor’s discretion.
4. The playing of the organ and other musical instruments is allowed *only* to support the singing (*Laetare* Sunday [4th], solemnities and feasts are exceptions) (#313).
5. Violet or purple is the color of sacred vestments. Rose may be used where it is the custom on *Laetare* Sunday (#346).
6. The Roman Missal has a specific Prayer over the People for each day in Lent. While these prayers are optional (and interchangeable) on weekdays, they are required (and fixed) on Sundays.
7. The Eucharistic Prayers for Reconciliation may be used during Lent, with either their own proper prefaces or one of the prefaces for Lent. The only exception is when the Scrutinies are celebrated; the specific preface called for then must be used.
8. Eucharistic Prayer IV has a fixed preface and therefore may not be used during Lent.
9. In the dioceses of the United States, crosses in the church may be covered from the conclusion of the Mass for the Saturday of the Fourth Week of Lent until the end of the celebration of the Lord’s Passion on Good Friday. Images in the church may be covered from the conclusion of the Mass for the Saturday of the Fourth Week of Lent until the beginning of the Easter Vigil. (*This is simply an option; there is no need to implement this practice if not already part of parish life.*)
10. In regards to emptying fonts during Lent, the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments has declared “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).”

Regarding Ash Wednesday

The *Book of Blessings* (chapter 52) includes a rite for blessing and distributing ashes outside of Mass, in the context of a celebration of the word of God. It may also be used when bringing ashes to the sick. When led by a deacon (or priest), ashes may be blessed as part of the rite. When led by a lay minister, ashes blessed at an earlier liturgy are to be used. If this rite is used, please use the newly translated formulas for imposing ashes found in the Missal (“Repent, and believe in the Gospel” OR “Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return”). The call to conversion symbolized by the imposition of ashes is a call answered within the context of the Church gathered liturgically as the Body of Christ. In the Body, especially in the liturgy, each member has his or her own proper place. The imposition of ashes is an official action of the Church, not a private act of personal piety. Thus, it is proper that only an official representative of the Church—such as a priest or deacon, who by virtue of ordination also represents Christ in a particular way in the community—

imposes the ashes. As with communion, if there is need, extraordinary ministers may be deputed to assist in this ministry. But, just as with communion, to simply pass ashes around with everyone imposing ashes on each other—that is, *everyone* acting as extraordinary ministers—is contrary to what the Church intends and therefore not permitted.

The Observation of Lent and Judaism

(1) In General:

<http://www.davenportdiocese.org/documents/2016/6/litRespecting%20JudaismJewishTraditions-LentTriduum-1.pdf>

Other resources at <http://www.davenportdiocese.org/preaching-links#AvoidingAntiJudaism>.

(2) Regarding Preaching:

Excerpted from *God's Mercy Endures Forever: Guidelines on the Presentation of Jews and Judaism in Catholic Preaching* (Bishop's Committee on the Liturgy, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, September, 1988); full document at: <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/ecumenical-and-interreligious/jewish/upload/God-s-Mercy-Endures-Forever-Guidelines-on-the-Presentation-of-Jews-and-Judaism-in-Catholic-Preaching-1988.pdf>.

16. The Lenten lectionary presents just as many challenges. Prophetic texts such as Joel (Ash Wednesday), Jeremiah's "new covenant" (cycle B, Fifth Sunday), and Isaiah (cycle C, Fifth Sunday) call the assembly to proclaim Jesus as the Christ while avoiding negativism toward Judaism.

17. In addition, many of the New Testament texts, such as Matthew's references to "hypocrites in the synagogue" (Ash Wednesday), John's depiction of Jesus in the Temple (cycle B, Third Sunday), and Jesus' conflicts with the Pharisees (e.g., Lk, cycle C, Fourth Sunday) can give the impression that the Judaism of Jesus' day was devoid of spiritual depth and essentially at odds with Jesus' teaching. References to earlier divine punishments of the Jews (e.g., 1 Cor, cycle C, Third Sunday) can further intensify a false image of Jews and Judaism as a people rejected by God.

18. In fact, however, as the 1985 Notes are at pains to clarify (sec. III and IV), Jesus was observant of the Torah (e.g., in the details of his circumcision and purification given in Lk 2:21-24), he extolled respect for it (see Mt 5:17-20), and he invited obedience to it (see Mt 8:4). Jesus taught in the synagogues (see Mt 4:23 and 9:35; Lk 4:15-18; Jn 18:20) and in the Temple, which he frequented, as did the disciples even after the Resurrection (see Acts 2:46; 3:1ff). While Jesus showed uniqueness and authority in his interpretation of God's word in the Torah—in a manner that scandalized some Jews and impressed others—he did not oppose it, nor did he wish to abrogate it.

19. Jesus was perhaps closer to the Pharisees in his religious vision than to any other group of his time. The 1985 Notes suggest that this affinity with Pharisaism may be a reason for many of his apparent controversies with them (see no. 27 of this document). Jesus shared with the Pharisees a number of distinctive doctrines: the resurrection of the body; forms of piety such as almsgiving, daily prayer, and fasting; the liturgical practice of addressing God as Father; and the priority of the love commandment (see no. 25). Many scholars are of the view that Jesus was not so much arguing against "the Pharisees" as a group, as he was condemning excesses of some Pharisees, excesses of a sort that can be found among some Christians as well. In some cases, Jesus appears to have been participating in internal Pharisaic debates on various points of interpretation of God's law. In the case of divorce (see Mk 10:2-12), an issue that was debated hotly between the Pharisaic schools of Hillel and Shammai, Jesus goes beyond even the more stringent position of the House of Shammai. In other cases, such as the rejection of a literal interpretation of the *lex talionis* ("An eye for an eye"), Jesus' interpretation of biblical law is similar to that found in some of the prophets and ultimately adopted by rabbinic tradition as can be seen in the Talmud.

20. After the Church had distanced itself from Judaism (cf. no. 5 of this document), it tended to telescope the long historical process whereby the gospels were set down some generations after Jesus' death. Thus, certain controversies that may actually have taken place between church leaders and rabbis toward the end of the first century were "read back" into the life of Jesus: Some [New Testament] references hostile or less than favorable to Jews have their historical context in conflicts between the nascent Church and the Jewish community. Certain controversies reflect Christian-Jewish relations long after the time of Jesus. To establish this is of capital importance if we wish to bring out the meaning of certain gospel texts for the Christians of today. All this should be taken into account when preparing catechesis and homilies for the weeks of Lent and Holy Week (1985 Notes, no. 29; see no. 26 of this document).

RESOURCES FOR THE UNIVERSAL PRAYER

(1) Synod on Synodality

<https://www.davenportdiocese.org/synod-2023>

(2) The Center for Liturgy (general intercessions for Sundays)

<http://liturgy.slu.edu/>

(3) Intercessions for various life issues may be found on the USCCB website at (in English and Spanish):

<http://usccb.org/about/pro-life-activities/prayers/intercessory-prayers-for-life.cfm>

<http://www.usccb.org/about/pro-life-activities/word-of-life/index.cfm> (archive from 2011-2020)



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