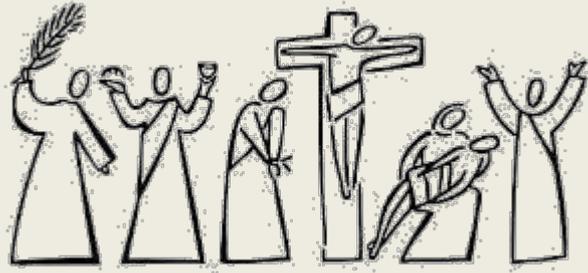


THE SACRED TRIDUUM



Introduction

Holy Week is the most solemn and glorious week in Christianity, the pinnacle of the liturgical year. It's more sacred than Christmas! This is because Holy Week commemorates the final week of Our Lord's life, the very purpose for which Christmas happened. Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday (when Jesus made his final entrance into Jerusalem) and culminates with Easter Sunday. As Holy Week progresses to its final days the solemnity heightens.

Sundown on Holy Thursday to sundown on Easter Sunday is considered the most solemn part of the liturgical year. This three-day period is referred to as the Easter Triduum, also known as the Sacred Triduum, or Paschal Triduum. **The word "triduum" comes from the Latin word triduum, which comes from tris ("three") + dies ("day").** Basically, the Sacred Triduum is one great festival recounting the last three days of Jesus' life on earth, the events of his Passion and Resurrection, when the Lamb of God laid down his life in atonement for our sins.

It is known as the "Paschal Mystery" because it is the ultimate fulfilment of the ancient Jewish Passover (or Pasch), which itself was a recollection of how God brought the Jews out of their slavery in Egypt. The spotless lamb was slaughtered at the Passover meal and consumed—that same night the destroying angel "passed over" the homes marked with the blood of the Passover Lamb, and those covered by the Blood were saved. This was the Old Testament prefigurement of Jesus' work at the Last Supper—where he inserted himself as the Paschal Lamb—and Calvary, where the sacrifice was offered to save us from our slavery to sin. With the Holy Eucharist, we consume the victim that died for our sins. The Paschal Mystery is, therefore, God's plan of redemption for the fallen human race through the passion, death, and resurrection of the God-man Jesus Christ. It is one marvellous event stretched out over three days. Here is a breakdown of each of the three days that make up the Easter Triduum.

HOLY THURSDAY



3. The evening Mass on Holy Thursday is referred to as The Mass of the Lord's Supper. This is where the Church re-lives the institution of the Eucharist and the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass at the Last Supper, as well as the institution of the priesthood, which took place the evening before Jesus was crucified. After the homily there is an optional "washing of the feet" ceremony, where the priest washes the feet of others to signify his role as servant—just as Jesus did with his disciples. Extra hosts are consecrated at this Mass to be used on Good Friday when no Mass will be celebrated. The Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy

Thursday concludes with a procession of the Blessed Sacrament to the "altar of repose," a place where the consecrated Host is kept, away from the main altar where Mass is normally celebrated. Many parishes will create space for people to stay and pray with the reposed Eucharist at this altar of repose late into the night, remembering Jesus' request in the Garden of Gethsemane for someone to "watch and pray" with Him.

GOOD FRIDAY

4. **Good Friday is a compulsory day of fasting and abstinence.** This is the day of the crucifixion, the day Jesus died for the sins of the world. The parish altar looks very different on Good Friday: it is plain and bare. There is no consecrated Host in the tabernacle at the main altar of the church; it was carried away on Holy Thursday night to the "altar of repose" to signify Jesus' death. The candle by the tabernacle is blown out, and the tabernacle doors are left open to show that it is empty. Jesus is gone. This is quite dramatic, reminding us that Good Friday is a solemn (intense) day of mourning and prayer. **The ceremony 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 of the year on which no Masses are offered. These Good Friday services often take place at 3 p.m., the hour that Jesus breathed his last on the cross. Often the priest will begin the service by prostrating himself in front of the altar. Veneration of the Cross usually takes place at this service, in which the priest and the faithful kneel before a cross and kiss it.



HOLY SATURDAY

5. **On this day Christ is in the tomb.** There is no daytime Mass on Holy Saturday. It is still a day of fasting and sorrow before the Easter Vigil begins that evening. We recall, with Mary and the disciples that Jesus died and was separated from them for the first time as He lay in the tomb. The faithful often continue their Good Friday fast through Holy Saturday. **In the Apostles Creed we pray "He descended into hell" (translated hades, that is, the temporary abode of the dead—not the eternal lake of fire) which describes what Jesus did in the time between his burial and Resurrection. Jesus descended to the realm of the dead on Holy Saturday to save the righteous souls—the Old Testament patriarchs, for example—who died before his crucifixion.** The Catechism of the Catholic Church calls Jesus' descent into the realm of the dead "the last phase of Jesus' messianic mission," during which he "opened heaven's gates for the just who had gone before him." Before Holy Saturday, there were no souls enjoying the beatific vision of God in heaven! Christ's work on Holy Saturday is also known as the "Harrowing of Hell."



