



DIOCESE OF ALLENTOWN
OFFICE OF THE VICAR GENERAL
Post Office Box F
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(610) 437-0755
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MEMORANDUM

February 5, 2020

TO: *All Priests and Deacons*
FM: *Reverend Monsignor David L. James, V.G.*
RE: *Annual Lenten Material*
CC: *Reverend Keith A. Mathur*
Diocesan Secretaries
Diocesan Seminarians

Please find attached the annual material for the Lenten Season 2020. I ask that you review it carefully to ensure a worthy celebration of this Penitential Season.

Enclosed you will find:

- ❖ 2020 Decree granting the faculty for all priests to confirm uncatechized adults (7 years of age or older) who have been properly prepared
- ❖ 2020 Lenten Pastoral Letter – Most Reverend Alfred A. Schlert, D.D.
- ❖ 2020 Lenten Ember Day Memorandum
- ❖ 2020 Mass of Chrism Reminder
- ❖ 2020 Lenten Liturgical Reminders
- ❖ 2020 Memorandum on the Mandatum
- ❖ 2020 Lenten Obligation (English)
- ❖ 2020 Lenten Obligation (Spanish)

Should you have any questions about the material, please do not hesitate to contact the Chancery. Thank you for your kind attention.

Be assured of my prayers for a Blessed Lent.



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

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DECREE

Mindful of the desire of Priests to be solicitous to the sacramental and pastoral needs of their people, and in consultation with the Council of Priests, I hereby grant the following faculty for the Year 2020:

In virtue of the Faculty granted in No. 6 of "Sharing the Pastoral Office, Ministerial Faculties of the Diocese of Allentown," all Priests in the Diocese of Allentown may confirm uncatechized adult Catholics (age 7 and older) who have been properly prepared. An uncatechized Catholic is one who has received no formation after Baptism in the Catholic Church. However, this faculty does not include adult Catholics who have received First Holy Communion. Such Catholics must be confirmed, after proper preparation, either:

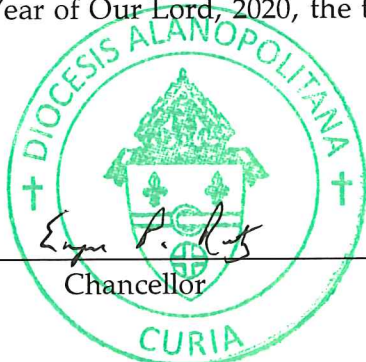
- 1. at the diocesan celebration of Confirmation on Pentecost Sunday, or*
- 2. when the Bishop or his delegate visits the parish or a neighboring parish to administer the Sacrament of Confirmation.*

Baptized Catholic children who have received First Holy Communion and are in 8th grade will continue to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation when the Bishop or his delegate visits the parish at the usual interval.

Catholic college/university students, who are candidates for Confirmation, who have received First Holy Communion, and who have been properly prepared on their campuses, may celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation at a nearby parish when the Bishop or his delegate visits the parish. If candidates for full communion have been prepared and are ready to be received into the full communion of the Catholic Church, they may also be received into the Church by the Bishop or his delegate during the same parish Confirmation visit or at another time by the priest assigned to campus ministry at a celebration on the college/university campus. If this occurs, the candidates for full communion will celebrate the Sacraments of Confirmation and Holy Eucharist at this same celebration.

This faculty is granted for the Year 2020 pending further direction by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, and may be renewed on an annual basis in the future.

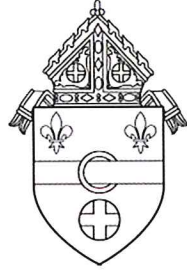
Given at Allentown, this 28th day of January, the Memorial of Saint Thomas Aquinas, in the Year of Our Lord, 2020, the third of my episcopate.



Ernest P. Schlert
Chancellor

+ Alfred A. Schlert


Most Reverend Alfred A. Schlert
Bishop of Allentown



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MEMORANDUM

5 February 2020

TO: *All Priests and Deacons*
FM: *Reverend Keith A. Mathur, Director* 
RE: *Bishop Schlert's Lenten Pastoral Letter 2020*
CC:

Attached is Bishop Schlert's Lenten Pastoral Letter for 2020.

