



## MUSIC FOR THE LITURGY

Sunday, March 25, 2018  
Palm Sunday Of The  
Passion Of The Lord

4:00 PM  
8:00 AM

Gathering: Hosanna To The Son Of David  
BB 137

Responsorial Psalm (Psalm 22)

***My God, my God, why have you  
abandoned me.***

Preparation What Wondrous Love Is This BB 481

Mass Parts Mass of Christ the Savior

Communion: Eat This Bread BB 337  
Bread For The World BB 351

Recessional: ***We depart in silence during Lent***

10:00 AM

Gathering: Hosanna To The Son Of David  
BB 137

Responsorial Psalm (Psalm 22)

***My God, my God, why have you  
abandoned me.***

Preparation Now We Remain BB 508  
What Wondrous Love BB 481

Mass Parts Mass of Christ the Savior

Communion: Behold The Lamb BB 339  
God's Holy Gifts BB 343

Recessional: ***We depart in silence during Lent***



Find us on:  
**facebook®**

St. Luke the Evangelist is now on Facebook! Go to  
[www.facebook.com/stlukenh.org/](http://www.facebook.com/stlukenh.org/) or **St. Luke the Evangelist  
Parish – Newton/Plaistow** and give us a Like! Please invite  
fellow parishioners and friends to do the same.

## ✠ PARISH TITHING ✠

Our Parish needs to take in \$7,000.00 each week in order to make ends meet. Thank you for your generosity to our parish! Your weekly contribution helps ensure that the parish remains a vibrant community. Please remember to submit your weekly gift even if you will be away. We depend upon your support!

**March 18, 2018**

<b>Offertory</b>	<b>\$6,615.59</b>
<b>Fuel</b>	<b>\$1,959.12</b>

### **PARISH GIVING**

Saint Luke the Evangelist Parish has engaged *Parish Giving* to provide parishioners with an opportunity to make your offertory and other contributions through Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). Parish Giving is a simple, secure, and convenient way to manage your stewardship without weekly envelopes and without worries. It allows you to select contribution amounts and special collections right from your own computer or smart phone. You can be a good steward for the Parish even when you are away from the area on a weekend. Parish Giving allows you to print out a report detailing your contributions for the year. This program is available to parishioners at no cost. Log on to the St. Luke the Evangelist Parish website at <http://stlukenh.org>, click on the Parish Giving logo, and follow the easy registration instructions.

### **UPCOMING SECOND & SPECIAL COLLECTIONS**

March 25, 2018	Catholic Relief Services
March 30, 2018	Good Friday – Holy Land
April 1, 2018	Easter
April 8, 2018	Property Management
April 15, 2018	No Second Collection



**Out of respect, please remember  
to silence or turn off  
your cell phones during Mass.  
Thank you!**

### **Suggested Weekly Contribution Based on Income**

Annual Income	5% Commitment annually/ weekly	3% Commitment annually/ weekly
\$100,000	\$5,000/\$100	\$3,000/\$60
\$75,000	\$3,750/\$75	\$2,250/\$45
\$60,000	\$3,000/\$60	\$1,800/\$36
\$50,000	\$2,500/\$50	\$1,500/\$30
\$40,000	\$2,000/\$40	\$1,200/\$24
\$30,000	\$1,500/\$30	\$900/\$18
\$25,000	\$1,250/\$25	\$750/\$15
\$15,000	\$750/\$15	\$450/\$9

### **Suggested Weekly Contribution Based on a Percentage Increase**

Your Current Offertory Contribution	25% Increase	30% Increase	40% Increase
\$75.00	\$93.75	\$97.50	\$105.00
\$50.00	\$62.50	\$65.00	\$70.00
\$40.00	\$50.00	\$52.00	\$56.00
\$35.00	\$43.75	\$45.50	\$49.00
\$30.00	\$37.50	\$39.00	\$42.00
\$25.00	\$31.25	\$32.50	\$35.00
\$20.00	\$25.00	\$26.00	\$28.00
\$15.00	\$18.75	\$19.50	\$21.00
\$10.00	\$12.50	\$13.00	\$14.00
\$5.00	\$6.25	\$6.50	\$7.00

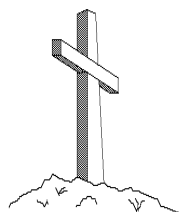
## ✠ PARISH NEWS ✠

### FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

If you would like an "end of year" financial statement of your contributions to the parish for 2017, please call **Jackie** at the Parish Office at 382-8324. **Financial Statements are issued on a request only basis.**

### LENTEN EVENING PRAYER

**Evening Prayer** is sung at Newton at 6:00 PM on all Sundays of Lent. Join us for a quiet time of prayer and reflection. The **Sacrament of Reconciliation** is available immediately after Evening Prayer each Sunday of the Lenten Season.



### STATIONS OF THE CROSS GOOD FRIDAY

Stations of the Cross will take place on Good Friday afternoon at 3:00 PM in Newton.

### EASTER CANDLES

Donations to defray the cost of the new Paschal Candles for the Easter Season are welcome. Please contact Jackie at the Parish Office for details.



### **From the Pastor's Desk**



### HOLY ANGELS CEMETERY CLOSED

**Holy Angels Cemetery in Plaistow is now closed until Spring 2018.** This decision comes as result of the real dangers of snow and ice in the Cemetery and the costs to Parishioners to inter during the winter months. Please contact the Parish Office with any questions.  
Fr. Albert



### **THE ROOF REPLACEMENT PROJECT AND CAPITAL CAMPAIGN FOR SAINT LUKE THE EVANGELIST PARISH**

Our Parish community continues with our Capital Campaign to replace roofs on the Plaistow campus, and to raise funds to complete other projects in Newton and in Plaistow. Our three-year goal is to raise \$250,000.00. Besides the Plaistow roofs, we would like to accomplish the following projects: Plaistow church access ramp, Plaistow office building & convent window replacement, Newton rectory interior flooring, Newton church lighting and painting, Newton rectory painting as funds become available.

#### ***How can you help?***

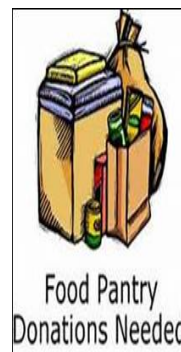
Any contribution is welcome.

Make checks payable to

***Saint Luke the Evangelist - Capital Campaign.***

### **ST. LUKE THE EVANGELIST FOOD PANTRY**

Food or care items are always needed – donations can be dropped off at Church or are welcome at the Parish Office during regular business hours. Cash donations for food are always welcome – make checks payable to **St. Luke the Evangelist Food Pantry**. All donations to the Food Pantry go toward helping the needy of our communities.



### FOOD PANTRY HOURS

**Wednesday from 10:00 AM to 12:00 Noon**

**Thursday from 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM**

**Friday from 10:00 AM to 12:00 Noon**

For more information, call the St. Luke Food Pantry at **603-819-4949**.

### **WHILE AWAY THIS SPRING...**

We appreciate all of you who remember to send in your Parish Offertory during the Spring even when on vacation or visiting other parishes. Thank you for remembering that our expenses also continue through the Spring months. We invite others to consider doing the same before or even after you return home.

## PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD

### ✠ WEEKLY CALENDAR ✠

#### Sunday, March 25

10:00 AM	NO Religious Education – Pre-K to 8	<i>Plaistow</i>
11:00 AM	Confirmation Session	<i>Plaistow</i>
11:00 AM	RCIA	<i>Plaistow</i>
11:00 AM	Parish Pastoral Council Meeting	<i>Plaistow</i>
6:00 PM	Vespers	<i>Newton</i>
6:30 PM	Sacrament of Reconciliation	<i>Newton</i>

#### Monday, March 26

11:00 AM	Sacrament of Reconciliation	<i>Plaistow</i>
5:00 PM	Sacrament of Reconciliation	<i>Newton</i>

#### Wednesday, March 28

**PARISH OFFICE CLOSING AT NOON**

7:30 PM	Tennebrae	<i>Plaistow</i>
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#### Thursday, March 29

**PARISH OFFICE CLOSED  
NO ADORATION**

8:00 AM	Morning Prayer	<i>Newton</i>
12:00 PM	Mid-Day Prayer	<i>Newton</i>
6:30 PM	Liturgy of the Lord's Supper/Adoration	<i>Newton</i>
10:00 PM	Night Prayer	<i>Newton</i>

#### Friday, March 30

8:00 AM	Morning Prayer	<i>Plaistow</i>
12:00 PM	Mid-Day Prayer	<i>Plaistow</i>
3:00 PM	Stations of the Cross	<i>Newton</i>
6:30 PM	Liturgy of the Lord's Passion	<i>Plaistow</i>

#### Saturday, March 31

**NO SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION**

8:00 AM	Morning Prayer	<i>Plaistow</i>
12:00 PM	Mid-Day Prayer	<i>Plaistow</i>
8:00 PM	Great Vigil of Easter & Reception	<i>Plaistow</i>

#### Sunday, April 1

6:00 PM	Vespers & Benediction	<i>Newton</i>
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### ✠ MASS INTENTIONS ✠

#### Saturday, March 24 ~ Vigil / Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord

*Mk 11:1-10; Is 50:4-7; Phil 2:6-11; Mk 14:1—15:47*

4:00 PM	Antonia & Stanley Zakiewicz by Pat Zakiewicz
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*Plaistow*

#### Sunday, March 25 ~ Palm Sunday / Passion of the Lord

*Mk 11:1-10; Is 50:4-7; Phil 2:6-11; Mk 14:1—15:47*

8:00 AM	Patricia Huygen by Patricia Spina
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*Newton*

10:00 AM	Angela Iannalfo by the Parish
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*Plaistow*

#### Monday, March 26 ~ Monday of Holy Week

*Is 42:1-7; Jn 12:1-11*

8:00 AM	For Michael and his recovery
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*Newton*

#### Tuesday, March 27 ~ Tuesday of Holy Week

*Is 49:1-6; Jn 13:21-33, 36-38*

8:00 AM	Bernard Bush (Month's Mind)
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*Plaistow*

#### Wednesday, March 28 ~ Wednesday of Holy Week

*Is 50:4-9a; Mt 26:14-25*

6:30 PM	Corinne Tozier (Month's Mind)
7:30 PM	Tennebrae

*Plaistow*

#### Thursday, March 29 ~ Holy Thursday

*Ex 12:1-8, 11-14; 1 Cor 11:23-26; Jn 13:1-15*

6:30 PM	Liturgy of the Lord's Supper and Adoration
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*Newton*

#### Friday, March 30 ~ Good Friday

*Is 52:13—53:12; Heb 4:14-16, 5:7-9; Jn 18:1—19:42*

6:30 PM	Liturgy of the Lord's Passion
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*Plaistow*

#### Saturday, March 31 ~ Holy Saturday

*Gn 1:1—2:2; Gn 22:1-18; Ex 14:15—15:1; Is 54:5-14;  
Is 55:1-11; Bar 3:9-15, 32—4:4; Ez 36:16-17a, 18-28;  
Rom 6:3-11; Mk 16:1-7 (Vigil)*

8:00 PM	Great Vigil of Easter
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*Plaistow*

#### Sunday, April 1 ~ Easter Sunday / Resurrection of the Lord

*Acts 10:34a, 37-43; Col 3:1-4; Jn 20:1-9*

8:00 AM	People of the Parish
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*Newton*

10:00 AM	People of the Parish
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*Plaistow*

**St. Vincent  
de Paul  
Society**



Our Society is available if you need a "hand up" when you "fall" because the unexpected happened or any other crisis has occurred. We are a confidential yet friendly ear, ready to listen to you.

Our next meeting on **Wednesday, April 18 at 7:00 PM**. We meet downstairs in the Church Hall in Plaistow. **New members are always welcome!**

If you seek assistance or need information about the St. Vincent de Paul Society, call 603-382-8324 x315.

**Hear, OH LORD, and answer me  
for I am poor and needy.**

#### PRAYER LINE

St. Luke's offers a prayer line as a resource for those seeking prayer assistance. To submit your prayer request please call Cathy Smith at 603-382-8324, ext. 314 or email her at [csmith@stluketheevangelist.net](mailto:csmith@stluketheevangelist.net).

**ST. LUKE'S WEBSITE! <http://stlukenh.org>**

MARCH 25, 2018

## ✠ FAITH FORMATION & PARISH INFORMATION ✠

### ADULT CONFIRMATION

Are you an adult who has been Baptized and received Eucharist, but has not celebrated the sacrament of Confirmation? The adult Confirmation process is an opportunity to complete the Sacraments of Initiation. If you would like to prepare for Confirmation, or if you have questions, call Cathy Smith at 603-382-8324, ext. 305 or email her at [csmith@stluketheevangelist.net](mailto:csmith@stluketheevangelist.net).

### RCIA

The **Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults** is the process by which people become members of the Roman Catholic Church. **RCIA** is intended to serve:

- Those not Baptized who would like to learn more about the Catholic religion.
- Those Baptized in another religion who think they might like to become Catholic.
- Those Baptized Catholic but have not been raised in the Faith.

If you or someone you know is interested in inquiring about becoming a member of the Roman Catholic Church, call Cathy Smith at 603-382-8324, ext. 305 or email her at [csmith@stluketheevangelist.net](mailto:csmith@stluketheevangelist.net).

### PARENTS BAPTISM PREPARATION SESSION

The monthly preparation session for infant Baptism will be held after the 10:00 AM Liturgy on **Sunday, April 8, 2018** in the Parish Office living room. All parents planning to celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism are welcome. Families wishing to celebrate Baptism in the Church must be registered (according to Church Canon Law) and practicing (attending Sunday Mass) for 3 full months before a Baptism can be scheduled. The use of the envelope system is always optional; however, it does guarantee a manner of accountability. For most families, the Pastor or staff can easily verify attendance during these three months. Church Canon Law also regulates baptismal sponsors (godparents). Sponsors must be at least 16, fully initiated (having received Baptism, Eucharist, and Confirmation), and be practicing Catholics living Christian lives consistent with the Church's teaching. Please see Fr. Albert with questions.

