



ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH  
DIOCESE OF  
HONOLULU

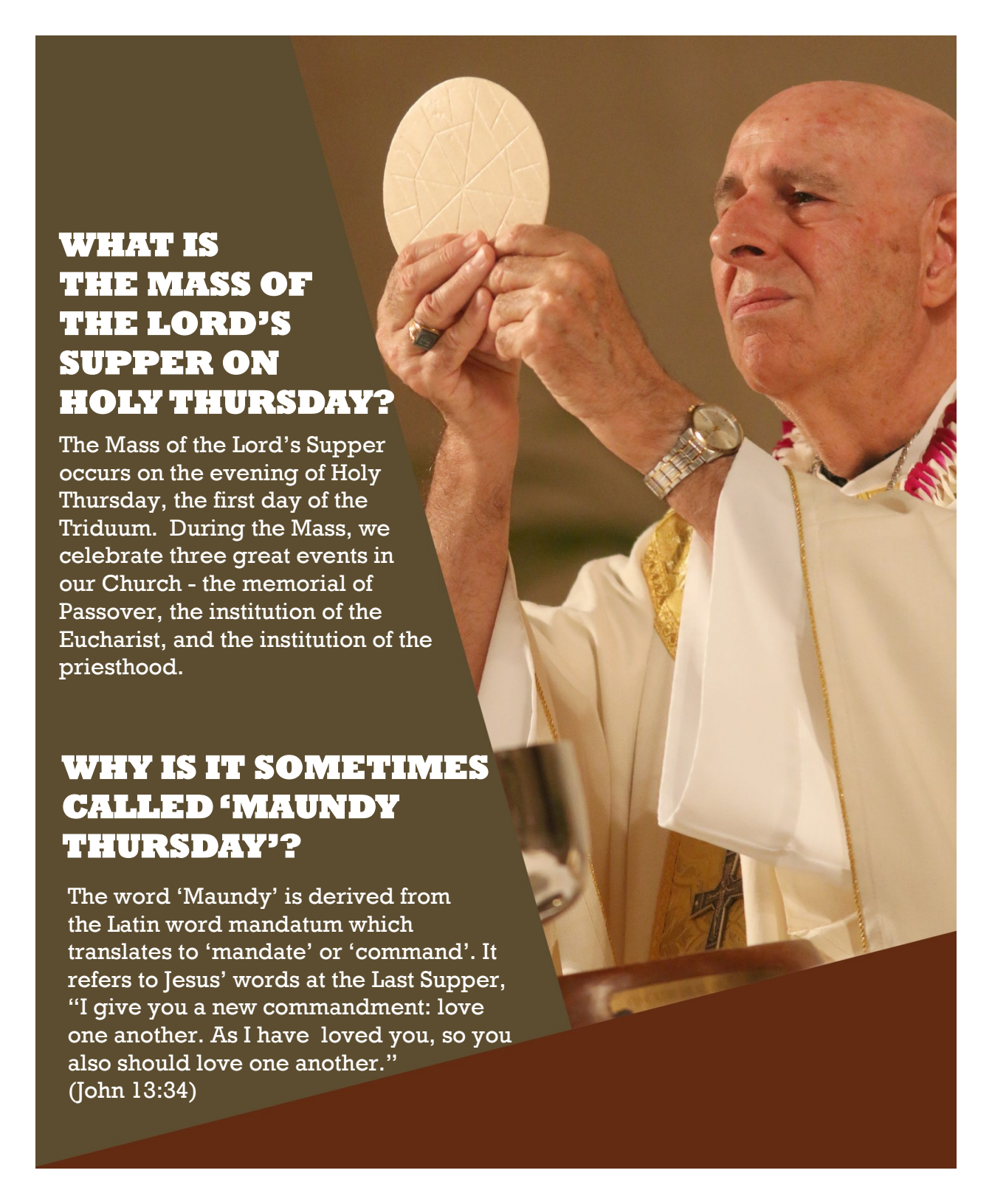


## WHAT IS THE TRIDUUM?

The Triduum is the highest point of the entire liturgical year. It is a three-part liturgy that extends over three days and celebrates and makes present the paschal mystery of Christ: his passion, death, and resurrection. It begins with the evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday, reaches its high point in the Easter Vigil, and closes with Evening Prayer on Easter Sunday.

## WHAT IS CELEBRATED IN THE SACRED TRIDUUM?

The Church celebrates the greatest mysteries of our redemption, keeping by means of special celebrations the memorial of her Lord, crucified, buried, and risen.