If feasible, the Lenten Pastoral Letter may be shared with the faithful of your parish through the bulletin or on your local social media outlets.

There is no expectation by the Bishop that the Lenten Pastoral Letter be read during the homily.

Thank you for your kind attention to this memorandum.



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Lent 2020

My dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As another Lenten Season unfolds for us, I would like to reflect upon something that is impacting our Church and society greatly: Anger.

It seems everywhere we look, we see expressions of anger. Anger in and at the Church; anger in and at Washington; anger in and among nations; anger in families; anger in social media. In my travels around the Diocese, I often hear many who are concerned about the coarseness in our society.

Perhaps during this Lenten Season, a good way for us to reflect upon the anger in our lives and in society is to do an examination of conscience based on that very popular Lenten devotion, The Stations of the Cross. In these fourteen stops along the way of Our Lord's Passion and Death, we see an example of patience and suffering combined in one total act of selfless love.

The First Station: Jesus is Condemned to Death

- ❖ In my own speech, do I in anger condemn another and quickly draw conclusions about a person's motives and intentions?

The Second Station: Jesus Carries His Cross

- ❖ When I have a heavy burden placed on me, justly or unjustly, do I react with anger, blame, retribution, or avoidance?

The Third Station: Jesus Falls the First Time

- ❖ Do I take delight in another's misfortune out of the anger I feel for him or her?

The Fourth Station: Jesus Meets His Sorrowful Mother

- ❖ When trial and sorrow come into my life, do I react with anger, blaming God or others for my testing, or do I seek to be compassionate and accepting of the situation over which I have no control?

The Fifth Station: Simon of Cyrene Helps Jesus Carry His Cross

- ❖ Does anger overcome me when asked to do something or circumstances demand that I get involved, preferring rather to watch from a comfortable distance, resentful that I have been asked to contribute my time, talent, or treasure?

The Sixth Station: Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus

- ❖ Does my anger keep me from showing compassion, especially if I have experienced a lack of compassion from someone else?

The Seventh Station: Jesus Falls the Second Time

- ❖ Am I patient with myself when I make the same mistake again, or do I become angry with my lack of perfection and give up?

The Eighth Station: Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem

- ❖ Does my anger lead me to be hardened to the plight of others, convincing myself that somehow they are to blame for their situation and therefore absolving myself of any charity toward them?

The Ninth Station: Jesus Falls a Third Time

- ❖ Do I create an angry standard in my mind of what persons are worthy of being helped based on my own prejudices and misconceptions?

The Tenth Station: Jesus is Stripped of His Clothes

- ❖ In my anger, do I strip someone of his or her dignity or good name by what I say about them, what I post on social media, or how I act toward them?

The Eleventh Station: Jesus is Nailed to the Cross

- ❖ How does my interior anger disfigure my soul and nail my humanity to the cross of hatred, arrogance, and selfishness?

The Twelfth Station: Jesus Dies on the Cross

- ❖ Does my anger rage to the point that I see another person as irredeemable or without the human dignity of one created by God and saved by the Blood of Christ?

The Thirteenth Station: The Body of Jesus is Taken Down from the Cross

- ❖ Do I show respect for the human person or do I judge another as an object of my anger or to be used in a selfish way?

The Fourteenth Station: Jesus is Laid in the Tomb

- ❖ In my anger, do I emotionally bury a family member, friend, co-worker, or classmate by treating them as if they are "dead to me," shutting them out of my life with no intention of reconciling with him or her?

The anger we sense in the world today is real and powerful. It is not easily rooted out, especially if we see the cause in someone else. This Lent, I ask myself and all the faithful to look inwardly to see how the anger in the world is really rooted in our personal anger, and seek to be reconciled with Our Lord and with those from whom we are estranged.

