

Come Celebrate Holy Week & Easter with us!

The Holy Week: The liturgies of the Holy Week and the Triduum, point directly to the core of our Christian faith and the Eucharistic life of the Church. *To this end, it is highly recommended that Catholics participate in the Holy Week ceremonies.* The Holy Week begins with Passion (Palm) Sunday, which marks the triumphant entry of Christ into Jerusalem. Palm branches are blessed on that day and the Passion is read during the gospel. On Thursday Morning (new since last year) March 28th, 2024 all the priests and people of the diocese would gather at the St. Maria Goretti parish in Madison for the Chrism mass at 10:00 am. At the Chrism mass, the priests renew their priestly promises and the holy oils of the sick, catechumen, and Sacred Chrism are blessed by the bishop, which will all be brought back to our respective Pastorate churches for use during the year.

Thursday, Friday, and Saturday of Holy Week is called the **Sacred Triduum**. During the **Triduum** there are no morning masses allowed by the church so that the central theme of the day may not be diminished. Holy Thursday mass is called the Mass of the Lord's Supper. It commemorates above everything else the institution of the Eucharist, and the institution of the ministerial priesthood with the Mandatum to love one another.

On Good Friday, the Church fasts and prays for the crucified Lord. At the Good Friday service, we venerate the cross of Christ and listen to the reading of the Passion of Christ according to John. All the faithful are welcome to venerate the cross at the time of veneration. Communion that was blessed on Holy Thursday mass is used at this service since there is no actual mass said.

Holy Saturday is the apex of the liturgical year. It begins with the service of the light where the fire is blessed, and the Easter candle is lit. The candle is carried into the church in procession, to remind all that Christ is the Light of the world. The priest sings the Exultet (Easter proclamation of Christ's resurrection) as all the faithful carry their lit candle. There are seven readings from the Old Testament that are recommended and the epistle and gospel. All the readings trace the history of salvation from the beginning of creation to the announcement of the birth of Christ.

The **Gloria** is sung after the last reading from the old testaments and all the lights in the Church are turned on to full capacity. The **Alleluia** is once again sung as the Church rejoices in the resurrection of the savior. We renew our baptism vows, and all are sprinkled with the Holy water. New members are welcomed into the Church through baptism, confirmation, Reception into full communion with the Catholic church. Mass continues as usual, and the celebration of Easter begins. Please, note that we are celebrating only one Easter Vigil as a pastorate at St. Cecilia church in the Dells. St. Cecilia is chosen because it's larger sitting capacity for these combined events. All the four priests will be present at the Easter Vigil, and we have a representation of people from the all the churches taking part in different liturgical roles. Please, invite your friends and families to join us for our Holy Week services here at John Paul II Pastorate. **See the bulletin for Holy Week and Easter Sunday schedules.**

Have a Blessed Holy Week!

Fr. Paul