### EASTER VIGIL RECEPTION



The Parish is planning to host a reception following the Great Vigil of Easter on Saturday night, **March 31**. We are looking for helpers to set-up, serve, and clean up, for food donations (especially pastries – Lent will be over!), beverages, and other food donations. For more information please call the Parish Office at 603-382-8324 or email [jtremlay@stluketheevangelist.net](mailto:jtremlay@stluketheevangelist.net).

### RICE BOWLS AVAILABLE

Operation Rice Bowl is the official Lenten program of Catholic Relief Services. Each Lent, parishes, schools and other faith communities participate in Operation Rice Bowl to learn more about the work of CRS and put their faith into action. Operation Rice Bowl provides funding to CRS for many third world projects that promote agricultural, nutritional and educational sufficiency. Additionally, Operation Rice Bowl supports local anti-poverty programs. Rice Bowls are available at the entrances of both Churches and are **due back by Holy Thursday, March 29**.

### ADORATION

We are truly blessed to have times for Adoration of Our Lord in our Parish. This time of prayer and intercession is not only a source of great grace for the individual, but it is a great source of grace for us as a parish family, as well.

We have many who have made the commitment to spend an hour each week with our Eucharistic Lord, **but** we need more people so there will be at least two people at each hour. We are also looking for people who would be able to substitute.

**Newton – Thursday  
8:30 AM – 8:30 PM**

If you can commit to one hour a week in Adoration of our Lord, or if you can be a substitute, please contact Cathy Smith at 603-382-8324, ext. 305 or email her at [csmith@stluketheevangelist.net](mailto:csmith@stluketheevangelist.net).

**The Church in Plaistow is open all day on Wednesdays for people to stop by and pray before the presence of Jesus in the tabernacle.**

## ✠ PARISH DIRECTORY ✠

Parish Office	382-8324
Parish Prayer Line	382-8324 x 314
St. Vincent de Paul Society	382-8324 x 315
St. Luke's Food Pantry	819-4949
Preschool	382-9783
Presentation of Mary Convent	382-2744

Fr. Albert Tremblay  
Cathy Smith  
Joyce Szczapa  
Jackie Tremblay  
Thomas Kondel  
Val Barczak  
Youth Ministry  
Parish Council

[fr.albert@stluketheevangelist.net](mailto:fr.albert@stluketheevangelist.net)  
[csmith@stluketheevangelist.net](mailto:csmith@stluketheevangelist.net)  
[jszczapa@stluketheevangelist.net](mailto:jszczapa@stluketheevangelist.net)  
[jtremlay@stluketheevangelist.net](mailto:jtremlay@stluketheevangelist.net)  
[tkondel@stluketheevangelist.net](mailto:tkondel@stluketheevangelist.net)  
[mvmbarczak@comcast.net](mailto:mvmbarczak@comcast.net)  
[youth@stluketheevangelist.net](mailto:youth@stluketheevangelist.net)  
[parishcouncil@stluketheevangelist.net](mailto:parishcouncil@stluketheevangelist.net)



✠ **Parish News ~ Youth News ~ Around The Diocese** ✠



*In Loving Memory*

Please pray for the repose of the soul of:

**Donald Sargent**

**PARISH OFFICE CLOSED**

The Parish Office will close at **12:00 Noon on Wednesday, March 28** and will reopen on **Tuesday, April 3 at 8:30 AM**.

**CRAFTERS AND ARTISTS WANTED FOR POPULAR CHRISTMAS CRAFT FAIR**

It's that time of year again when each of us starts making plans for the crafting season ... which fairs?? which weekends??

If you – or someone you know – would like to be considered as a vendor for this year's St. Luke the Evangelist Christmas Craft Fair, **the first jury period ends on May 7<sup>th</sup>**. We expect to be oversubscribed, so don't delay!

Work must be original and executed by the applicants, and may include food and/or beverages (no baked goods).

1<sup>st</sup> – Please save the date of our Parish Fair: **Saturday November 10, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM**.

2<sup>nd</sup> – To apply, please contact the Craft Fair at: [stlukenhfair@gmail.com](mailto:stlukenhfair@gmail.com). Applications are also available at <http://stlukenh.org> under "News and Events" or call the Parish Office at 603-382-8324.

We are always looking for new vendors to keep our Fair exciting for our visitors!

Don't miss out on participating in this fun and well-attended event!

**KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS PLEDGE TO CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT CAMPAIGN**

The St. Jude Council #6617 of the Knights of Columbus is very pleased to announce a \$2,500 pledge to the Capital Campaign Fund for our Parish. The Knights are planning to honor the entire pledge this calendar year. Last year the St. Jude Council donated \$1,550 to the Capital Campaign Fund. The parish's St. Jude Council invites all Catholic men over the age of 18 to join the Knights. The Knights, in addition to serving our parish, also help people and change people's lives. There are over 7,500 Knights in NH and over 2 million worldwide "doing good" to quote another Knight, our own Fr. Albert. If you would like more information on the St. Jude Council, please contact Dan Sullivan at 603-770-4803 or [dans49@comcast.net](mailto:dans49@comcast.net).

**DIOCESAN DAY OF RECONCILIATION**

You are invited to join NH Catholics in a statewide day of reconciliation. This is an opportunity for you to open your heart and allow the Lord to fill it with His Grace. All parishes will open their doors to welcome you on **Monday of Holy Week, March 26, 2018**. At St. Luke's, the Sacrament of Reconciliation will be offered in **Plaistow from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM** and in **Newton from 5:00 to 7:00 PM**.

**BLOOD DRIVE**

The Knights of Columbus, St. Jude Council #6617 will be sponsoring an American Red Cross Blood Drive on **Friday, March 30, 2018 from 1:00 to 6:00 PM** at the Atkinson Community Center, 4 Main Street, Atkinson NH 03811. To schedule an appointment, please call 1-800-733-2767 or visit [www.redcrossblood.org](http://www.redcrossblood.org) and enter sponsor code NHATKINSONCOMMUNITY. Walk-ins are also welcome. Come and join us to give the gift of life!

**WEEKEND RETREATS**

Our Lady of Hope – House of Prayer in New Ipswich, NH is offering two weekend retreats in April. Registration deadlines are March 30. Go to <http://www.ourladyhope.org>.