## **WHAT IS THE MASS OF THE LORD'S SUPPER ON HOLY THURSDAY?**

The Mass of the Lord's Supper occurs on the evening of Holy Thursday, the first day of the Triduum. During the Mass, we celebrate three great events in our Church - the memorial of Passover, the institution of the Eucharist, and the institution of the priesthood.

## **WHY IS IT SOMETIMES CALLED 'MAUNDY THURSDAY'?**

The word 'Maundy' is derived from the Latin word *mandatum* which translates to 'mandate' or 'command'. It refers to Jesus' words at the Last Supper, "I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another."  
(John 13:34)





## **WHY DO PEOPLE HAVE THEIR FEET WASHED AT MASS ON HOLY THURSDAY?**

At the Last Supper, Jesus gave His disciples a new commandment: Love one another. After Jesus gave them the new commandment, He showed them how to love one another—He washed their feet. The ritual of the ‘washing of the feet’ at Mass is a reminder that we are all called to love and serve each other by humbling ourselves and loving each other as Christ does.

## **WHY IS THE TABERNACLE LEFT EMPTY AND THE EUCHARIST PLACED AT THE ALTAR OF REPOSE?**

There is no formal ending to Mass on Holy Thursday because it continues with the Good Friday liturgy. At the conclusion of Mass, the Eucharist is taken in procession from where Mass has been celebrated to the altar of repose - the place where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved for a period of solemn adoration. This procession is led by the priest, a cross bearer, and accompanied by candles and incense. This action symbolizes Jesus' walk to the Garden of Gethsemane (Mark 14:32-50).

## **WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE EUCHARIST IS MOVED TO THE ALTAR OF REPOSE?**

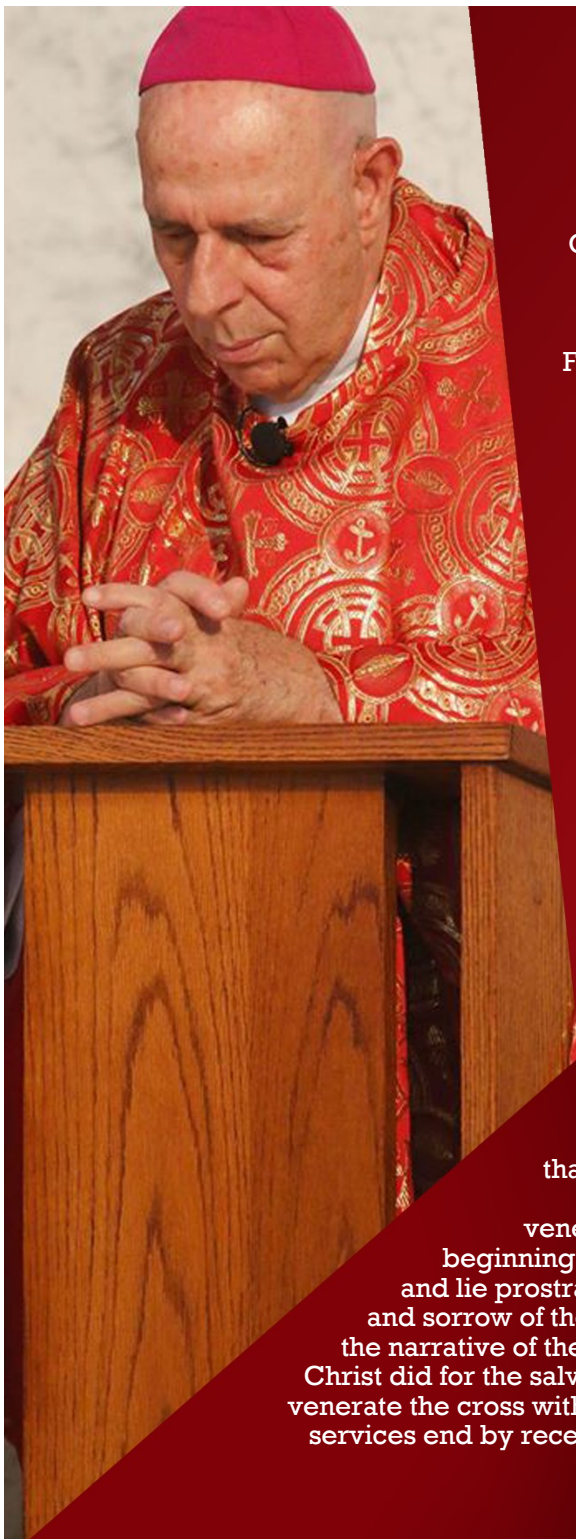
At the altar of repose, 'Tantum Ergo' is sung and the priest will incense the Blessed Sacrament. The faithful are then invited to spend time in Eucharistic adoration. This is a time of personal prayer, and done in silence.

