

Our Lady's Assumption Catholic Parish



Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord

4th & 5th April 2020

Responsorial Psalm

MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU ABANDONED ME?

1. All who see me deride me.
They curl their lips, they toss their heads.
'He trusted in the Lord, let him save him:
let him release him if this is his friend.'
R.

2. Many dogs have surrounded me,
a band of the wicked beset me.
They tear holes in my hands and my feet,
I can count every one of my bones.
R.

3. They divide my clothing among them.
They cast lots for my robe.
O Lord, do not leave me alone,
my strength, make haste to help me!
R.

4. I will tell of your name to my brethren
and praise you where they are assembled.
'You who fear the Lord give him praise;
all sons of Jacob, give him glory.
Revere him, Israel's sons.' R.



First Reading: Isaiah 50:4-7

Second Reading: Philipians 2:6-11

Gospel: Matthew 26:14-27:66

- Gospel Acclamation -
Praise to you,
Lord Jesus Christ,
king of endless glory!
Christ became obedient for us even
to death,
dying on the cross.
Therefore God
raised him on high
and gave him a name
above all other names.
Praise to you,
Lord Jesus Christ,
king of endless glory!



PARISH PRIEST SPEAKS.....

This is my first blog to the Mandurah parishioners. The church doors are closed now!! That made me a new parish priest of a closed church or an un-gathered Church!! It is the disciples of Christ that make up the Church and not the buildings, opened or closed. In this time of crisis, with the shut downs, we have to re-position ourselves to be the true Church. We Christians are to realise the meaning of the words of Jesus, “This sickness will end not in death but in God’s glory, and through it the Son of God will be glorified” (John 11:4).

The virus, not discriminating between the rich, the privileged, the celebrities, the powerful and the rest, makes everyone appreciate the interdependency as God’s design for human beings. It is also helping us sort the perishable from the life-giving. A crisis also makes humanity more creative. Businesses and the economy have already initiated some new thinking. The Education field is finding creative ways of schooling. Yes, the Crisis is not a waste. It becomes the birth pang of a new creation. Jesus always stressed the importance of being there for others in a spiritual life. When this deadly crisis period is over we will look at our families, friends and neighbours with a deeper appreciation of God’s goodness to us all. With these reflections let us enter into Jerusalem along with Jesus who suffered, died and rose for our sake so that we may have a new life!

I take this occasion to thank Rev. Fr. Theophane, our beloved brother for all the sacrifices and good works he has done to our parish. He was a kind hearted shepherd who loved and cared for his flock. May God bless him and his future undertakings in USA.

Fr. Johny Arattukulam, OCD
Parish Priest



Parish Life

Even though you cannot attend Church at this time you can be part of parish life:

- **Each day our priests will be celebrating Mass in private at 7:30am and 5:00pm.** You can participate by setting aside this time for daily prayer in your own home and joining with the priest spiritually. During this time you could read through the Mass, the daily readings, reflect on them and spend time with God in silent prayer.
- **Continue to contribute to planned giving and the work of the parish by donation.** Our parish not only provides for all in our parish but also assists smaller localities within the diocese. Our second collection including the planned giving envelopes goes toward servicing the debt which we still have for the parish centre building. We also need to support our priests and continue the running of the parish.



Direct Debit is a convenient and safe way to make your offering to the church. If you would like to join our Direct Debit scheme please contact the parish office by phone or email and this can be easily arranged. You can select the amount and the frequency of the payment (weekly, monthly etc). Your direct debit request can be cancelled at any time.

Planned Giving Scheme and Regular Church Offering (by electronic deposit)

For those who would like to continue to contribute you can make electronic deposits to the parish bank account using the following details:

Mandurah Parish Cheque Account

BSB 086 006

Account Number 848522519

In the reference line please put your envelope number and surname or just surname.

Example: 345 SMITH or SMITH

All online donations will be recorded as Second Collection.



Unable to do online banking transaction?

You can put your offering aside at home and contribute it as a lump sum when we return to regular services.

Continued on next page..

- **Communicate** with fellow parishioners by phone or email. Making contact especially with those who do not have access to email will let them know they are part of our parish family.
- **Register** your details for the sending out of information via email. Our parish bulletin is sent out each week to those who have let the Parish Office know they are connected via email. It is also available on the Parish website.
- **Keep Informed** of things related to the parish and the Catholic faith by accessing the Parish website, the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, Cathnews and the Diocese of Bunbury.

Praying at home

From midday on March 23, 2020, all public Masses and liturgical gatherings have been suspended across Australia. The Bishops Conference is supporting the prayer life of Catholics who are unable to attend Mass. Dioceses and other Catholic organisations are also providing material and access to livestreaming of Masses.

Catholics are encouraged to utilise the resources below to support your prayer life and, especially to allow you to continue to keep Sunday as a day when prayer is prominent. Many Catholic organisations have been supportive in their provision of access to material that is sometimes only available via subscription. The Conference thanks St Pauls Publications in particular for allowing the reproduction of its Scripture reflections.



Your email address required by the Parish Office

If you would like to receive the bulletin by email and to be updated by the Parish news.

Also, please advise the Parish Office if any of the following applies to you

- You have recently moved or changed address;
- You have changed phone numbers or email address;
- You wish to inquire, begin or cease planned giving.



