

HOLY THURSDAY 2026

# Seven Churches Pilgrimage

SELF-GUIDED TOUR

VISIT 7 OR MORE  
ALTARS OF REPOSE AT  
9 DOWNTOWN CHURCHES  
ON 1 HOLY NIGHT

*“Were you not able to keep watch with me one hour?” – Matthew 26:40*

The Seven Churches visitation grew out of the penance given to pilgrims to visit the seven basilicas of Rome. St. Philip Neri is credited with the popularization of the Seven Churches Pilgrimage in the 16th Century. The practice has proliferated around the world and today is popular in Italy, Poland, Mexico, and the Philippines.

Pilgrims are invited to draw closer to Jesus through prayer before the Blessed Sacrament at the start of the Holy Triduum by visiting seven Altars of Repose. The Seven Churches visitation is reminiscent of when Jesus asked disciples to stand watch with him and pray while in the garden of Gethsemane. In visiting seven locations, we are reminded of the seven places Jesus went between the Last Supper and Calvary.

Upon entering each church, pilgrims visit the altar of repose, kneel, make the sign of the cross, read the appropriate scripture for each station and engage in private prayer and adoration. At the final church, many opt to observe a Holy Hour.

## **Station 1**

### **Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane**

#### **Luke 22: 39-46**

And he came out, and went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives; and the disciples followed him. And when he came to the place he said to them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation." And he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and knelt down and prayed, "Father, if you are willing, remove this chalice from me; nevertheless not my will, but yours be done." And there appeared to him an angel from heaven, strengthening him. And being in agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down upon the ground. And when he rose from prayer, he came to the disciples and found them sleeping for sorrow, and he said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Rise and pray that you will not enter into temptation."

#### **Meditation:**

In one of His deepest moments of anguish and distress, our Lord, like all of us, needs human connection, yet when He needed them most, His disciples were asleep.

"Gratitude arises out of Holy Week vision of Jesus, not soaring unscathed into realms of light above us and beyond us, untouched by human pain, but down on His knees on the ground, weeping, abandoned, sweating blood, beseeching His Father, preparing to meet Sin and Death disarmed and unprotected, gathering Himself for His climatic battle against your Enemy and mine..."

(Fleming Rutledge, Means of Grace)

#### **Prayer:**

Lord, because of my human frailty and weakness, like the disciples I also turn away from you and fall asleep. I fail to see your grace at every moment of the day. I pray you will give me the strength to stand by you, as you stand by me. Help me to always see your goodness around me and in difficult moments of life to remember as Jesus to accept all that comes my way as the Father's will.

#### **Our Father**

## Station 2

### Jesus is bound and taken before Annas

#### John 18: 19-23

The high priest then questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching. Jesus answered him, "I have spoken openly to the world; I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews come together; I said nothing secretly. Why do you ask me? Ask those who have heard me, what I said to them; they know what I said." When he had said this, one of the officers standing by struck Jesus with his hand, saying, "Is this how you answer the high priest?" Jesus answered him, "If I have spoken wrongly, bear witness to the wrong; but if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?"

#### Meditation:

Jesus is taken to the man in charge first. Jesus reminded Annas He could not be required by law to give evidence against Himself. A passerby, slaps Jesus for what he perceives as Jesus' disrespect towards Annas. Striking a prisoner is forbidden by Jewish law. Jesus reminded the person who struck Him that they could testify against Him but not abuse Him physically.

We may not have been slapped in the face before, but we all know the feeling of being let down, being passed over for a job promotion, being ridiculed, being falsely accused, being gossiped about, etc. Jesus did not just die horribly on the Cross, moreover, His journey to the cross was nothing short of humiliating.

#### Prayer:

From the fear of being humiliated, deliver me O Jesus.  
From the fear of being despised, deliver me O Jesus.  
From the fear of suffering rebukes, deliver me O Jesus.  
From the fear of being calumniated, deliver me O Jesus.  
From the fear of being forgotten, deliver me O Jesus.  
From the fear of being ridiculed, deliver me O Jesus.  
From the fear of being wronged, deliver me O Jesus.

