



Archdiocese of Cape Town

ARCHDIOCESE OF CAPE TOWN REGULATIONS

● LENT 2023

Lent begins on **Ash Wednesday**, February 22, 2023 and concludes at 4.00pm on **Holy Saturday**, April 08, 2023.

The Need for Penance

The faithful are obliged by divine law to do penance. To enable the faithful to join together in a common practice of penance, certain days have been prescribed in the Church's year. These days are each Friday and the season of Lent when the faithful are, in a special way, to devote themselves to prayer, to engage in works of piety and charity and to deny themselves certain pleasures.

All should join in the Church's penitential exercises during Lent as fully and as frequently as possible. This may be done by daily assistance at Mass and frequent Communion, by participating in the Stations of the Cross in which we meditate on the passion and death of our Saviour, by frequent and fervent prayer and by abstaining from luxuries and amusements which could distract us from the love and service of God and neighbour.

Fast and Abstinence

The days of fast and abstinence are **ASH WEDNESDAY** and **GOOD FRIDAY**.

ALL FRIDAYS, unless a Solemnity, are days of abstinence from meat; however, with the exception of **GOOD FRIDAY**, the faithful may on a Friday substitute abstinence from alcohol, tobacco or some luxury food or undertake other forms of penance, especially acts of charity or exercises of piety. What is required is some conscious identification with the Lord's passion by voluntarily depriving oneself of meat, alcohol, tobacco or luxury foods, or deliberately undertaking an act of charity or piety. In other words, all Fridays are penitential days.

The law of **FASTING** allows only one full meal a day, but does not prohibit taking some small quantity of food at the other two mealtimes. All persons who have celebrated their **EIGHTEENTH** birthday but not yet reached their **FIFTY-NINTH** one, are bound by the law of **FAST**. Self-imposed fasting on all weekdays of Lent is strongly recommended, though not obligatory.

The law of **ABSTINENCE** forbids the use of meat, but not of eggs, the products of milk or condiments made of animal fat. All persons who have celebrated their **FOURTEENTH** birthday are bound by the law of **ABSTINENCE**.

The Eucharistic Precept and the Sacrament of Penance

Once admitted to the Blessed Eucharist, each of the faithful is obliged to receive Holy Communion at least once a year. This precept must be fulfilled during Paschal time unless, for a good reason, it is fulfilled at some other time during the year. Paschal time is understood as the period from Palm (Passion) Sunday to Pentecost Sunday. The satisfaction of the Eucharistic precept outside this period requires a just cause such as illness. In such a case, the precept must be satisfied within one year. Moreover, all the faithful who have reached the age of discretion (7 years) are bound faithfully to confess their grave sins at least once a year.

The Lenten Appeal

The Bishops' Lenten Appeal for the missionary needs of the Church in Southern Africa and to assist the poor and needy, provides an ideal means of almsgiving during the season of Lent. Its call for sacrifice on the part of every Catholic should be a reminder of the obligation to practice self-denial and mortification. All the faithful are urged to participate fully in this appeal by making their contribution generously. Children should be encouraged to obtain a 'mite box' at the beginning of Lent in order to learn the meaning of sacrifice.

● HOLYDAYS OF OBLIGATION

In addition to every Sunday of the year, the only other holy day of obligation is the solemnity of **CHRISTMAS DAY**. On these days, the faithful are bound to assist at Mass and, in so far as possible, abstain from servile works. The celebration of the solemnity of the Epiphany is transferred to the Sunday between January 2 and January 8, the solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ to the Sunday after Trinity Sunday, and the solemnity of All Saints and the Assumption to the following Sunday.

● CATECHETICAL INSTRUCTION

Parents are reminded of their grave obligation to ensure the Catholic education of their children. The role of the parish catechetical programme and the parents themselves is vital to ensuring that children are properly instructed in the faith. Adult Catholics are to be encouraged to be trained as catechists and to become involved in the parish programme.

● ONGOING FORMATION

Parishes are encouraged to participate in locally available programmes for on-going formation. A theology course, marriage preparation and enrichment, as well as other programmes for lay ministry are offered by the Centre for Pastoral Development. Contact the office for details. The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults for those wishing to be baptised or received into full communion with the Catholic Church is highly recommended as a means of evangelisation.

