

Dear Friends,

After last week's bulletin article and homily, I am in need of a break! A lot of energy was devoted to providing a clear and concise article about the restoration of the tabernacle to the high altar and the veiling of the statues. If you missed last weekend's bulletin, please let me know and I will be happy to provide you with a copy.

This week, I think it best to provide a description of what we will encounter during Holy Week, the sacred days that lead to Easter.

At the conclusion of the 11:30am Mass on Palm Sunday, Perpetual Adoration will be held in the Brennan Chapel through Wednesday evening (Please refer to the article from Brian Mizzoni in this week's bulletin for accurate times). Young families are encouraged to attend and make a family hour during this time. Please contact Brian or Carrie Jake for more information.

On Tuesday, Fr. Brown and I concelebrate the Chrism Mass at Sacred Heart Cathedral with Bishop Matano. At this Mass, the Bishop consecrates the oils that will be used for the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Orders and Anointing of the Sick. This is also the occasion where priests renew their priestly promises. Please pray for Fr. Lew and me on this day in particular. We are thankful for your daily prayers as well!

At the Holy Thursday Mass of the Lord's Supper, Bishop Matano will be the celebrant and homilist. After Mass adoration of our Lord in the tabernacle on the high altar will continue through 10:00pm, concluding at that time with compline/night prayer. This year, our Bishop will observe the ceremonial foot washing by washing the feet of those who have been selected. This year, six have been chosen by merit of being involved with some form of service and expression of vocational life in the Church. However, the Holy Oils will not be presented at the beginning of the Mass. Remember the Bishop, who is our pastor, made these oils a few days before at the Chrism Mass. Typically, the Chrism Mass is celebrated on Holy Thursday morning, the oils brought to the local parishes by the pastor, and presented to the faithful before the Mass of the Lord's Supper. This is not a universal practice and is, among many things, an option. I realize that these represent changes from years' past, but I hope you can see the thought behind them.

Good Friday of the Lord's Passion is the only day in the calendar year when the Church does not celebrate the Most Holy Eucharist. This service commemorates the death of Jesus on the Cross. The Passion Narrative according to St. John will be sung by three voices. You are invited to listen (always the preference when the Word of God is proclaimed) or to follow the narrative printed in the Gather Hymnal. The Church will be opened at 11:30am for prayer. Booklets for the Stations of the Cross will be provided should you choose to pray the stations on your own. The service will commence at 3:00pm. Later that evening, a Tenebrae service will be held. New to our parish, this ancient service is the praying of psalms (which will be chanted) and readings while candles are successively extinguished leaving us in darkness. We will observe this prayer on Good Friday, though it was prescribed in the days leading up to the Easter Vigil as part of the Divine Office, the prayers that clergy promised to pray when ordained to Holy Orders.

In addition, Good Friday is also the day when the Novena leading to Divine Mercy Sunday begins. This is prayed in private but will conclude with a public recitation on Divine Mercy Sunday (April 28 at 3:00pm).

On Holy Saturday, the Vigil of Easter will begin at 8:00pm. This year, there are no catechumens (non-baptized) to initiate into the Church. Since this is the case, we will hear all seven readings. At this Mass, the Blessed Sacrament will be restored to the High Altar. I appreciate the several expressions of support, both written and verbal, about this important move, one that I pray will foster and strengthen our devotion to the Real Presence of our Lord in the Most Holy Eucharist.

Morning Prayer will be prayed at 9:00am on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday at St. Mary's during Holy Week. Please join us for this which is always a time of peaceful, quiet reflection.

Times when confession is offered are listed in the Holy Week Schedule. If you missed the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation during the Day of Penance or on a Saturday afternoon, these additional times, I hope, will be convenient for you.

As we enter this most sacred time in our Church, let us keep each other in prayer for our needs of healing. This season of forty days is about to conclude. During this time, we worked hard to turn from sin and live a life of holiness for two reasons: our own salvation, rejoicing when the Lord rises from the tomb in the hope that we too will rise with him. And to bring the Good News to all those we meet.

In Christ,

Fr. Jones