



Office of the Bishop

*Diocese of Erie
P. O. Box 10397
Erie, Pennsylvania 16514-0397*

DECREE OF PROMULGATION

CONCERNING PARTICULAR NORMS FOR EVENING MASSES WHICH FULFILL THE SUNDAY OR HOLY DAY OBLIGATION

The practice of allowing for evening Anticipated Masses (*i.e.*, those with texts identical to the Sunday or Holy Day text) or Vigil Masses (*i.e.*, those with special readings and proper texts for the evening preceding the Sunday or Holy Day) to fulfill the obligation for Sundays and Holy Days has become an accepted part of Catholic life. This practice is rooted in the Judeo-Christian tradition of beginning Holy Days at sunset, a practice mirrored in the celebration of First Vespers for Sundays and Solemnities.

To provide for a consistent practice throughout the diocese, and to ensure that the evening character of these Masses be retained, with the unanimous opinion of the Presbyteral Council I now decree that:

1. Anticipated Masses and Vigil Masses are not to begin prior to 4:30 p.m.
2. With due regard for nos. 3 and 4 below, on any given Sunday or Solemnity there is not to be more than one Anticipated Mass or Vigil Mass celebrated in any church, chapel, or oratory in the Diocese of Erie without the express permission of the Bishop.
3. On Christmas Eve, no Vigil Mass is to begin prior to 4:30 p.m. The pastor himself, however, may authorize the celebration of multiple Vigil Masses in the parish in accord with the pastoral needs of the people.
4. The time for the Easter Vigil will be set each year by the Bishop in accord with the liturgical norms that require the Easter Vigil to begin after nightfall. All celebrations of the Easter Vigil are to conform with the time established by the Bishop, except in those cases where his express permission has been obtained beforehand.

These norms are hereby promulgated and obtain the full force of law on Holy Thursday, April 1, 2010. Anything to the contrary notwithstanding.

Given at the Chancery
of the Diocese of Erie
on this 25th day of January, 2010.

The Most Rev. Donald W. Trautman, S.T.D., S.S.L.
Bishop of Erie

The Rev. Edward M. Lohse, J.C.L.
Chancellor

Original with signatures and seal is on file in the Chancery Office.