

NOTES FROM FR. SEÁN

March 28, 2021

In Today's Gospel

Today we celebrate Palm Sunday. We celebrate Christ's triumphant entry into Jerusalem, but we do a curious thing. In today's gospel, we read the account of the Lord's passion and death. As Jesus entered Jerusalem, he knew what was about to happen to him. He knew that that road to Jerusalem would ultimately lead to the cross. During this week, let us walk that road with Jesus.

Holy Week

Today we enter into the most sacred week of the year, Holy Week. We begin this week by remembering Christ's triumphant entry into Jerusalem and end with the celebration of his resurrection. In between, we celebrate the institution of the priesthood, the institution of the Eucharist, and Christ's passion and death on the cross. On Thursday morning, I will join many of my fellow priests as we celebrate the Chrism Mass at the Cathedral. Although this is typically one of the most crowded Masses at the Cathedral, this year they are limiting the number of people who can attend due to COVID -19. This Mass is special for two reasons: the first is that this is the Mass where the Bishop blesses the holy oils that we use for the next year, the second is that priests renew the promises they made at their ordination.

Having renewed our commitment to God and to the priesthood, one of the first things that we do when we return to the parish is to wash the feet of our parishioners. Before the institution of the Eucharist, Jesus knelt before his apostles and washed their feet. This is a powerful symbol of how we are all to act. We will continue this tradition this year, with extra precautions in place due to COVID.

We will be celebrating Mass of the Lord's Supper as one community, both St. Mary and St. Richard, at St. Mary. The holy oils for both parishes will be presented before this Mass. We will have representatives from both parishes having their feet washed during the Mass. Then, as one community, we will celebrate communion.

Following the Last Supper, Jesus and his disciples went to the garden to pray. Remembering this event, following the Mass of the Lord's Supper, we will process out of the church to the altar of repose set up in Haney Hall. There we will have the opportunity to keep watch with Christ.

On Good Friday, we remember Christ's passion and death. We do not celebrate Mass on this day. We will have Good Friday services at both St. Mary and St. Richard. We will have Stations of the Cross at noon, followed by the Good Friday service. At this service, we will offer solemn prayers of the Church and for the world, we will have adoration of the Cross, and finally we will have a communion service using hosts previously consecrated. Good Friday is a solemn day. Between the hours of Noon and 3 PM, we should remember, in a special way, Christ, as he hung on the cross for our sins.

Not much happens in the Church during the day on Holy Saturday as the sun sets, however, we begin our great celebration of the Easter Vigil. At this Mass, we keep watch for the resurrection. This is the high point of the liturgical year in the Church. As with Holy Thursday, we will be celebrating this Mass as a single community at St. Mary Church. (Continued)

Fish Fry

I want to give a big thank you to everyone who participated in the Fish Fry this year. This year was a bit of a challenge, but everyone rose to that challenge. Thank you to everyone who had a part in making this year's fish fry a success; from the greeters in the parking lot to the dishwashers in the kitchen, you all did a fantastic job under difficult and unique circumstances. I would especially like to thank everyone who came to eat at our Fish Fries. Without you, there would be no fish fry.

There will be no Fish Fry on Good Friday. Good Friday is a day of prayer, fasting, and abstinence. I look forward to seeing you in church on Friday as we commemorate the Passion of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

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