



Our Lady of HOPE

CATHOLIC CHURCH

Understanding the TRIDUUM

How We Can Fully Enter into Christ's Ultimate Sacrifice for All of Us

The liturgies of the Triduum are the highlight of the Catholic year. Though celebrated over three days, they form one continuous liturgy — a sacred journey from the Upper Room to the Cross to the empty tomb. Entering fully into each service allows us to profoundly experience the depth and beauty of Christ's love and the power of His Resurrection. This year, engage in the Triduum and allow these holy days to draw you deeper into the mystery of our faith, preparing your heart for a truly blessed Easter.

Here at Our Lady of Hope, we commemorate these sacred days in several meaningful ways. On Holy Thursday, as we recall Jesus washing the feet of His disciples, we wash the feet of our candidates and catechumens — and this year, we are blessed to have an exceptionally large group preparing to enter the Church. These children, youth, and adults are going through the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults.

On Holy Saturday, there is a fire out in front of the church, and the catechumens and candidates enter the church with that light.

The Triduum is special to Fr. Paul Ferguson. In



particular, he loves Holy Thursday.

"The beautiful thing is placing oneself into the Upper Room, into the triumphant entry into Jerusalem, and then ultimately the Upper Room," he says. "We process out of the church and over to our chapel, which becomes the place of repose for Holy Thursday.

It's like going to the garden. We're singing and going into the garden, praying as Jesus prayed."

Then, on Good Friday, Fr. Paul loves seeing the many ways people venerate the Cross.

"It's the beauty of people reverencing the Cross in their own way," he says. "It gives you a spiritual understanding that we're heading toward Jesus — that Jesus is our Savior and He died for us."

The Mass also includes the Solemn Intercessions, which Fr. Paul also finds to be beautiful. This culminates with the Easter Vigil. People walk into a dark church.

"A few candles are lit, then all the candles are lit, and the church fills with brightness and illumination," he says. "We realize that Christ is the light of the world. It's that image of darkness being expelled — expelled because Christ is that light."

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Palm Sunday: *A Gateway to Holy Week and Stewardship*



Palm Sunday, which marks the beginning of Holy Week in the Catholic Church, is a day of profound significance. It commemorates Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem, where crowds waved palm branches and shouted "Hosanna!" as a sign of honor and recognition. While Palm Sunday itself is not directly about stewardship, it holds deep connections to the concept of stewardship and its importance in the Church.

The waving of palm branches by the people of Jerusalem symbolizes the act of giving. The crowd willingly offered their palm branches as a sign of their reverence and respect for Jesus, acknowledging Him as the King who came in the name of the Lord. This act of giving is a reminder of the sacrificial nature of stewardship — the sharing of our time, talents, and treasure in a manner that reflects our commitment to Christ and the well-being of our faith community.

STEWARDSHIP OF TIME: Palm Sunday offers a unique opportunity to reflect on the stewardship of time. In the Catholic faith, time is considered a gift from God, and how it is spent is a reflection of one's stewardship. Just as the crowds in Jerusalem took time to greet Jesus and honor Him, Catholics are encouraged to dedicate their time to acts of worship, service, and reflection. The choice to participate in the liturgical events of Holy Week, including the Palm Sunday procession and Mass, demonstrates a commitment to stewarding time for spiritual growth and communal engagement.



STEWARDSHIP OF TALENT: The crowd's enthusiastic shout of "Hosanna!" on Palm Sunday represents the stewardship of talent. Talents and abilities are God-given gifts, and the crowd's proclamation can be seen as a public expression of their talents used to honor Jesus. Similarly, stewardship encourages individuals to use their unique talents and skills for the betterment of their faith community. Whether through musical talents, organizational skills, or other abilities, we are called to contribute our talents to the service of the Church and its mission.