**AMAZON SMILE**

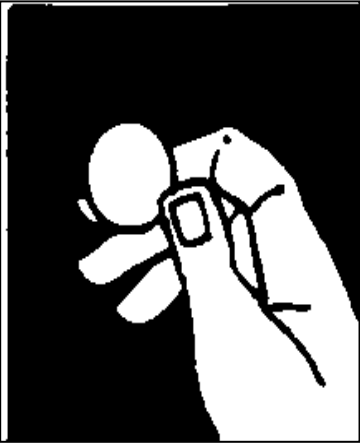
**AmazonSmile.com** is the same market platform as Amazon.com, but with the added benefit of allowing customers to donate 0.5% of the price of items purchased to a charitable organization. Please register today to start shopping and donating at [www.amazonsmile.com](http://www.amazonsmile.com). For questions, please call the Parish Office at 603-382-8324. Be sure to choose:

**St Luke the Evangelist Parish, Plaistow.**

**WINTER WEATHER CLOSINGS**

Saint Luke the Evangelist Parish Office, Holy Angels Cemetery Office, Saint Luke Food Pantry and the Parish Liturgical schedule complies with the longstanding inclement weather policy of Saint Luke Religious Education Program and Holy Angels Pre-School-Kindergarten: **If the Timberlane and/or Sanborn regional school districts close because of inclement weather, ALL Parish Offices and Parish programs will be closed or suspended. All activities by any Parish or non-Parish groups will be cancelled for that day/evening on both campuses.** In the event of a weather related closing, the scheduled weekday Liturgy will not be held and the intention (if any) will be moved to a conveniently available date. **Sunday (or Saturday evening) liturgies can never be cancelled, but all are advised to use prudence when deciding to travel to Church during winter storms.**

## OUR COMMUNION: OUR PEACE AND OUR PROMISE



In our life together as Catholic Christians, we rejoice in the great gift of the Holy Eucharist. We believe as a Church that Jesus is always present in our world, but Christ is especially present when we gather for worship. The primary day for gathering is Sunday, when we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. When we come together for Sunday Liturgy, we believe as Catholics that Jesus is “truly present” in the Word, in the Sacrament, in the gathered Assembly and in the person of the priest.

Jesus tells us to eat his flesh and drink his blood. We must avoid an overly literalistic understanding of these words. We do not literally eat flesh or drink blood. Jesus’ command to eat his body and drink his blood can only make sense if we understand the words body and blood as designating the whole person, the real glorified Christ as he exists today in our midst.

How do we approach this great moment? It should be with reverence and with the knowledge that the Lord calls each of us - and all of us as a community - to enter into the mystery of the Lord’s dying and rising. A few things are important about our reception of communion:

***The Church calls us to fast from all food and drink at least one hour before receiving.*** This is more of a spiritual exercise than an ascetical practice. When fasting, our minds, bodies and spirits are better prepared to receive the gifts God gives us.

***We all “receive” communion from the hands of another.***

“Taking” communion is not part of the Catholic perspective on the sacrament of the Eucharist. Jesus feeds us... we are needy and unworthy. That feeding comes through the ministry of another of our brothers or sisters. The Bishops of the United States have authorized two methods of receiving communion under the form of the host: on the tongue, or in the hand. One should determine one’s preference, and after a bow of the head in reverence to the sacred Host, respond “Amen,” open the mouth or have a “throne” made with one’s two hands open to receive the Body of the Lord. *The host is then immediately consumed.*

***We believe as a Church that Jesus is always present in our world, but he is especially present when we gather for worship.***

***How do we approach this great moment?***

In the Diocese of Manchester, our Bishop has made it clear that a sign of adoration before receiving the Eucharist is a wonderful way of showing reverence and awe before the Holy Gifts God gives to us. ***A simple bow of the head is indicated in the 2001 General Instruction of the Roman Missal.*** One then receives the Eucharist standing, joined in procession with the whole Assembly gathered - in communion with the Church. Any gestures or actions which detract from this communion are distracting and a serious sign of dis-union with the Assembly gathered and praying together.

*Continued on next page...*

The assembly is encouraged by the Church to receive from the cup, after having the cup withdrawn for centuries. This in no way detracts from the belief that the “whole Christ, body, blood, soul and divinity” is present in either element of the Eucharist. The Church’s return to a common cup follows the very words of Jesus, “take and eat... take and drink...” and the instructions and admonitions of the great Christian teachers such as Paul of Tarsus and Augustine of Hippo. ***Receiving from the cup means first bowing one’s head in a gesture of adoration, responding “Amen” to the minister, and then drinking from the cup.***

There is no scientific evidence at all of any person “catching something” from this act. In fact, you are more likely to catch cold from sitting next to a family member at home than from sharing in the cup at communion time. ***Receiving under both forms is a fuller and better sign of our participation in the Eucharistic action. Eating and drinking fulfills in the best way possible the commands of the Lord Jesus.***



Receiving from the cup means just that. Self-intinction (dipping the host into the cup yourself) is not part of our observance and breaks the communal sharing of the Eucharist in a serious way. While intinction is used in some places, it is not a preferred way of receiving communion according to our U.S. Bishops, and **NEVER** in the Catholic Church is a communicant allowed to complete this action on his or her own. ***We receive communion as a holy gift from God.*** Our conduct in receiving should show how important we believe that gift to be.

***Children who are not of the age to receive (7 by law in the Church) should not receive communion.*** This means that parents have to keep an eye on little ones - while still respecting their desire to “join the procession.” **DO bring up children in the communion procession**, and have them cross their arms over their chest, and the priest or minister of communion will simply bless them. ***Parents should never “share” communion they have received with their young children.*** While on the surface a pious act, it breaks up the unity supposed by the sharing of the Eucharist. When they have reached the proper age and are prepared, children are admitted to communion for the first time. That day is a highlight in the lives of many a Catholic boy and girl, as well it should be.

To eat Jesus’ body and drink His blood is to enter into a true encounter with the person of Jesus. This is the full meaning of the Eucharist. It is a dynamic meeting with the Risen One. But it is not a solitary experience. We do not come to the Eucharist simply as isolated individuals, but rather as persons who are members of a community, as persons who are the Body of Christ. The Eucharist is not just Jesus with me, but Jesus with us, and all of us with one another. And we are not together hiding from the world: We are Christ's body in the world God created, every day, every hour of our lives.

In a word, Jesus’ presence is not static: He is not satisfied just to be there. He is there to act dynamically in order to change our lives. In the Eucharist we meet Christ, and are challenged by his presence in the assembly of his people. He is present to make us whole people. He is there to bring harmony and peace into our lives, our families, our country, and our world. He comes to make us experience ourselves as his body in the world.

***We receive communion as a holy gift from God....***

# Keeping the Holiest Days of the Year



Today is the sixth and the last of the Sundays of Lent. We know it also by other names. It is called **Palm Sunday** because the first thing that we do when we gather this day is to take up palms and tell the story of how Jesus once came into the holy city, Jerusalem, riding over a carpet of branches, cheered by people waving branches. Today also is known as **Passion Sunday** because the Gospel story read (today) is the account of Jesus' passion as told by Luke.

Today knows other events. This is the last Sunday when we will call forth and dismiss those Elect, who, at the start of this Lent, were chosen or "Elected" for the Easter Sacraments. Beginning with Easter Sunday, they will not be dismissed after the homily, but will stay with us and do all that Baptized people do. They will begin to keep each Sunday by joining the church to give God thanks and praise at this table, over bread and wine, which we eat and drink and so become, little by little, the living body of Christ.

Today marks the beginning of the days we call **Holy Week**. That name, Holy Week, can be misleading - or it can be a rich insight into these days. It can mislead if we think of the time from today until next Sunday, Easter Sunday, as one segment of time that day by day tries to tell the story of the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus. That's not really what happens here. Rather, we have a week that splits in two on Thursday night - and each one of us ought to know how and why. That will tell us what puts the "holy" in Holy Week. **Until Thursday night it is Lent.** The Forty Days right now are down to their last five days. Thursday evening Lent ends. If we have kept these days so far with various kinds of fasting, various forms of almsgiving, and times of prayer each day, then we are near the end and can perhaps put on an extra burst of energy and so finish this great Lenten contest smiling and exuberant to have done penance and turned the world a bit upside-down.





