



1 March 2011

My Dear Brother Priests,

With the Christmas celebrations behind us, it is not too early to begin to look forward to the celebration of Easter, and our time of Lenten preparation.

This year, Holy Saturday will occur on April 23. Civil twilight in Atlanta will take place at 8:39 PM. Civil twilight marks the point where the sun is six degrees below the horizon, and represents the earliest time when the Easter Vigil may begin. However, the sky is not yet completely dark at civil twilight, and so parishes may prefer to wait until nautical twilight, which takes place at 9:11 PM in Atlanta. The times for twilight will vary slightly elsewhere in the Archdiocese.

Lent is a season of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. In order to see that our preparation for Easter has a communal, and not just an individual dimension, the Church gives us certain norms for a common Lenten observance. The Lenten guidelines for the Archdiocese of Atlanta are as follows:

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent, and is a day of universal fasting and abstinence. The following fasting and abstinence regulations are observed throughout Lent:

Abstinence from meat is observed on Ash Wednesday (March 9), Good Friday (April 22) and all the Fridays of Lent by all Catholics 14 years of age and older.

Fasting is observed on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday by all Catholics who are 18 years of age but not yet 59 years of age. Those bound by this rule may take only one full meal. Two smaller meals are permitted as necessary to maintain strength according to one's needs, but eating solid foods between meals is not permitted.

Those who are sick, pregnant, or nursing, or whose health would adversely be affected by fasting or abstinence should not consider themselves bound by these norms.

During the season of Lent, we are all called to embrace penances and to perform works of charity that reflect our desire for conversion of heart. Let us all pray fervently for those Catechumens and Candidates who will celebrate the Easter Sacraments with us this year. May this Lent lead us all to a deeper union in Christ with one another.

El Miércoles de Ceniza marca el inicio de la Cuaresma, y es un día de ayuno y abstinencia universal. A través de la Cuaresma, se observan las siguientes normas sobre ayuno y abstinencia:

**Office of Divine Worship**

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El Miércoles de Ceniza (9 de marzo), el Viernes Santo (22 de abril) y todos los viernes de Cuaresma, todos los católicos de 14 años en adelante se abstienen de comer carne.

Todos los católicos de 18 a 59 años de edad observan el ayuno el Miércoles de Ceniza y el Viernes Santo. Quienes deben observar esta norma pueden tomar sólo una comida completa. Se permiten dos comidas pequeñas para mantener la fuerza, según las necesidades de cada persona, pero no se permite ingerir alimentos sólidos entre las comidas.

Quienes se encuentren enfermos, las mujeres embarazadas o que estén lactando, o aquellas personas cuya salud podría afectarse adversamente por el ayuno o la abstinencia, no deben considerarse limitados por estas normas.

Durante la temporada de la Cuaresma, estamos llamados a acoger la penitencia y a realizar obras de caridad que reflejen nuestro deseo de una conversión de corazón. Oremos con fervor por aquellos catecúmenos y candidatos que este año celebrarán los sacramentos de la Pascua con nosotros. Que esta Cuaresma nos lleve, unos con otros, a una unión más profunda en Cristo.

I wish you all of God's graces as we prepare for this holy season.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Fr. Theodore Book

Director, Office for Divine Worship