



DIOCESE OF BELLEVILLE

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**TO:** PASTORS, PARISH ADMINISTRATORS, DEACONS AND  
PARISH LIFE COORDINATORS  
**FROM:** SUE A. HUETT, DIRECTOR  
OFFICE OF WORSHIP  
**DATE:** FEBRUARY, 2012  
**RE:** LENTEN REGULATIONS 2012

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*Each year the Lord Jesus calls the entire Church to a special season of penance and renewal. As we begin this holy time of Lent, we should reflect on our need for conversion of heart, prayer, charitable works and penance.*

**The season of Lent extends this year from Ash Wednesday, February 22, to the Mass of the Lord's Supper, April 5, inclusive.**

1. Everyone 14 years of age or over is bound to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday, Good Friday and all Fridays of Lent.
  2. Everyone 18 years of age and under 59 years of age is also bound to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.
  3. On these two days of fast and abstinence, only one full meatless meal is allowed. The other meatless meals, sufficient to maintain strength, may be taken according to one's needs, but altogether they should not equal another full meal. Eating between meals is not permitted on these two days, but liquids, including milk and fruit juices are allowed. When health or ability to work would be seriously affected, the obligation of the law is modified. Because Lent is a special season for all Christians, we should not lightly excuse ourselves from these penitential practices.
  4. To completely disregard the law of fast and abstinence is seriously sinful.
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**HOLY SATURDAY: THE EASTER VIGIL**

The first Mass of Easter, the Easter Vigil, falls between nightfall of Holy Saturday, 7 April and daybreak of Easter Sunday, 8 April 2012. On Saturday evening, 7 April, the sun will set in our diocese at 7:30 p.m. The end of civil twilight (nightfall) will occur at 7:57 p.m. **It is suggested that the Easter Vigil celebration not begin before 8:00 p.m.**

According to a most ancient tradition, this night is one of vigil for the Lord, and the Vigil celebrated during it, to commemorate that holy night when the Lord rose from the dead, is regarded as the mother of all holy vigils. For in that night, the Church keeps vigil, waiting for the resurrection of the Lord, and celebrates the sacraments of Christian initiation.

— *Paschale Solemnitatis*, no. 77

(quoting Exodus 12:42; St. Augustine, Sermon 219; and the *Ceremonial of Bishops*)

The entire celebration of this vigil should take place at night, that is, it should either begin after nightfall or end before the dawn of Sunday.

*All of the information in this memo is available on the Office of Worship [website](#).*