On Thursday night we walk out of Lent into these three holiest days, and we walk into them singing: “We should glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.” And there it is, in one part of one sentence from Paul: Our glory is in the cross. The cross is our only and ultimate glory. Somehow that is what it comes to for us, the transforming cross that never ceases to be the cross, the death that is death itself, all the ways death reigns in this poor world, but we look at it and we say, “Glory”. **From Thursday night until Sunday afternoon, it is Triduum.** We will gather in God’s house Thursday day and Thursday night and Friday morning and afternoon and evening, and Saturday in the morning and then in the darkness of Saturday night. These are liturgies we do not celebrate three or four times each day so that it is convenient for us to come. We do it once and we hope that all of us can be together, most especially at the **Great Easter Vigil**. That gathering of



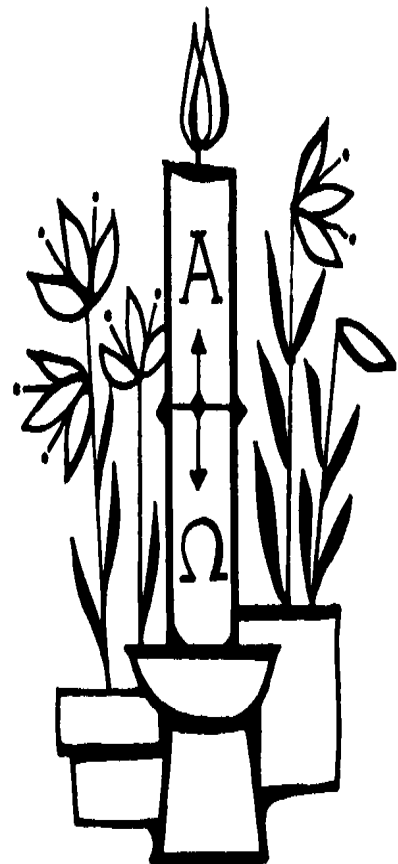
the church between Saturday evening and Sunday morning is the life that nourishes our whole year, all our days. It is when we come to spend some good time in the reading of scripture, and then go finally to the Baptismal font where our catechumens are challenged to renounce evil, to believe in Father and Son and Spirit, and so to die in the waters and live forever in Christ. We do the liturgies of these days only once because who would have the energy to do them again? We do them once because we wish that this whole Parish be, this once in the year, all together here to do scripture and Baptism and Eucharist.

And we dare to do these liturgies just once and to say that we should all be here because of something that we so easily overlook. It is: What else could we possibly find to do? That is the key to getting from the end of Lent back into life in this world. ***We have to know that life-as-usual stops from Thursday evening to Easter Sunday.*** Or perhaps it doesn’t stop, but we do. We drop out. We do not do on this Good Friday and this Holy Saturday what we do on any other Friday and Saturday of the year. So we are not ever trying to work in “going to church” among a hundred other things. No. The decks are clear. Lots of things in our lives have been closed down. We are free.

**We have to know this:** The way these three days are kept is not only with the liturgies here in this assembly. For these to have any sense at all to them, the three days have to be kept in our lives. A generation ago, at the second Vatican Council, the world's bishops had a great and ancient insight into this. They said these strange words: *“Let the Paschal fast be kept sacred. Let it be celebrated everywhere on Good Friday and, where possible, prolonged throughout Holy Saturday.”* They spoke not of a Lenten fast but of a Paschal fast, an Easter fast. What's that? And they spoke not just of fasting, but of “celebrating” this particular fast. What sort of fasting is celebrated? It is the fasting of excitement and expectation, of butterflies in the stomach because of what is about to happen. It is fasting from food, yes, but fasting also from work, and from entertainment and distraction. It is getting real hungry. it is clearing the mind and the heart. It is being famished for the word of God.

So the invitation to us Christians is to leave all we can of the normal on Thursday night. Off and on through those next three days, we'll meet here. You have your schedules of liturgies and other times of prayer. But it is the times between the liturgies that make the liturgies possible. Let all of us together find again and anew what is this glory that is ours in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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# PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD



## Worthy Vessels

Eternal and glorious God,  
you sent your Son, Jesus, to redeem us.  
Bring your Holy Spirit upon each of us  
and like the anointing at Bethany,  
may your Spirit anoint us with your love  
and make us worthy vessels ready to  
pour out your gift of mercy.

Give us generous hearts  
so that, transformed by Jesus' Passion  
and renewed in his Resurrection,  
our lives may become signs of your  
generosity, love, and peace.

Grant us, O Lord,  
the courage to embrace the cross,  
which calls us to put aside our desires  
and witness to the victory over sin  
and death.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Sunday, March 25, 2018**

**Triumph and Suffering**



*Today's Readings: Mark 11:1–10 or John 12:12–16; Isaiah 50:4–7; Psalm 22:8–9, 17–18, 19–20, 23–24; Philippians 2:6–11; Mark 14:1–15:47.* As we begin the holiest week of the liturgical year, the liturgy is filled with emotion. During the past five weeks, the Church has taken time to ponder God's mercy. At the same time, each of us has confronted our sin to prepare our hearts for the fullness of life promised by the Paschal Mystery of Christ. At the procession the Gospel is filled with excitement as Jesus triumphantly enters Jerusalem. Is this a foreshadowing of the triumph of the Resurrection? Imagine the crowds that might have gathered and spread their cloaks as Jesus entered the city. At Mass, after the Preface, we still sing "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" At every liturgy, Christ,

who reigns in glory, is present and nourishes us so we should sing *Hosanna*.

As the liturgy progresses, the mood changes and we hear the passage of the Suffering Servant and the anguish in Psalm 22, which both prepare us to hear the story of the Passion. When have you prayed the words of Psalm 22? When all of these readings are proclaimed together, we learn that Christ is the servant who suffered and died for our sins. Even though the Passion narrative is filled with sorrow, Mark's Gospel account presents us with a strong confirmation that Jesus is the Messiah. As we draw closer to Easter, take time to pray with the Passion, praying for all who suffer that they may rise with Christ.





