



*On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the disciples said to Jesus, "Where do you want us **to prepare for you** to eat the Passover? He said, "Go into the city to a certain man and tell him the Teacher says, "In your house I shall celebrate the Passover with my disciples. **Make the preparations for us there**" The disciples did as Jesus had ordered, and **prepared the Passover.** (Mt 26: 17-19 and Mk 14:12-16)*

Around the world, there are people breathing a sigh of relief and relaxation as the Lent and Holy Week celebrations come to a close. Like the disciples before the last supper Jesus shared with his disciples, these folks have been preparing for **you** to celebrate the holy season and feasts of our Catholic Christian faith.

There are so many who help to prepare the liturgies we celebrate. Some of them are obvious to everyone because they minister in the sanctuary, in the choir, welcoming you at the door, proclaiming the word, serving at the altar; sharing the Sacrament with you. Others work quietly, ahead of time, preparing the liturgy in and outside the sacristy, in and outside the sanctuary; cleaning the worship space; scheduling liturgical ministers; preparing worship aids; arranging flowers and the environment for worship; counting palm

branches and tapers; ironing, polishing, vacuuming, sweeping and dusting; hanging banners; cleaning out pews as you leave for the people coming in for the next liturgy; preparing and changing the liturgical environment from feast to feast; and in general, worrying about things you'd never dream need to be worried about -- but that you'd notice right away if someone hadn't worried about them!

Our Catechumenate team met weekly to prepare the candidates for the Easter sacraments; Our Service and Justice Commission provided opportunities for Lenten sacrificial giving in preparation for Easter; Our Youth Ministry and Faith Formation folks worked seasonal themes into their programs in preparation for Easter; music directors, musicians, choirs and cantors spent hours upon hours rehearsing; good lectors spend hours preparing to proclaim the word; preachers spent hours preparing homilies; and the parish staff assisted in a host of ways, not the least of which included answering phone calls, replying to emails, making lists, going to the printer, running copies, answering questions and making sure that the little things that can easily fall through the cracks - don't!

When things go well, it's often the pastor who gets the kind words and compliments but in hundreds of ways, the thanks belong to scores of others who work so hard to prepare and provide the time, the place, the word, the song and the stuff of sacraments and rites for these holy days.

I'm ever grateful for those in our parish who work so faithfully, tirelessly and selflessly to support and enhance the prayer and worship we offer as a community of faith.

You know many of these folks in our parish. Seek them out, speak to them after Mass, call them, email them and let them know that you appreciate all they've done -- because through their work, the Lord saves his people!