

Holy Week Services

Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday,
Good Friday and Holy Saturday



These prayers are not intended to replace the liturgies of Holy Week. Rather, they are a sincere effort to cultivate some of the rituals and spirit of Holy Week in our own homes while public celebration is not possible.

Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion

Introduction

Palm Sunday celebrates two seemingly different stories. We begin the liturgy by commemorating Jesus's triumphant journey to Jerusalem where he is greeted by shouts and songs of acclamation and joy. Everything seems to be going well. Jesus is hailed as a King and people wave palm branches to show their honour for him. By the time we reach the Gospel, however, we hear the Passion of Jesus Christ, recalling the events leading up to his crucifixion and death on the cross. It may seem strange that these two extremes are celebrated on Palm Sunday, but that is the reality of the Paschal Mystery. There is only one story. Jesus's life, death and resurrection are all connected; it is impossible to separate them as isolated events. The same is true for our lives. Everything we do is united with Christ, the good times and the difficult ones. Even when God seems distant and far away, we know that we are always connected to the story of Jesus's life, death and resurrection. We are always connected to Christ.

As we begin Holy Week, take a moment to recall this narrative of Christ with your family. What are some events from Jesus's life that stand out to you? Do you have a favourite parable or story of healing? It is important to remember that the Jesus who walked and taught and ate is the same Jesus who dies and rises again. Think too about your own life. What are some of the significant events you have experienced this past year? Recall some of these moments aloud as continue to share the story of your family, which is also the story of Christ!

Ritual at Home

Perhaps the most memorable part of the Palm Sunday liturgy is the Commemoration of the Lord's Entrance into Jerusalem. To help us celebrate, the church invites us to carry palm branches as we gather for prayer today. Even so, we remember that liturgy is not a recreation of past events. Rather, it is an active remembering of the past so that we may live those realities today.

If you have a Palm Cross, you can use it during these prayers.

In the name of the Father
and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Opening Prayer

Hosanna to the Son of David.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Behold your king comes to you, O Zion,
meek and lowly, sitting upon an ass.

Ride on in the cause of truth and for the sake of justice.

Your throne is the throne of God, it endures for ever;
and the sceptre of your kingdom is a righteous sceptre.

You have loved righteousness and hated evil.

Therefore God, your God, has anointed you
with the oil of gladness above your fellows.

Hosanna to the Son of David.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Christ enters his own city to complete his work as our Saviour, to suffer, to die, and to rise again. Let us go with him in faith and love, so that, united with him in his sufferings, we may share his risen life.

If you have a palm cross, hold it and say the following prayer:

God our Saviour,
whose Son Jesus Christ entered Jerusalem as Messiah to suffer and to die; let these palms be for us signs of his victory and grant that we who bear them in his name may ever hail him as our King, and follow him in the way that leads to eternal life; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Palm Gospel

Matthew 21:1-11 is read

True and humble king,
hailed by the crowd as Messiah:
grant us the faith to know you and love you,
that we may be found beside you on the way of the cross,
which is the path of glory.
Amen.

Psalmody

Psalm 118: 19-24 is read

Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.

Christ humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross.

Therefore God has highly exalted him

and given him the name that is above every name.
Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.

Passion Gospel

Matthew 27: 11-54 is read

This is the Passion of the Lord.

Benedictus

Blessed be the Lord the God of Israel,
who has come to his people and set them free.

He has raised up for us a mighty Saviour,
born of the house of his servant David.
Through his holy prophets God promised of old
to save us from our enemies,
from the hands of all that hate us,

To show mercy to our ancestors,
and to remember his holy covenant.

This was the oath God swore to our father Abraham:
to set us free from the hands of our enemies,

Free to worship him without fear,
holy and righteous in his sight all the days of our life.

And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High,
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,

To give his people knowledge of salvation
by the forgiveness of all their sins.

In the tender compassion of our God
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,

To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of
death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

**Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

Kyrie

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Silence is kept.

Intercessions

Confident that Jesus Christ hears our prayer, let us offer our petitions with open hearts.