## **HOW IS THE INSTITUTION OF THE PRIESTHOOD CELEBRATED ?**

It is during this liturgy when Christ institutes the holy Eucharist, the Mass. We hear in the Gospel of the Last Supper, Jesus blessed the bread and the wine, gave it to them saying, "This is my body, this is my blood." Then he says "Do this in memory of me" (Luke 22:19). This is the moment when he institutes the priesthood by giving his priests, the apostles, this responsibility. Our bishops and priests today continue this action at every Mass.







## **WHAT IS THE GOOD FRIDAY LITURGY?**

On the Good Friday liturgy the Church reflects on the passion of her Lord and Spouse, adores the cross, and prays for the salvation of the whole world. St. John Chrysostom reminds us that Good Friday, underneath the solemnity and sorrow over Christ's passion and death, is a celebration of hopeful joy.

## **WHEN SHOULD THE GOOD FRIDAY LITURGY TAKE PLACE?**

Normally it should take place in the afternoon, at about 3:00 PM, to enable people to assemble more easily. However, pastoral discretion may indicate a time shortly after midday, or in the late evening, though never later than 9:00 PM. Depending on the size or nature of a parish or other community, the local Ordinary may permit the service to be repeated.

## **HOW IS THE GOOD FRIDAY LITURGY CELEBRATED?**

There are three parts to the Good Friday liturgy that has no official beginning and no official ending. The three parts are the liturgy of the word, the veneration of the cross, and Holy Communion. At the beginning of the liturgy the priests enter the sanctuary area and lie prostrate as an act of humility and also to show the grief and sorrow of the Church. During the liturgy of the word we hear the narrative of the passion of Christ narrated as a reminder of what Christ did for the salvation of humanity. Then the faithful are invited to venerate the cross with a gesture, such as a kiss or a reverent bow. The services end by receiving Holy Communion that was consecrated and reserved from the Holy Thursday liturgy.

## **WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THE CROSS FOR US CHRISTIANS?**

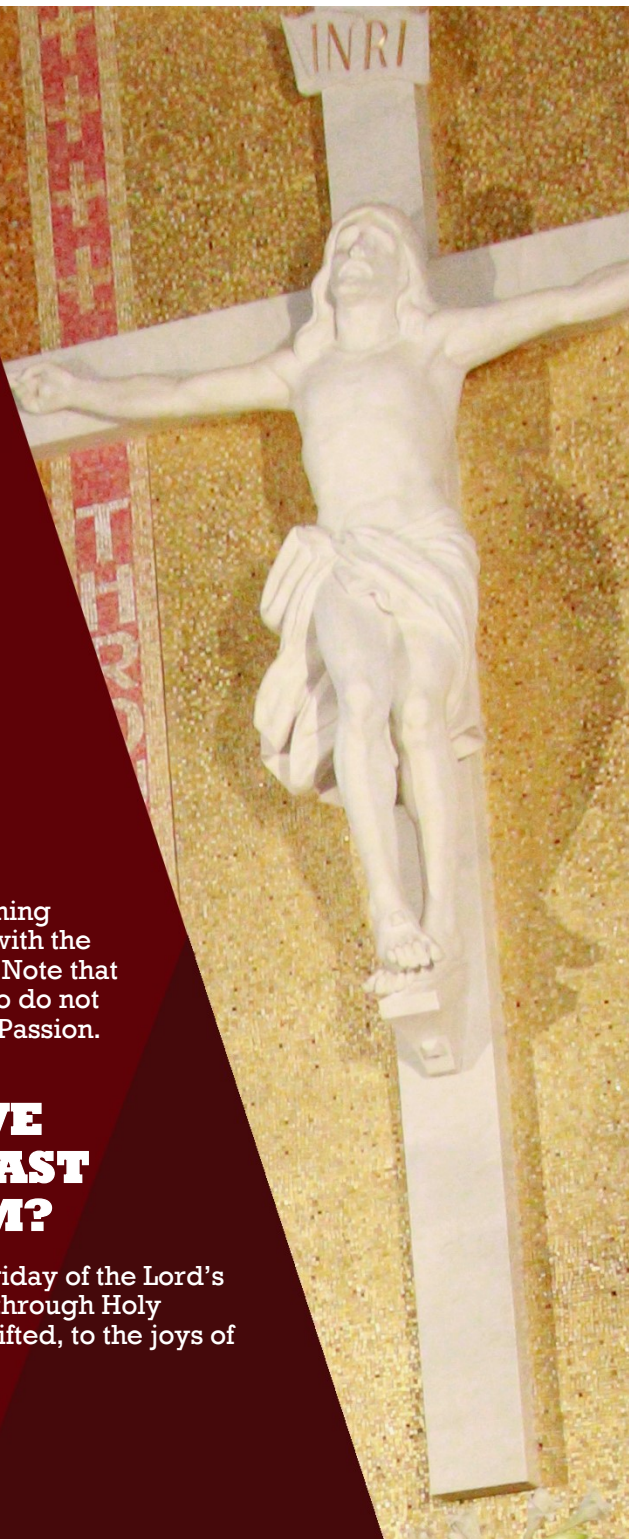
The cross, which was a symbol of death and condemnation, through Christ gained a new meaning. The cross is a symbol of celebration; a solemn, spiritual feast. It is an object that represents honor, blessing and reconciliation.

