

Preparing for Lent

1. No Gloria is said or sung (GIRM #55); specific solemnities during Lent are the exception.
2. We abstain from “Alleluia” during Lent, especially during the Gospel Acclamation (#62) but including 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.
4. The playing of the organ and other musical instruments is allowed only to support the singing (*Laetare* Sunday [4th], solemnities and feasts 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. 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 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.*)
7. 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).”