

Holy Week

A Very Special Time

Holy Week is a very special time in our history as God's people.

Step by step, we move forward to the celebration of our liberation in Christ. Through His paschal mystery, the Lord Jesus redeemed the human race and gave perfect glory to the Father. By dying, Christ destroyed our death; by rising He restored our life.

For this reason, the Easter Triduum, when we celebrate the death and resurrection of Jesus, is the high point of the church year. The Easter Triduum opens with the Solemn celebration of the Lord's Passion on Good Friday and closes with the great vigil of Holy Saturday Night and the masses of Easter Sunday morning.

The entire community is urged to set aside time for prayer and reflection during these special days and to participate to the full in the celebrations of this great week.

Passion Sunday

Passion Sunday is our introduction to the great celebrations of Holy Week.



It has been popularly known as **Palm Sunday** because of the joyful procession that marks the entry for that day. But the major element of the day – the one that announces Holy Week

itself – is the proclamation of the Passion of our Lord.

The procession with palms had its beginning in fifth century Jerusalem. The practice did not become established in Rome, however, until the eleventh century. Palms were carried to highlight the joy of the procession, just as they were used in the original entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. The participants waved them, and strewed them in the path of the procession.

It was only much later that the palms were blessed and taken home after the service. Our parish celebration will attempt to capture something of the original spirit of the procession with palms. But this is done with some discretion, in order that the gospel proclamation of our Lord's passion may be the principal focus of our attention.

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday



After the important celebration of Passion Sunday, the liturgies of Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday help us to continue to reflect on the suffering of Jesus, and especially on his attitudes of faith and trust in God our Father.

As we enter into the spirit of our Lord, we become more aware of the cost of our salvation: we are saved by the blood of the Lamb who freely laid down His life for us.

Holy Thursday

Solemn Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper

On Holy Thursday, the Christian community comes together to celebrate the evening mass of the Lord's Supper.

The celebration includes the washing of feet and a Eucharistic procession into the chapel. This is followed by the stripping of the altar and a period of personal adoration that lasts till midnight.



To underscore the sense of unity that we celebrate on Holy Thursday, there is only one mass today. Communion is brought to those confined to their homes so that they may be one with us. For the same reason everyone shares the altar breads consecrated at this mass. No consecrated elements are brought from the tabernacle. Hence, the tabernacle is empty. The whole community also shares in the chalice, which is the great sign of God's love poured out for us.

At the Last Supper, Jesus performed the work of a slave in washing the feet of his disciples. He did this



in order to give them a dramatic, even shocking, expression of what He wants from us. He is asking us to show our love in practical deeds. In a believing community where the

priests, deacons, pastoral assistants, and other ministers are truly servants of the people, this ceremonial portrayal of their role will ring true, and proclaim in symbolic action what we are about all year.

A sufficient amount of altar breads is consecrated for the Good Friday service. These are carried to a place of reposition outside the church at the end of the celebration. All are invited to spend some quiet time in prayer with the Lord in response to His invitation to spend one hour

with Him. This period of reflection ends at midnight.

Good Friday

Solemn Liturgical Action

The celebration of Christian Passover begins with the Solemn Liturgical Action of Good Friday.

This service takes us back to the earliest days of church life

and to the primitive manner of celebration. The priest and ministers take their places without song. There are no preliminary rites, and the Opening Prayer is given without introduction.

The heart of the celebration is the proclamation of the Lord's Passion. During the middle ages, it was common to act out the Passion. Some elements of this is built into our celebration, but with discretion; the Passion is a live proclamation, not a historical play.

The General Intercessions, which bring the Liturgy of the Word to its close, are proclaimed in their solemn form. For many years these were the only intercessions which were proclaimed during the course of the church year.

The practice of venerating the cross comes from Jerusalem and found its way into the Roman liturgy in the late seventh century. The ceremony of unveiling the cross dates from the twelfth century.

The use of one single cross is important. The invocation, "This is the wood of the cross on which hung the Saviour of the world" is a proclamation of faith.

Holy Communion then follows the veneration. We use the bread which was consecrated at mass on Holy Thursday. Following the ancient custom, the altar is set and then cleared after communion.



The ministers depart in silence. The sense of waiting is heightened when there is no procession. The ministers simply leave the altar area.

From the end of the Good Friday service until the beginning of the Great Vigil on Holy Saturday, the community pays special attention to reflection and prayer. Traditionally, the three-day celebration is held together by the Pascal Fast which is broken by receiving Holy Communion at the first mass of Easter. In our own day, the church encourages us to return to this fast.

