

**Sunday, April 5, 2020  
Palm Sunday Of The Passion Of The Lord**

During these anxious and challenging days, I want to thank you for your prayers and ongoing support of the ministries of our Parish. Even though you are not physically present at the celebration of the Liturgy, you and your family are in our hearts as we pray for you and with you. I also thank you for your concern for the poor and forgotten through your support of our Saint Luke the Evangelist Food Pantry.

In the coming days and weeks, we will be severely challenged as a Parish community in terms of finances. We do not have any cash reserves on which to fall, and salaries, supplies and utilities continue to be a part of the operations of our Parish.

I have already consulted with members of our Finance Council and have put in place various cost saving strategies to help us ride out the Corona storm. I am deeply grateful for your continuing support of the work of our Parish, even in your absence. Your ongoing support will mean that the Parish can continue the work of ministry for the present and will help us look toward a future when we are all together again.

If you would like assistance in making electronic contributions, please see the Parish Giving section in the right-hand column of this page.

May God console us, heal us and bless us in the days to come.

Father Albert, obl. SB

**RESTROOM BREAKS DURING MASS**

**Attention Parents**

Please be sure to accompany your young children when they need to use the restroom during Mass. This is for their safety and your peace of mind. Thank you for your assistance.

**✠ 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!

**DONATIONS RECEIVED FOR  
MARCH 22 & 29, 2020**

<b>Offertory</b>	<b>\$5,655.69</b>
<b>CRS &amp; Home Missions</b>	<b>\$430.95</b>
<b>Easter Flowers</b>	<b>\$215.00</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**

April 5, 2020	Property Management
April 10, 2020	Good Friday – Holy Land
April 12, 2020	Easter <b>AND</b> Needs of Parish

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



**Suggested Weekly Contribution  
Based on Income**

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

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

<b>Your Current Offertory Contribution</b>	<b>25% Increase</b>	<b>30% Increase</b>	<b>40% Increase</b>
\$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 ✠

## PAINT THE TOWN!

Our Parish community continues with our Capital Campaign. Our next projects include exterior painting for the church and Parish house in Newton. We'd also like to paint the interior sanctuary of the church in Newton and complete some electrical upgrades to the church.

Other possible projects include work on our Plaistow and Newton parking lots, and ramp access to the church in Plaistow.

### *Can you help?*

Any contribution is welcome. Make checks payable to  
**Saint Luke the Evangelist – Capital Campaign.**

#### SANCTUARY CANDLES

The Sanctuary Candles in both Newton and Plaistow may be offered in memory or honor of a loved one. The suggested offering for each is \$10.00. Please call the Parish Office at 382-8324.

#### VIGIL LIGHT

The Vigil Light in front of the Blessed Mother Icon in Newton may be also be offered in memory or honor of a loved one. The suggested offering for each is \$10.00.



## *In Loving Memory*

Please pray for the repose of the soul of:  
**Edward Murphy**

#### 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.**

#### FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

If you would like an "end of year" financial statement of your contributions to the parish for 2019, **please call Jackie** at the Parish Office at 382-8324. **Financial Statements are issued on a request only basis.**

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

#### **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, April 5**  
CHURCHES IN NEWTON AND PLAISTOW  
OPEN FOR PRIVATE PRAYER  
UNTIL 12:00 NOON

**Monday, April 6**  
HOLY ANGELS CHURCH OPEN FOR PRIVATE PRAYER  
11:00 AM Sacrament of Reconciliation *Plaistow*  
5:00 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation *Newton*

**Tuesday, April 7**  
HOLY ANGELS CHURCH OPEN FOR  
PRIVATE PRAYER FROM  
8:30 AM TO 4:00 PM

**Wednesday, April 8**  
HOLY ANGELS CHURCH OPEN FOR  
PRIVATE PRAYER FROM  
8:30 AM TO 4:00 PM

**Thursday, April 9**  
PARISH OFFICE CLOSED  
8:30 AM Adoration Begins *Newton*  
8:30 PM Adoration Ends *Newton*

**Friday, April 10**  
PARISH OFFICE CLOSED

**Saturday, April 11**  
NO SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

**Sunday, April 12**  
CHURCHES IN NEWTON AND PLAISTOW  
OPEN FOR PRIVATE PRAYER  
UNTIL 12:00 NOON IF NO PUBLIC MASS IS ALLOWED

**St. Vincent  
de Paul  
Society**



We're looking for new members! Have you ever wondered just what the St. Vincent de Paul Society is all about? Plan to join us at our next scheduled meeting **Wednesday, April 15 at 7:00 PM** in the Holy Angels Church Hall for some light refreshments and information on how you can become a member of this vibrant, caring group of people. We look forward to meeting you and answering any questions you may have. See you on April 15!

