



April 1, 2020

Sunday begins Holy Week.

This year, Holy Week does not feel the same as it has in the past.

We will certainly be streaming the Holy Week celebrations. However, to participate in the Mass of the Lord's Supper and not receive the Eucharist is going to leave many of us with a hole that is not easily filled. When we celebrate Easter Vigil this year, we will not be starting off gathered around the Easter Fire carrying candles into a darkened church. This year there will be only the paschal candle that we see through our computer screen.

As a priest, to celebrate these liturgies without the parish community present will be unsettling as well.

Indeed, as Holy Week approaches, the Triduum celebration that seems to hit home this year is Good Friday. **It is on Good Friday that we remember Christ's suffering and Death.**

For those who have lost jobs or fortunes,

it is Good Friday that hits home.

For those who fear for their health and the health of their family members,

it is Good Friday that we relate to.

For those who feel isolated and alone,

Christ's words "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me."

These are the Gospel words that resonate with us.

Yet, as Christians, we are first and foremost a people of hope. We do certainly remember all that Jesus did for us and all that Jesus gave for us. However, we also remember the salvation purchased by Christ's total self-giving. We remember the tremendous sufferings of the cross, and yet we don't just stand before the cross in Holy Week. We also stand in front of an empty tomb.

Christ promised that no matter what we suffer, we have a savior who stands with us and who has endured the lion's share of suffering.

As we enter into this Holy Week, ***we pray for St. Albert, for the Church and for a world that needs Good Friday-*** a world that needs to know that our savior understands suffering -a world that needs to know that suffering is not the end but it is the beginning.

We unite our sufferings to Christ and we offer these sufferings for those who have it worse than us. That does not mean that we ignore our suffering, or suggest that it does not exist. It simply means that we put our suffering into perspective by remembering who suffered for us and what he suffered.

St. Paul says:

"Indeed, as the sufferings of Christ overflow to us, so, through Christ, does our consolation overflow. When we are made to suffer, it is our consolation and salvation." (2 Cor 1:5-6)

Although we will not be together during this Holy Week, let us pray that it will be a time of salvation for us all.

Fr. Chris Worland