

Holy Week Newsletter

A LETTER FROM THE PASTOR

March 29, 2020 – Fifth Sunday of Lent

Dear Friends in the Lord,

This letter is taking on a different tone, as the entire world is in extraordinary circumstances and all are focused on stopping the mitigation of COVID-19. Our prayers are united for the patients and families who have contracted the virus. May the dead rest in the hands of our merciful God! May the families of the deceased be comforted by Christ, the Good Shepherd! May the wisdom of God be with all of our leaders (church and civic) to guide them in eliminating this pandemic!

Friends, Holy Week, the time we celebrate the depth of our faith: the Paschal Mystery –the Death and Resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ, is approaching. While waiting for more instruction from our Diocese of Grand Rapids and given all the restrictions going on, most likely priests will celebrate the Sacred Paschal Triduum without the presence of people.

In anticipation of this situation, I asked the staff to prepare the Proclamation of the Passion on Palm Sunday (April 5) and Good Friday (April 10) to follow me on those days when I celebrate the liturgy without the presence of the faithful in our churches. You will also receive the Rosary Meditation on the Luminous Mystery (the last one is on the institution of Holy Eucharist) to be prayed on Holy Thursday Evening (April 9), and the Exulted – the Proclamation of Easter to be sung on the night of Holy Saturday (April 11) when the Church celebrates the “Mother of all Vigils.” Join me in prayer at home as I celebrate these solemn liturgies in the churches.

Dear friends, all of us wish to celebrate the Sacred Paschal Triduum (which begins with the Mass of the Lord’s Supper on Holy Thursday, reaching its depth in the Paschal Vigil and ending with the Evening Prayer of the Church on Easter Sunday) with great solemnity! These extraordinary circumstances, however, call us to rediscover the depth of our family life. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* no. 2685 states: “The Christian family is the first place of education in prayer. Based on the sacrament of marriage, the family is the ‘**domestic church**’ where God’s children learn to pray ‘as the Church’ and to persevere in prayer. For young children in particular, daily family prayer is the first witness of the Church’s living memory as awakened patiently by the Holy Spirit.” May the prayers of our families resound and unite with the priests to celebrate the liturgies on this day and reach the throne of God so that Christ, who conquered sin and death, will destroy COVID-19 which is seeking to disrupt the lives of those who have been redeemed by His Blood. Amen.

On a practical note: Our Elect will receive the Sacrament of Christian Initiation on Pentecost on May 31, 2020 at the 10:30am Mass. Our Candidates will be received into full communion with the Catholic Church on Holy Trinity Sunday on June 7, 2020 (Our Bishop wrote a letter to the Elect and Candidates explaining the postponement) Finally, First Communicants will receive Christ’s Body and Blood on the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of the Lord on June 14, 2020. Thank you for all of your understanding. Once again, let us unite in prayers for our families, our nation, and the entire world: We Adore you, o Christ and we bless you! Because by your holy Cross, you have redeemed the world! I am

Sincerely yours in the Lord,

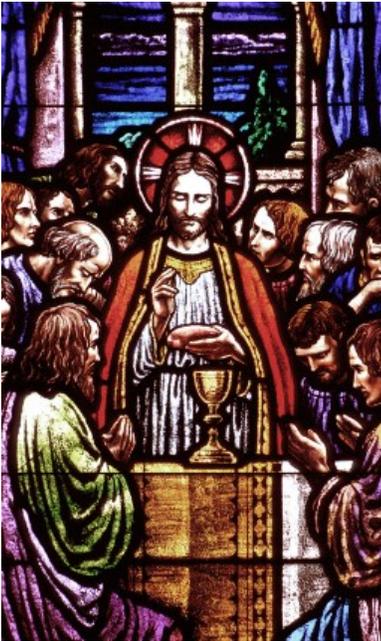


Rev. Lam T. Le, Pastor



“The Triduum begins with the evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper on Holy Thursday, reaching its high point in the Easter Vigil, and closing with Evening prayer on Easter Sunday” (UNLYC 19).

MAKING A SPIRITUAL COMMUNION



During this time, the Church encourages us to make an act of “spiritual communion,” where we unite ourselves to God through prayer. It is a beautiful way to express to God our desire to be united with him when we are unable to complete that union in the reception of Holy Communion.