Psalm 34 tells us,

*Calm your anger and forget your rage;
do not fret, it only leads to evil.
For those who do evil shall perish;
the patient shall inherit the land.*

May God grant all of the peace and forgiveness of a Lenten Season truly lived well so that the Love of Christ will wash over us, bring us to be forgiven and inspire us by His forgiveness to forgive.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Most Reverend Alfred A. Schlert
Bishop of Allentown



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MEMORANDUM

5 February 2020
The Memorial of Saint Agatha

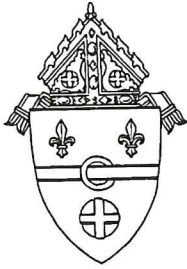
TO: *All Priests, Deacons, and Seminarians*
FM: *Reverend Keith A. Mathur, Director* *(KAM)*
RE: *Lenten Ember Days*
CC: *Reverend Monsignor David L. James, V.G.*

As the Season of Lent approaches, His Excellency, Most Reverend Alfred A. Schlert asks the clergy and faithful of the Diocese of Allentown to celebrate the Ember Days for the Season as a sign of reparation and healing for the Church. Ember Days are quarterly observances with three days set aside (Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday) to pray in gratitude for the blessings of the season and human labor, to thank God publicly. There are twelve Ember Days in all.

Holy Mother Church provides many opportunities to refresh and renew. The Lenten Ember Days blends with the season of Lent, providing reminders to continue and persevere in the spirit of conversion and penance. The fasting and abstinence would follow the current laws of the Church, with abstaining being from all meat, and fasting would be one full meal a day, with the allowance of two smaller meals that do not equal the main meal, and no eating between meals.

The Church no longer regularly ordains priests during the Quarterly Ember Days, but traditionally this is a special time, particularly Ember Saturday, to pray for priests and for seminarians.

The Lenten Ember Days for 2020 are as follows: Wednesday, March 4, 2020, Friday, March 6, 2020, and Saturday, March 7, 2020



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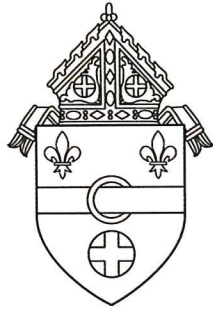
February 5, 2020

TO: *All Priests, Deacons and Seminarians*
FM: *Reverend Monsignor David L. James, V.G.*
RE: *Chrism Mass: April 8, 2020 @ 10:30 a.m.*

In order that you might properly prepare for the celebration of the Chrism Mass, I call your attention to the following considerations:

- Tables will be provided in the Cafeteria Serving Area adjacent to the Cathedral Parish Activities Center beneath the Church. Ceremonial and/or oversized oil stocks will only be partially filled to insure an adequate supply of Holy Oil for each Parish. You are reminded that the Holy Oils should be transported in appropriate, clean and dignified oil stocks or vessels (e.g. no plastic or ordinary household containers).
- Parking will be available in the three Cathedral parking lots; on-street parking is also permitted.
- Due to the nature of the luncheon, only priests, deacons, and seminarians can be accommodated.

Thank you for your kind cooperation in these matters.



The Mandatum

Theological and Pastoral Notes

The Diocese announced in a memorandum dated 21 January 2016, that the Holy Father has made a change to the Liturgical Law of the Universal Church regarding the participation of women in the Washing of the Feet (the *Mandatum*) at the Mass of the Lord's Supper (*Missa "In Coena Domini"*).

The Holy Father recommended in the Decree that "an adequate explanation of the rite itself be provided" to the faithful and in particular those who are chosen to participate in the rite.

In an effort to assist the clergy of our Diocese in proper catechesis and to avoid possible confusion among the faithful, the Diocese offers the following theological background and pastoral reminders:

Theological Background

- The origin of the rite is found in the Gospel of John 13:1-7, immediately after the Last Supper. Through the act of washing his disciples' feet and commanding them to do the same, Jesus is urging the disciples to lives rooted in service and humility.
- Saint Paul and the apostolic Church recognized the act of foot washing as a characteristic act of piety (1 Timothy 5:10).
- With the rise of Benedictine monasticism, the *Mandatum* as a practice in the liturgy of the Lord's Supper began to spread especially in monastic settings. The Abbot would wash the feet of poor men. After the ceremony, the poor men would receive food and beverages from the monks and be given a small amount of money before leaving. However, the rite would

not conclude there. The Abbot and Prior would then gather for a second foot washing of all the monks in the house.