Holy Saturday

The Great Vigil and First Mass of Easter

From the end of the Good Friday service until the beginning of the Great Vigil, the community pays special attention to reflection and prayer.



The Vigil, or Night Watch, takes place at night. (Originally, the Vigil was continued through the night until dawn, when the First Mass of Easter began.) The church is empty and in darkness. When everything is ready, we begin the service of light, which takes us back to the early years of the church. The new fire, originally used for warmth, is lit and blessed. Then the Easter (Paschal) Candle is lit from the fire.

The procession with the newly lit Pascal Candle then makes its way through the church stopping three times to sign the proclamation, "Christ our light!" All then respond, "Thanks be to God!"

After the first proclamation, the people in the procession light their candles from the Pascal Candle. After the second proclamation, the congregation lights their candles. After the third proclamation, the Pascal Candle is placed in the stand and the priest sings the Easter proclamation, which

is one of the most ancient prayers of the church.

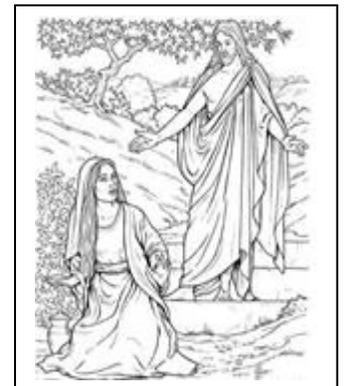
The service then continues with the Liturgy of the Word, which forms the core of the Vigil. There are seven Old Testament readings, each followed by a psalm and a prayer. These readings provide us with the story of salvation history. This is our story and our history as God's people. Following the readings, the altar candles are lit again and the "Glory to God" is sung. With this song, the Church expresses its Easter joy.

The celebration continues with the opening prayer of the Mass, the Epistle, Gospel and Homily. After the Liturgy of the Word, we celebrate Baptism and Confirmation. The catechumens and candidates of our parish have been looking forward to these sacraments of initiation for some time. During this part of the celebration, we also renew our own Baptismal Promises and are sprinkled with the water that was blessed for the baptisms. The Liturgy of the Eucharist is the final part and the culminating point of the Passover event.

Easter Sunday Morning

The Second, Third and Fourth Mass of Easter

The principal Mass of Easter is the Mass which follows The Great Easter Vigil of Holy Saturday Night. But the celebration of the resurrection of Jesus continues to reverberate throughout the day with a second, third and fourth Mass on Easter Sunday morning. These masses are celebrated for those who are not able to take part in the mass, which follows the Vigil.



In fact, Easter is seen as one great celebration of joy that spans fifty days, concluding with the solemn celebrations of Pentecost.

Liturgical Schedule for Holy Week & Easter

Monday of Holy Week

*Mass 8:00 am & 7:30 pm
Reconciliation:
7:00 pm - 7:30 pm & after Mass*

Tuesday of Holy Week

*no morning Mass
Chrism Mass
at St. Michael's Cathedral 11:00 am*

*Mass 7:30 pm
Reconciliation:
7:00 pm - 7:30 pm & after Mass*

Wednesday of Holy Week

*Mass 8:00 am & 7:30 pm
Reconciliation:
7:00 pm - 7:30 pm & after Mass*

Holy Thursday

*no morning Mass
Adoration Chapel closes 8:00 am
-no adoration during day
Mass of the Lord's Supper 7:30 pm
Adoration after mass until midnight*

Good Friday

*Morning Prayer 10:00 am
Stations of the Cross-
Led by Youth 11:00 am*

*Celebration of the Lord's Passion
3:00 pm & 7:30 pm*

Parish Office Closed this day

Holy Saturday

*Morning Prayer 10:00 am
The First Mass of Easter with Initiations
8:00 pm
Reception in Hall following mass*

Easter Sunday

*8:00 am
9:30 am Italian in church
English in hall
11:00 am
12:45 pm*

Easter Monday

*Morning Prayer in the Chapel 9:30 am
Mass 10:00 am
No 8:00 am Mass this day*

Please pray for the children and adults who will celebrate the initiation sacraments at the Easter Vigil, the first mass of Easter:

*Sahil Manuvelpillai
Regina Calaguas*

Sunday April 23 Divine Mercy Sunday

**Divine Mercy Holy Hour
3:00 pm-4:00 pm**