STEWARDSHIP OF TREASURE: Although the people of Jerusalem did not offer treasure in the form of money, the concept of giving one's possessions and financial resources is inherent in the act of hospitality and support shown to Jesus. This spirit of generosity and giving is deeply connected to the stewardship of treasure, which encourages Catholics to support the Church financially. The financial contributions made by parishioners enable the Church to carry out its mission, support those in need, and maintain the resources necessary for worship and community service.

Seen in this light, Palm Sunday serves as a meaningful gateway into Holy Week, and it holds significant connections to the concept of stewardship. The act of giving and sacrifice demonstrated by the crowds in Jerusalem reflects the principles of stewardship that are central to the Catholic faith. As Catholics wave their own symbolic "palm branches" through the stewardship of time, talent, and treasure, they acknowledge that Jesus is Lord in their lives and the importance of supporting the Church and their faith community. By connecting Palm Sunday to stewardship, we are reminded of the call to emulate Christ's sacrificial love and the willingness to give generously for the greater glory of God.

THE JOY OF LENT

Dear Parishioners,

Have you ever thought about the joy in sacrifice that Lent provides? Most of us don't delight in sacrifice; in fact, in our daily lives, we often do our best to avoid challenges and practices that push us outside of our comfort zones.

In Christianity, there is a beautiful irony between joy and sacrifice, and we are presented with a wonderful opportunity to embrace this uniquely during Lent. In one of his Lenten messages, Pope Francis shared, "Lent is a fitting time for self-denial; we would do well to ask ourselves what we can give up in order to help and enrich others by our own poverty."

While giving up sweets in favor of healthy snacks for Lent is a common and noble endeavor, the goal of Lent should not only be a spiritual excuse to lose weight! In choosing acts of self-denial, we are saying "no" to things in order to get into the practice of saying "no" when inclined towards sin, ultimately deepening our faith and our relationship with the Lord. Victory can be found when we deny ourselves and pick up our crosses and hardships in order to grow closer to Christ!

Therein lies the joy. When we grow closer to God by denying our will, we say "yes" to a life of abundance with Him. Our God is a benevolent God; He will not hold back His grace from those who honor Him and choose



challenging things to grow and give Him glory. Christ even tells us Himself, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Without question, Lent is a time for conscious penitence and spiritual preparation for Easter. And it is important to remember that God loves us whether we make Lenten changes or not. At the same time, Lent provides us an opportunity to make God a greater part of our lives and to take our faith to new levels. Stewardship is a God-centered

way of life — a spiritual way of living that, above all, acknowledges God's presence in all we do.

Lent is a time for every one of us to do more than simply deny ourselves; we need to welcome God into our lives in greater ways so that when we get to Holy Week and Easter, we have an even greater appreciation for the sacrifice the Lord made for us. Talk about pure joy!

May you and your loved ones enjoy a holy and joyous Lenten journey.

In Christ,

Fr. Paul Ferguson

Fr. Paul Ferguson
Pastor



OUR LADY OF HOPE FEAST DAY

A Time of Shared Fellowship and Spirituality



Cake featuring Our Lady of Hope, whose feast day we celebrated on Jan. 18



(From left) Teresa Joyce, Bonnie Graham, and Shannon Lee enjoying the celebration



Committee members setting up the drink station — (from left) Randy Emmons, Debbie Wichman, and Barb Emmons

On Sunday, Jan. 18, our parish celebrated the Feast Day of Our Lady of Hope at the Washington Catholic Middle School gymnasium after a bilingual Mass at 10 a.m. Joe Wellman, member of the Stewardship Committee, recaps the event.

“The parish supplied food,” Joe says. “We had chicken tenders and ham, and we supplied the drinks and cake. The rest of the side dishes were brought by parishioners. We had lots of great food, including some Hispanic dishes and other desserts. We had three cakes and 90 cupcakes.”

There were about 185 in attendance, including volunteers.

“Everyone was pleased with the turnout,” Joe says. “There were eight to 10 on our Stewardship Committee, but then we had other people who volunteered to help put tablecloths on or various things like that. Then, when it was over, a lot of people stayed and helped turn over tables and chairs.”