- Likewise, the “double” *Mandatum* was celebrated in Rome by the Holy Father in the Middle Ages: 12 subdeacons and 13 poor men from the city.
- From the late Middle Ages until the 18th century, the *Mandatum* became a regular practice in the liturgy at the parish level. It took various shapes mainly the washing of the most vulnerable or poor men in society.
- The Mandatum fell out of practice in the late 1800s universally.
- In 1955, Pope Pius XII restored the liturgies of Holy Week by the decree *Maxima Redemptionis Nostrae Mysteria* # 2b where the faculty was granted to “perform the washing of the feet of twelve men during the Mass of the Lord’s Supper to represent Christ’s humility and love for his disciples.”
- In 1988, the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, in *Paschale Solemnitatis* # 51, confirmed that “the washing of the feet of chosen men” may take place this day to represent the service and charity of Christ who came to serve and not to be served.
- In a letter dated December 20, 2014, Pope Francis expressed his desire to Cardinal Sarah, the prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, to change rubric # 11 of the *Mass of the Lord’s Supper* to include “the People of God (*populus Dei*)” and not simply “the chosen men (*virii selecti*).” The Holy Father has expressed his desire to manifest the full meaning of the rite to those who participate in it; namely the charity of Christ to every part of the People of God.

Pastoral Reminders

- The Washing of the Feet (the *Mandatum*) remains an optional rite. “After the Homily, where a pastoral reason suggests, the Washing of the Feet follows.” (*Mass of the Lord’s Supper*, # 10) It is for pastors to evaluate the overall desirability of the rite in such a way that it is not reduced to something artificial nor carried out in an overly theatrical manner.
- In the Diocese of Allentown, pastors are to be vigilant that the males and females chosen for the Washing of the Feet (the *Mandatum*) are practicing Catholics in good standing, living a life of conformity with Church teachings.

- The number required for the Washing of the Feet (the *Mandatum*) is not definitively set in the Roman Missal. The Missal refers simply to “those chosen from among the People of God.” (*Mass of the Lord’s Supper*, # 11). In the Diocese of Allentown, pastors are encouraged to choose a number other than twelve (e.g. 6, 8, 10) to establish a clear distinction that the group having their feet washed is not representative of the twelve male Apostles, but rather a ritual enactment of Jesus Christ’s New Commandment that is not limited to the twelve.
- The liturgical change does not set a requirement that men or women must be used in the rite. Rather the Decree states that “the group *may* consist of men and women, and ideally of the young and the old, healthy, and sick, clerics, consecrated persons, and lay people.” (Emphasis added)
- The liturgical change implemented does not allow for anyone other than the bishop or priest to wash the feet of the “People of God.” It is not permissible for lay people to wash other lay people’s or the priest’s feet; nor is it allowable for other parts of the body (e.g. hands) to be washed during the *Mandatum*.
- This liturgical change impacts only the Ordinary Form of the Mass. Priests in the Diocese of Allentown while celebrating the Extraordinary Form of the Mass are not impacted by the change as this does not affect the 1962 Missal.

If you have any further questions regarding the meaning or implementation of this liturgical change, please do not hesitate to contact the Chancery. Thank you for your pastoral consideration of this matter.

OUR LENTEN OBLIGATION

Church law considers every Friday and the season of Lent as penitential days and times. The practice of penance is a part of our faith and Christian life. When we do penance, we imitate Jesus, who Himself recommended it as necessary to His followers, and gave them the example of His prayer and fasting.

The Lenten obligation, as determined for Catholics in the United States by our bishops, requires that fasting be observed on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. The law of abstinence is to be observed on Ash Wednesday and all the Fridays of Lent.

Who must fast?

All Catholics who are between the ages of 18 and 59. The obligation ceases when one begins his/her 60th year on his/her 59th birthday.

