

This Week We Call Holy

April 13 - April 20

Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion ~ The Sacred Triduum ~ Easter Sunday

To fully experience the glory of Easter we must recall the events leading up to His Resurrection. In this week we celebrate the drama of Christ's death and resurrection: from dark to dark - one continuous liturgical celebration of the Lord Jesus Christ's Paschal Mystery - Christ's regal entrance into Jerusalem, His Last Supper with his disciples, His betrayal, the pain and suffering of the Cross, the darkness of the tomb and finally, His eternal Triumph over Death. Holy Week's rituals proclaim to the world the liberating, redeeming and perpetual truth of the Gospel that Jesus Christ has died, is risen and will come again. Participate in them fully!

Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion. On this day we commemorate Christ's entry into Jerusalem for the accomplishment of His Paschal Mystery. We, as "children of the Hebrews," re-enact this entry through the sacramental of blessed Palms. But, the joy is tempered with bitterness as Christ must face His Passion for us sinners.

Ceremonies of the Liturgical Year, No. 125

Holy Thursday: Mass of the Lord's Supper. On the evening of Holy Thursday, we celebrate the three gifts Jesus Christ imparted to his beloved Bride, the Church: the Priesthood, the Eucharist, and a Love that is stronger than death. In her liturgical rites, Holy Church enters the upper room for the "Cena Domini." He, the Lord and Master of all, kneels humbly to wash the feet of the men he has called to serve. At table with his closest disciples, the Lord brings together all the sacrifices of the Old Law as he takes bread and wine and makes himself the one Sacrifice of a new dispensation, the Sacrifice of his Church. Then together they go forth into the night, to the Mount of Olives, to the Garden of Gethsemane, and the drama of his Passion begins.

Ceremonies of the Liturgical Year, No. 184

Good Friday: Celebration of the Lord's Passion. We call "good" this day when Our Lord loved us and gave himself up for us, redeeming us from sin and death. Thus, while the liturgical rites of the day are austere, they are marked by the triumphant sign of Christ's Cross, and they glow with the color of his Precious Blood. The crowds who gather for the Good Friday liturgy are not only assistants at the Passion, expressing the human emotion of grief and mourning, but Christian men and women whose gift of faith in the one Redeemer and Savior gives them confidence and hope. The death of the Lord Jesus breaks open the Mystery of the Trinity; the God who is Love revealed in the language and terms of a fallen world, that is, through rejection, pain and suffering. But at the heart of the Passion is the divine paradox: Death itself is put to death on this day which we call "good."

Ceremonies of the Liturgical Year, No. 218

The Great Easter Vigil: Night-Watch of the Resurrection. This is the high point of the Christian year, the celebration of the Paschal Mystery in the great Easter Eucharist, summit and source of the liturgical action and life of God's People. This "holy night" is the "mother of all holy vigils" that begins the "queen of feasts." The full meaning of the Easter Vigil is waiting for the Lord. He who took our human flesh, who suffered and died for us in that flesh, now rises in that same human body, glorified and immortal, as befits the new life of Resurrection. With the joyous "alleluias" of her new Passover, Mother Church celebrates a unique event, at once historical and cosmic. At the broken tomb, the Incarnation reaches its fulfillment, and the ultimate purpose of our Redemption is revealed in the frailty of human flesh - nothing less than a literal sharing in the glory of his bodily Resurrection. For this we were washed by the waters of Baptism; for this we were sealed with the Spirit's fragrant Chrism; for this we feast on the Body and Blood of the One who leads us into eternal life.

Ceremonies of the Liturgical Year, No. 255

Easter Sunday: Great Sunday - the Feast of Feasts. The Christian year reaches its supreme moments in the celebration of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Word, risen indeed in our human flesh, glorified in that flesh, triumphant over the mortality of that flesh. Again and again, the liturgy resounds with the cry of "alleluia!", as the people reborn through the Paschal Mystery wait in joyful hope of the day when they, too, will share the glory of the risen Lord.

Ceremonies of the Liturgical Year, No. 312