A moment of community and stewardship played out in one event. Our parish likes to get involved.

“It’s really active,” Joe says. “One of the tables we had was so people could learn about other ministries. I think there are 40 or more different ministries. We’re trying to encourage people to use their talents and time to be involved.”

The Youth Group was present with a table selling their t-shirts and sweatshirts. Daughters of Isabella had a table as well.

“The Daughters of Isabella are selling nuts, pecans, and walnuts,” Joe says. “A lot of people were buying t-shirts and sweatshirts.”

The event itself was free and a great success for its first run.

“This was the first time we’ve done this,” Joe says. “Our Stewardship Committee was brainstorming activities, and someone brought up the idea of celebrating Our Lady of Hope. I think it may become an annual event.”

There were also speakers at the celebration.

“First, I gave a short history of Our Lady of Hope, which was also known as Our Lady of Pontmain, from an apparition back in the 1800s in France,” Joe says. “Then we had three short presentations.”

Marianna Bacerra, a high school student, spoke about her faith and how it has been strengthened. Then Madolyn and Dillon Query spoke about their conversion and what faith has done for their family. Finally, Jeff Heron, a retiree and grandfather, spoke about his conversion and his family. Yvonne Evans,

CELEBRATION A GREAT SUCCESS

Community as an Active Faith Community

Pastoral Associate, also spoke about the merging of parishes and how we became Our Lady of Hope.

“As each of us spoke, Fr. Juan Ramirez translated into Spanish,” Joe says. “Marianna speaks both English and Spanish. And Fr. Paul had a blessing before the meal and then offered a closing prayer at the end.”

Hearing from our own community members was truly a special part of the celebration.

“It was nice having some of our own parishioners speak,” Joe says. “We’ve had other programs where we have a paid presenter to come in, but it was nice having local parishioners speak and tell their story. It adds to getting to know each other a little better.”

Many valuable spiritual and fellowship connections were made throughout the event, which offered a nice

change from what can too often be the abrupt in-and-out of weekly Mass.

“These events build fellowship and allow parishioners to meet and interact with other parishioners they may not have previously known,” Joe says. “The witness talks gave listeners hope.”

Overall, the event was a success, and we hope to hold another like it next year.

“Thanks to the Stewardship Committee members who have been planning this thing for months,” Joe says. “Everybody pitched in and brought up lots of ideas to put together the program. So we’re thankful to them.”

We’re also thankful to all those who volunteered, brought dishes to share, and those who shared their stories. We’d like to keep the fellowship going!

If you feel you could be involved in one of our ministries, leave your information on our website at www.ccwash.org/Ministries.



Parishioners celebrating our feast day with food and fellowship

A Historical Look at Our Lenten Practices and Traditions

When the Season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, we enter into a time of preparation, sacrifice, and penance, culminating in Holy Week and the joyous celebrations of Easter. And while the liturgical season of Lent offers us a time for solemn reflection, it is also widely welcomed each year as an opportunity to be drawn ever closer to our faith.

But just how did this penitential season come to be? And how did the reverent hallmarks of Lent — such as fasting and prayer — become so deeply ingrained in our observance of this season?

To understand the Lenten season, it is important to understand the word “Lent” itself, which is derived from two Anglo-Saxon terms: *lencten*, meaning “spring,” and *lenctentid*, which is the term for both “springtide” and “March” — of course, Lent often falls throughout most of March, and during the transition into (and renewal of) the spring season. In Latin, the corresponding term for “Lent,” *quadragesima*, refers to its dating from the 40th day before Easter.

This brings us to another hallmark of the Lenten season — its length of 40 days. However, Lent was not originally observed for this length of time. During the first three centuries of the Christian era, Easter preparations consisted of three days of fasting and prayer. In some places, this preparation was extended into the entire week before Easter — which we now observe as Holy Week. There is also some evidence that, in Rome, Easter preparation was as long as three weeks.