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.**

### ✠ MASS INTENTIONS ✠

**Saturday, April 4 ~ Vigil / Palm Sunday of the Passion  
of the Lord**

*Mt 21:1-11; Is 50:4-7; Phil 2:6-11; Mt 26:14-27:66*  
Kevin Gallant (27<sup>th</sup> Anniversary)  
by Patricia Gallant  
**No Public Mass**

**Sunday, April 5 ~ Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord**  
*Mt 21:1-11; Is 50:4-7; Phil 2:6-11; Mt 26:14-27:66*

Ron Metcalf by his family  
**No Public Mass**  
Jesselyn Driscoll by her family  
**No Public Mass**

**Monday, April 6 ~ Monday of Holy Week**  
*Is 42:1-7; Jn 12:1-11*

Joshua Shoemaker (2<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary)  
by Phyllis Shoemaker  
**No Public Mass**

**Tuesday, April 7 ~ Tuesday of Holy Week**  
*Is 49:1-6; Jn 13:21-33, 36-38*

For the Intentions of Edward Duhamel  
**No Public Mass**

**Wednesday, April 8 ~ Wednesday of Holy Week**  
*Is 50:4-9a; Mt 26:14-25*

Clara, Leo, and Edward McCusker  
by Elaine Kelcourse  
**No Public Mass**

**Thursday, April 9 ~ Holy Thursday**

*Ex 12:1-8, 11-14; 1 Cor 11:23-26; Jn 13:1-15*  
Liturgy of the Lord's Supper  
**No Public Mass**

**Friday April 10 ~ Good Friday**

*Is 52:13-53:12; Heb 4:14-16, 5:7-9; Jn 18:1-19:42*  
Liturgy of the Lord's Passion  
**No Public Service**

**Saturday, April 11 ~ 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; Mt 28:1-10*  
8:00 PM Great Vigil of Easter  
**Plaistow (IF public Mass allowed)**

**Sunday, April 12 ~ Easter Sunday of the Resurrection  
of the Lord**

*Acts 10:34a, 37-43; Col 3:1-4; Jn 20:1-9*  
8:00 AM George Moulaison by his wife, Tess  
**Newton (IF public Mass is allowed)**  
10:00 AM Barbara Vitale by her children  
**Plaistow (IF public Mass is allowed)**

### 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).

APRIL 5, 2020

## ✠ FAITH FORMATION & PARISH INFORMATION ✠

### RICE BOWLS AVAILABLE

Operation Rice Bowl is the official Lenten program of Catholic Relief Services. Operation Rice Bowl provides funding to Catholic Relief Services 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, April 9.**

### RCIA

The **Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults** is the process by which people become members of the Roman Catholic Church. 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).

### 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).

### PARENTS BAPTISM PREPARATION SESSION

The monthly preparation session for infant Baptism will be held after the 10:00 AM Liturgy on **Sunday, May 3, 2020** 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.

### CHRISM MASS

Bishop Peter Libasci invites the faithful of the Diocese of Manchester to the Chrism Mass at St. Joseph Cathedral, Manchester on **Holy Tuesday, April 7, 2020 at 6:00 PM.** The Chrism Mass, celebrated by the Bishop and concelebrated with the priests working in the diocese, is the Mass when the bishop consecrates the holy chrism and blesses the oil of catechumens and the oil of the sick. Priests concelebrate this Mass as witnesses and cooperators with the diocesan bishop because they share in the grace of the Sacrament of Holy Orders to build up, sanctify and serve the people of God. All are welcome. Visit [www.catholicnh.org](http://www.catholicnh.org) for more information and to register to attend.



### 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 Szapa
Jackie Tremblay
Thomas Kondel
Val Barczak
Parish Council

fr.albert@stluketheevangelist.net
csmith@stluketheevangelist.net
jszczapa@stluketheevangelist.net
jtremblay@stluketheevangelist.net
tkondel@stluketheevangelist.net
mvmbarczak@comcast.net
parishcouncil@stluketheevangelist.net



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

**ST. GIANNA'S PLACE BANQUET**

You are invited to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual St. Gianna's Place Fundraising Banquet on **April 22** at the Event Center in Nashua, NH. Appetizers and cash bar begin at 5:45 PM and dinner will be served at 6:45 PM. There is no fee to attend, but reservations are required. Please call 247-8654 or 770-9288 to reserve your seat.

**Rockingham VNA & Hospice  
BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUPS**  
**Spring 2020**

**Morning:**

Tuesdays from 10:30 AM to 12:00 Noon  
April 14 to May 19

Epping Regional Health Center  
212 Calef Highway (Rte 125), Epping, NH

**Evening:**

Thursdays from 6:00 to 7:30 PM  
April 16 to May 21

4 Alumni Drive  
Exeter, NH (on the campus of Exeter Hospital)

**Monthly Drop-In Grief Support Groups** are also available on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of every month from 3:00 to 4:30 PM in Epping and on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of every month from 6:30 to 8:00 PM in Exeter.

All groups are free and open to the public.

