

Holy Week and Easter

2020

Dear Parishioners,

With the celebration of Our Lord's triumphal entry into Jerusalem, we enter into the holiest of weeks. This week is different than all other weeks. This year especially. Each day of Holy Week has its own focus leading up to the days of the Triduum. Below you will find a brief synopsis of the days of Holy Week, along with some suggestions on how you might enter into these days more fully. At the end of this communication, there will be a list of live streaming options for Masses, and various other liturgical events throughout the week.

Please note: I will not be live streaming the Triduum. I will still celebrate those liturgies, but I am encouraging everyone to watch the live streamed liturgies from either the Archdiocese or Saint Meinrad.

I hope everyone has a blessed Holy Week. Know that I am praying for you, please in your charity, pray for me.

Pax,

Fr. Byrd

Monday of Holy Week – Today, Jesus goes back to Jerusalem. He enters the Temple, and see that it has been turned into a marketplace. He is angry. Jesus cleanses the temple. He then returns to Bethany. How do I need to be cleansed and purified by Jesus? Spend some time today with the Lord, and invite him to purify your heart.

Read John 2:13-25

Tuesday of Holy Week – Jesus goes again to Jerusalem. He is confronted by the Temple Leadership for what he did the day before. He also teaches extensively, using parables. There is the parable of the vineyard and the parable of the wedding banquet. There is also the teaching on paying taxes and the rebuke of the Sadducees who deny the resurrection. There is also the fearful prophecy about the destruction of Jerusalem if the inhabitants do not come to faith in him. He warns that not one stone will be left on another. Continue to pray with Jesus and listen carefully to his final teachings just before his passion.

Read Matthew 21:18-46

Wednesday of Holy Week - Traditionally this day was called "Spy Wednesday" because it was on this Wednesday before the crucifixion that Judas conspired to hand Jesus over. For his betrayal, he was paid 30 pieces of silver. Jesus likely spent the day in Bethany. In the evening, Mary of Bethany anoints Jesus with costly perfumed oil. Judas objects but Jesus rebukes him and says Mary has anointed him for his burial! The wicked are besetting Jesus and plotting against him. Are you praying?

Read Matthew 26:1-16

Holy Thursday – Today marks the beginning of the Sacred Triduum, or the “three days.” Jesus gives instructions to his disciples on how to prepare for the Passover. They spend the day getting ready for the Passover meal. They gather in the evening in the Upper Room, and Jesus celebrated the Eucharist for the first time. In the Mass of the Lord’s Supper, we remember and make present that Last Supper which Jesus shared with his disciples. We are in the upper room with Jesus and the Apostles and do what they did. Tonight, we are united with the Lord in a different kind of way. We will not be able to receive him in the Eucharist. We will instead make a spiritual communion, asking Jesus to come to us spiritually. We also remember the institution of the Priesthood on this day. Spend some time today thinking about all of the Priests that have been part of your life – the priest that Baptized you, heard your first Confession, gave you your first Holy Communion, the priest that witnessed your Marriage, the priest that helped you through a hard time. Maybe make a list of these men, and say a prayer of thanksgiving to God for them and their priesthood.

Traditionally, after the Mass of the Lord’s Supper, we process into the garden to pray with Our Lord. Although we are not able to go with the Lord to the garden, physically, we can go with him spiritually. Tonight after the sun sets, go outside for a few minutes of quiet prayer. Look up at the stars. Hear the sounds of the night, and imagine yourself with Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane as he enters into his agony.

Read Matthew 26:17-56

Good Friday – Jesus has been locked away in the dungeon of the high priest’s house. He is brought before Pilate early in the morning, and then to Herod. Jesus was sent back to Pilate, who eventually gave in to the pressure of the temple leadership, and condemns him to die the horrible death of crucifixion. Jesus was taken by the soldiers through the city – the Via Dolorosa, and up the hillside of Golgotha. By noon he is nailed to the cross where he hangs in agony for three hours. He dies around three in the afternoon. He is taken down from the cross and placed in the tomb hastily before sundown.

Today is a day of prayer, fasting and abstinence. While we are not able to participate in the liturgy of the Lord’s Passion in person, we can join our hearts to Our Lord’s in spirit. Spend some time today in quiet prayer, reflecting on the love that Jesus has for you. Maybe fast from electronic devices today, and try to spend most of the day in silence. At some point today, spend time praying with the crucifix, making an act of reverence to close your time of prayer.

Read John chapters 18 and 19

Holy Saturday – Jesus’ body lies in the tomb. His soul is among the dead to announce the kingdom. What must it had been like for the dead to awaken to the voice of Jesus? Do I know the voice of Jesus? Can I hear him calling me to life?

The disciples mourn and grieve over the death of their Lord. They easily forget his promise that he will rise. We must never forget his promise.

Today the Church waits at the tomb, anticipating that moment when Jesus triumphed over the grave. Alas, we are not able to participate in person in the greatest liturgy of the Church year

– we none the less rejoice in the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and cry out with all our hearts Alleluia! Christ is risen! Alleluia!

Here are some suggested activities for Holy Saturday: Color Easter Eggs, symbols of the tomb of Jesus. Pray the litany of saints. Prepare candles to light and renew your baptismal promises.

Read Matthew 28:1-10

Live streaming schedule: Saint Meinrad

www.saintmeinrad.org/live

Monday – Wednesday : Mass - 8:30 a.m. / Vespers – 6:00 p.m.

Holy Thursday – Mass of the Lord’s Supper – 6:00 p.m.

Good Friday – Liturgy of the Lord’s Passion – 4:00 p.m.

Holy Saturday – Vespers – 6:00 p.m. / Easter Vigil Mass – 9:00 p.m.

Live Streaming schedule: Archdiocese of Indianapolis

www.archindy.org

Holy Thursday – Mass of the Lord’s Supper – 6:00 p.m.

Good Friday – Liturgy of the Lord’s Passion – 3:00 p.m.

Holy Saturday –Easter Vigil Mass – 8:45 p.m.

Live Streaming schedule: Jennings County

www.facebook.com/JCCatholics

Wednesday – Daily Mass 12:00 p.m.

Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday – Scripture and reflection – 3:00 p.m.

Good Friday – Tenebrae music and reflections – 6:00 p.m.

Easter Sunday – Mass – 10:00 a.m.