For the all leaders of the Christian Church: May they continue to boldly lead, offering prophetic witness to the Gospel.

For all people in positions of leadership: May they work tirelessly for peace and justice to ensure the common good for all.

For those who are lonely, anxious or afraid: May they know you consolation, strength and peace.

For all who are ill at this time: May they know your wholeness and healing and that you hold them safe in your loving care.

For all families and communities, especially those struggling with isolation: May they know that you are always with them.

For our own needs this day: *Prayers may be offered aloud.*

For all who have died: May they rest and peace and rise with Christ in glory.

Silent Prayer:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

The Collect of the day is said

Almighty and everlasting God,
who in your tender love towards the human race sent your Son
our Saviour Jesus Christ to take upon him our flesh
and to suffer death upon the cross:
grant that we may follow the example of his patience and humility,
and also be made partakers of his resurrection;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

The Conclusion

May Christ who bore our sins on the cross,
set us free to serve him with joy.
Amen.

Let us bless the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Thursday of the Lord's Supper (Holy Thursday)

Introduction

The Sacred Paschal Triduum begins with the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday. The word Triduum comes from the Latin for "three days." These three days of Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Easter Vigil are the highpoint of our entire liturgical year. Holy Thursday especially commemorates Jesus's command to serve others, modelled explicitly in the washing of feet and the celebration of the Eucharist. How do you serve others in your own family and community? Why is it important to connect our daily service to others with Jesus's command to do so?

Even when we are unable to gather to celebrate Eucharist, we are still called to be a eucharistic people. Jesus's self-gift in the Eucharist allows us to give freely of ourselves to others, following Jesus's instructions, "Do this in memory of me." Our own table fellowship with our family and friends is also a participation in the Eucharist, because the Eucharist by its very nature is deeply relational. If we limit our understanding of Eucharist to only what we receive at Mass, we are missing a major part of Christ's invitation to us. "Do this in memory of me" is a command and call to action. Do we dare to live our lives following the example of Christ?

Ritual at Home

The footwashing, has been a Holy Thursday practice since as early as the seventh century. A concrete representation of our call to service, the foot washing in the Holy Thursday liturgy reminds us of Jesus's example and command. If we truly

understand this command, however, we realize that we are called to do more than literally wash feet. Rather, this is a ritual that reminds us of our call to serve others through the concrete realities of life.

Place a pitcher of water, a large bowl, and a towel in front of those gathered.

In the name of the Father
and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Our Lord Jesus Christ says, 'If you love me, keep my commandments.' 'Unless I wash you, you have no part of me.' Let us confess to almighty God our sins against his love.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

The Collect of the day is said

God our Father,
you have invited us to share in the supper
which your Son gave to his Church
to proclaim his death until he comes:
may he nourish us by his presence,
and unite us in his love;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

First Scripture Reading

1 Corinthians 11.23-26 is read

Gospel Reading

John 13:1-17, 31b-35 is read

If you are a family or group worshiping at home you could wash each other's feet. If you are worshipping alone, imagine Jesus washing your feet and what you would like to say to him.

Intercessions

Confident that Jesus Christ hears our prayer, let us offer our petitions with open hearts.

For all who serve in our church: May they follow the example of Christ and uphold the dignity of all people.

For all who serve in our country and community: May they work for the good of all people, especially those who are poor and on the margins of society.

For all who serve others each day, especially parents, guardians, teachers, and those who care for the sick and suffering: May they find comfort, hope and fulfilment knowing that their service makes a difference to many.

For all gathered here: May we live lives of service to God and one another, even when it is difficult or requires extra effort.

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.**

**And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,
you have taught us
that what we do for the least of our brothers and sisters
we do also for you:
give us the will to be the servant of others
as you were the servant of all,
and gave up your life and died for us,
but are alive and reign, now and for ever.

Amen.

Jesus says: 'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you.
Do not let your hearts be troubled, neither let them be
afraid.'