To register, please call 603-772-2981

**ALL ABOARD FOR FUN AT  
VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL**

**Rocky Railway  
Jesus' Power Pulls Us Through**

**Make your Reservations early.**

**Sign up NOW.**

**The train will depart daily from 9:00 AM to Noon**

**June 22 to June 26**

**St. Luke the Evangelist Parish**

**Call 603-382-8324 x 305 for more information.**

**BECOME A CASA VOLUNTEER**

CASA volunteers make a life-changing difference for children who have experienced abuse or neglect. Every year, more than 1,400 children in New Hampshire depend on their CASA volunteer advocate. You can help change a child's story. New advocate training begins in Nashua on **Tuesday, March 31**. For more information, call 1-800-626-0622 or go to [www.CASANH.org](http://www.CASANH.org).

**IMPORTANT FACTS ABOUT  
CORONAVIRUS AND COVID-19**

There's a lot in the news lately about coronavirus and COVID-19. Here is some information you can use to help protect yourself and the people you care about.

**What is coronavirus and COVID-19?**

Coronavirus is a type of virus that causes respiratory illness – an infection of the airways and lungs. COVID-19 is a new strain of coronavirus. It's part of the same family or coronaviruses that includes the common cold.

**What are the symptoms?**

The most common early symptoms appear between 2 and 14 days after infection. Symptoms can be mild to severe. They include fever, cough, and shortness of breath.

**How does the virus spread?**

Like many other viruses, coronavirus seems to spread from person-to-person through a cough, sneeze, or kiss.

**How to protect yourself:**

Frequent hand-washing is the most effective way to protect yourself from infection. Other good health habits to practice include covering your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough and sneeze, and cleaning frequently touched items such as phones, keyboards, and doorknobs to help remove germs.

Keep yourself informed by going to

[www.cdc.gov/coronavirus](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus).

**KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS  
ST JUDE COUNCIL # 6617  
**GIVE YOUR PARISH COMMUNITY  
1 HOUR A MONTH****

The Knights of Columbus are a vital and vibrant part of the St Luke the Evangelist Parish. We welcome any practicing Catholic man 18 or older to join the Knights, whose main purpose is charitable works in support of our parish and community. Joining is simple – talk to a brother Knight or you can now join on-line. Go to [www.kofc.org/joinus](http://www.kofc.org/joinus). Your Council is involved in many activities from collecting money for people with intellectual disabilities through the Tootsie Roll Drive to the annual St Jude Golf Open which raises money for parish families in need. The list is as long as you want it to be. Do you have a certain passion you would like to get involved in? Come join us and make it a reality!

We are Catholic men. We live by principles informed by faith. We are sons, fathers, husbands, and grandfathers. Join us on life's greatest adventure to discover the man God calls you to be. Feel free to call Dan Sullivan at 603-770-4803, email him at [dans49@comcast.net](mailto:dans49@comcast.net), or catch him at the 8:00 AM Sunday Mass in Newton. For more information about the Knights, go to [www.kofc.org/un/en/todays-knights/what-we-do.html](http://www.kofc.org/un/en/todays-knights/what-we-do.html)

# PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD



## Entering the Story

Almighty and ever-living God,  
bring us into the story of your Son's passion  
and death.

As he enters his sacred city,  
shake us out of our pride and self-interest.  
As he perseveres when people turn  
against him,  
reveal the ways we betray and abandon him.

As he stoops to wash feet,  
prostrates himself in prayer,  
and bears the burden of his cross,  
forgive us for having failed to do the same.  
And as our Lord pours his Spirit out upon us,  
remake us in his image.  
Help us follow him through the darkness  
and into eternal light and life with you.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sunday, April 5, 2020

Shaken



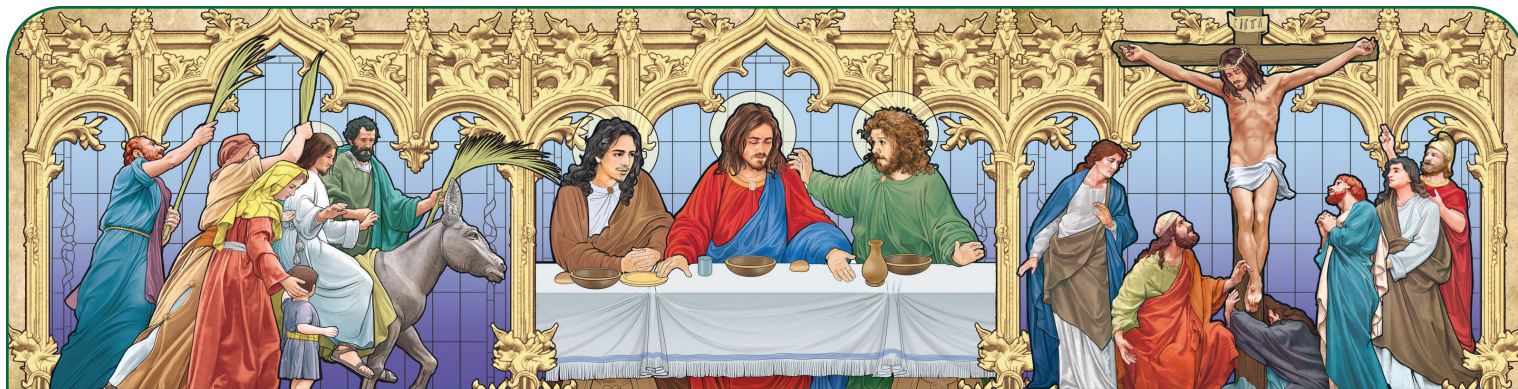
*Today's Readings: Matthew 21:1–11; Isaiah 50:4–7; Psalm 22:8–9, 17–18, 19–20, 23–24; Philippians 2:6–11; Matthew 26:14–27:66.* As we hear in the opening Gospel, the city is “shaken.” People wonder who is entering their midst. During the short time Jesus spends in the city, he only rattles its residents more. He attacks the temple, the Torah, and the Jewish authorities until it all becomes too much—too much judgment, too much upheaval, too much change, and they put an end to it. They put an end to him.

