

LITURGY BYTES

Holy Week 2024



Holy Week is the most significant week for Catholics spanning from Palm Sunday to Holy Saturday, marking the final days before we celebrate Easter and the Resurrection of Our Lord. During this sacred period, Catholics pray and reflect on the profound journey of Jesus' suffering, sacrifice, and victory over death.

Palm Sunday commemorates Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. We receive blessed palms which symbolize the crowd that welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem. At Mass on Palm Sunday, the entire account of the Passion is read. The palms that we receive are usually displayed in our homes, some people weaving them into a cross.

During Holy Week, the Diocese celebrates the Chrism Mass prior to or on Holy Thursday. During the Chrism Mass, the Bishop blesses the oils used for the Sacraments. At this Mass, the renewal of priestly promises also takes place.

Holy Thursday begins the first day of the Triduum, the most sacred days of our Faith as Catholics. It begins with the Mass of the Lord's Supper, commemorating the Last Supper celebrated by Jesus and his disciples on the Jewish holiday of Passover. During this Mass, the priest will wash the feet of some members of the parish as Jesus washed the feet of his disciples at the Last Supper. It is during the Last Supper that Jesus taught his disciples that the Eucharist is truly His Body and Blood. Jesus taught them the importance of the Eucharist and commanded that they do this in memory of Him. Following the Mass of the Lord's Supper, parishes have Adoration before the Blessed Sacrament.

Good Friday commemorates the day Jesus died and saved us from our sins. His death and resurrection on Easter are the most important events of our Faith, and that is why it is called "good." Mass is not celebrated on this day. It is a day of solemn prayer with veneration of the cross and the reading of the Passion.

In the next Liturgy Bytes, we will reflect on Holy Saturday and the great feast of Easter! In the meantime, try to attend at least one of the Holy Week services. You will be glad you did!!

Have a blessed, peaceful, and prayerful week ahead! ~ *Michele Hall*