## THIS WEEK AT HOME

### Monday, March 26

#### Chosen One

In the First Reading, we hear part of the Servant Song. God's chosen one will bring justice to the nations. He is not a warrior, but will restore sight to the blind and free captives. The Gospel tells the story of Jesus' anointing that foreshadows his burial. The message at the start of this week is that Jesus is the chosen one who frees us from sin and unites us as one family. What gift might you present or give to the poor and dying? *Today's Readings: Isaiah 42:1-7; Psalm 27:1, 2, 3, 13-14; John 12:1-11.*

### Tuesday, March 27

#### Betrayal

As today's Gospel unfolds, it is revealed that Judas will betray Jesus. Throughout the passage, Jesus seems to be clear about what he will endure in the coming days, but the disciples seem clueless. How do you think you would have accompanied Jesus during his passion and death? Have you ever betrayed Jesus? Disconnect from social media for the remainder of the week and focus on prayer and listening. *Today's Readings: Isaiah 49:1-6; Psalm 71:1-2, 3-4a, 5ab-6ab, 15 and 17; John 13:21-33, 36-38.*

### Wednesday, March 28

#### Spy Wednesday

Today is known traditionally as Spy Wednesday because the Gospel narrates Judas' act of betrayal. Like Judas, we have seen and heard the Good News, but yet we also at times give in to the temptations of money, power, or authority. This Lenten season invited us to recall those times we have betrayed Jesus, to repent, and to open our hearts to be transformed in love. Make time to journal about your Lenten experience. *Today's Readings: Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 69:8-10, 21-22, 31 and 33-34; Matthew 26:14-25.*

### Thursday, March 29

#### Holy Thursday

This evening, parishes throughout the world gather to celebrate the beginning of the Sacred Triduum with the Mass of the Lord's Supper. These three days, the holiest of the liturgical year, invite us to lay aside distractions and experience the Paschal Mystery. Be nourished by the Eucharist and stay to keep vigil with the Lord. *Today's Readings: Chrism Mass Isaiah 61:1-3a, 6a, 8b-9; Psalm 89:21-22, 25 and 27; Revelation 1:5-8; Luke 4:16-21. Mass of the Lord's Supper Exodus 12:1-8, 11-14; Psalm 116:12-13, 15-16bc, 17-18; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; John 13:1-15.*

### Friday, March 30

#### Good Friday

We enter the church today in silence to meditate on Jesus' death and what it means for our life. Pay close attention to the Gospel, the Adoration of the Cross, and the Solemn Intercessions. Give yourself over to the prayer of the liturgy and listen to God's invitation. What do you hear? *Today's Readings: Isaiah 52:13-53:12; Psalm 31:2, 6, 12-13, 15-16, 17, 25; Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9; John 18:1-19:42.*

### Saturday, March 31

#### Easter Vigil

In the stillness of the night, the Church gathers to share her story of salvation and to proclaim the Good News of Christ's Resurrection. Listen for the many images in the *Exsultet* so that you may ponder them later. *Today's Readings: Genesis 1:1-2:2; Psalm 104:1-2, 5-6, 10, 12, 13-14, 24, 35 or Psalm 33:4-5, 6-7, 12-13, 20-22; Genesis 22:1-18; Psalm 16:5, 8, 9-10, 11; Exodus 14:15-15:1; Exodus 15:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 17-18; Isaiah 54:5-14; Psalm 30:2, 4, 5-6, 11-12, 13; Isaiah 55:1-11; Isaiah 12:2-3, 4, 5-6; Baruch 3:9-15, 32-4:4; Psalm 19:8, 9, 10, 11; Ezekiel 36:16-17a, 18-28; Psalm 42:3, 5; 43:3, 4 or Isaiah 12:2-3, 4bcd, 5-6 or Psalm 51:12-13, 14-15, 18-19; Romans 6:3-11; Psalm 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23; Mark 16:1-7.*





# Lenten Prayer and Liturgy

The Church invites all people to special moments of prayer during the season of Lent. It is a common custom for people to make room in their schedule for daily Eucharist, which we celebrate as follows during the Lenten season:

Monday	8 am	Newton
Tuesday	8 am	Plaistow
Wednesday	6:30 PM	Plaistow
Thursday	8 am	Newton

Another Lenten custom involves taking a journey... to the Holy Land! Going on pilgrimage has always been an important part of our Christian tradition. By visiting a place where a religious event occurred, a pilgrim hoped to share in the experience associated with that place. The

desire to visit Jerusalem and the Holy Land was very important to Christians long ago, but because of the danger and expense of travel, and the political climate of Palestine, such a journey was not always feasible. When the Friars of the Franciscan Order took over the care of the Holy Places in Jerusalem in 1342, they began to erect "Stations" in Churches back home in Europe. It was a way to "go" to the Holy Land without ever leaving home. The custom of the Stations quickly spread to parish Churches, and the devotion of the Stations of the Cross was born.

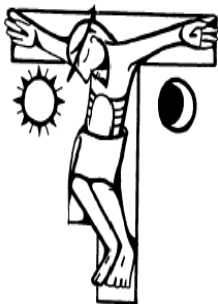


*Praying the Stations of the cross*

We walk the **Stations of the Cross** each Friday of Lent at 6:30 at **NEWTON**. Using various versions and forms of the Stations, and led by various groups in the Parish, we make Jesus' journey to the Cross our own. **On March 23, we will conclude our evening Stations with a Lenten Soup Supper.**

## Baptismal Font and Holy Water Font

During Lent, we pray and prepare to renew our own Baptismal promises even as we pray as a community for those to be Baptized. Following ancient custom, the Sacrament of Baptism is not ordinarily celebrated during Lent, and the Baptismal Font itself is sealed. We also "fast" from the Baptismal water usually present at the doors of the Church. The entire Church waits with Jesus in the desert, praying for the Living Waters of Easter.

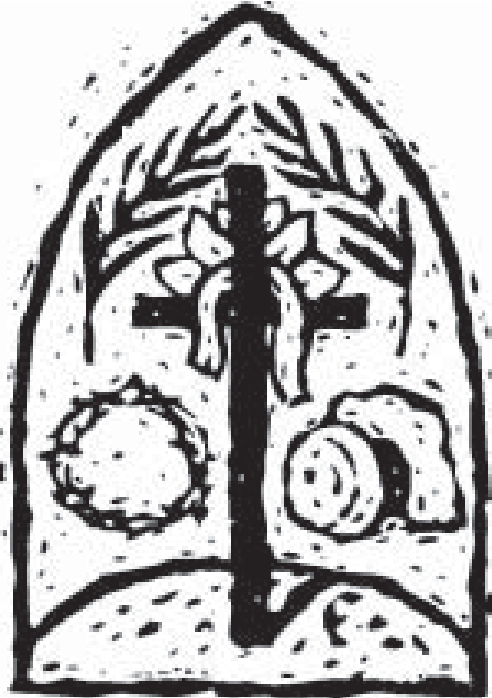


## Lenten Space, Silence, & Music

During Lent, the Church's lighting is dimmed so as to encourage an atmosphere of prayer and introspection. Our Assembly's music is more meditative and somber. **We leave at the end of Mass in silence,** reflecting on our mission as Disciples to pray, fast, and to give of ourselves in the coming week.

## LENTEN REGULATIONS

### FASTING



**Fasting for anyone between 21 and 59 years of age means having only one full meal to maintain one's strength.** Two smaller meatless and penitential meals are permitted according to one's needs, but should not equal the one full meal. One may, however, enter more into the spiritual element of fasting and not partake of any of the above-mentioned meals. Eating between meals is not permitted; but liquids, including milk and juices are allowed. **Days of fasting are Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Wednesdays and Fridays are also traditional fast days; however, one may fast on any day of the week.**

### ABSTINENCE

**Abstinence is the observance for all those 14 years of age or older to forego the eating of meat on: Ash Wednesday; all Fridays in Lent and on Good Friday.** When health or ability to work would be seriously affected, this discipline does not apply.

