

From the Deacon's Desk

Chrism Mass:

We are looking for some parishioners to attend the Chrism Mass on Tuesday, March 27th at 10:30 am at the Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption. If you are interested in attending, please let Deacon Jerry know or call the parish office.

Holy Week Triduum Liturgies:

I pray that you attempt to make it to as many of the Triduum Liturgies as possible. The Holy Week Triduum (meaning "three") Liturgies are basically one liturgical act with intermissions or breaks between them. It really made a difference in my life once I began to understand and participate in all that these liturgies say about Catholicism and Christianity in relationship to the Paschal Mystery; the Passion, Dying, Rising and Ascension of Jesus, our Lord and Savior.

Mass of the Lord's Supper is at 7PM on Holy Thursday. This is where the washing of the feet (Jesus' premier example of discipleship) takes place as well as the invitation to stay for some time that evening to worship and adore Jesus in the "Reservation Chapel" set up in the parish library until 10PM that night. **For the Washing of the Feet, similar to last year, I would like families to do this for each other since families are called to serve each other each and every day. We would also like parishioners to consider asking another parishioner if you could wash their feet. One of my main problems to the way we do ministry in the church is that it's always the ordained ministers doing all the liturgical actions, and I'm always looking for ways for parishioners to get involved in our liturgical actions. The washing of the feet is a perfect way to take your place as Jesus, and in his name, wash the feet of someone else.**

Good Friday of the Passion of the Lord Service (the only day Mass **is not** celebrated in the Catholic Church) begins at 12:30PM, **but at 12 Noon we are invited to listen to a dramatic reading of the Stations of the Cross by the youth of the parish.** One can expect to be moved as you participate in the Passion, the Adoration of the Cross, Holy Communion and silent dismissal so that you may prepare for the great celebration of the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday at 8:30 PM. **There will be no Saturday 4:30 Mass or Confessions.**

The culmination of the Triduum, the Three Days, takes place Saturday at the Easter Vigil at 8:30 PM. At that liturgy, we will celebrate the baptism of Scott and he will be confirmed with Kristen and welcomed to the Eucharistic Table. The Mass begins at the Easter Fire outside the church.

There is a Mass on Easter Sunday at 9:30AM.

Gospel Today: Jesus' Passion

This year we hear Mark's version of the passion narrative which focuses on his last few hours immediately leading up to his death.

What many Christians fail to realize is that Jesus underwent two trails during a brief 24 hour period. The first trail was with the Sanhedrin (the teachers of the Law of Moses) who Jesus repeatedly criticized and challenged during his public ministry. They obviously wanted to get rid of Jesus, but they had no power to do so

themselves because the Romans prohibited them from killing anyone. We are told they met in the middle of the night which was against their own Jewish regulations. They were only supposed to meet in the light of God's day. They already knew that Jesus needed to die, but they couldn't tell the Romans they wanted him eliminated because he made them (the religious leaders) look bad, so they met at night to fabricate a plan.

During Passover time in Jerusalem, everyone was on edge, both Jews and Romans alike. Remember Passover is about celebrating the reality that God led the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt to be free people. But were the Jews now still free? No, because they were under the rule of the Romans. They were an enslaved people once again. So on Passover, which recalls their freedom and liberation, everyone was on edge because up-risings and riots broke out quite regularly. So during Passover, the Romans brought added soldiers into the city to safe guard the peace keeping.

What the Sanhedrin conspired to tell the Romans the next day in front of Pilate (at his second trial) was that Jesus was an enemy of Rome, and if they didn't get rid of him now, Jesus would cause some serious uprising and trouble. Either their argument to Pilate was convincing, or he couldn't have cared less about the life of one more Jew. Unlike popular mythology, Pilate was not wimpy in any sense of the word. He was a ruthless killer who cared little for the life of any Jew, let alone this one named Jesus.

In the night before he died, Jesus was in the Garden of Gethsemane, and the text says he fell down "prostrate in prayer," and was "sorrowful even to death." The original Greek text literally says he was on the verge of a mental and physical breakdown. Jesus in his human consciousness was scared to death, and thus he prayed "Father, let this cup pass from me!" What I've always admired about Jesus is that despite his own fears and anguish, he stayed right where he was, while he saw them coming to get him.

I spent Holy Thursday night in the Garden of Gethsemane in 1983, and what many people fail to appreciate is that between the city walls of Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives is a huge grave yard that existed in the time of Jesus, and it is still there today. As I sat there in the darkness in 1983 and watched both the graveyard and Jerusalem bathed in moonlight, what I could not help realizing was that as his betrayers approached Jesus walking through the grave yard, Jesus had plenty of time to run away and escape into the darkness. But this man stayed right where he was and trusted in the God he knew. The thought of that conviction and courage still makes me emotional to this day.

Alpha on Monday: Why and How Do I Read the Bible

Talk summary:

- The Bible is the most popular book in the world, the most powerful book in the world, and the most precious book in the world. But why?
- The Bible is the primary way God communicates with us
- God has spoken: Revelation – he has revealed himself in creation and through a person – Jesus. Through the Bible we get to know Jesus. The Bible is all about Jesus.
- God speaks: Relationship – through the Bible we develop our relationship with Jesus and receive guidelines for living.
- The Bible is inspired by God (*God-breathed*)
- The Bible is a collection of books written over 1600 of years by over forty different authors: 100% human authors. 100% inspired by God.
- How do we hear God speak through the Bible? Find a plan, pattern, place