

My Best Friend Died

In 1989 when we moved from Pennsylvania to Texas, there was one thing we had never encountered: schools not being closed on Good Friday. We were also surprised at how many Churches did not even offer worship opportunities for Maundy Thursday and Good Friday!! We were from an environment where many stores were either closed that day or were at least closed between Noon and 3:00 P.M. "Easter Break" as we called it was designed so that people could go to church during Holy Week - not the beach. We encountered two problems: the necessity at having the Liturgy of Good Friday at a time other than when one normally would: namely when He was on the Cross and died, and having to postpone the time for the Liturgy to when He had already been taken down from the Cross!!!! The entire night after the Maundy Thursday Mass until the Proper Liturgy of Good Friday: (the Solemn Collects, the Veneration of the Cross, the Passion, the Mass of the pre-Sanctified, people spent one hour with Jesus: "Will you not WATCH with me for one hour." (Thus, the term "Watch" for the time spent at the Altar of Repose (the Garden of Gethsemane).

Our youngest daughter, who was in Middle School was particularly upset. Like many Christian families, in addition to no school on Good Friday there was no television or movies or shopping that was done that day - particularly between Noon and 3 P.M. What would she do? She informed the school that her best friend had died. And she would not be in that Friday. When she returned on Monday, with her beautiful smile she looked at the person in the school office and said, "My best friend is alive again." Now that she is a teacher - guess what she does? Alleluia, Christ is Risen.