

Candidates for the Sacraments

especially on the Sundays of Lent

Background

For those preparing to be initiated into the Church at Easter, Lent marks the final stage of preparation, the period of Purification and Enlightenment. It begins with the Rite of Election on the First Sunday of Lent. During the season of Lent the Scrutinies are celebrated on the 3rd, 4th and 5th Sundays in preparation for Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist at the Easter Vigil. Many parishes will also receive candidates for Reception into the Church.

The people of God, as represented by the local Church, should understand and show by their concern that the initiation of adults is the responsibility of all the baptised.

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. RCIA 9

The celebration of other Sacraments, such as Confirmation and First Holy Communion, will often take place within the Easter season so that candidates for these Sacraments will also be preparing in Lent. These candidates should also be remembered in the prayers of the community.

Prayer of the Faithful

one of the following may be used or adapted according to local needs

- Let us pray for those called to the Easter sacraments: that they may find joy in the love of the Lord.
- For all who walk alongside the Elect and candidates, for catechists, sponsors and Godparents may they be generous in faith and caring in support.

Prayer

Father of love and power,
it is your will
to establish everything in Christ
and to draw us into
his all-embracing love.

Guide the elect of your Church:
strengthen them in their vocation,
build them into
the kingdom of your Son,
and seal them
with the Spirit of your promise.

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

Liturgical Texts

may be used when permitted - see Table of Rubrics

- The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults contains the texts for the celebrations proper to the period of Purification and Enlightenment.

Opportunities and Challenges

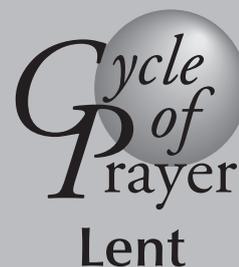
- Where there are members of the Elect - for the Scrutinies to well celebrated with them within the Sunday assembly.
- When the Scrutinies are celebrated the scripture readings for year A are always used. Will this use affect other parish Masses as well to assist a common reflection on Baptism?
- To make the whole parish aware of those preparing for the celebration of the Easter Sacraments and to invite their prayers.
- To encourage people to participate in the Easter Triduum and in particular the Easter Vigil.
- What opportunities are there to make connections between the preparation of different Sacraments? Enable a time for reflection between priest(s) and catechists.

Links

- RCIA Network of England and Wales [www.rcia.org.uk]
- *Sharing the Word*-guidance on Lectionary Based Catechesis (pdf) [www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Resources/Scripture/Lectionary-Catechesis.pdf]

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Cycle
of
Prayer
Lent

The Needy and Hungry of the World

especially on Lenten Fast Day – 1st Friday in Lent

Background

The agency for Overseas development, Cafod, encourages the Church in England and Wales to use the 1st Friday of Lent as an opportunity to remember the needy and hungry of the world. The day is an opportunity the three Lenten disciplines of Prayer, Fasting and Almsgiving which derive from the proclamation of the Word on Ash Wednesday.

The proceeds from the practice of fasting on the Friday are usually collected at Mass on the 1st Sunday of Lent.

Prayer of the Faithful

one of the following may be used or adapted according to local needs

- For the poor and hungry of the world may they have access to food fairly traded.
- For all who work for overseas development may they work alongside the poor bringing dignity and justice.

Liturgical Texts

may be used when permitted - see Table of Rubrics

- In time of famine.

Prayer

All powerful Father,
God of goodness,
you provide for all your creation.
Give us an effective love for our
brothers and sisters
who suffer from lack of food.
Help us do all we can to relieve their
hunger,
that they may serve you with carefree
hearts.

Roman Missal

Opportunities and Challenges

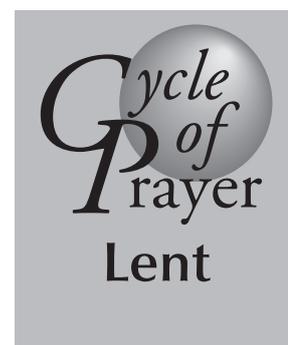
- Fasting is an ancient Christian practice that is encouraged on the Fridays of Lent.
- On Holy Thursday the procession of gifts can include gifts for the poor.
- What opportunities are there to serve the needy and hungry in the local area? Involvement in a Soup run or other project would be good way of engaging an RCIA group in the social activity of the church.

