

The journey of the Triduum is not the journey of Jesus dying and rising again – that happened only once, rather it is our experience of reliving and immersing ourselves in these saving events which are “the paschal mystery”.

Everything we do, say, sing, reflect on, move through and enter into from the opening hymn of the Holy Thursday Mass leads us towards the FONT, the font of baptism, the water of life. On that night of nights, around the font, men and women are immersed into the death and resurrection of Jesus the Christ –immersed in the paschal mystery of God’s gracious love. This is a holy night, it is a night which Surely empowers us as the Church, the body of Christ.

Lent ends on Holy Thursday: these days which follow Lent, are given for the faithful to live more purposefully, to live for a season the life that the Church is called to all year around. Lent prepares us for these days, in that it focuses us, not just only on ourselves but most especially on those to be baptised and joined to the church – Lent is truly their season, but it is a huge invitation to the rest of us also.

The Triduum is our Church’s retreat, our Church's stripping away of everything that is not essential, and the deepening of our spirits into the life of God's Spirit who moves us to retell these stories, to sing of our salvation, to wash one another’s feet, to bless each other with water, to kiss and embrace a cross as the Master did, to celebrate the Eucharist with such wonder, devotion, and passion, that we are for ever empowered by these days, made whole, cleansed, and strengthened for the life of discipleship which is our shared vocation in this world.

Prayer:

O God, ever faithful and kind to all,
with tireless love you call the wayward home,
inviting them back to the path of true conversion,
and in your Son, lifted up on the cross,
you have provided us with healing,
from the sting of the Evil One.

Grant us the abundant riches of your grace,
that with our spirits renewed,
we may be able to respond
to your boundless and eternal love.

Let the world's weary and wounded come to know,
that by your gracious gift we are saved and delivered,
so immeasurable is the love
with which you love the world. Amen.



**We Must Glory
in the Cross**



**Journey
of Faith**

Session 16 - 2016-2017

Preparing for the Easter Triduum

Connecting to the previous sessions:

The raising of Lazarus—last Sunday’s Gospel - brought to completion the “trilogy” of the Lenten Gospels of conversion-transformation. The raising of Lazarus was also the final sign of the seven signs which Jesus gave to demonstrate his divine nature and power. After this sign is given, the Gospel takes a dramatic turn, looking toward the passion event of Christ, his “hour”. As this hour unfolds, rather than **giving** signs, Jesus **becomes** the Sign himself. Though this is the hour of the passion, it is an hour of Glory. The seven signs have demonstrated his glory—now, in his passion, he will be Glorified. This is why we say on Good Friday that we proclaim the **Glorious** Passion narrative of John the Evangelist.

Remember: for John, Jesus is conscious of his pre-existence (c.f. The Prologue). He has “come from God and is returning to God” (to a state he has left temporarily). He has freely chosen “to lay down his life and take it up again”; he is not a victim at the mercy of his opponents; he knows all; he knew Judas was going to betray him.....

At the end of the Passion narrative we will see that Jesus is buried as befits a king, with an elaborate amount of myrrh and oils. This is the passion of a King who has overcome the world.

The Triduum is one celebration which spans three days:

- the first day begins on Holy Thursday night with the Mass of the Lord’s Supper and runs till the evening of Good Friday,
- the second runs from evening of Good Friday to the evening of Holy Saturday.
- The third day opens with the darkness of the Easter Vigil and the breaking of the darkness with the Easter fire, and continues until the evening of Easter Sunday when the church concludes it with her Evening Prayer.

“**Triduum**” means three days – beginning with the “gathering of the whole community” for the evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper on Holy Thursday. This is the moment when the Triduum begins.....and it lasts until the Evening of Easter Day & Emmaus.

How does the biblical drama unfold?

<p><i>Will he come to the festival or not?</i> John 11:56 (Saturday before Palm Sunday)</p>	<p>The entry into Jerusalem is contained in all four gospel narratives; Jesus hailed by titles: <i>Son of David</i>, the <i>One who comes in the name of the Lord</i>. <i>Hosanna to the King of Israel</i>. John recalls Lazarus.</p>	<p><i>Six days before the Passover....</i> Hospitality at Bethany, anointing...overtone of betrayal. (Monday of Holy Week)</p>	<p>Preview of the supper - saving the washing of feet for Thursday, the placing of Peter and John. <i>Night had fallen</i>. This is the hour, and it means <i>glorification</i> (Tuesday of Holy Week)</p>	<p>Matthew's continuation of the betrayal drama. The plot thickens, Judas in cahoots with the chief priests....30 silver pieces [reminiscent of Jeremiah] (Wednesday of Holy Week)</p>	<p><i>I have given you an example you must copy—washing feet.</i> Is John telling us this is a Eucharistic gesture?... Journey into the night, into darkness. The arrest and trial.</p>	<p><i>It is accomplished</i> (John 19.30) Fulfillment of the scripture is a key reason for these events being told they way they are in John.</p>	<p><i>He goes before you to Galilee.</i> All the prophecy has been fulfilled, everything of salvation history must now be reinterpreted in the light of his rising. The way the story will be told is quite different.</p>
<p>Preparation of church buildings—the removal of things not central to this week....the veiling of statues etc is symbol of this readiness.</p>	<p>The distribution and blessing of palms, a procession of <i>Hosannas</i>, the recalling of the suffering servant; the solemn proclamation of the Passion from one of the synoptic Gospels.</p>	<p>The Monday Tuesday and Wednesday of Holy Week are days when the liturgy (both the Mass and the Liturgy of the hours) builds up the passion themes and invite the community which celebrates to ensure all the practical preparations are in place so the spiritual experience can be entered into “with heart and mind renewed” (c.f. The First Preface of Lent).</p>	<p>One Eucharist only today , in the evening, recalling the hour of the supper; the retelling of the Passover meal, the washing of feet, the upper room Eucharist, the procession and watching at the altar of repose.</p>	<p>The afternoon liturgy—silence, prophecy, fulfilment of prophecy, the glorious passion of John, the prayer for the world, the veneration of the cross, the simplest of communion services.</p>	<p><i>After a day of waiting at the Lord's tomb</i>, in the night, the church gathers to await the Rising Son, heralded in the paschal fire; the light is shared, the story told, the faith professed, baptism renewed, new members joined, the Eucharist celebrated.</p>		

How does the drama unfold in the liturgy of Passion Week?

"The Liturgy of the Word is the fundamental element of the Easter Vigil"

The seven readings from the Old Testament which constitute this Liturgy of the Word, and the two from the New Testament are everywhere in use in the Church of both east and west from the most ancient tradition. On this night the Church, *beginning with Moses and going through the prophets*, explains Christ's paschal mystery. The Vigil therefore is an *Emmaus experience*.

The structure is LISTEN - RESPOND - PRAY

In the Liturgy of the Word at the Easter Vigil God lavishes his gifts on us.

He has given us life itself (*Genesis*)
Called us to share in the faith of Abraham (*Genesis*)
Delivered us from the slavery of sin (*Exodus*)
Promised to love us with an everlasting love (*Isaiah*)
Called and nourished us at the waters of eternal life (*Isaiah*)
Given us the light of his word to live by each day (*Baruch*)
Given us a new heart in which his own spirit dwells (*Ezekiel*)
Baptised us into his son that we may share in his resurrection (*Romans*)
And always goes before us to meet us where we live and work (*Gospel*).

Only after the reading of the Word do we renew our commitment at the Baptismal font.

The celebration of the
Easter Triduum
is our redemption in
the present moment!