But the shaking continues. Darkness enfolds the land, the earth quakes, and tombs split open as holy people are raised up. Creation proclaims what the people fail to accept:

the crucified Jesus is lord of all—lord of Jerusalem, lord of the nations, lord of heaven and earth. Let all creation bend the knee to the Lord.

All creation shook with homage to the Lord. Now it is our turn. The season of Lent gave us time to be shaken out of our complacency, to make changes, and to bend our knee before the Lord. We only have one week left to prepare ourselves for the holiest time of our liturgical year. This week we can open ourselves to being shaken still further by the only one who can rebuild our lives and ensure that we are never shaken again.





## THIS WEEK AT HOME

### Monday, April 6 The Lord of Life

As Jesus anticipates his death, we notice a terrible irony. People want to kill the one who raised a man from the dead. Moreover, Jesus is the servant God sent into the world. The Father, who breathes life into people and sustains creation with his Spirit, sent his Son to lead people out of darkness, to open their eyes and give them life. Although the people will crucify this servant, he will rise from the dead. During the Sacrament of Reconciliation, confess the ways you have harmed others. *Today's Readings: Isaiah 42:1–7; Psalm 27:1, 2, 3, 13–14; John 12:1–11.*

### Tuesday, April 7 Failures

When Jesus speaks of his glorification, he refers not only to being raised up to new life but also to being raised up on the cross. He undergoes his glorification as one friend betrays him and another denies knowing him. Jesus is the servant who seems to have accomplished nothing, to have failed in revealing his Father to the world. As God declared to his servant, however, Jesus' work has not been in vain. Should you try again at something you had given up on? *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, April 8 Facing It

We hear again from God's servant, who perseveres in doing God's will despite offensive and painful mockery. As Jesus eats with his disciples for the last time, he knows what he will endure because of his ministry, yet he "sets his face like flint" and remains steadfast. Despite all that is done to him, he will neither falter nor be ashamed. Is there a particular conflict you have been avoiding? How can you face it calmly and prayerfully? *Today's Readings: Isaiah 50:4–9a; Psalm 69:8–10, 21–22, 31 and 33–34; Matthew 26:14–25.*

### Thursday, April 9 Holy Thursday

As Jesus celebrates the liberation of his people from Egypt and the many blessings God had bestowed, he prepares his disciples for the blessings of eternal life that God bestows through him. To share in this new life, we must be humble and selfless enough to give up the lives we have now. Read and pray with John 17. *Today's Readings: Exodus 12:1–8, 11–14; Psalm 116:12–13, 15–16bc, 17–18; 1 Corinthians 11:23–26; John 13:1–15.*

### Friday, April 10 Good Friday

God's servant offers himself up for judgment. Like Pilate, our decision about Jesus becomes a statement about us. We profess that Jesus is God's Son and our Savior, but have we followed his way, accepted his truth, and welcomed his life? Surround yourself with as much silence as you can today. *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, April 11 The Easter Vigil

Ancient texts are proclaimed to us this holy night, but even these could not prepare people for the Resurrection. Creation again shakes in fear and wonder, yet we are told not to be afraid but to embrace our Risen Lord and to go quickly to share this joyous news. *Today's Readings: Genesis 1:1–2:2 or 1:1, 26–31a; 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 or 22:1–2, 9a, 10–13, 15–18; 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; Matthew 28:1–10.*



# 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.



**Passion Sunday  
Evening Prayer  
At Newton 6:00 PM  
Sacrament of Reconciliation  
follows Evening Prayer.**

**Reconciliation available at  
Plaistow on Holy Monday 11 am-1  
PM, and at Newton 5-7 PM**

And if we have not kept these days so well, or perhaps not at all, if we have forgotten to pray, neglected to fast, not gotten around to all the ways alms can be given, then the news is good: Five days, counting today, to go! It isn't too late at all. Time enough remains to discover what hunger feels like-bodily hunger and other hungers too. Time remains for that spring-cleaning of house and wallet and life that Lent makes almost appealing to us who are too heavily laden

with possessions and near-addictions. Time remains also for quiet, for taking out the Bible and reading the Passion stories, reading here and there in Paul, reading psalms and prophets, and quietly reflecting on these words and stories and letting them help us to pray. Time remains. Five days of Lent to conclude your Forty Days, or Five Days to be your Forty Days.