Links

- CAFOD [www.cafod.org.uk]
- Leaflet on Fasting (pdf) [www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Resources/Penance/Fasting.pdf]
- Lenten Resources on Fasting and Penance [www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Resources/Penance/LentRec.html]

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Women's World Day of Prayer

especially on 1st Friday in March

Background

Women's World Day of Prayer is a worldwide movement of Christian women who come together to observe a common day of prayer held on the first Friday in March each year, and who, in many countries, have a continuing relationship in prayer and service. Through Women's World Day of Prayer women are encouraged to become aware of their talents and use them in the service of the wider community.

Prayer of the Faithful

one of the following may be used or adapted according to local needs

- For governments and legislators that they may protect and establish the dignity and equality of women in society.
- For women within the Church may they serve the needs of all.

Opportunities and Challenges

- Women's World Day of Prayer is usually celebrated ecumenically. This is an opportunity for celebrating the best of what different traditions have to offer.
- The material for the day is usually has a theme and is prepared by a particular country. How might this material be shared by the wider community?

Prayer

Father,
you have given all peoples
one common origin,
and your will is to gather them
as one family in yourself.
Fill the hearts of all women
with the fire of your love
and the desire to ensure
justice for all.

Hear the prayers offered you
by women throughout the world
for an end to all division,
and a human society
built on love and peace.

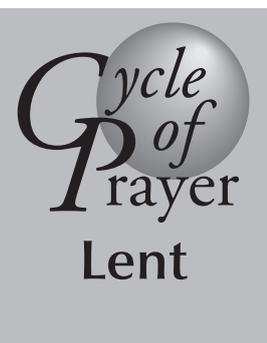
Roman Missal (adapted)

Links

- Women's World Day of Prayer [www.wwdp-natcomm.org]
- National Board of Catholic Women [www.nbcw.org]
- Letter of Pope John Paul II to Women [www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/letters/documents/hf_jp-ii_let_29061995_women_en.html]

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Penitents and Wanderers

Background

The twin themes of Lent are baptism and penance. Lent is a time of reflection and preparation for Easter. Many parishes offer opportunities for the celebration of the Sacrament of Penance in the Lenten season. In recent years some parishes have explored using the Lenten period as a time to assist those returning to the Church after a period of not being active in the life of the Church. This reflects the ancient practice of the Order of Penitents which reached its end on the morning of Holy Thursday.

Prayer of the Faithful

one of the following may be used or adapted according to local needs

- For the courage to face up to sin and turn to Christ.
- For all who are searching may they find their home in the Church.

Liturgical Texts

may be used when permitted - see Table of Rubrics

- For any Need
- For Forgiveness of Sins

Opportunities and Challenges

- In the 3rd edition of the Roman Missal permission is given to use the Eucharistic Prayers for Reconciliation with any appropriate preface. This means they may be used on the Sundays of Lent.
- The Rite of Penance encourages the use of non-Sacramental Penitential Services as way of preparing for the celebration of the Sacrament.
- Among the resources prepared by the Liturgy Office to assist parishes celebrate the Rite of Penance are a selection of Scripture cards for use in preparation for and celebration of Individual Confession.
- Does the parish offer a variety of forms of prayer and liturgy as entry points into the prayer life of the parish?

Prayer

God of power and might,
we praise you through your Son,
Jesus Christ,
who comes in your name.
He is the Word
that brings salvation.
He is the hand
you stretch out to sinners.
He is the way
that leads to your peace.

God our Father,
we had wandered far from you,
but through your Son
you have brought us back.
You gave him up to death
so that we might turn again to you
and find our way to one another.

*Roman Missal:
Eucharistic Prayer for Reconciliation II*

Links

- CASE directory - Welcoming Back Returning Catholics [www.caseresources.org/case/Main.aspx?page=section§ionid=15]
- Landings [www.richmond.demon.co.uk/landings]
- Liturgy Office Resources for the Sacrament of Penance [www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Resources/Penance/LentRec.html]

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