Countless saints incorporated this type of prayer into their daily lives, not being satisfied with receiving Jesus in the Eucharist once a week or even once a day. Making an act of spiritual communion for them was an essential part of life and drew them closer to God on a daily basis. —Philip Kosloski

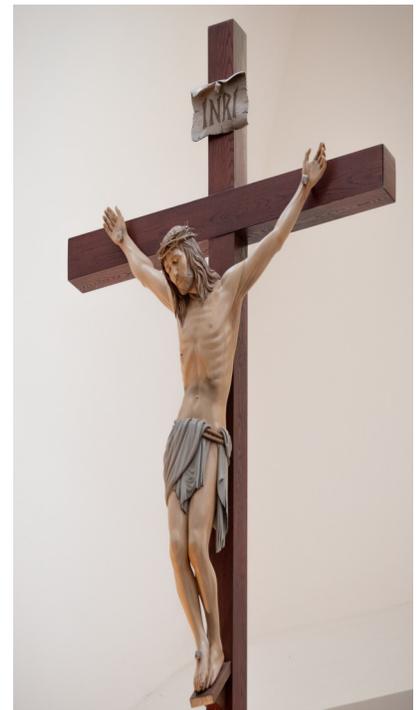
“My Jesus,
I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.
I love You above all things,
and I desire to receive You into my soul.
Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally,
come at least spiritually into my heart.
I embrace You as if You were already there
and unite myself wholly to You.
Never permit me to be separated from You.

Amen.”

GOOD FRIDAY-THE PASSION OF THE LORD

The Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ Year A: Matthew 27:11-54 (Short Form)

- N: The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew
- N: Jesus stood before the governor, Pontius Pilate, who questions him,
- V: “Are you the king of the Jews?”
- N: Jesus said,
- †: “You say so.”
- N: And when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he made no answer. Then Pilate said to him,
- V: “Do you not hear how many things they are testifying against you?”
- N: But he did not answer him one word, so that the governor was greatly amazed. Now on the occasion of the feast the governor was accustomed to release to the crowd one prisoner whom they wished. And at that time they had a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. So when they assembled, Pilate said to them,
- V: “Which one do you want me to release to you, Barabbas, or Jesus called Christ?”
- N: For he knew that it was out of envy that they had handed him over. While he was still seated on the bench, his wife sent him a message, “Have nothing to do with that righteous man. I suffered much in a dream today because of him.” The chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas but to destroy Jesus. The governor said to them in reply,
- V: “Which of the two do you want me to release to you?”
- N: They answered,
- C: “Barabbas!”
- N: Pilate said to them,
- V: “Then what shall I do with Jesus called Christ?”
- N: They all said,
- C: “Let him be crucified!”



N: But he said,

V: “Why? What evil has he done?”

N: They only shouted the louder,

C: “Let him be crucified!”

N: 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,

V: “I am innocent of this man’s blood. Look to it yourselves.”

N: And the whole people said in reply,

C: “His blood be upon us and upon our children.”

N: Then he released Barabbas to them, but after he had Jesus scourged, he handed him over to be crucified. 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 about him. Weaving a crown of thorns, they placed it on his head, and a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him, they mocked him, saying,

C: “Hail, King of the Jews!”

N: 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. As they were going out, they met a Cyrenian named Simon; this man they pressed into service to carry his cross. And when they came to a place called Golgotha –which means Place of the Skull-, they gave Jesus wine to drink mixed with gall. But when he tasted it, he refused to drink. After they had crucified him, they divided his garments by casting lots; then they sat down and kept watch over him there. And they placed over his head the written charge against him: This is Jesus, King of the Jews. Two revolutionaries were crucified with him, one on his right and the other on his left. Those passing by reviled him, shaking their heads and saying,

C: “You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself, if you are the Son of God, and come down from the cross!”

N: Likewise the chief priests with the scribes and elders mocked him and said,

C: “He saved others; he cannot save himself. So he is the king of Israel! Let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now if he wants him. For he said, ‘I am the Son of God.’”

N: They revolutionaries who were crucified with him also kept abusing him in the same way. From noon onward, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And about three o’clock Jesus cried out in a loud voice,

† : “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?”

N: Which means,

† : My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

N: Some of the bystanders who heard it said,

C: “This one is calling for Elijah.”

N: Immediately one of them ran to get a sponge; he soaked it in wine, and putting it on the reed, gave it to him to drink. But the rest said,

C: “Wait, let us see if Elijah comes to save him.”

N: But Jesus cried out again in a loud voice, and gave up his spirit.