-Excerpts taken from the *Litany of Humility*

## Our Father

## **Station 3**

### **Jesus is taken before the High Priest, Caiaphas**

#### **Matthew 26: 63-68**

But Jesus was silent. And the high priest said to him, "I adjure you by the living God, tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God." Jesus said to him, "You have said so. But I tell you, hereafter you will see the Son of man seated at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven." Then the high priest tore his robes, and said, "He has uttered blasphemy! Why do we still need witnesses? You have now heard his blasphemy. What is your judgment?" They answered, "He deserved death." Then they spat in his face, and struck him; and some slapped him, saying, "Prophecy for us, Messiah: who is it that struck you?"

#### **Meditation:**

Caiaphas was the High Priest before whom Jesus was interrogated. He found Jesus guilty and sent Him to Pontius Pilate for sentencing. He was also the High Priest in the Acts of the Apostles who persecuted the first Christians (Acts 5:17).

What utter suffering our Savior went through. To spit on someone is such a degrading act of disrespect. Christ took on all things to remind us that nothing can separate us from God, even our own sins, weaknesses, and addictions.

#### **Prayer:**

Jesus, you spit on the ground so you could heal the blind man and give him new life. Yet upon you, the Author of Life, you endured spit and humiliation to raise us to your divinity, help us to endure all suffering with confidence that you accompany us along the way.

#### **Our Father**

## **Station 4**

### **Jesus is taken before Pilate**

#### **John 18: 35-37**

Pilate answered, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests handed you over to me. What have you done?" Jesus answered, "My kingdom does not belong to this world. If my kingdom did belong to this world, my attendants would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not here." So Pilate said to him, "Then you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say I am a king. For this I was born and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice."

#### **Meditation:**

Pilate was the prefect of Judea when Tiberius Julius Caesar Augustus was the Emperor of Rome. Pilate was taking care of the Jewish state in the Roman Empire. Pilate was a career politician, a diplomat, he was politically correct and was more interested in keeping the peace rather than befriending the Prince of Peace. What does it mean to see Him as the King of the Jews? Every encounter with Jesus confronts us with the truth about ourselves. Pilate is torn between engaging with Jesus and keeping Him at a distance. We have the same struggle.

#### **Prayer:**

Lord Jesus, to follow you as King comes with a great cost. It is much easier to wear a necklace around my neck, put a \$20 bill in the collection basket, or just show up for Mass. However, to be your disciple requires a radical reorientation of my life to align with your Kingdom, give me the grace to be faithful and steadfast.

#### **Our Father**

## **Station 5**

### **Jesus is taken before Herod**

**Luke 23: 8-9, 11**

Herod was very glad to see Jesus; he had been wanting to see him for a long time, for he had heard about him and had been hoping to see him perform some sign. He questioned him at length, but he gave him no answer. Even Herod and his soldiers treated him contemptuously and mocked him, and after clothing him in resplendent garb, he sent him back to Pilate.

#### **Meditation:**

Herod was glad to see Christ and wanted to see a sign, yet Herod was blinded by the reality of the truth standing before Him. Herod was full of pride and sought his own glory rather than the glory of God. Like the Pharisees in the Gospels we also can be spiritually blind. We may know all the Mass responses, say our daily prayers, pray the rosary, yet we can still be blind to the presence of God around us.

#### **Prayer:**

Lord, how many times have you come before me and yet I remain indifferent, unaware, and blind to your Presence. Do not allow me to treat you as a passerby, but rather as the Lord who comes to save me. Make my heart docile, receptive, and alert to find you amidst the noise and busyness of life.

#### **Our Father**

## **Station 6**

### **Jesus is taken before Pilate again.**

#### **Matthew 27: 22-26**

Pilate said to them, "Then what shall I do with Jesus called Messiah?" They all said, "Let him be crucified!" But he said, "Why? What evil has he done?" They only shouted the louder, "Let him be crucified!" When Pilate saw that he was not succeeding at all, but that a riot was breaking out instead, he took water and washed his hands in the sight of the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this man's blood. Look to it yourselves." And the whole people said in reply, "His blood be upon us and upon our children." Then he released Barabbas to them, but after he had Jesus scourged, he handed him over to be crucified.