The Conclusion

When the disciples had sung a hymn they went out to the
Mount of Olives. Jesus prayed to the Father, 'If it is possible,
take this cup of suffering from me.' He said to his disciples,
'How is it that you were not able to keep watch with me for
one hour? The hour has come for the Son of Man to be
handed over to the power of sinners.'

Amen.

Friday of the Passion of the Lord (Good Friday)

Introduction

As we celebrate the Passion of Jesus Christ and hear John's Gospel account of his suffering and death, we are reminded of the injustices that pervade our world. Often times these systems of oppression, hate, and fear are so commonplace in our world that perhaps we do not even notice them. Good Friday serves as a good reminder of this reality. It is easy to become discouraged, to see the work that has to be done and look away. Today we pray that we may have the conscience to see and the courage to act, remembering that death never wins. Life and love always prevail in Christ.

The traditional Good Friday liturgy contains three unique components: the reading of John's Passion, the praying of The Solemn Intercessions, and the Adoration of the Holy Cross. Each of these helps us enter more fully into our relationship with Christ and recommits us to pray and work for the good of the church and world.

Ritual at Home

The Adoration of the Holy Cross begins with a Showing of the Holy Cross. While there are two options for this ritual, unveiling the cross or processing the cross through church, both forms include a sung proclamation: Behold, the wood of the Cross. The rubrics for the Adoration of the Cross call for a cross rather than a crucifix, as it highlights the major symbol of the crucified and risen Christ. Rather than an act of idolatry, the Adoration of the Cross points us to the Risen Christ.

Place a plain cross in front of you on a table with candles if you wish.

Opening Prayer

Eternal God,

in the cross of Jesus we see the cost of our sin and the depth of your love: in humble hope and fear may we place at his feet all that we have and all that we are, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Passion Gospel

John 18:1–19:42 is read

Reflecting on the Cross

Place a cross on a table or some other place of honour, adding candles if you wish. Be sure to allow some time in silent reflection as you gaze upon the cross and grow in relationship with Jesus.

Part of the beauty of the Adoration of the Cross is the time for personal prayer and reflection, as well as performing individual acts of reverence. Do not let this time be cluttered by words but bask in the power of the cross as a symbol of not only death but ultimately of Resurrection.

To begin and end the time of reflection, simply proclaim and respond:

Behold, the wood of the Cross, on which hung the Saviour of the world

Litany for Forgiveness

For the times we have not loved as we are called to love . . .
Father, forgive.

For the times we have cultivated doubt instead of hope . . .
Father, forgive.

For the times that selfishness, greed, and lust influence our
decisions . . . *Father, forgive.*

For the times we nurture isolation instead of community . . .
Father, forgive.

For the times we hear the needs of others but refuse to act . . .
Father, forgive.

For the times we pass judgment on ourselves
and those whom we encounter . . . *Father, forgive.*

For the times we create divisions . . . *Father, forgive.*

For the times we neglect care for our common home . . .
Father, forgive.

For the times we are not good stewards of the gifts you give us . . .
Father, forgive.

Intercessions:

Let us pray for the church of God throughout the world:

- for unity in faith, witness and service,
- for bishops and other ministers and those whom they serve
- for our bishops and the people of this diocese
- for all Christian people
- for those who are mocked and persecuted for their faith

Lord, hear our prayers for your church, through your son Jesus Christ, that all your faithful people may serve you in holiness and truth, confirmed in faith, increased in love, preserved in peace.

Let us pray for the nations of this world and their leaders:

- for all who administer the law and all who serve in public office

- for all who have power, and the responsibility that it implies
- for all who strive for justice and for peace.

Lord, hear our prayers for your world, through your Son Jesus Christ, that by the power of your Spirit, the peace that is your will may be established throughout the world.

Let us pray for those of other faiths, and those who are without faith:

- for greater understanding between Christians and those of other faiths
- for all who have not heard the message of salvation
- for those who have lost faith
- for the grace to be faithful to God's covenant and to grow in the love of his name.

Lord, hear our prayers for all the people of the earth, through your son Jesus Christ, that we may dwell together in mutual compassion and understanding.