We appreciate your response. *Please email us at catholicparish@westnet.com.au or call us at 9581 2061.*



OUR CHURCH'S VISION STATEMENT

We are Catholic Family, who, drawing together on our traditions and diversity, seek to respond to God's call. As a Pastoral community, we strive to nurture the Spiritual growth of all.

First Reading

[Is 50:4-7](#)

A reading from the prophet Isaiah
I did not cover my face against insult and I know I will not be ashamed.
The Lord has given me
a disciple's tongue.
So that I may know how to reply to the wearied
he provides me with speech.
Each morning he wakes me to hear,
to listen like a disciple.
The Lord has opened my ear.
For my part, I made no resistance,
neither did I turn away.
I offered my back to those who struck me,
my cheeks to those who tore at my beard;
I did not cover my face
against insult and spittle.
The Lord comes to my help,
so that I am untouched by the insults.
So, too, I set my face like flint;
I know I shall not be shamed.

Second Reading

[Phil 2:6-11](#)

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Philippians
He humbled himself to become like us and God raised him on high.
His state was divine,
yet Christ Jesus did not cling
to his equality with God
but emptied himself
to assume the condition of a slave,
and became as men are,
and being as all men are,
he was humbler yet,
even to accepting death,
death on a cross.
But God raised him high
and gave him the name
which is above all other names
so that all beings
in the heavens, on earth and in the underworld,
should bend the knee at the name of Jesus
and that every tongue should acclaim
Jesus Christ as Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

Pope at Urbi et orbi (To the City and To the World)

Pope Francis meditated on the calming of the storm from the Gospel of Mark during the prayer service over which he presided on the steps of St Peter's Basilica on Friday evening. Here is the full text.



“Why are you afraid? Have you no faith?” Lord, your word this evening strikes us and regards us, all of us. In this world, that you love more than we do, we have gone ahead at breakneck speed, feeling powerful and able to do anything. Greedy for profit, we let ourselves get caught up in things, and lured away by haste. We did not stop at your reproach to us, we were not shaken awake by wars or injustice across the world, nor did we listen to the cry of the poor or of our ailing planet. We carried on regardless, thinking we would stay healthy in a world that was sick. Now that we are in a stormy sea, we implore you: “Wake up, Lord!”.

“Why are you afraid? Have you no faith?” Lord, you are calling to us, calling us to faith. Which is not so much believing that you exist, but coming to you and trusting in you. This Lent your call reverberates urgently: “Be converted!”, “Return to me with all your heart” (*Joel 2:12*). You are calling on us to seize this time of trial as a *time of choosing*. It is not the time of your judgement, but of our judgement: a time to choose what matters and what passes away, a time to separate what is necessary from what is not. It is a time to get our lives back on track with regard to you, Lord, and to others. We can look to so many exemplary companions for the journey, who, even though fearful, have reacted by giving their lives. This is the force of the Spirit poured out and fashioned in courageous and generous self-denial. It is the life in the Spirit that can redeem, value and demonstrate how our lives are woven together and sustained by ordinary people – often forgotten people – who do not appear in newspaper and magazine headlines nor on the grand catwalks of the latest show, but who without any doubt are in these very days writing the decisive events of our time: doctors, nurses, supermarket employees, cleaners, caregivers, providers of transport, law and order forces, volunteers, priests, religious men and women and so very many others who have understood that no one reaches salvation by themselves. In the face of so much suffering, where the authentic development of our peoples is assessed, we experience the priestly prayer of Jesus: “That they may all be one” (*Jn 17:21*). How many people every day are exercising patience and offering hope, taking care to sow not panic but a shared responsibility. How many fathers, mothers, grandparents and teachers are showing our children, in small everyday gestures, how to face up to and navigate a crisis by adjusting their routines, lifting their gaze and fostering prayer. How many are praying, offering and interceding for the good of all. Prayer and quiet service: these are our victorious weapons.

“Why are you afraid? Have you no faith?” Faith begins when we realise we are in need of salvation. We are not self-sufficient; by ourselves we flounder: we need the Lord, like ancient navigators needed the stars. Let us invite Jesus into the boats of our lives. Let us hand over our fears to him so that he can conquer them. Like the disciples, we will experience that with him on board there will be no shipwreck. Because this is God’s strength: turning to the good everything that happens to us, even the bad things. He brings serenity into our storms, because with God life never dies.

The Lord asks us and, in the midst of our tempest, invites us to reawaken and put into practice that solidarity and hope capable of giving strength, support and meaning to these hours when

everything seems to be floundering. The Lord awakens so as to reawaken and revive our Easter faith. We have an anchor: by his cross we have been saved. We have a rudder: by his cross we have been redeemed. We have a hope: by his cross we have been healed and embraced so that nothing and no one can separate us from his redeeming love. In the midst of isolation when we are suffering from a lack of tenderness and chances to meet up, and we experience the loss of so many things, let us once again listen to the proclamation that saves us: he is risen and is living by our side. The Lord asks us from his cross to rediscover the life that awaits us, to look towards those who look to us, to strengthen, recognize and foster the grace that lives within us. Let us not quench the wavering flame (cf. /s 42:3) that never falters, and let us allow hope to be rekindled.