### EASTER PRECEPT

The Easter Precept – or Easter Duty is the decree for all the faithful to **receive Holy Communion at least during the Easter Season** (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2042). The faithful must celebrate the **Sacrament of Penance at least once a year in preparation for the reception of Holy Eucharist.** Traditionally, the Church has marked the time in which one may fulfill the Easter Duty between the First Sunday of Lent and Trinity Sunday. A monthly celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation is encouraged for all.

### PRAYER AND ALMSGIVING

All of the faithful are encouraged to spend additional time in prayer during the Lenten season, and to participate in the devotional practices of the Parish. It is also praise worthy for the faithful to give generously to charities and to their Church during this Season of Sacrifice.

**SAINT LUKE THE EVANGELIST  
LENT- EASTER LITURGICAL SCHEDULE 2018**

**THE BEGINNING OF THE LENTEN FAST FEBRUARY 14**

**ASH WEDNESDAY LITURGY 8 am Newton &  
6:30 pm Plaistow**

**SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION:** Plaistow: Saturdays 3:00 pm  
(except Holy Saturday); Newton: Sundays of Lent 6:30 pm  
Monday of Holy Week (March 26 - Plaistow 11:00am - 1:00  
PM, Newton 5:00-7:00 PM

**LENTEN EVENING PRAYER:** Sunday evenings of Lent at Newton, 6 pm

**STATIONS OF THE CROSS:** Fridays of Lent - 6:30 pm - at Newton    Lenten Soup Supper Friday March  
23 following Stations

**HOLY WEEK**

Monday of Holy Week March 26- Liturgy at 8 am - Newton

Tuesday of Holy Week March 27- Liturgy at 8 am - Plaistow

Wednesday of Holy Week March 28 - Liturgy at 6:30 pm - Plaistow  
Tenebrae at 7:30 PM

**PASCHAL TRIDUUM**

**HOLY THURSDAY MARCH 29** Morning prayer 8 am - Newton

Mid-day prayer 12 noon - Newton

**LITURGY OF THE LORD'S SUPPER 6:30 PM - Newton**

*-Eucharistic Adoration follows-*

Night Prayer 10:00 pm - Newton

**GOOD FRIDAY MARCH 30 -** Morning prayer 8 am - Plaistow

Mid-day prayer 12 noon - Plaistow

Stations of the Cross 3 pm - Newton

**SERVICE OF THE LORD'S PASSION**

**& HOLY COMMUNION 6:30 PM - Plaistow**

**HOLY SATURDAY March 31-** Morning Prayer 8 am - Plaistow

Mid-day Prayer 12 noon - Plaistow

**EASTER GREAT VIGIL AT 8 PM - Plaistow**

(Reception in Hall to follow)

**APRIL 1 EASTER SUNDAY LITURGIES**

**8 AM - Newton**

**10 AM - Plaistow**

Easter Solemn Vespers with Benediction at 6 pm - Newton

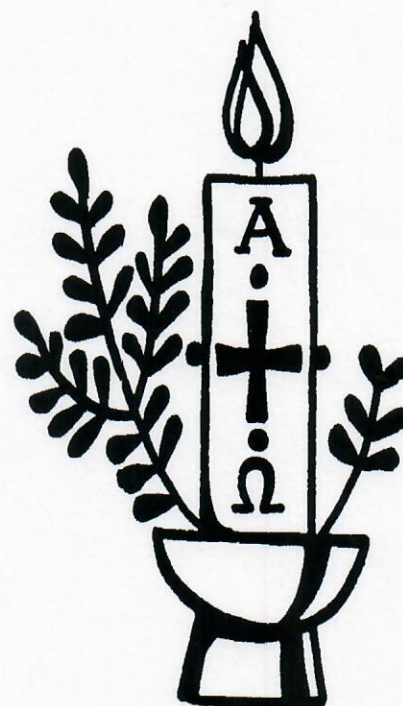
**LENTEN SEASON  
DAILY LITURGIES:**

M 8 am Newton

T 8 am Plaistow

W 6:30 pm Plaistow

Th 8 am Newton



**SAINT LUKE THE EVANGELIST PARISH**

Newton: 12 Amesbury Road, Newton, NH  
03858

Plaistow: 8 Atkinson Depot Road, Plaistow,  
NH 03865

www. <http://stlukenh.org>  
(603) 382-8324



# The Gospel for All Ages

Family Catechesis

**Gospel Weeklies**  
Pflaum  
FAITH FORMATION PROGRAM

**Palm/Passion Sunday • March 25, 2018 • Jesus' Passion and Death**

**Sunday Readings:** Mark 11:1-10; Isaiah 50:4-7; Philippians 2:6-11; Mark 14:1-15:47

## Weekly Discussion Questions

**For the Parish Bulletin**

**Life Question:** What in the Holy Week liturgies expresses who Jesus is for you?

**Gospel Question:** How does Jesus' Death on the Cross affect how you live?

## LIFE AND GOSPEL QUESTIONS BY AGE LEVEL

### Exploring the Sunday Readings (Adults)

Which character of the Passion story speaks most powerfully to you this Passion Sunday? What does he/she teach you about yourself?

Visit [exploringthesundayreadings.com](http://exploringthesundayreadings.com)

### Visions (Grades 7-8)

**Life Question:** Who walks with you in your life journey?

**Gospel Question:** Who walks with Jesus to Jerusalem?

### Venture (Grades 4-6)

**Life Question:** How would you welcome Jesus to your school or parish?

**Gospel Question:** How does the crowd of people in the Gospel welcome Jesus?

### Good News (Grades 2-3)

**Life Question:** How do you welcome new children to your class?

**Gospel Question:** What are ways people show respect to Jesus?

### Promise (Grades K-1)

**Life Question:** What does your family do to prepare the week before Easter?

**Gospel Question:** What are some things that happen to Jesus during Holy Week?

### Seeds (Preschool)

**Life Question:** Discuss what it means to welcome someone into our home.

**Gospel Question:** How could you welcome Jesus to your class?

## Family Corner

### About the Gospel

When we participate in the reading of the Passion, it is hard to say the words, "Crucify him." It reminds us that we all choose to sin and that Jesus loves us anyway. He loves us so much that he died and rose for us and our salvation.

Visit [www.usccb.org/bible/readings](http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings) to read this Sunday's Scripture.

### In Church

Focus on the Passion of Jesus during Mass. Follow along carefully and say the crowd responses strongly. Consider what it would have been like to be there when Jesus was crucified.

### Question of the Week

When have you gone along with the crowd, even when you knew it was not the right thing to do?

### Family Prayer

We want to choose you, Jesus! Show us how to do what is right, even when others want us to do what is wrong.

## Rincón de la Familia

### Acerca del Evangelio

Cuando participamos en la lectura de la Pasión, es difícil decir las palabras: "¡Crucifícalo!". Nos recuerda que todos elegimos pecar y que Jesús nos ama de todos modos. Nos ama tanto que murió y resucitó por nosotros y por nuestra salvación.

Visita [www.usccb.org/bible/readings](http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings) para leer las lecturas de este domingo.

### En la Iglesia

Concéntrate en la Pasión de Jesús durante la misa. Sigue atentamente y di las respuestas de la multitud con fuerza. Considera cómo hubiera sido estar allí cuando crucificaron a Jesús.