## **DOES THE CHURCH ENCOURAGE ANY OTHER LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS ON GOOD FRIDAY?**

On this day the Office of Readings and Morning Prayer could appropriately be celebrated with the participation of the people in the churches. Note that Evening Prayer is only prayed by those who do not participate in the Celebration of the Lord's Passion.

## **HOW LONG SHOULD WE KEEP THE PASCHAL FAST DURING THE TRIDUUM?**

The Paschal Fast should be kept from the Friday of the Lord's Passion (Good Friday) and, if appropriate, through Holy Saturday as a way of coming, with spirit uplifted, to the joys of the Lord's Resurrection.







## **WHAT IS THE EASTER VIGIL?**

The Easter Vigil, in the holy night, when the Lord rose again, is considered the “mother of all holy Vigils,” in which the church awaits the Resurrection of Christ.

## **WHEN SHOULD THE EASTER VIGIL TAKE PLACE?**

The Vigil, by its very nature, must take place at night. It is not begun before nightfall and should end before daybreak on Easter Sunday. The celebration of the Easter Vigil takes the place of the Office of Readings of Easter Sunday. The Easter Vigil begins and ends in darkness. It is a nocturnal vigil, retaining its ancient character of vigilance and expectation, as the Christian people await the Resurrection of the Lord during the night.

Fire is blessed and the paschal candle is lighted to illumine the night so that all may hear the Easter proclamation and listen to the word of God proclaimed in the Scriptures. For this reason the Solemn Beginning of the Vigil (Lucernarium) takes place before the Liturgy of the Word. Since sunset varies at different locations throughout the country, local weather stations can be consulted as to the time of sunset in the area, keeping in mind that twilight concludes (i.e., nightfall occurs) somewhat later.



## **WHAT ARE THE SYMBOLS AND RITUALS CELEBRATED AT THE EASTER VIGIL?**

Some of the symbols are:

1. Light/Fire
2. Community
3. Cross
4. Word
5. Water
6. Oil
7. Laying on of Hands
8. Bread and Wine

There are four parts/rituals to the Easter Vigil:

1. The Solemn Beginning of the Vigil or Lucernarium
2. The Liturgy of the Word
3. Baptismal Liturgy
4. The Liturgy of the Eucharist

## **HOW MANY READINGS SHOULD BE PROCLAIMED AT THE EASTER VIGIL?**

One of the unique aspects of the Easter Vigil is the recounting of the outstanding deeds of the history of salvation. These deeds are related in seven readings from the Old Testament chosen from the law and the prophets and two readings from the New Testament, namely from the Apostle Paul and from the Gospel. Thus, the Lord meets us once again on our journey and, “beginning with Moses and all the prophets” (Lk 24:27) opens up our minds and hearts, preparing us to share in the breaking of the bread and the drinking of the cup.



**Resources:**

Mary Birmingham, “Catholic Faith, Life, & Creed” (2011)

“Roman Missal” 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition (2010)

“The General Instruction of the Roman Missal” (2011), USCCB

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DANN EBINA



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