Embracing his cross means finding the courage to embrace all the hardships of the present time, abandoning for a moment our eagerness for power and possessions in order to make room for the creativity that only the Spirit is capable of inspiring. It means finding the courage to create spaces where everyone can recognize that they are called, and to allow new forms of hospitality, fraternity and solidarity. By his cross we have been saved in order to embrace hope and let it strengthen and sustain all measures and all possible avenues for helping us protect ourselves and others. Embracing the Lord in order to embrace hope: that is the strength of faith, which frees us from fear and gives us hope.

“Why are you afraid? Have you no faith”? Dear brothers and sisters, from this place that tells of Peter’s rock-solid faith, I would like this evening to entrust all of you to the Lord, through the intercession of Mary, Health of the People and Star of the stormy Sea. From this colonnade that embraces Rome and the whole world, may God’s blessing come down upon you as a consoling embrace. Lord, may you bless the world, give health to our bodies and comfort our hearts. You ask us not to be afraid. Yet our faith is weak and we are fearful. But you, Lord, will not leave us at the mercy of the storm. Tell us again: “Do not be afraid” (*Mt 28:5*). And we, together with Peter, “cast all our anxieties onto you, for you care about us” (cf. *1 Pet 5:7*).

Source: www.vaticannews.va

COMING★UP...

If you would like to watch the Palm Sunday Mass

by Fr Johny and Fr Theo, please join us on Facebook and YouTube.

The links will appear on our parish website-

www.olaparishmh.org.au

Click on the header ‘**Online Mass**’.



**The link will be available from
6pm Saturday, 4 April
and will remain active for viewing anytime.**

St Patrick's Cathedral, Bunbury

LIVE STREAMING OF EASTER CEREMONIES



Palm Sunday Mass – Sunday 5th April at 9am

Direct Link https://youtu.be/k_ptvNMI6DU

Mass of the Last Supper – Thursday 9th April at 7pm

Direct Link <https://youtu.be/NTtxaRaxkLA>

Passion of Our Lord – Friday 10th April at 3pm

Direct Link <https://youtu.be/BP9-pfxXp4U>

Easter Vigil Mass – Saturday 11th April at 7pm

Direct Link <https://youtu.be/-Zpc4hNmb4c>

Easter Sunday Mass – Sunday 12th April at 9am

Direct Link <https://youtu.be/yTxBnGKKEzU>



Thanksgiving and Farewell Mass for Fr Theo (20/03/2020)



Thank you to all the Priests who came and con-celebrated the Mass, musicians and choir, Parish Pastoral Council, families and friends who joined in this very important celebration of our Parish for Fr Theo.



Churches are not being closed. Buildings are being closed. You are the Church! You are to remain open.



Text from Geraldton Diocese, Western Australia forwarded by Bishop Grep O'Kelly, Bishop of Port Pirie and Apostolic Administrator, Adelaide

Photo: St Peter's Rome by Maurice Shinnick

Project Compassion Palm Sunday (5th April 2020)



Dominic, 47 is a former teacher and father of six from Papua New Guinea. In 2016, he became involved with the Caritas Australia's Safe House and Family Anonymous programs and turned a difficult life and an unhappy relationship around. The program provides gender-based violence prevention training, counselling services and safe accommodation for women and children survivors of violence. Now a community trainer, he works with other men to help them to change their behaviour and build more harmonious family lives. Dominic and his wife, Christophylda say that their relationship has been transformed – and their family life is now harmonious, happy and safe.

Please donate to Project Compassion 2020 to help support the Safe House project and help bring greater harmony to families in Papua New Guinea. You can keep your envelopes/boxes at home and bring them to the church when Mass resumes.

Reflection

Palm Sunday of Lent – 5th April 2020 - Dominic

The Holy Week story highlights the struggle for communion and solidarity in the midst of great challenges, injustice and suffering. Today's gospel readings offer us great contrast. We can see ourselves in the crowds amongst those who were jubilant, crying 'Hosanna' as Jesus enters Jerusalem to then find the crowd shouting 'Crucify him' just a few days later. Like Peter, Judas and the other disciples, we too can be fickle followers of Jesus.

In the Passion we see the suffering of Jesus as he is beaten, scourged and ridiculed. He is treated unjustly as a notorious thief is chosen for release over Jesus. Jesus is deserted by his closest friends and it is only a Gentile centurion, Mary and a group of faithful women who remain at the foot of the cross. At the end, Jesus even feels deserted by his Father asking 'why have you abandoned me?' In the Project Compassion story this week Dominic shares how he was liberated from his pattern of domestic violence. Just as Mary and the faithful women remained at the foot of the cross with Jesus, Dominic's wife and family chose to remain with him on his journey to wholeness. His participation in the Caritas Australia supported program at the Center of Hope in Papua New Guinea brought light back to his family. By opening himself up to the process of counselling with Christophylda, his wife, he was able to learn new ways to manage his behaviour and attitudes, bringing new life to his family where there was once fear and darkness.

Dominic is also bringing change to his community as he now works as an advocate, challenging gender-based violence and sharing his testimony of change. Having people speak from their own experience leads others to challenge their own behaviour through its authenticity.

