

# Sunday and Feast Day Liturgical Notes for Priests and Deacons

## Suggestions for Leading Worship



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**RE:** Liturgical Suggestions for the First Sunday of Lent, Cycle B

**Sunday or Feast Day date:** February 28-March 1, 2009

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Dear Fathers and Deacons,

### **An Overview for this Sunday...**

Historically, Lent is a season of final, intense preparation for initiation sacraments. The whole Church joins in a conversion process along with those to be baptized or make their profession of faith. Lent is conversion and journey; its goal is a renewed sense of our identity as daughters and sons of God.

The first reading from Genesis for this Sunday speaks of the covenant God made with Noah; that waters will never again destroy “all mortal beings.” At the same time, it was those destroying waters that brought life to Noah and his family, the righteous ones. The second reading from the First Letter of Peter explicitly relates baptism to saving waters. By our baptism we make a new covenant with God (“appeal to God for a clear conscience”) that initiates in us a new relationship to God through Jesus Christ, the Risen One who “is at the right hand of God.”

Lent is a time for us to assess our baptismal, covenantal relationship with God. It is our time to face evil and choose to live in righteousness. By so doing we – with Christ – proclaim by our lives that the “kingdom of God is at hand.” Living the paschal mystery calls us to die to the sin within us so that we can rise to the life given us in baptism.

*(from Living Liturgy, Joyce Ann Zimmerman, et al, Liturgical Press, Collegeville, MN)*

## Questions for Faith Sharing...

- 1) What does the call of Lent – “Repent and believe in the Gospel” – mean to me?
- 2) What drives me into the desert to face the sin within?
- 3) How can I find the mercy of God? What can I do to turn towards God and experience the Lord’s mercy?

## Some Other Considerations as You Prepare...

- 1) Establish a “Lenten pattern” for the Introductory Rites: a quieter or simple procession, with a simple Lenten opening song. Sing the penitential rite (a sung *Kyrie*) using form C, or use form A, that is, recite the Confiteor with all singing a *Kyrie* at its conclusion.
- 2) The non-verbal elements of Lenten Liturgy are important: a spare, uncluttered church, removal of plants and flowers, the lack of decorations, the use of seasonal color in altar paraments/banners, the use of incense. These elements help to signal that a new sober, solemn time in the Church year has begun.
- 3) The regular Opening Prayer for the First Sunday of Lent brings out the meaning of Lent and emphasizes the paschal mystery of Christ. The alternate Opening Prayer relates to the first reading with its references to the creation of man and our need for mercy.
- 4) On this Sunday the RCIA suggests that the “Parish Celebration for Sending Catechumens for Election and Candidates for Recognition by the Bishop” be celebrated. It may be found at nos. 530-546 in the ritual.
- 5) There is a mandatory Preface, P12, for the First Sunday of Lent, to be used today.
- 6) Consider using one of the Eucharistic Prayers for Reconciliation during the entire season of Lent as often as possible.

## Sample Intercessory Prayers for the First Sunday of Lent–Cycle B

(adapted from *Prayers for Sundays and Seasons, Year B*, by P. Scagnelli, Liturgy Training Publications, Chicago, IL, 1997)

*Priest:* Saved by baptism and called to share Christ's victory over temptation, let us offer our intercession to God.

*Deacon* (or other reader when there is no deacon):

- 1) That these forty days in the wilderness of Lent may increase the Church's strength for proclaiming the good news, we pray to the Lord.
- 2) That God's covenant of peace may inspire nations to prepare a heritage of peace for future generations, we pray to the Lord.
- 3) That those estranged from God or the assembly may return, finding God's blessing awaiting them, and the welcome of God's people, we pray to the Lord.
- 4) That the Elect, who draw near to the saving waters of baptism, may persevere in the covenant that God seeks to establish with them, we pray to the Lord.
- 5) That all those already baptized, led by the Spirit and one with Jesus, may experience the Lenten wilderness as a place of testing and triumph, we pray to the Lord.
- 6) That our beloved dead (especially \_\_\_\_\_) may go with Christ into heaven to the right hand of God, we pray to the Lord.

[*pause; the presider alone concludes*]

*Priest:* Gracious God, ever true to your covenant,  
whose loving hand sheltered Noah and the chosen few  
while the waters of the great flood cleansed and renewed a fallen  
world,  
may we, sanctified through the saving waters of baptism,  
and clothed in the shining garments of immortality,  
be touched again by your call to conversion  
and give our lives anew to the challenge of your reign.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.