### Pregunta de la semana

¿Cuándo acompañaste a la multitud, incluso cuando sabías que no era lo correcto?

### Oración en familia

¡Queremos elegirte a Ti, Jesús! Muéstranos cómo hacer lo correcto, incluso cuando los demás quieren que hagamos lo que está mal.



***ST. VINCENT dePAUL***

***EASTER LILY FUND RAISER***

***\$15. PER PLANT***

***(PROVIDED BY NEWTON GREENHOUSE)***

***EASTER SUNDAY***

***After the 8:00 A.M.***

***mass in Newton***

***and after the 10:00 A.M.***

***mass in Plaistow***

***PROCEEDS TO BENEFIT THOSE IN NEED.***

***THANK YOU, IN ADVANCE, FOR YOUR***

***SUPPORT!***

***(ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CALL SUSAN MOKRAY AT (603) 887-5055)***







# Bringing Home the Word

Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion | March 25, 2018

## A Story Worth Singing About

By Mary Katharine Deeley

Traditions help us order the world and mark the passing of time. As my children grew up, we marked our entry into the Christmas season by decorating the Christmas tree, reading the Dylan Thomas classic *A Child's Christmas in Wales*, and singing the choral parts of Handel's *Messiah*.

Most people are familiar with Handel's masterpiece, but not everyone knows it was composed as an oratorio for Easter, not Christmas. If we listen to the whole thing, we hear the familiar prophecies of Isaiah and Paul's triumphant cry, "O Death, where is thy sting?" The glorious "Hallelujah Chorus" announces the triumphant reign of the risen Christ.

Every year on Palm Sunday and Good Friday, for much longer than our traditions have held sway, the Church has told the story of the passion and death of Jesus. This story marks our entrance into the faith of the Church and orders our sacred time.

It's the story of a death that leads to life—both the resurrected life of Jesus, which we celebrate next week, and the eternal life that's ours if we follow him.

In Mark's telling of the story, we encounter the woman who anointed Jesus and the young man who ran away when Jesus was arrested.

Each Gospel writer gives us a slightly different version of the story, and each writer adds to our perspective and our understanding that this man and this death weren't like any other. This Jesus was God, who emptied himself so we might live.

Surely that's worth singing about. +

## A Word From Pope Francis

Jerusalem, of course, means "city of peace." This is what God wills it to be....Yet sadly Jerusalem remains deeply troubled as a result of long-standing conflicts....May efforts and energies be increasingly directed to the pursuit of a just and lasting solution to the conflicts which have caused so much suffering.

—Welcoming ceremony,  
visit to Tel Aviv,  
May 25, 2014



## Sunday Readings

**Mark 11:1–10 or John 12:12–16**

Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!

**Isaiah 50:4–7**

I have set my face like flint,  
knowing that I shall not be  
put to shame.

**Philippians 2:6–11**

[Jesus became] obedient unto  
death, even death on a cross.

**Mark 14:1—15:47 or  
Mark 15:1–39**

[Jesus cried...] "My God, my God,  
why have you forsaken me?"

## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

### ONE QUESTION REFLECTION

- Do I value the infinite mercy of Jesus, who forgives me whenever I turn to him sincerely?
- In order to love with greater peace, what do I need to accept or embrace?



# Why Do Catholics...?

By Thomas H. Groome

**T**here are Catholic practices that can seem strange to people of other faiths. We may

sometimes need reminding about why we do certain things. Three old favorites: Why do Catholics pray to the saints, pray for the souls of the dead, and confess sins to a priest? All three practices reflect the communal understanding that we have of our Christian faith.

*Praying to the saints:* From their earliest days, Christians have been convinced that baptism bonds us into the body of Christ and that this bond is never broken—not even by death. Further, baptism unites us with the dying and rising of Christ, the paschal mystery that promises new life for all. In this resurrection faith, death is simply a transition. For the dead, life is changed, not ended.

The saints have entered into Jesus' new life in God's presence, yet they remain bonded with us. Much as we would ask a living person to pray for us, we can ask the saints likewise. Strictly speaking, we don't pray *to* saints as if they can answer our prayers; only God can do so. Instead, we ask them to pray *with* and *for* us.

Of course, Mary rightly holds pride of place in the communion of saints. We presume that, like all children, Jesus had

special affection for his mother. If Mary prays for us, how can Jesus decline his own mother?

## “Those Who Have Gone Before Us”

*Praying for the souls of the departed:*

The first Christians began the practice of praying for “those who have gone before us, marked with the sign of faith.” They knew the challenge of discipleship and how easy it is to fall short. Yet they were also confident in God's mercy, augmented by the saving work of Jesus. So, for those who might not be quite ready, they intuited that God provides an intermediate state of purgation between death and final judgment.

The living can intercede for the departed souls. We can pray for them; do an act of mercy, love, or justice on their behalf; and somehow our efforts can work to prepare them for God's eternal presence. A favorite Catholic practice is to have Mass celebrated for their “eternal rest.”

*Confessing to a priest:* Again, our communal faith is key to why we confess to a priest in the sacrament of reconciliation. The Bible teaches that every sin hurts the community, if only to diminish the holiness of the people of God. Thus, the rituals of repentance throughout the Hebrew Scriptures are

communal events, with all as a people admitting their sinfulness and asking for God's mercy.

## Four Key Steps

As when we apologize for offending another person, repentance always requires that we 1) admit fault, 2) say we are sorry, 3) ask forgiveness, and 4) resolve to make amends to the aggrieved person. The sacrament of reconciliation has taken different forms over its history but has always required these four steps. For many centuries the admission of sins had to be done before the whole community. Eventually this was done in private to a priest who was sworn to secrecy.

Strictly speaking, we confess to God. The priest, acting in the person of Christ and in the name of the community, assures us of God's forgiveness. He says, “Through the ministry of the Church, may God give you pardon and peace, and I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” With gratitude, the penitent says, “Amen.” What a gift! +



Lord, you empty yourself out in loving service to all people. Give me a selfless spirit that I may be of service to others.

*From Mindful Meditations for Every Day of Lent and Easter,*

Rev. Warren J. Savage  
and Mary Ann McSweeney

***Three common Catholic practices that people wonder about reflect the communal understanding that we have of our Christian faith.***

## WEEKDAY READINGS

March 26–31, 2018

Monday of Holy Week: Is 42:1–7 / Jn 12:1–11

Tuesday of Holy Week: Is 49:1–6 /  
Jn 13:21–33, 36–38


Wednesday of Holy Week: Is 50:4–9a /  
Mt 26:14–25

Holy Thursday: Ex 12:1–8, 11–14 /  
1 Cor 11:23–26 / Jn 13:1–15

Good Friday: Is 52:13–53:12 /

Heb 4:14–16; 5:7–9 / Jn 18:1–19:42

Holy Saturday: Gn 1:1–2:2 or 1:1, 26–31a /  
Gn 22:1–18 or 22:1–2, 9a, 10–13, 15–18 /  
Ex 14:15–15:1 / Is 54:5–14 / Is 55:1–11 /  
Bar 3:9–15, 32–4:4 / Ez 36:16–17a, 18–28 /  
Rom 6:3–11 / Mk 16:1–7

Bringing Home  
the Word   
March 25, 2018

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