We can identify with much of Jesus' suffering, in our own lives and the lives of people close to us. We can take comfort and consolation in that Jesus identifies with the suffering of the human race. We now know that the story doesn't end there, that there is the resurrection yet to come. Sadness and death give way to new life.

As we journey through Holy Week, will we keep in mind our sisters and brothers who suffer?

Prayer of Intercession

We pray for all those affected by gender-based violence. May we continue to support organisations like Caritas Australia who are working to build lasting peace within families and within communities.

Mass and Adoration times suspended.

Following the directive of our Government, all Masses, prayers, devotions and Adoration in our Church have been suspended until further notice.

There will be no Baptisms.

Reconciliation can be offered by special appointment.

For Weddings and Funerals, please contact the Parish Office by phone or email or contact our Priests.



St Vincent de Paul Support Centre Mandurah

Operating in COVID 19 times

The Vinnies Support Centre in Mandurah will continue to help people in need but with no face-to-face contact.

There will be no one in attendance at the Support Centre, but we will operate remotely via mobiles with documentation sent to Vinnies through email.

Vouchers will be sent to agencies by email if appropriate, or to clients by post.

Phone Jim 0427 956 794 or Winston 0428 490 005

Hours of operation – 10am to 12 Noon only

Four days a week – Monday, Tuesday and Thursday Friday

Calls will be handled only during operating hours.

Jim Mather President Mandurah Conference 0427 956 794



***We are
praying
for you.***

Frank O'Driscoll, Alysha Carboni, John Gilbertson, Joan Orchard, Joan McKay, George Tacey, Jenny Stokic, Sue Short, Sheila Pearce, Joanne Ford, Leah Hardie, Lil Eves, Lesley Mertens, Sean Mahoney, Jodie Donnelly, Mikayla Wilton, Peter Young, Roy & Jan Payne, Grace Moore, Aldine Wheldon, Daryl Winters, Merle Johnson, Trish Mulcahy, Oliver, Norma Hales, David Naughton, Dulcie Kent, Anita Doran, Herbert Lenard, Taylor Green, Margaret

McGuinness, Les Pearson, Beryl Fitzgerald, Louisa & Luigi Bove, Anne-Marie Fliegenger, Bill Kociaruba, Sergio Fiore, Johnson Joseph, Fiona Davies-McConchie, Les Burns, Sophie, Margaret Worthington, Tessie Plamonte, Cristina King, Irene Pini, Kate Whooley, Fr Chris Warnock, Joshua Chernoff, Ron Nichols, Barbara Padua, Marie Aide, Raeleen Sutton, Jessica Amphlett, Raegis Farrell, Barbara, Philip Giuffre, Liz Evans, Boy Flores, Bill Cople, Dorothy Oliver, Chris Morris, Alan Edwards, Joseph Godridge, Christian Vimpany, Kylie Godridge, Mark Bussanich, Amber, Elsie Medina, Markus Ruescher, Angie Mae, Greg Lewis, Joan Marshall, Leo Manser, Kevin Scanlon, Bohumil Verzhich, Eunice Hope, Mia Hoppee, Greg Carter, Nick Marshall, Michelle Stafford, Debra Keena, Joy Brokenshire, Jenny S., Brendan Davidson. **PLEASE ADVISE THE OFFICE IF ANY**

OF THE ABOVE NAMES NEED TO BE REMOVED.

Fr Johny Arattukulam - Parish Priest

Fr Albin Odippattil—Assistant Parish Priest

Fr Anson Akkappilly—Assistant Parish Priest

Michael Phillips - Deacon

Ernie Carey— Retired Deacon

Vivien de Winter/Alison Caingcoy—Office Staff

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Holy Week

A Time Apart for Renewal

Holy Week is a time that is set apart in our Church's liturgical year for our spiritual renewal. In fact, the word holy refers to anything that is set apart for God's purposes. Holy Week is holy precisely because it is time that is set apart for us to focus on how we are spiritually renewed through the suffering, death, and Resurrection of Jesus.

During this time of physical distancing and isolation every follower of Christ is encouraged to give time to reflection and prayer. To assist you with this a reflection guide follows focusing on the events of this most important time of the liturgical year.

The Symbols of Holy Week

The liturgies of Holy Week are filled with some of the richest and most ancient symbols of the Catholic faith. The waving of palms on Passion (Palm) Sunday reminds us that we are called to be followers of Jesus, not just fans who cheer from a distance.

The washing of feet on Holy Thursday speaks to us of the selfless love that we are called to practice in imitation of Jesus.

The veneration of the cross on Good Friday reminds us that, as Christians, we believe that Jesus can overcome anything, even death.

The lighting of the Easter fire in a darkened church and the celebration of baptisms on Holy Saturday speak to us of the new life that is ours because of Jesus' triumph over the darkness of sin and death through his resurrection.



Holy Week

Let it Begin...

Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion (Year A)

And when he entered Jerusalem the whole city was shaken and asked, "Who is this?" And the crowds replied, "This is Jesus the prophet, from Nazareth in Galilee." Matthew 21:10-11

As Jesus entered Jerusalem, just four short days before He would be arrested, He was received with great joy. As He entered, riding a donkey, the crowds spread their cloaks, strewed palm branches before Him and cried out, "Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord; hosanna in the highest" (MT 21:9).

Jesus was the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and He was given a Kingly welcome.