## The Paschal Triduum

But that brings us only to Thursday evening. That is the reason we say that this so-called Holy Week is really two very different pieces of time. For when Lent ends, we move without stopping for breath into the three days that are for us the heart and soul of the entire year. The church calls them a "*Triduum*," just the Latin for "three days." But we call them the "Easter Triduum" or the "Paschal Triduum." What that means is that

they are about the Paschal mystery, the Passover mystery, the way life and death and resurrection, our own, our church's, our human race's, get all tangled up in the life and death and resurrection of the one who is truly God and truly human, Jesus.



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



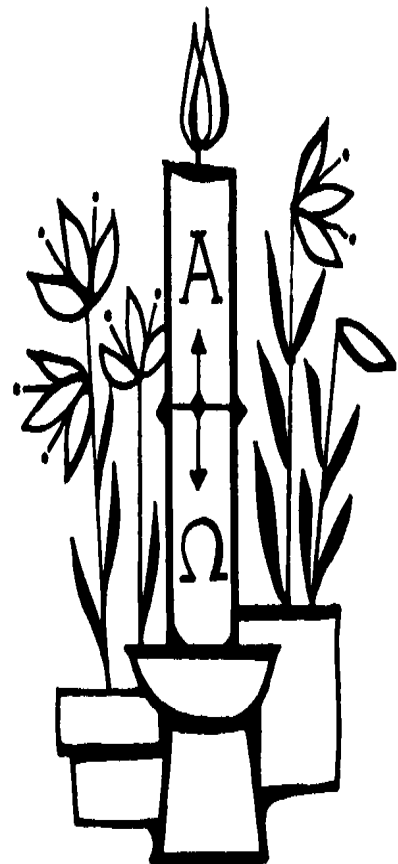
the church between Saturday evening and Sunday morning is the life that nourishes our whole year, all our days. It is when we come to spend some good time in the reading of scripture, and then go finally to the Baptismal font where our catechumens are challenged to renounce evil, to believe in Father 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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# The Paschal Triduum

The Church's holiest days begin with the **Liturgy of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday, April 9 at 6:30 PM in Newton.** At Mass that evening, the holy oils blessed earlier that week by Bishop Peter will be presented to the Parish, Jesus' call to service and humility is remembered through washing of feet, and the institution of the Eucharist by Jesus at the Last supper is celebrated. Adoration and prayer with the Eucharist will go on that night in church until Night Prayer at 10:00 PM.

**Throughout the Triduum, the Church is in almost constant prayer.** The **Liturgy of the Hours** will be celebrated beginning on Holy Thursday at 8 am and Noon at Newton. Night prayer will be at 10 PM. The same schedule for Morning and Mid-Day prayer will be kept on Good Friday and Holy Saturday at Plaistow.



The Passion and death of Jesus on the cross is celebrated on **Good Friday, April 10.** Stations of the Cross will be prayed at 3:00 PM in Newton, and **the principal celebration of the day, the Reading of John's Passion, the Veneration of the Cross and Holy Communion will be celebrated at 6:30 PM at Plaistow.**

On Holy Saturday, the Church waits in prayer at the Lord's tomb. No Masses are allowed, no sacraments other than communion for the dying are celebrated. We wait for announcement of Easter victory. Morning prayer will be celebrated at Plaistow at 8 am, and Mid-Day prayer at Noon.



The ***Great Vigil of Easter*** will begin at **8 PM on Saturday, April 11** with the blessing of new fire and the lighting of the Paschal Candle, the principle symbol of the Easter Season. We will then listen to our story of salvation, proclaimed through readings and song. We will proclaim the Easter Gospel, and renew our Baptismal Promises. We will then celebrate the solemn Eucharist of Easter, followed by a festive reception in the Hall.

The ***Great Vigil of Easter*** begins from the **Parish Hall**, where we'll process to the blessing of the new fire, burning just outside the doors of the Church. ***If you plan on attending the Great Vigil on April 11, plan on gathering in the Hall for 7:50 PM on Holy Saturday evening.***

## Easter Sunday

**Easter Liturgies will be celebrated at 8:00 am in Newton and at 10:00 am in Plaistow on April 21, with renewal of Baptismal Promises and blessing with Easter Water.**

Easter Evening Prayer with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament will conclude our Easter Sunday at 6:00 PM at Newton.



# Stand Watch

In the ancient world the soldier who kept the night watch was said to be on station. He neither slept nor ate but kept his whole attention on looking out for friend or foe who might approach the gates of the city or camp. The church took over that vocabulary. Stational liturgy, when the bishop presides at the eucharist of the local church, is the fullest form of communal prayer for us. Its derivative form will take place in every parish where the pastor presides at the sacraments of initiation at the Easter Vigil. For centuries the candidates, the ministers and the rest of the local church fasted together and saw their fasting as a necessary element of the celebration.