Let us pray for those who suffer

- for those who are deprived and oppressed
- for all who are ill
- for those in darkness, doubt and despair, in loneliness and in fear
- for prisoners,
- for the victims of false accusation and violence
- for all at the point of death and those who watch beside them.

Lord, hear our prayers for all in any kind of suffering, through your Son Jesus Christ, that they may be sustained by the knowledge of your love and find comfort, strength, and hope.

Let us commend ourselves and all God's children to his unfailing love, and pray for the grace of a holy life, that with all who have died in the peace of Christ, we may come to the fullness of eternal life and the joy of the resurrection.

Merciful Father

**Accept these prayers for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Prayer

Most merciful God,
who by the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ
delivered and saved the world. Grant that by faith in him who
suffered on the cross we may triumph in the power of his
victory; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive
and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God
now and for ever.
Amen.

The Easter Vigil in the Holy Night

(Holy Saturday)

Introduction

“Exult, let them exult!” We hear these words at the beginning of the *Exsultet*, The Easter Proclamation, as we trace God’s saving action throughout history. The name *Exsultet* comes from the first word of the prayer: Exult! As a Christian people we do exult, for Christ is risen from the dead and light banishes all traces of darkness.

The Easter Vigil liturgy is rich with symbol and ritual, and the Scripture readings connect us to our ancestors in faith, living the very same hope that we live today. The Genesis reading highlights God’s incredible work of creation, and reminds us that creation and recreation continue today. Abraham’s sacrifice recalls God’s promises and abundant blessings for God’s people, just as the reading from Exodus in which the Israelites cross the Red Sea prefigures Christ’s own resurrection. Readings from the prophets follow, those great heralds of God’s message throughout the ages. The Epistle from Paul to the Romans reinforces our baptismal identity and relationship with Jesus Christ who died and rose.

If time permits, read each of these Scripture passages in your own commemoration of Holy Saturday. Each of these stories highlights God’s love for God’s people and helps us to celebrate Christ’s resurrection by recalling God’s saving action.

Ritual at Home

The rubrics for The Easter Vigil clearly state that the celebration must take place in the night and end before dawn, for the contrasts between darkness and light are essential. The

celebration begins with a service of light often associated with the early church tradition of lighting lamps for evening prayer and rejoicing in the light of Christ.

As you prepare an area for tonight's prayer, you may wish to light a number of candles. If possible, each person might also have their own candle to hold.

Opening Prayer

We gather this night to rejoice in Jesus Christ,
the Light of the World,
the One whom no darkness can overcome,
the One death cannot destroy.

Lighting the candles, continue:

We give you thanks, O God,
for the light this evening that illumines our hearts and home,
and for your Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ,
a light so filled with glory and power,
a light undimmed by sin and death,
a light that guides peoples and nations.
May we welcome this light of Christ into our lives.

Amen.

Proclamation:

This is the night when Christ poured out his own blood,
cleansing us of the ancient sin of Adam:

Thanks be to God!

This is the night when the Paschal Lamb was slain, anointing
the hearts and homes of believers:

Thanks be to God!

This is the night when Moses led the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt through the Red Sea:

Thanks be to God!

This is the night when Christ rose from the dead, banishing death and darkness forever:

Thanks be to God!

Thanks be to God!:

Thanks be to God!

First Scripture Reading

Exodus 14.10-end, 15.1a is read

Prayer

Lord God our redeemer,
who heard the cry of your people
and sent your servant Moses to lead them out of slavery:
free us from the tyranny of sin and death
and, by the leading of your Spirit,
bring us to our promised land;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Gospel Reading

Matthew 28:1-10 is read

Intercessions

All are welcome to share their own prayers, with everyone responding: "Risen Christ, Light and Life, hear our prayer."

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Prayer

Lord of all life and power,
who through the mighty resurrection of your Son
overcame the old order of sin and death
to make all things new in him:
grant that we, being dead to sin
and alive to you in Jesus Christ,
may reign with him in glory;
to whom with you and the Holy Spirit
be praise and honour, glory and might,
now and in all eternity.

Amen.

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

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