Who must abstain?

All Catholics who are 14 years and older.

What does fasting mean?

The observance of fasting means that those obliged may take only one full meal on the day of fast. Two lighter meals (not equal to another full meal) may be taken to maintain strength according to one's needs.

What does abstinence mean?

The law of abstinence forbids the eating of meat, including poultry. Voluntary abstinence refers to refraining from lawful pleasures in a spirit of penance.

Can anyone be dispensed or excused from fast and/or abstinence?

Individuals for a just cause may be dispensed by their pastor or by a priest with the faculty to do so. In our Diocese all priests may dispense individuals who are committed to their pastoral care.

Those who are ill or have a similar serious reason are excused from the observance of fast and abstinence. Catholics are reminded that they should not lightly excuse themselves from this obligation.

Are there other obligations which we should fulfill?

Catholics are obliged to fulfill what has been called their "Easter Duty." They are required to receive Holy Communion during the Easter time. In the United States this obligation can be fulfilled from the First Sunday of Lent until Trinity Sunday (1 March until 7 June 2020). Those conscious of serious sin are reminded of the obligation to confess their sins at least once a year during this time.

Catholics also are encouraged to make Lent a time of more intense prayer and to practice almsgiving and other works of charity. Parishes are encouraged to continue participation in Rice Bowl.

NUESTRA OBLIGACIÓN DE CUARESMA

La ley eclesiástica considera todos los viernes y el tiempo de Cuaresma como los días y tiempo de penitencia. La práctica de la penitencia es una parte de nuestra fe y vida cristiana. Cuando hacemos penitencia, imitamos a Jesús, Él mismo recomendó como necesario para sus seguidores y les dio el ejemplo de su oración y ayuno.

La obligación de Cuaresma, según lo determinado por los católicos en los Estados Unidos por nuestros obispos, requiere que se observe el ayuno el miércoles de Ceniza y el Viernes Santo. La ley de la abstinencia se observa el miércoles de Ceniza y todos los viernes de Cuaresma.

¿Quién debe ayunar?

Todos los católicos que están entre las edades de 18 y 59. La obligación cesa cuando se haya cumplido los 59 años.

¿Quién debe abstenerse?

Todos los católicos que tienen 14 años y mayores.

¿Qué significa el ayuno?

La observancia del ayuno significa que los obligados pueden tomar sólo una comida completa en el día de ayuno. Dos comidas más ligeras (Que no igualen a una comida completa) pueden tomarse para mantener la fuerza de acuerdo a las necesidades de uno.

¿Qué significa la abstinencia?

La ley de la abstinencia prohíbe el consumo de carne, incluidas las aves de corral. Abstinencia voluntaria se refiere a abstenerse de los placeres lícitos en un espíritu de penitencia.

¿Puede alguien ser dispensado o excusado de ayunar y/o la abstinencia?

Los individuos de una causa justa pueden ser dispensados por su párroco o un sacerdote con facultad para hacerlo. En nuestra diócesis todos los sacerdotes pueden dispensar las personas que están

comprometidos con su cuidado pastoral. Los que están enfermos o tienen una razón similar sería están excusados de la observancia del ayuno y la abstinencia. Se les recuerda a los católicos que no deben excusarse a sí mismos de esta obligación.

¿Existen otras obligaciones que debemos cumplir?

Los católicos están obligados a cumplir con lo que se ha llamado su "deber de Pascua." Ellos están obligados a recibir la Sagrada Comunión durante el tiempo de Pascua. En los Estados Unidos esta obligación puede ser cumplida a partir del Primer Domingo de Cuaresma hasta el Domingo de Trinidad (1 de marzo hasta el 7 de junio del 2020). Los que tienen conciencia de pecado grave se les recuerda de la obligación de confesar sus pecados al menos una vez al año durante este tiempo.

También se les anima a los católicos a hacer de la Cuaresma un tiempo de oración más intensa y de practicar la limosna y otras obras de caridad. Se anima a las parroquias a continuar su participación en la Operación Plato de Arroz.