Jerusalem itself was the place of the Temple where so many of the ancient kings of Israel offered sacrifice to God. Year after year, decade after decade, and century after century, the high priest entered the Holy of Holies within the Temple to offer sacrifice to God. However, little did anyone know that as Jesus entered Jerusalem, the entire city became the new Temple and Jesus became the final and definitive Priest. He entered this new Holy of Holies as a King and Priest, and He died as the Sacrificial Lamb. He was greeted with shouts of "Hosanna" only to soon hear "Crucify Him, crucify Him!"

What a turn of emotions. How could this be? How could something so glorious become so painful in such a short amount of time? From an earthly perspective, what would soon follow made no sense, but from a divine perspective, it was the beginning of the most glorious act ever known.

Jesus, the Eternal Son of the Father, was given this glorious reception by these sons and daughters of God. The frightful, forceful and definitive attack on our Lord would soon begin now that He was welcomed into the city of Jerusalem to begin the Feast of Passover. Who could have known that on that Passover the Lamb of Sacrifice would be our Lord Himself?

In our own lives, we often do all we can to avoid even the slightest amount of sacrifice. But sacrifice is capable of the greatest good when united to the one Sacrifice of Jesus. Jesus entered Jerusalem with perfect determination to begin the Sacrifice that would conquer sin and death and defeat evil.

Reflect, today, upon how willing you are to embrace sacrifice in your own life, particularly during this time of isolation. If you face your difficulties in life, be they big or small, and if you intentionally and wholeheartedly unite them to the actions of Jesus that first Holy Week, then you can be certain that you will suffer with our Lord. But you can also be certain that your suffering will be transformed by the power of this Holy Week and lead you to a glorious sharing in His triumph over all sin and suffering. Sacrifice yourself with our Lord this Holy Week so that you, too, will rise victorious with our Lord.

My glorious Lord, I cry out to You, "Hosanna!" You are the King, the High Priest, and the Spotless Lamb of Sacrifice. As I enter into Holy Week, enable me to walk with You and to offer my own life as a sacrifice in union with Your own perfect Sacrifice. May Your Holy Week transcend time and permeate every aspect of my life so that, as I die with You, I may also share in the glory of Your Resurrection. Jesus, I trust in You.

Anointing the Feet of Jesus

Monday of Holy Week

Mary took a litre of costly perfumed oil made from genuine aromatic nard and anointed the feet of Jesus and dried them with her hair; the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil. [John 12:3](#)

What a humble and beautiful act of love toward Jesus. This perfume was worth 300 days' wages. It's interesting to note that Judas objected to this act by claiming that he thought it should have been sold and the money given to the poor. Of even greater note is Jesus' response to Judas. Jesus rebukes Judas and states, "Leave her alone. Let her keep this for the day of my burial. You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me."



If anyone else said this it would have sounded self-centered. But it was Jesus who said it and He was perfectly selfless in His love. Jesus knew what Mary needed. And in saying what He did, He revealed what each one of us needs. We need to worship Him, honour Him and make Him the centre of our lives. We need to humble ourselves before Him and serve Him. Not because He needs us to treat Him this way, but because we need to treat Him this way. Honouring Him in our humility and love is what we need to do for our own holiness and happiness. Jesus knew this, so He honoured Mary for this act of love.

This story invites us to do the same. It invites us to look to Jesus and to make Him the centre of our adoration and love. It invites us to willingly pour out all our labour for Him. Nothing is too costly for Jesus. Nothing is worth more than an act of our worship.

Worship of God is right to do. Most importantly, it's an act that will transform you into the person you were made to be. You were made for worship and adoration of God and this is accomplished when you humbly honour our Lord with your whole self.

Reflect, today, upon the depth of your own adoration of our Lord. Are you willing to "spill" your whole livelihood upon Him? Is He the most central part of your life? Do you daily humble yourself before Him and pour out your heart to Him in prayer? Reflect upon this humble act of worship that Mary offers Jesus and seek to imitate her beautiful example. In these days of separation from our loved ones, think of Jesus' disciples and the separation they must have felt after their Lord and teacher left them.

Lord, may I follow the example of this holy woman, Mary. Help me to humble myself before You and honor You with my whole life. Dear Lord, nothing in life is more important than You and my total adoration of You. Draw me in, dear Lord, humble me before Your glory and help me to love and worship You with my whole being. Jesus, I trust in You.

Painful Betrayal

Tuesday of Holy Week

Reclining at table with his disciples, Jesus was deeply troubled and testified,

“Amen, amen, I say to you, one of you will betray me.” [John 13:21](#)

It's very important to note here that Jesus was “deeply troubled.” This shows His humanity.



Jesus had a human heart and loved Judas with a divine love through His human heart. As a result of this perfect love of Judas, Jesus' heart was deeply troubled. It was “troubled” in the sense that Jesus could do nothing more than He had already done to change the mind and heart of Judas. It's not that Jesus was personally offended or angered by Judas' betrayal. Rather, it's that Jesus' heart burned with a deep sorrow at the loss of Judas whom He loved with a perfect love.

Judas had free will. Without free will Judas could not freely love Jesus. But with free will, Judas chose to betray Jesus. The same is true with us. We have free will and we are given the same ability that Judas had to accept the love of Jesus or to reject it. We can let His loving gift of salvation and grace enter our lives or refuse it.

