

This Week's Liturgy Calendar.

Holy Week.

Sunday 5th April: **Passion (Palm) Sunday (a)**

Today's celebration is the opening scene of the drama of Holy Week. It points us to the two central acts that brought us forgiveness and new life: Jesus' death and resurrection. We begin by acclaiming Jesus as our victorious King as we hold our palms for he will overcome sin and death at Easter. However, to win this victory, he chose to pass through suffering and death, as we are told in the story of his passion. We have some days of glorious happiness, of success and joy, but also sad days of contradiction and failure. Today we look at them in the light of the Lord. With him, we live the happy days, with him we experience sad days, but whether sad or joyful, in all of them we try to follow the Lord. Walking with him through the sadness and darkness of the Corona Virus and its effects in so many different ways and on so many people all over the world

Monday 6th April: **Monday in Holy Week.**

Holy Week is for us the time when we meditate on the saving death of Our Lord. The days of his suffering are approaching. The first reading today gives us the first of the Songs of the Suffering Servant from the Prophet Isaiah. It speaks of the attitude and role of God's people but we find these exemplified in Jesus, the perfect servant of God and of people. He is shown as the one who comes to serve the poor and the suffering by bringing them justice and freedom. He is the one who will unite God with us and us with God. All this he will do for us by his saving death.

Tuesday 7th April: **Tuesday in Holy Week.**

Today's Gospel presents three people to us – Judas, Peter and Jesus himself.

Judas is presented as being preoccupied with himself, his own interests and needs. He is not a free person but he is not open to Christ for he serves money and greed. He will betray Jesus.

Peter is a good person, open to Jesus but weak. He tries to hide this but cracks in the hour when he is tested. He will deny Jesus.

Jesus is totally unselfish, open to God and to everyone. He is the perfect servant, the person for others, described in the first reading today in the words of the second of the Songs of the Suffering Servant.

Wednesday 8th April: **Wednesday in Holy Week.**

Today we read of the betrayal of Jesus by Judas in the context of the Passover meal Jesus was sharing with his disciples. Jesus faces his death with the fullest trust in God. He makes the Passover into Eucharist. It is the deepest way he is going to stay with his disciples then and now.

Thursday 9th April: **Thursday of the Lord's Supper. (Maundy Thursday)**

This evening we celebrate the memory of Jesus' farewell meal. At the Last Supper, so heavy with meaning and symbolism, he did and said unusual and shocking

things. Like the lowliest servant, he, the great Teacher and Lord, washed the feet of his disciples and told them to become, like him, servants of the people.

Then as they were eating, he passed the bread and wine to them saying 'This is my body, broken for you. This is the cup of my blood shed for you. Love one another as I have loved you.' These events happened long ago, and yet, he tells us here and now: I have given you an example. As I have done, so must you do; as I have served, so you must serve. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.

Friday 10th April: Friday of the Passion of the Lord.
(Good Friday)

Just before his death on the cross, Jesus says, 'It is accomplished.' What is accomplished? Accomplished and finished is his torture on the cross and his earthly life and task. Accomplished in him is the will of the Father and his work to bring forgiveness and life to people. All is accomplished as far as Jesus' mission on earth is concerned and we are assured that evil will never triumph again. The final victory belongs to God. Not yet accomplished is the kingdom of justice and love and compassion on earth. That task is to be accomplished in us and with us. As long as there are people who suffer from hunger and injustice, we his disciples, have to work to eliminate these evils. Our Good Friday liturgy reminds us of this.

Saturday 11th April:

Holy Saturday.
At the Tomb of Christ.

Vigil of the Resurrection
First Mass of Easter.

Tonight we celebrate the central event of our faith. The reality of the whole Easter event is so powerful that we must relive it not just as an event from the past but something present and real affecting us today. Easter is a celebration of life and joy. By the power of the Risen Lord, each one of us can rise to new life. Jesus, who was condemned to death, scourged, mocked, and crowned with thorns, who was jeered when he died on the cross, is risen and alive. Since that day, God guarantees that his love is stronger than death. May the joy of the Risen Lord light up our lives.

ALLELUIA, ALLELUIA
HE IS RISEN AS HE SAID
ALLELUIA.