The original Lenten fast was that of Holy Saturday and through the night which opened onto Easter morning. To that was

added the fast of Good Friday. The fast of this Holy Week is not so much an acceptance of physical pain in order to know the suffering of Jesus. It is much more an entrance into a state of heightened awareness triggered by our hunger. The pain in the belly calls us to be on the lookout for the glorious coming of Christ into the lives of those whom God has called to join our number. For those who have observed the Lenten fast as well as for those who have done little or no fasting the closing days of this week call us all to stand and watch.

How faithful have I been to fasting this Lent? How can I redouble my efforts in these last days?

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# **SAINT LUKE THE EVANGELIST**

## **Lent - Easter Liturgical Schedule 2020**

**THE BEGINNING OF THE LENTEN FAST FEBRUARY 26**  
**ASH WEDNESDAY LITURGY 8 am Newton**  
**6:30 PM Plaistow**

### **RECONCILIATION**

**Plaistow: Saturdays 3:00 PM (except Holy Saturday)**  
**Newton: Sundays of Lent following 6 PM evening prayer**

**Sunday March 22: Penance Service at Exeter 4:00 PM**

**Monday of Holy Week: 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 – Newton Lenten Soup Supper Friday March 27**

### **HOLY WEEK**

**Monday of Holy Week – Liturgy at 8 am - Newton**  
**Tuesday of Holy Week – Liturgy at 8 am - Plaistow**  
**Wednesday of Holy Week – Liturgy at 6:30 pm - Plaistow**  
**Tenebrae at 7:30 PM**

### **PASCHAL TRIDUUM**

**HOLY THURSDAY APRIL 9 – 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 APRIL 10 - 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 APRIL 11– Morning Prayer 8 am - Plaistow**  
**Mid-day Prayer 12 noon - Plaistow**

**EASTER GREAT VIGIL AT 8 PM - Plaistow**  
**(Reception in Hall to follow)**

### **EASTER SUNDAY LITURGIES APRIL 12**

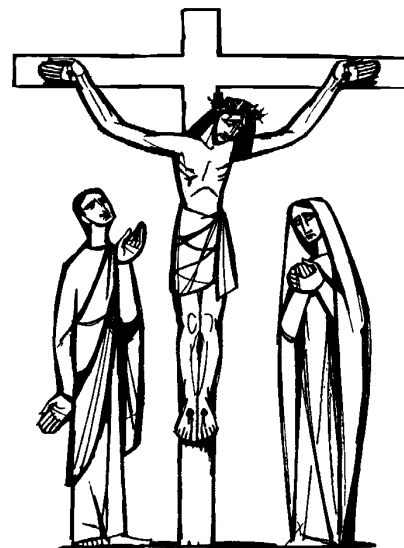
**8 AM – Newton**

**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**





## 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 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 praiseworthy for the faithful to give generously to charities and to their Church during this Season of Sacrifice.**

# The Gospel at Home

## This Week's Gospel: Matthew 26:14–27:66

Palm/Passion Sunday celebrates Jesus' triumphant entrance into Jerusalem. It begins the most solemn week of the Church year. During Holy Week, we remember Jesus' Passion, Death, and Resurrection. We also listen to the Passion according to Matthew at this Sunday's Mass.

### Exploring the Gospel Message

**Seeds (Preschool):** Bring home a blessed palm and display it. Talk about welcoming Jesus into your home and into your hearts. Talk about the joy you have because Jesus is with your whole family. Sing hosanna in praise to Jesus.

**Promise (Grades K–1):** The class learned about how Jesus was welcomed to Jerusalem and talked about the ways we welcome people. Your child also reviewed all the events of Holy Week. Try to take your child to at least one of the Holy Week liturgies. Talk about Jesus' suffering and Death with your child, and comfort them with the promise of new life at Easter.

**Good News (Grades 2–3):** This week your child learned about the events of Holy Week. Ask your child to show you his or her Holy Week Prayer Book and to explain each event to the family. Decide together on ways you will celebrate Holy Week in your home. Work the word, Hosanna, into your prayers of praise for Jesus.

**Venture (Grades 4–6):** In class, your child experienced the many events of Holy Week and the Sacred Triduum. Ask your child to share with the family "My Good Friday Stations of the Cross," a booklet that contains dramatic paintings of the traditional moments in the final hours of Jesus' life. Plan to go to church during the week and pray the stations, guided by the booklet. At the end, kneel together and pray to understand the Resurrection's role in your lives.

**Visions (Grades 7–8):** Your child's class adopted a reporter's viewpoint to learn more about the events of Holy Week. Ask your child to share the reports on how the city of Jerusalem welcomed Jesus and the events of Good Friday. Plan to attend Good Friday services together. After the liturgy, spend a few minutes sharing together what the experience meant to each of you.

### Pray Together

Each day of Holy Week, plan to eat a simple meal together. Begin and end the meal with prayers appropriate to the day. For example, on Palm/Passion Sunday the prayer might simply be, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord." On Holy Thursday, you may wish to use some of the prayers from Mass. The important thing is to bring the prayerful spirit of these days into your home.

