

What have we lost?

There are those things we have given up by our fasting: sweets, chocolate, coffee, TV, Social Media, salt and pepper/spices, meat, alcohol, the pillow or bed, the mirror, hot water showers, the snooze button, elevators/escalators, etc.

In the church and in our Liturgy, we lost the Alleluia, the great hymn of joy; the flowers which add beauty and remind us of life; the richness and depth of music as it is simplified; and the Gloria.

Now as we enter into the Passiontide, the pruning cuts deeper. As we journey with Jesus on his way to Calvary, it has not yet come. So the crucifixes are veiled during these days. No Passion yet means no Resurrection yet, either, and Heaven is still closed, so the saints are veiled from our eyes as well. The invitation is for this journey with Christ to become real as we too, like our Jewish brothers and sisters of old, long for a Messiah and Savior.

On Holy Thursday we will lose the presence of Jesus Christ as the tabernacle is emptied, much as he is taken from our midst as he is arrested. On Good Friday we will lose the source of life, as the holy water fonts are drained. And on Holy Saturday there is nothing, as we are stripped of light itself, in the darkness of the tomb.

Yet all of our loss pales in comparison with Jesus, who freely loses his life for our sake. And invites us to do the same. That is what these things are all about. Lent is meant to be about loss and death—dying to ourselves, dying to sin, even a liturgical death which is evident around us. There can be no new life in Christ if we are not willing to bid the old farewell. The Passiontide has begun - there are only two weeks left of Lent. As you look back, would you say that your Lent has been one of loss? Are you sharing in the death of our Lord? If not, find some ways to do so during these last days, that in sharing in his death, you too may share in his glory come Easter.

I would like to end with an invitation. Come. Join with Jesus during the different Liturgies of Holy Week. The Triduum, consisting of Holy Thursday, Good Friday and the Easter Vigil on April 2-4—are three days in which we celebrate the one mystery of our salvation. The Vigil is easily my favorite Mass of the entire year. Give yourself, and our Lord, the gift of joining with him during these holy days. The full Triduum schedule can be found on Page 9 of this bulletin.