Holy Week is an ideal time to seriously contemplate the road you are on. Each and every day of your life you are invited to choose God with all your might and love. But, like Judas, we so often betray Him by our refusal to give completely of our lives in a sacrificial and generous way, as our Lord did that Holy Week.

Reflect, today, upon the love Jesus had for Judas. It was His love for Judas, more than Judas' sin, that brought so much pain to Jesus' Heart. If Jesus didn't love him, the rejection would not have hurt. Reflect, also, on the love Jesus has for you. Ponder whether or not His heart is also troubled as a result of the actions in your life. Be honest and do not make excuses. If Jesus is troubled in any way as a result of your actions and choices this is no reason to despair as Judas did. Rather, it should be the cause of rejoicing that you are aware of your weakness, sin and limitation. Turn that over to Jesus who loves you more than you love yourself. Doing this will bring your heart much consolation and peace. And it will also bring much consolation and peace to the Heart of our Divine Lord. He loves you and is waiting for you to come to Him this Holy Week.

My dear suffering and rejected Lord, I do love You but I also know that I cause Your Heart to be troubled by my betrayal. Help me to see my sin honestly this Holy Week. In seeing it, may I let go of that which keeps me from loving You more deeply, so as to walk with You to the Cross to share in Your glorious triumph. Jesus, I trust in You.

Stuck in Denial

Wednesday of Holy Week

The Son of Man indeed goes, as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed. It would be better for that man if he had never been born.” Then Judas, his betrayer, said in reply, “Surely it is not I, Rabbi?” He answered, “You have said so.”

Matthew 26:24-25



Was Judas in denial? Did he truly think that he was not the one who was to betray Jesus? We do not know for certain what was going on in Judas' mind, but one thing is clear...he did betray Jesus. And it appears from his words that he didn't see his act as a betrayal and, therefore, he was in deep denial.

Denial, if written out as an acronym, has been said to mean that I “don't even know I am lying.” Perhaps Judas was so steeped in his own sin that he couldn't even admit to himself, let alone to others, that he was lying and preparing to betray Jesus for money. This is a scary thought.

It's scary because it reveals one of the effects of persistent sin. Persistent sin makes sin easier. And eventually, when one persists in the same sin, that sin is easily rationalized, justified and denied as sin altogether. When one gets stuck in this downward spiral of persistent sin it's hard to get out. And often the only way to survive the psychological tension is to remain in denial.

This is an important lesson for us this Holy Week. Sin is never fun to look at and takes great courage to do so. But imagine if Judas had actually confessed to what he was about to do. Imagine if he had broken down in front of Jesus and the other Apostles and told them the whole truth. Perhaps that act of honesty would have saved his life and his eternal soul. It would have been painful and humiliating for him to do so, but it would have been the right thing to do.

The same is true with you. Perhaps you are not at a point where your sin is leading you to outright betrayal of Jesus, but everyone can find some pattern of sin in their lives this Holy Week. You must seek to discover, with God's help, some pattern or habit you have formed. What a great discovery this would be if you could then face this sin with honesty and courage. This would enable you to shed any bit of denial regarding your sin and enable you to conquer that sin and discover the freedom God wants you to experience!

Reflect, today, upon Judas saying to Jesus, “Surely it is not I, Rabbi?” This sad statement from Judas must have deeply wounded our Lord's Heart as He witnessed the denial of Judas. Reflect, also, upon the many times that you deny your sin, failing to sincerely repent. Make this Holy Week a time for honesty and integrity. The Lord's mercy is so deep and pure that, if you would understand it, you would have no need to remain in any form of denial of your sins. *Lord, help me this Holy Week to have the courage I need to face my sin and weakness. I am a sinner, dear Lord, but it can be very hard for me to admit it. May I entrust my sin to You so that I may be set free and receive, in its place, Your abundant mercy. Jesus, I trust in You.*

Humility of Service, Nourished by the Eucharist

Holy Thursday, Mass of the Lord's Supper



“This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” 1 Cor. 11:24

We begin, today, the Triduum – the three great celebrations of our Catholic Faith; the heart of our faith and are the culmination of all of our worship. On Holy Thursday evening, we begin the Triduum with the commemoration of the Last Supper. This event in history, which took place as a Passover meal shared with Jesus and His Apostles, begins the gift that brings us salvation.

On Holy Thursday, we hear the Lord say for the first time, “This is my body that is for you.” We hear Him point to the gift of the Holy Eucharist as His gift to us, given for our holiness and fulfillment. It’s a gift we will never be able to fathom or comprehend. It’s the gift of His complete self-giving and sacrificial love.

The Eucharist is God Himself, present in our world, and given to us to transform us into that which we consume. The Eucharist, in a real way, transforms us into Christ Himself. As we consume the Holy Eucharist we are made one with God and are given the food of eternity.

The Eucharist transforms us into true servants who are called to humility. We are called to humble service of others. This service will take on various forms but it is what we are called to.