EASTER VIGIL / EASTER SUNDAY

6. **A vigil Mass is held after nightfall on Holy Saturday,** or before dawn on Easter Sunday, in celebration of the resurrection of Jesus. This is called the Easter Vigil: the most glorious, beautiful, and dramatic liturgy for the Church. The vigil is divided into four parts and can last up to three hours:

- 1) The Service of Light,
- 2) The Liturgy of the Word,
- 3) The Liturgy of Baptism, and
- 4) The Liturgy of the Eucharist.

This is also the Mass in which many RCIA catechumens are brought into full communion with the Catholic Church.



CELEBRATING EASTER FULLY

6. **Easter Sunday is what we've all been waiting for!** The forty days of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving during Lent was in preparation for this day, when our hearts and souls can drink in deeply the conclusion of the Paschal mystery: the Resurrection. "Therefore Easter is not simply one feast among others, but the 'Feast of feasts', the 'Solemnity of solemnities', just as the Eucharist is the 'Sacrament of sacraments'. St. Athanasius calls Easter 'the Great Sunday' and the Eastern Churches call Holy Week 'the Great Week'.



The mystery of the Resurrection, in which Christ crushed death, permeates with its powerful energy our old time, until all is subjected to him." —The Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1168 and 1169.

Activity

A. What is the Triduum?

1. Three priests
2. Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Vigil
3. Parts of an organ?

B. On what day were the Sacraments of Eucharist and Holy Orders instituted?

1. Holy Thursday
2. Good Friday
3. Holy Saturday

C. On which day do we remember Jesus' Death?

1. Holy Thursday
2. Good Friday
3. Easter Sunday
4. Holy Saturday

D. At what Mass do we remember Christ washing the apostles' feet?

1. Holy Thursday Mass
2. Easter Vigil
3. Palm Sunday Mass
4. Good Friday service

E. What liturgical colour is worn on Holy Thursday?

1. White
2. Red
3. Green
4. Purple

F. What colour is worn during the Easter Season?

1. Purple
2. White
3. Green

SAINT JOSEPH a working Father.

The following lesson is based on the extract from the apostolic letter of Pope Francis "PATRIS CORDE" par6



An aspect of Saint Joseph that has been emphasized from the time of the first social Encyclical, Pope Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum*, is his relation to work

1. Saint Joseph was a carpenter who earned an honest living to provide for his family. From him, Jesus learned the value, the dignity and the joy of what it means to eat bread that is the fruit of one's own labour. Work is a means of participating in the work of salvation, an opportunity to hasten the coming of the Kingdom, to develop our talents and abilities, and to put them at the service of society and fraternal communion. It becomes an opportunity for the fulfilment not only of oneself, but also of that primary cell of society which is the family. A family without work is particularly vulnerable to difficulties, tensions, and estrangement and even break-up. How can we speak of human dignity without working to ensure that everyone is able to earn a decent living?
2. **Working persons, whatever their job may be, are cooperating with God himself, and in some way become creators of the world around us.** The crisis of our time, which is economic, social, cultural and spiritual, can serve as a summons for all of us to rediscover the value, the importance and necessity of work for bringing about a new "normal" from which no one is excluded. Saint Joseph's work reminds us that God himself, in becoming man, did not disregard work. The loss of employment that affects so many of our brothers and sisters, and has increased as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, should serve as a summons to review our priorities. Let us beg Saint Joseph the Worker to help us find ways to express our firm faith that no young person, no person at all, no family should be without work!

ACTIVITY:

- I. How did Saint Joseph provide for his Family?
- II. What did young Jesus learn from him?
- III. Explain how a family without work is vulnerable to difficulties.
- IV. Explain in your own words how the economy, culture and spiritual a crisis of our time.
- V. Saint Joseph is the patron saint of the whole...?
 - a) woodwork community
 - b) the weather
 - c) stories
 - d) Universal Church

Prayer to Saint Joseph for workers and those seeking employment.....

Silent and well-known carpenter in Nazareth, model of workers, by the work of your hands you gave your contribution to the work of the Creator, you earned your living, and you provided for the needs of the Holy Family. Intercede for all workers, in the difficulties of their daily lives especially for the unemployed, in their anxieties for tomorrow, so that through the guidance of God, the great Architect and Builder, they all may use their strength and talents to make visible God's new creation, to offer a concrete service to society, and to earn wages worthy of their efforts. With confidence and trust we make this prayer thru Jesus. Amen.