

THE PENITENTIAL TRIDUUM LEADS US ALL INTO THE JOYFUL RESURRECTION



For Catholic Christians, the season of Lent and Holy Week which ends with the three-day period known as the Triduum, is the holiest time of the liturgical year. It concludes the forty-days of prayer and fasting period of Lent. The Triduum encompasses Holy (Maundy) Thursday Good Friday and Holy Saturday. In some parts of the world, the Saturday before Easter Day is known as “Black Saturday

Maundy (also called Holy) Thursday: commemorates the day on which Jesus celebrated the Last Supper. The Triduum begins with the evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper. The church relives the Eucharist’s establishment, the “Holy Sacrifice of the Mass at the Last Supper,” and the formation of the priesthood, which Catholics believe occurred the night before Jesus’ crucifixion. Priests sometimes present a homily, then an optional foot-washing ceremony. The service concludes with a procession of the “The Blessed Sacrament” to the Altar of Repose, which holds the consecrated elements. In addition, many parishes will encourage people to stay long into the night as they ceremonially “**watch and pray**” with Jesus. In some parishes the organ is played, and bells are rung, after which the organ and bells remain silent until the time comes for the Easter Vigil Mass.

Good Friday: The only day of the Catholic liturgical year when no masses are said. The Good Friday service usually occurs at 3 pm, the hour Jesus died on the Cross. Fasting and abstinence are mandatory on this day. The altar is plain and bare, save for a fair linen cloth and the tabernacle doors are left open to display its emptiness (for Jesus is gone). All this reminds worshipers that Good Friday is for mourning and prayer. Communion takes place using the consecrated elements from Maundy Thursday and are brought from the Altar of Repose and then distributed to the faithful. Veneration of the Cross usually also occurs, where the priest and the congregation kneel at the cross and kiss it. When all this is done everyone leaves in silence.

Holy Saturday: On this day, Catholics remember Christ in the tomb. The day continues with fasting and mourning until the evening Easter Vigil. Catholics believe Jesus “descended into hell” between His burial and Resurrection to “save the righteous souls who died before His Holy Sacrifice

(eg: the Old Testament patriarchs).” The Paschal Candle holds a central place in Catholic liturgy, symbolizing Christ’s resurrection and presence. It is blessed and lit from the Holy Fire during the Easter Vigil, marking the beginning of the Easter season. The candle is inscribed with specific symbols that reflect key theological truths. Its use extends beyond Easter, appearing in baptisms and funerals to signify new life and hope.

Easter Day: is for Catholic Christians a most important celebration. It is the day on which Jesus Christ’s resurrection took place, symbolizing victory over sin and death, spiritual renewal, and the promise of eternal life.

So may the Risen Lord fill your heart with peace,
your soul with joy, and your life with the light of
His love.

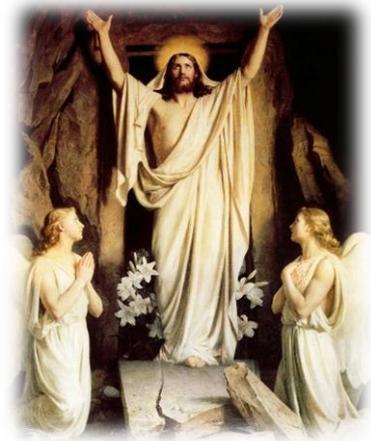
Amen.

As Christ has conquered death, may you rise with
Him to new hope and renewed faith.

Amen.

May Almighty God bless you, the +Father, the
+Son and the +Holy Spirit, be with you this day
and throughout the Ages of Ages.

Amen.



**A Blessed Easter to you and
your loved ones!**



Mar Geoffrey Lazarus
Coadjutor Patriarch and Metropolitan Archbishop