#### **Meditation:**

Pilate wanted an easy way out. He washes his hands clean to suggest he doesn't want responsibility. Furthermore, another way of saying this is too much to handle. How often are we like Pilate when we wash our hands clean from attending Sunday Mass, reading Scripture, speaking up for our faith in College, at work, around our neighbors, etc. It is so easy to walk away from this Messiah.

#### **Prayer:**

Lord, I face societal pressure daily to conform to this world, rather than the Kingdom of God. Give me the fortitude and courage to hold fast to your Gospel and the commands you set upon those who wish to bear your name, "Christian", that is "little Christ".

#### **Our Father**

## Station 7

### Jesus is given the crown of thorns and led to his crucifixion

#### Matthew 27: 27-31

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus inside the praetorium and gathered the whole cohort around him. They stripped off his clothes and threw a scarlet military cloak upon him. Weaving a crown out of thorns, they placed it on his head, and a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him, they mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" They spat upon him and took the reed and kept striking him on the head. And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the cloak, dressed him in his own clothes, and led him off to crucify him.

#### **Meditation:**

The Kingship of Christ was misunderstood by those who mocked Him and by many today. How can "this" man from Nazareth be king. This king was born on a hitlist, this king lived in poverty and on the run. This king lived in no palace and had no jet to transport him around the world. However, **at His name every knee must bend of those in heaven, on earth,** under the earth (Phil 2:10). What a privilege it is to be beloved children of Christ the King!

#### **Prayer:**

What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul!  
What wondrous love is this, O my soul!  
What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss  
To bear the dreadful curse for my soul, for my soul,  
To bear the dreadful curse for my soul.

-What Wondrous Love is This

#### **Our Father**

### **Chapel of the Basilica of Ste. Anne de Detroit**

1000 Sainte Anne Street, Detroit, MI 48216

Holy Thursday Service at Most Holy Trinity Parish – Bilingual – 7pm

Altar of Repose open until 11pm

### **Cathedral of the Most Blessed Sacrament**

9844 Woodward Avenue, Detroit, Michigan 48202

Holy Thursday Service – English – 7pm

Altar of Repose open until 11pm

*Those wishing to attend the Mass of the Lord's Supper are encouraged to enter the Cathedral from the Woodward Street doors. Those coming for the Altar of Repose should enter through the office entrance directly off the parking lot.*

### **Most Holy Redeemer Parish**

1721 Junction St., Detroit, MI 48209

Holy Thursday Service – Bilingual – 7pm

Altar of Repose open until 11pm

### **Most Holy Trinity Parish**

1050 Porter St, Detroit, MI 48226

Holy Thursday Service – Bilingual – 7pm

Altar of Repose open until 10pm

### **Old St. Mary Parish (Greektown)**

646 Monroe St, Detroit, MI 48226

Holy Thursday Service – English – 7pm

Altar of Repose open until midnight

### **Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish**

(Our Lady Queen of Angels site)

4200 Martin St, Detroit, MI 48210

Holy Thursday Service – Spanish – 7pm

Altar of Repose open until midnight

*Please enter by the side door by the parking lot.*

### **St. Aloysius Parish**

1234 Washington Blvd, Detroit, MI 48226

Holy Thursday Service at the Blessed Sacrament Cathedral

Altar of Repose will be open from 8:30pm until 11pm

Night Prayer will be prayed at 10:45pm

*Note – Located at the heart of downtown so they do not have a parking lot. There are several parking lots and metered street parking. Enter through the bronze doors off Washington Blvd. and take the stairs to the Lower Altar.*

### **St. Gabriel Parish**

8118 W. Vernor Hwy, Detroit, MI 48209

Holy Thursday Service – Bilingual – 7pm

Altar of Repose open until 11pm

### **Sweetest Heart of Mary Church**

4440 Russell St, Detroit, MI 48207

Holy Thursday Service – English – 6pm

Altar of Repose open until 11pm

*6pm through Good Friday – Exposition of the Holy Face Relic*

*7:45pm – Holy Face of Jesus meditation, devotions, prayers*

*9:00pm – Tenebrae Service with Confessions*

\*Meditations and Prayers by Fr. Zaid Chabaan