## ✠ AROUND THE PARISH & DIOCESE ✠



### **MARRIAGE IN THE CHURCH**

**Did you know that ALL Catholics are required to be married in the Church as a condition of the validity of their marriage?**

Any Catholic married in a civil ceremony (JP) or in any religious ceremony other than a Catholic one (unless specifically excepted by the Bishop) is not living out the Sacrament of Marriage in its fullness according to the teaching of the Church. Contact Father Albert at the parish office for more information.

### **STAY INFORMED WITH FAITHFUL CITIZENSHIP NEWS**

The Diocese of Manchester wants to inform Catholics about important public policy matters facing our elected officials. Faithful Citizenship News provides briefs on legislation as well as information about Catholic social teaching on some of today's pressing issues. To read the current issue of Faithful Citizenship News and to subscribe, visit [www.catholicnh.org/fcnews](http://www.catholicnh.org/fcnews).



Altar Flowers are a special opportunity for remembering a departed loved one or offering thanksgiving for a blessing or family event. A floral arrangement placed in front of the altar for the Sunday Liturgy can be purchased for an offering of \$85 (*increase is due to change in size of arrangement and deliver charge*), with an accompanying announcement in the weekly bulletin. Availability is limited according to the Liturgical Calendar. Offerings can be reserved on a first-come basis by contacting the Parish Office at 382-8324.

### **SANCTUARY CANDLES**

The Sanctuary Candles in both Newton and Plaistow may be offered in memory or honor of a loved one. The suggested offering is \$10.00.

### **HOW TO MAKE A REPORT OF SEXUAL ABUSE**

Child sexual abuse is a crime in the State of New Hampshire and the Church. New Hampshire law requires that anyone who has reason to suspect that a child is being or has been abused or neglected must make a report to the Division for Children, Youth & Families ("DCYF") of the State of New Hampshire, 1-800-894-5533. Any person who suspects or alleges child abuse on the part of a priest, deacon, employee, or volunteer of a parish, school, or institution of the diocese of Manchester is also encouraged to make a report to the Office for Ministerial Conduct, 603-669-3100. Church personnel – clergy, paid employees, and volunteers – have additional reporting requirements if they believe that Church personnel have sexually abused a child. You can learn more about these reporting requirements on the diocesan website at [www.catholicnh.org](http://www.catholicnh.org) or by speaking with our Parish Safe Environment Coordinator, Cathy Smith at 382-8324.

### **PLEASE HELP US!**

**As you leave church, kindly take your Bulletin with you – or return it to the basket at the entrance of the Church, return your music book and Mass card to their proper place, and pick up after yourself as you leave. Our Ushers are wonderful and diligent, but they should not have to face a Foxboro aftermath as each Mass ends! Thanks for being attentive and respectful!**

**F. Albert.**



### **MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER**

Don't you and your spouse deserve a beautiful, romantic weekend away together? Get away from all those worldly anxieties and take time to just focus on each other by making a Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend. Deepen your communication, strengthen your relationship, rekindle your romance, and renew your sacrament by attending the next Worldwide Marriage Encounter weekend in New England. For more information, call Ralph & Jane Becker at 1-800-710-9963 or visit [www.wmme.org](http://www.wmme.org).

### **NH COUPLE ENRICHMENT CIRCLE**

Have you attended a Marriage Encounter Weekend? If your answer is yes, you are invited to participate in the NH Couple Enrichment Circle to continue to strengthen your marriage relationship. For more information, contact David and Karen Demers at 617-480-9989 or [ddemers@aviconpartners.com](mailto:ddemers@aviconpartners.com).

### **RETRouvaille...A Lifeline**

Rediscover a loving marriage with a Retrouvaille weekend. If your marriage is tearing the two of you apart, if there is little or no meaningful communication, if you are considering separation or divorce, we believe Retrouvaille can help you. For more information, call 1-800-470-2230 or visit [www.HelpOurMarriage.com](http://www.HelpOurMarriage.com).



### **SUPPORT FOR DIVORCED AND SEPARATED**

Divorce and separation can be painful experiences. Support groups are available to those who are seeking healing, comfort, and empowerment. Visit [www.catholicnh.org/support](http://www.catholicnh.org/support) for a listing of groups.







# Bringing Home the Word

**Palm Sunday (A)**  
**April 5, 2020**

## Noble and Humble

By Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

**P**alm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord prepares us to leave behind Jesus' public ministry and enter into his suffering and death. From miracles, crowds, and praise we move to pain, silence, and humility. Only the strong and true lovers of Jesus will make it to the foot of the cross.

A painting in the Vatican Museum by Pseudo Domenico di Michelino, *The Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem*, depicts Jesus coming into Jerusalem sitting

nobly—on a donkey—in the center. The prophecy of Zechariah 9:9 sets the scene and marks its importance: "Exult greatly, O daughter Zion! Shout for joy, O daughter Jerusalem! Behold: your king is coming to you, a just savior is he, humble, and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey." By riding into Jerusalem on a donkey, Jesus embraces the path of the Messiah that God mapped out through the prophets. He comes as a king and in peace and obedience. Jesus wins with meekness and love.

