

## **The Sacred Triduum**

The summit of the liturgical year is the Sacred Easter Triduum—from the evening of Holy Thursday to the evening of Easter Sunday. Though chronologically three days, they are liturgically one day unfolding for us the unity of Christ's Paschal Mystery. Participating in these liturgies offers a profound opportunity for spiritual growth and connection to the core of our faith.

Holy Thursday - Mass of the Lord's Supper - 7:00pm. The Mass begins by receiving the Holy Oils that were consecrated by the Archbishop at the Chrism Mass held that morning. At this Mass, we commemorate the institution of the Eucharist and the priesthood. After the homily, the priest washes the feet of others, to show Jesus' command to love and serve one another.

Mass concludes with a procession of the Blessed Sacrament to the altar of repose; at Mary Mother this will be in the side alcove. All are invited to join this procession in candlelight, and then to "watch and pray" in Adoration. Night prayer will be at 9:45pm, and then the Church will close.

Good Friday of the Lord's Passion - 7:00pm. On Good Friday, the sanctuary looks very different: it is plain and bare. The red candle is unlit, 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 day of mourning and prayer.

The priest begins by prostrating himself in front of the altar. We hear the Passion of our Lord according to John, and pray for the needs of the whole world. Veneration of the Cross takes place, as the parish youth bring in a large wooden cross. We are invited to come before the cross, and touch or kiss it. Finally, we receive Holy Communion from the hosts reserved at the altar of repose, consecrated the night before. This service ends in silence. We genuflect to the cross as we depart.

Great Vigil of Easter on Saturday - 8:00pm. This is the most glorious, beautiful, and dramatic liturgy of the Church. We begin outside at the Easter fire; the fire is blessed and then used to light the new Paschal candle, representing the light of Christ. As the light is brought into the Church, we each light our own vigil candle, signifying light overcoming darkness. We hear from Scripture the story of God's great plan of salvation, culminating in the Resurrection of Our Lord. After the Liturgy of the Word, the water in the Baptismal font is blessed, to prepare for the full initiation of Thao Phung and Andy Gardner. There is great joy as they are baptized and walk out of the font, beginning their new life in Christ. The Great Vigil continues with the

Liturgy of the Eucharist. The Mass concludes with great joy. Alleluia! Alleluia! He is risen!

I want to invite and encourage you to attend the Triduum. As you walk through the events of Christ's suffering, death and resurrection, you will deepen your relationship with God, and our community. We come together as the Body of Christ, to worship, pray, and celebrate the mysteries of our faith.

*-Roxanne Tozier, Parish Ministry Director*