In its early form, Lent was an intense period of spiritual and liturgical preparation for catechumens who were to be baptized at Easter. At the time, many members of the community observed this period of preparation alongside the catechumens. But, as time passed and more people were baptized as infants, the connection between catechumens and Lenten preparation gave way to a focus on the themes of repentance and fasting during Lent for all Christians.

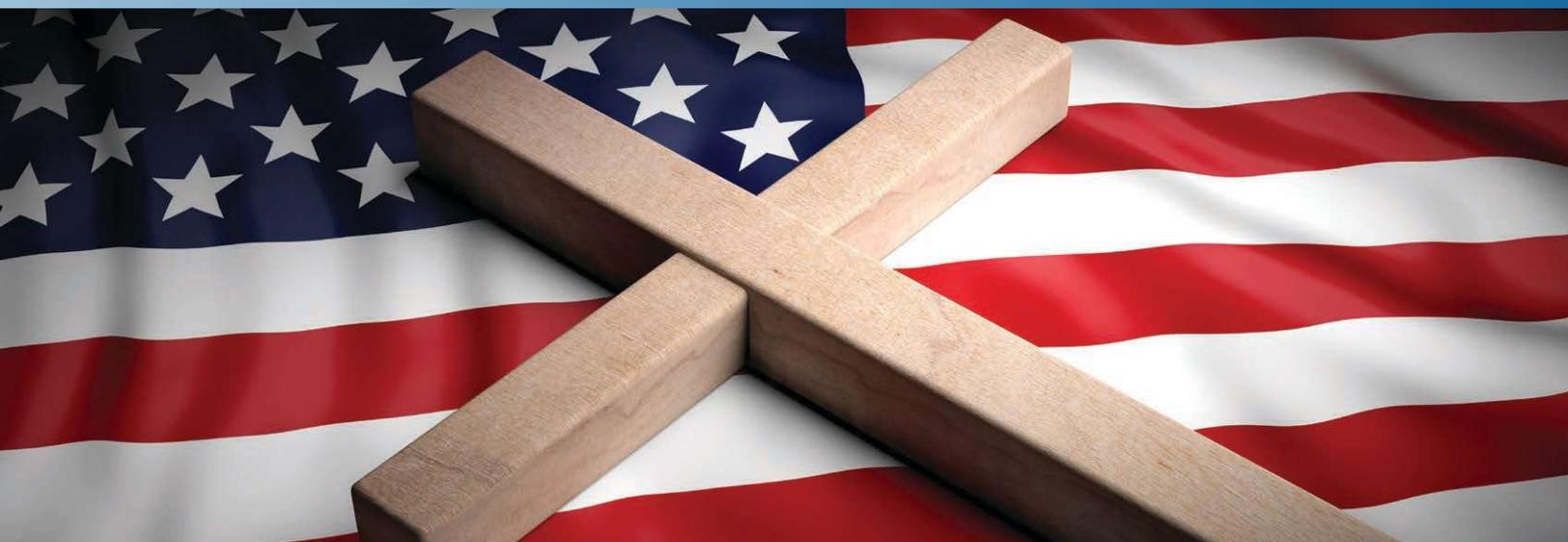
It was not until the fourth century — upon the

legalization of Christianity — that Lent developed into its current length of 40 days, which mirrored the length of Jesus’ fast and temptation, as chronicled in Luke 4:1-13.

Yet, interestingly, the Lenten observations of fasting and prayer did not always take place for 40 consecutive days. For instance, in Jerusalem, fasting was observed for 40 days, Monday through Friday, but not on Saturday or Sunday — thus, Lent lasted for a total of eight weeks. In Rome and the West, fasting took place for six weeks, Monday through Saturday, with Lent being observed over six weeks. The practice of fasting for six days over six weeks eventually prevailed, with Ash Wednesday being instituted to account for 40 fasting days before Easter.