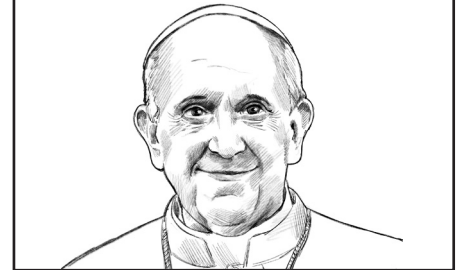
Returning to the painting, we see little children laying down their coats before Jesus. These simple souls recognize his divine humility and honor him with their gestures while the crowd acclaims his kingship. The reign of Jesus incites praise, fidelity, and allegiance. The people wave olive branches and throw them on the ground before him.

Counting the followers in the painting, eleven process with golden halos around their heads. These symbols of holiness highlight the fact that to love Jesus is to follow him to the end, as do almost all of the twelve disciples Jesus selected to join him in his ministry. One follower, however, is surrounded in shadow. Unlike the others, he looks away. His heart is set on another plan. +

### ***A Word from Pope Francis***

Jesus enters Jerusalem. The liturgy...somehow expresses the contradictory feelings that we too, the men and women of today, experience: the capacity for great love, but also for great hatred; the capacity for courageous self-sacrifice, but also the ability to "wash our hands" at the right moment.

—Palm Sunday homily, March 25, 2018



## Sunday Readings

### **Matthew 21:1–11**

The very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and strewed them on the road.

### **Isaiah 50:4–7**

The Lord God is my help, / therefore I am not disgraced.

### **Philippians 2:6–11**

He emptied himself, taking the form of a slave [and]...humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross.

### **Matthew 26:14–27:66 or 27:11–54**

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

### REFLECTION QUESTIONS

### QUESTIONS REFLECTION

- How do I respond to Jesus' invitation to join him in his passion? do my actions show where my heart really is?
- Would I be shrouded in shadow or surrounded by Jesus' glory?

# Jesus Christ, Our Starting Point

By Fr. Thomas Richstatter, OFM

Being Catholic starts with Jesus Christ. In fact, everything begins with Christ. He is “the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end” (Revelation 22:13). He is “the firstborn of all creation” (Colossians 1:15).

I wasn’t around before the creation, of course, but from my perspective I can imagine things happening something like this: God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—was sitting at breakfast when God the Father said, “Being God is wonderful, but eternity can sure get boring.” “So let’s do something different,” the Son replied. “Let’s create something out of nothing!” The Father asked, “Can we do that?” “Sure,” said the Spirit, “we’re God, aren’t we?” The Father said, “OK, what shall we make?”

And (this is the crucial point) what did God make? Jesus Christ—the firstborn of creation, the Word through whom God made everything else that exists.

If you are not accustomed to thinking of Jesus in this way, an analogy may help. Years ago when I was teaching at a seminary, one popular hobby among the students was making model airplanes. On winter evenings the hobby shop would be crowded with boys gluing together various shapes of balsa wood pinned to diagrams on a table.



When asked, “What are you making?” the seminarians never said, “I am gluing piece A7 to H5.” One might respond, “I am making a P-51 Mustang.” From the beginning, their minds were on the finished project. Similarly, if you asked God at the creation, “What are you making?” he would have responded: “We’re making Jesus Christ.”

## God’s Masterpiece

Jesus is God’s masterpiece. God created Christ out of love, and Christ returned perfect love to God. We can see this in everything Jesus said and did while he walked on earth. We see this most clearly in Jesus humbling himself, “becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross” (Philippians 2:8). And on the cross “he handed over the spirit” (John 19:30) to the Church so that we who are baptized put on Christ and become his body.

At Mass we ask God to “grant that we, who are nourished by the Body and Blood of your Son and filled with his Holy Spirit, may become one body, one spirit in Christ.” Our incorporation into Christ is the principal petition at every Eucharist. We pray that we, to paraphrase St. Augustine, be what we see on the altar and receive what we are—Christ’s body. Through Christ, in him, with him, our lives have meaning. We live for more

than ourselves. We are taken up into that great, mysterious plan of God that is Jesus Christ.

## God’s Coworkers

And what is our role in God’s plan? Our mission is reconciliation. While God has reconciled all things in Christ, “making peace by the blood of his cross” (Colossians 1:20), with our incorporation into Christ, God has “given us the ministry of reconciliation” (2 Corinthians 5:18). We are to improve the quality of life for all, to alleviate hunger and disease, injustice and conflict.

And while this task may seem impossible, we Catholics know that it is possible. In fact, we know that it will be achieved because it is God’s plan. This is what gives us our inherent Catholic optimism. We are optimistic because we know that grace is more original than sin. God’s great plan of love did not start with Adam and Eve, the fruit, or the snake, but with Jesus. Everything starts with Jesus. +



*Lord, you are the model of nonviolence and unconditional love. May your example inspire me to be a more loving and forgiving person in life.*

—From *Mindful Meditations for Every Day of Lent and Easter*, Rev. Warren J. Savage and Mary Ann McSweeney

## WEEKDAY READINGS

April 6–11

**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 / Mt 28:1–10

Bringing Home  
the Word 

April 5, 2020

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