● MARRIAGE

Parties proposing to enter marriage are to give at least six months notice of their intention to the parish priest. Prior to the celebration of the sacrament, the parties are to attend a course of marriage instruction. This may be presented by the pastoral minister who is to assist at the marriage, or the couple may participate in an Engaged Encounter weekend or a programme of instruction offered at deanery level or by the CPD, including online courses approved by the CPD.

It is absolutely forbidden for a pastoral minister to assist at a marriage, even only in his capacity as a civil marriage officer, where at least one party remains bound through a bond of marriage to his/her former spouse. The participation of a pastoral minister in such a ceremony would lead to serious scandal among the faithful and to their questioning the Church's doctrine on the indissolubility of marriage. Failure to observe this norm may lead to canonical penalties.

Mixed Marriages

Permission for the celebration of marriage where one party is a member of the Catholic faith and the other not, may be granted by the pastoral minister assisting at the marriage, subject to certain conditions:

- a) The Catholic party is to declare that he/she is prepared to remove all dangers of defecting from the faith. The responsibility for fidelity to the Church thus rests with the Catholic party.
- b) The Catholic party must also make a sincere promise to do all in his/her power to have all the children baptised and brought up in the Catholic faith. The other party is to be informed of these promises of the Catholic party in good time so that it is clear that he/she is truly aware of the promise and obligation of the Catholic party.
- c) Both parties are to be instructed about the purpose and essential requirements of marriage which are not to be excluded by either party.

Dispensation from the Canonical Form of Marriage

This dispensation is reserved and must be requested of the Judicial Vicar.

The granting of a dispensation from the canonical form is subject to the following:

- a) The conditions stipulated for a mixed marriage have been satisfied;
- b) The reasons for the request for a dispensation be concerned in some way with:
 - o the grave difficulty of a non-Catholic party to be married by a Catholic pastoral minister when his/her parent or a close relative is a minister of his/her Church;
 - o the strong reluctance on the part of the family of the non-Catholic to submit to the Catholic form of marriage.

The Place for the Celebration of Marriage

Since the celebration of marriage between Catholics or between a Catholic and a baptised non-Catholic is a sacramental one, it is most fitting that the ceremony takes place in the parish church of one of the Catholic parties. Although a marriage between a Catholic and non-baptised person is not sacramental, it is nevertheless a religious event in which the Lord is called upon to witness the exchange of consent. Such a marriage should ordinarily be celebrated in the church of the Catholic party.

In extraordinary circumstances, permission could be given for a marriage to be celebrated in a non-Catholic church, provided a Catholic pastoral minister receives the consent of the couple on behalf of the Church. Permission may also be given for a marriage to be celebrated on a wine estate or other similar venue provided that the Catholic pastoral minister who is to assist at the marriage has confirmed that the proposed venue is suitable for the celebration of marriage and that the sacredness of the event will not be lost in such secular surroundings. Such permissions are to be sought from the Judicial Vicar.

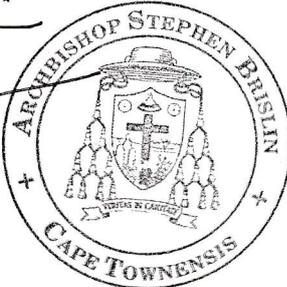
Registration of a Marriage

As soon as possible after the celebration of a marriage, the parish priest of the place of celebration or whoever takes his place, even if neither has assisted at the marriage, is to record in the parish marriage register the names of the spouses, of the pastoral minister who assisted, and of witnesses, and the place and date of the celebration of the marriage. Notification of the Catholic party(ies) place of baptism should also happen as soon as possible.

Confirmation Prior to Marriage

The reception of the sacrament of Confirmation prior to marriage is strongly recommended, although it is not an *absolute* obligation where it cannot be conferred without grave inconvenience. Where the pastoral minister who is to assist at the marriage learns of the non-confirmation of a Catholic party only within a short period prior to the proposed marriage, such a person should be enrolled in the parish confirmation programme and admitted to the sacrament of Confirmation after the reception of the sacrament of Matrimony.

GIVEN at Cape Town this the 21st day of February, 2023.

+ Stephen Brislin
ARCHBISHOP OF CAPE TOWN



Father Manuel Fernandes SAC
CHANCELLOR