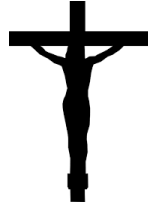


LITURGY BYTES

Good Friday into the Vigil



Good Friday is the day Jesus died for the sins of the world! The Church looks quite different on this day – very plain and bare. The Tabernacle door is open revealing no consecrated hosts. The remaining hosts were carried away to the altar of repose on Holy Thursday following the Mass of the Lord's Supper. The candle by the Tabernacle is blown out and the doors of the Tabernacle are left open to show that Jesus is gone. It is quite dramatic and a wonderful reminder to us that it is a day of mourning and prayer.

The afternoon solemn service on Good Friday is not a Mass. It is a communion service using the consecrated hosts from Holy Thursday. Good Friday is the only day on which no Masses are offered.

The service usually takes place around 3 PM, the hour that Jesus breathed his last breath on the cross. Very often the priest will begin the service by prostrating himself in front of the altar. If a Deacon is serving, he will join the priest. Scriptures, the Passion, and an extensive list of General Intercessions are part of this service.

Veneration of the Cross also takes place at this service, as both the clergy and the people kneel before a Cross situated in the center aisle. Appropriate music is played and sung during this time. Veneration of the Cross reminds us that through this Cross, the glory of the resurrection emerges. So, on Good Friday, we come forward to show our great reverence and respect for the Cross. Later on, communion is distributed to those present, and all leave the Church in silence.

Some thoughts for this year to ponder: What does the death of Jesus mean to me? Hope you can join us this Good Friday!