Here kneel and pause for a short time.

N: And behold, the veil of the sanctuary was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth quaked, rocks were split, tombs were opened, and the bodies of many saints who had fallen asleep were raised. And coming forth from their tombs after his resurrection, they entered the holy city and appeared to many. The centurion and the men with him who were keeping watch over Jesus feared greatly when they saw the earthquake and all that was happening, and they said,

C: “Truly, this was the Son of God!”

The Gospel of the Lord.

EASTER VIGIL-THE EASTER PROCLAMATION

Exult, let them exult, the hosts of heaven,
exult, let Angel ministers of God exult,
let the trumpet of salvation
sound aloud our mighty King's triumph!
Be glad, let earth be glad, as glory floods her,
ablaze with light from her eternal King,
let all corners of the earth be glad,
knowing an end to gloom and darkness.
Rejoice, let Mother Church also rejoice,
arrayed with the lightning of his glory,
let this holy building shake with joy,
filled with the mighty voices of the peoples.

(V. The Lord be with you.

R. And with your spirit.)

V. Lift up your hearts.

R. We lift them up to the Lord.

V. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

R. It is right and just.

It is truly right and just,
with ardent love of mind and heart
and with devoted service of our voice,
to acclaim our God invisible, the almighty Father,
and Jesus Christ, our Lord, his Son, his Only Begotten.

Who for our sake paid Adam's debt to the eternal Father,
and, pouring out his own dear Blood,
wiped clean the record of our ancient sinfulness.

These then are the feasts of Passover,
in which is slain the Lamb, the one true Lamb,
whose Blood anoints the doorposts of believers.

This is the night,
when once you led our forebears, Israel's children,
from slavery in Egypt
and made them pass dryshod through the Red Sea.

This is the night
that with a pillar of fire
banished the darkness of sin.

This is the night
in which even now, throughout the world,
sets Christian believers apart from worldly vices
and from the gloom of sin,
leading them to grace
and joining them to his holy ones.

This is the night,
when Christ broke the prison-bars of death
and rose victorious from the underworld.

O wonder of your humble care for us!
O love, O charity beyond all telling,
to ransom a slave you gave away your Son!

O truly necessary sin of Adam,
destroyed completely by the Death of Christ!

O happy fault
that earned so great, so glorious a Redeemer!
The sanctifying power of this night
dispels wickedness, washes faults away,
restores innocence to the fallen, and joy to mourners.

O truly blessed night,
when things of heaven are wedded to those of earth
and divine to the human.

On this, your night of grace, O holy Father,
accept this candle, a solemn offering,
the work of bees and of your servants' hands,
an evening sacrifice of praise,
this gift from your most holy Church

Therefore, O Lord,
we pray you that this candle,
hallowed to the honor of your name,
may persevere undimmed,
to overcome the darkness of this night.
Receive it as a pleasing fragrance,
and let it mingle with the lights of heaven.
May this flame be found still burning
by the Morning Star:
the one Morning Star who never sets,
Christ your Son,
who, coming back from death's domain,
has shed his peaceful light on humanity,
and lives and reigns for ever and ever.

R. Amen.

Frequently Asked Questions: A complete list of Q & A can be found on the Diocese of Grand Rapids website: www.GRdiocese.org.

Why have Masses been suspended in the Diocese of Grand Rapids? These actions, while extreme, are temporary, and are being taken in order to cooperate with the best of the scientific community's recommendations and with the express intent of helping mitigate the spread of the coronavirus, prevent a possible overload of our health care system, and ultimately save lives.

With the suspension of public Masses in the diocese, are Catholics dispensed from their obligation to attend Sunday Mass? With this suspension, all Catholics within the territory of the Diocese of Grand Rapids are granted a dispensation from their obligation of attending Sunday Mass through Easter Monday, April 13.

What can my family and I do at home together since we're not able to attend Mass? Catholics are encouraged to make an act of spiritual Communion, a great source of grace; to pray the rosary, or meditate on Sacred Scripture to keep holy the Lord's Day. We can also seek the intercession of our Blessed Mother asking for her help, consolation and for an end to the pandemic.

Where can I watch Mass now that there are no public, in-person options? Watch the LIVE broadcast of Sunday Mass each week from the Cathedral of Saint Andrew in Grand Rapids at 10 a.m. ET. Available on the diocesan website, on Facebook or on TV on WXMI Fox 17.