And as the length of Lenten observance developed over time, so did the observance of fasting itself. At first, some areas of the Church abstained from all meat and animal products, while others made exceptions for certain foods, like fish. And while a person was to only have one meal a day, a smaller repast would be allowed so that manual laborers could maintain their strength throughout the day. Eventually, eating meat was allowed throughout the week, save for Ash Wednesday and on Fridays.

In fact, two of our most common and beloved Lenten and Easter traditions — the Shrove Tuesday meal and Easter eggs — developed from these early Lenten observations. Initially, abstinence from dairy products was observed during Lent, with dispensations given if pious works had taken place. Eventually, this particular rule of abstinence was relaxed entirely. Today, pre-Lenten pancake breakfasts, Easter egg decoration, and egg hunts remain as enjoyable seasonal opportunities for fellowship and fun within our parish families!



Get to Know Knights of Columbus Council 630

Sharing in Brotherhood, Service, and Faith

When the members of Our Lady of Hope Knights of Columbus Council 630 gather for meetings, they are continuing a legacy as one of the oldest Knights councils in Indiana. Since its founding in 1906, the council has remained active in bringing devout Catholic men together for charitable work and camaraderie.

The council's main fundraising activity, Treasure Hunt, has been a generous benefactor for not only our parish, but also our high school, and organizations such as Feed My Sheep.

"We've given away between \$7-8 million over the last 15 years," says Tim Jackman, past Grand Knight. "Most of our income comes from this. I can't begin to say the number of organizations that have received donations. Treasure Hunt has been invaluable in giving millions throughout the county."

Tickets for Treasure Hunt sell for \$1 each, with the drawings held on Saturdays.

The council also holds a bingo fundraiser at least once a week.

Meetings are held twice a month — members gather

at the council building at 6 p.m. on the first Tuesday for the business meeting; and at 7 p.m. on the second Tuesday for a social meeting, when the Fourth Degree also gathers. The members open each meeting with the Rosary.

No matter the activity, our Knights find they are able to grow closer to Christ.

"Absolutely — that's what makes being a Knight so good," Tim says.

Being part of an organization that is both fraternal and social is the most rewarding aspect of being a Knight.

"We get together with our families and friends — there's camaraderie," Tim says. "That all mixes in with church-based activities. With our camaraderie and with what the Knights do, we get together and give away what we can."

"We have speakers twice a year at all Masses to encourage men to join," he adds. "Membership is aging, and we're looking for new members."

Catholic men who are at least 18 years old are eligible to join the Knights of Columbus.

Council 630 holds recruitment events twice a year, with notices in the Sunday bulletins on how to apply for membership. Those interested can also go online at www.kofc.org to join.

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Understanding the TRIDUUM *continued from front cover*

These days help us prepare for Christ, our light. We can enter into His Resurrection rejoicing.

“Through those three days, it feels like heaven and earth touch,” Fr. Paul says. “We become part of the Scripture. On Holy Thursday, we enter into that Scripture. It’s like it’s happening right then — the Last Supper, the walk to the garden. We find ourselves within it.”

While the Easter Vigil or Easter Sunday Mass are the only liturgies of the Triduum that are holy days of obligation, consider attending each service — even those that are not required — to fully immerse yourself in the beauty and depth of these sacred days.

“I always tell my parishioners this is the most precious three days of the Church calendar,” Fr. Paul says. “It’s even greater than Christmas. During these three days, we are actually seeing, living, and moving through those Scripture passages. You can’t experience the full three days if you only come to one. You can’t just come for the happy part. You need to walk through all of it — the Upper Room, the garden, the Cross — to fully experience the Resurrection.”

Watch the parish bulletin for Triduum Mass times and consider attending all Triduum services.

“Those three days are the most sacred days,” Fr. Paul says. “It’s not just about attending — it’s about participating. Place yourself within the mystery. Live it.”

