



OFFICE OF DIVINE WORSHIP

ANNOUNCEMENT: JULY 1, 2019

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EASTER VIGIL EARLIEST START TIMES 2020 - 2025

The following times have been determined as the *earliest* start times for the Celebration of the Easter Vigil in the Holy Night for all parishes within the Diocese of Green Bay for 2020 - 2025. The *Roman Missal* states "the entire celebration of the Easter Vigil must take place during the night, so that it begins after nightfall and ends before daybreak on Sunday." Parishes may not begin the celebration of the Easter Vigil prior to these times:

April 11, 2020; 8:15 PM CDT

April 3, 2021; 8:00 PM CDT

April 16, 2022; 8:15 PM CDT

April 8, 2023; 8:00 PM CDT

March 30, 2024; 8:00 PM CDT

April 19, 2025; 8:15 PM CDT

Ritual Importance

The celebration of the Easter Vigil marks the climax of our Liturgical Year. Of the rich symbols this liturgy is embedded with, the Blessing of the Fire (Lucernarium) requires darkness to be celebrated and experienced. Keeping vigil in earlier centuries meant lighting the lamps at sundown, watching prayerfully throughout the night and celebrating the Eucharist just before sunrise. Today, we begin in darkness as we wait and we celebrate the Light of Christ, which shatters the darkness.

The Easter Vigil is not an Anticipated Mass

The *Circular Letter Concerning the Preparation and Celebration of the Easter Feasts* expressed concern that in some places the Easter Vigil "is celebrated as if it were an evening Mass, in the same way and at the same time as the Mass celebrated on Saturday evening in anticipation of Sunday." The Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the

Sacraments then reiterated the rubric in the *Roman Missal* and added, "This rule is to be taken according to its strictest sense. Reprehensible are those abuses and practices which have crept in many places in violation of this ruling, whereby the Easter Vigil is celebrated at the time of day that is customary to celebrate anticipated Masses."

Explanation of the Calculations

The times above are based upon the end of civil twilight (not sunset) which is the earliest point of the evening at which solar illumination, remaining after sunset, is no longer sufficient and artificial sources of light [i.e.: candles] are needed to carry on most outdoor activities.

Please contact the Office of Divine Worship with any additional questions.

Shaun Johnson
Divine Worship Director

Office of Divine Worship
Diocese of Green Bay
P.O. Box 23825, Green Bay, WI 54305
920-272-8341
worship@gbdioc.org