Do you serve those around you? Do you humble yourself before others to care for their most basic needs? Do you show them you love them by your actions? This is at the heart of Holy Thursday. Humble service is a beautiful expression of our own intimate union with the Son of God. So often, true “greatness” is misunderstood. Greatness is often perceived with a secular understanding of success and admiration. Too often we want others to admire our accomplishments. But Jesus offers another view of greatness. On Holy Thursday, He shows that true greatness is found in this humble act of service. Imitating Him requires that we surrender our pride. And this is made possible when we consume the Holy Eucharist with faith. The Eucharist enables us to love and serve others in this humble way. And that love and service is an act that will win the hearts and souls of others for the Kingdom of God.

As we celebrate Holy Thursday, we are all challenged to ponder our humility and to commit ourselves to a radical and total gift of self to others.

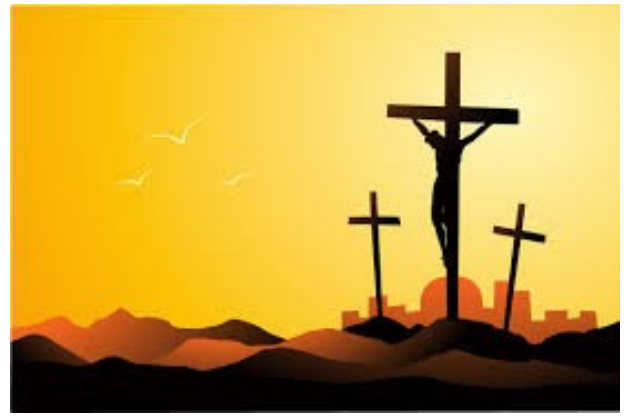
Reflect upon whether you imitate the humility of our Lord. Are you committed to seeking ways in which you can serve others, showing love and care for them? Let Holy Thursday transform you so that you can imitate the great love that Jesus offered us on this glorious night.

Lord, help me to understand what it means to be a servant. Help me to live this humility in my actions. May the gift of Your most Sacred Body and Blood transform me into the person You desire me to be. Jesus, I trust in You.

God Suffers Human Death

Good Friday of the Lord's Passion

Ponder today the final words of Jesus. Scripture records seven last statements, or the "Seven Last Words." Take each phrase and spend time with it. Seek the deeper spiritual meaning for your life.



"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Jesus' forgiveness of others was radical and to a degree never seen before. While hanging on the Cross and enduring the cruelty of others, Jesus spoke words of forgiveness. He forgave them in the midst of His persecution. This humble acknowledgment of Jesus shows the depth of His tender mercy. It reveals He died not in anger or resentment, but in willing sacrifice.

"I assure you, today you will be with me in paradise."

What a consolation it must have been to hear these words. Jesus offers us the same assurance. He offers salvation to us beginning today. And He offers it to us in the midst of our own suffering and sin.

"Woman, behold your son."

Here, dying on the Cross, Jesus entrusted His own mother to John. And in so doing, He entrusted her to each one of us. Our unity with Jesus makes us a member of His family and, thus, sons and daughters of His own mother. Our Blessed Mother accepts this responsibility with great joy. She embraces us and holds us close.

"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

Jesus allowed Himself to feel and experience this complete loss of the Father in His human nature. He felt the deep experience of despair. He allowed Himself to know and experience the effects of sin. Therefore, He knows what we go through when we despair.

"I thirst."

What a meaningful statement. He thirsted physically at that moment for water. But more than that, He thirsted spiritually for the salvation of all our souls. Jesus' spirit still longs for this gift of salvation. He longs to call us His children. He thirsts for our love.

"Father, into your hands I commend my spirit."

These are the words we need to pray more than any. These are the words of complete surrender to God. It means that we let go of our own will and choose only God's. And it means that God pledges to accept our surrender and guide us into the perfect plan He has in mind for us.

"It is finished."

This spiritual statement from Jesus is one that affirms that His mission of the redemption of the whole world is accomplished. His death, which we commemorate today, is the perfect sacrifice which takes away the sins of all. He accomplished the act that saves us and He is now offering it to us.

So today, on this Good Friday, it would be good if we spent the day pondering the reality of Jesus' sacrifice. Try to understand that Jesus' sacrificial love will enable us to love as He did. It will enable us to love those who have hurt us and those who persecute us. His love is total.

Lord, I know You thirst for my soul. You finished what You started by dying on the Cross for my salvation and the salvation of the world. Help me to understand Your love and to accept it into my life. I thank You, dear Lord, for the gift of Your Precious Blood, poured out for the salvation of the world. Jesus, I trust in You.

The Silence of the Tomb

Holy Saturday



Today, there is a great silence. The Saviour has died. He rests in the tomb.

Many hearts were filled with uncontrollable grief and confusion. Was He really gone? Had all their hopes been shattered? These and many other thoughts of despair filled the minds and hearts of so many who loved and followed Jesus.

It is on this day that we honour the fact that Jesus was still preaching. He descended to the land of the dead, to all the holy souls who had gone before Him to bring them His gift of salvation. He brought His gift of mercy and redemption to Moses, Abraham, the prophets and so many others. This was a day of great joy for them. But a day of great sorrow and confusion for those who watched their Messiah die on the Cross.

It's helpful to ponder this apparent contradiction. Jesus was accomplishing His act of redemption, the greatest act of love ever known, and so many were in complete confusion and despair. It shows that God's ways are so far above our own ways. What appeared to be a great loss was actually the most glorious triumph ever known.

So it is with our lives. Holy Saturday should be a reminder to us that even those things which seem to be the worst of tragedies are not always what they seem. God the Son was obviously doing great things as He laid in the tomb. He was accomplishing His mission of redemption. He was changing lives and pouring forth grace and mercy.

The message of Holy Saturday is clear. It's a message of hope. Not hope in a worldly sense, rather, it's the message of divine hope. Hope and trust in God's perfect plan. Hope in the fact that God always has a greater purpose. Hope in the fact that God uses suffering and, in this case, death as a powerful instrument of salvation.

Spend time in silence today. Try to enter into the reality of Holy Saturday. Let divine hope grow within you knowing that Easter is soon to come.

Lord, I thank You for the gift of Your suffering and death.

Thank You for this day of silence as we await Your Resurrection.

May I also await Your triumph in my life.

When I struggle with despair, dear Lord, help me to be reminded of this day.

The day when all appeared as loss.

Help me to see my struggles through the lens of Holy Saturday, remembering that You are faithful in all things and that the Resurrection is always assured to those who put their trust in You.

Jesus, I trust in You.

An introduction to the Holy Week

Holy Week, the last week of Jesus' life punctuated by betrayal, violence, surrender, death and victory! A perfect culmination of a well spent life exclusively for others! A categorical definition of Life, humanness and holiness! It is a challenge for every one of us to be really human in the midst of terrible insults, violence, heinous crimes- a culture of death. Each word, act and rite of the Holy Week points to the enormity of God's love for us. We remember and share in God's passion for us. But they also speak of the God who interrupts our lives in ways which challenge and confront to become a more fervent individual and parish afire with love, belongingness.

Holy Week is not a mere remembrance of the passion and death and resurrection of Jesus. It is an actual reality. What we celebrate in each liturgy this week is our entrance **HERE AND NOW** into the newness of life that is ours through our union with the risen Lord. Holy Week is about life. It means life is for giving. It means that if you love enough, if you care enough, then you have to show it.

Below is the acronym **H-O-L-Y W-E-E-K** to help us make this week not just an ordinary week but a truly meaningful and a holy week.

H — alt! Stop for a while, or at least slow down. Take time to rest and relax. Your body needs rest, so find time to be still. Go away, disappear. Rest a while.

O – ff with your worldly pursuits and concerns. Turn off your cellular phone if you have to, so that you can focus on your spiritual life this week. Forget quotas, forget deadlines and forget performance. Just be. Surprise yourself. Rediscover your inner strengths and simple joys. **OFF** to the world. **ON** to your heart. **ON** to your God.

L - isten. If you are in the Off or Silent mode, then you can really listen, pray and meditate. Take time to listen to God and tell him what's happening with your life. Allow the Father to wrap His loving arms around your shoulders once again and just listen. Listen also to your own inner self, not just to your day-to-day wants and needs. Is there something you are missing in your life? Is there something more you need to do in your life?

Y - ield to God. Let go of your grip on your own life. Be on the lookout for His road signs as you travel on. Listen to His instructions, and you will find your way. Better still; let Him do the navigating and the driving.

W - arm up your relationships. Time to allow your loved ones feel that warm-and-sunny-spring you, not the cold-and-cloudy-winter you. Reach out to the people you have taken for granted or left out altogether. Time to call a friend and use your lifeline or ask your audience for an apology for help and suggestions. Call, eat, write, smile and hug. Use anything that will help you repair, restore and revitalize your relationships.

E - rase the burdens of guilt and sin with a good, honest and humble confession. Heed God's call: "Come back to me, with all your heart. Don't let sin keep us apart. Long have I waited for your coming home to me." In response to God's love, may we all say to God, especially this week: "Create a clean heart in me; O God. Give back to me the joy of your salvation." Time also to erase hurts, resentments, anger and ill feelings. Forgive people who hurt you, and ask for forgiveness from people you have hurt, cheated, used or abused in any way.

E - xpress your love. Whatever you do, especially this week, like praying, fasting, works of penance and deeds of charity, let them all be expressions of your love and gratitude to God. Let them be done not out of fear, or out of obligation.

K - neel down. In humility, kneel down in prayer before God and thank Him for suffering so much. For dying on the cross and for rising again for our salvation. Somebody died for you and me. Let us not allow this week to pass without personally thanking Him.

Let this be a time for all of us to kneel down before one another in humility: Husband to wife and wife to husband; parents before their children whom they have neglected; children before their parents whom they have hurt; politicians and government officials before the people whom they have cheated etc.,

Some further resources you may like to use during this Holy time

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U71IM17e3Mg&feature=youtu.be>

Gospel reflection on Passion Sunday from Brisbane

<http://www.carmelites.ie/Stations%20of%20the%20Cross%202013.pdf>

Stations of the Cross with Reflections and prayers

<https://www.pray.com.au/with-jesus-in-the-desert-a-retreat-for-a-time-of-isolation/>

Links to 14 Daily reflections with Gospel stories, guided meditation and reflection.

<https://clicktopray.org/>

Join with the Pope in praying for the world during this time of uncertainty.

<https://www.catholicweekly.com.au/prayers-in-time-of-a-pandemic/>

inviting all to pray online

