



## HOLY WEEK HANDOUT

### PALM SUNDAY:

Palm Sunday celebrates Christ's entry into Jerusalem to accomplish his death and resurrection. It is tradition to tuck palms behind a cross on the wall in your home. The ashes we get on Ash Wednesday are from burnt palms from last year's palms on Palm Sunday. The procession, (or solemn entrance), is done at the principal mass, with the simple entrance done at the other masses.

1. Blessing of palms with Holy Water to represent the people who welcomed Jesus and proclaimed the resurrection of life by waving olive branches of peace. Done inside or outside of church depending on entrance/procession using - see above.
2. Options for procession + gospel readings.

#### **Cycle A:**

Matthew 21:1-11 - Jesus fulfilling the Old Testament prophecies in verse 5 - in that Jesus came in humility and without a big display. Jesus knew he was going there to suffer, die, and resurrect to fulfill God's will and his mission on earth. Although the people showed they knew he was someone special because the laying down of the branches and cloaks was a tradition and sign of respect for a King, but that was not orchestrated by Jesus or his apostles. The crowds that were with Jesus were proclaiming him as the Messiah / King descended from David. The Mount of Olives is spoken of in the Old Testament as the place where the Lord will come to rescue Jerusalem from the enemy nations. So Jesus coming to that Mount of Olives location as a prophet from Nazareth attracted large crowds because the people saw it as the fulfillment of the Old Testament prediction – sort of history in the making. "Hosana" meant "O Lord grant us salvation" and it meant jubilation and welcome. They were very excited that this was finally happening now! Although it is ironic that after this huge welcome Jesus is put to death shortly afterwards.

#### **Cycle B:**

John 2:12-16 - Jesus was fulfilling scripture by the way he entered Jerusalem.  
Palm branches= peace. Jesus "comes in the name of the Lord" is Jesus representing God on earth.

#### **Cycle C:**

Luke 19:28-40 - "Master" = God, not Jesus. Jesus makes a grand entry into Jerusalem shortly before people turn on him and he is crucified.

### 3. Liturgy of the Word

#### **Cycle A:**

Isaiah 50:4-7 – The idea is that God is working through him (Isaiah) and he is open to that movement. He doesn't fight this vocation given to him by God. In the broader passage, the people were complaining that God had abandoned them so this was a reminder that their bond still exists, and God will save them in the end. The "Plucked my beard" part meant a grave insult of another. With God on our side there is no disgrace, even when we are tested or made fun of, so stay focused on what God wants you to do and "set your face like flint".

Philippians 2: 6-11 – Jesus served God and God worked through him, like in the first reading. By humbling and giving up himself to God his name became exalted. Jesus became one of us (humans) so we could better understand the Lord's teachings. He made the great sacrifice for us and because of that was exalted to heaven. Jesus was human! Jesus was 100% human and 100% divine – the 2 natures of Jesus. This also illustrates that parts of the trinity where Jesus and God are linked.

Matthew 26:14-27:66 or Matthew 27:11-54 - The Passion of the Lord - Jesus initiating the mass as we know it at the Last Supper. He knew Judas was to betray him. Judas denied it initially but eventually gave in because he had already set it up. "Take and eat- this is my body". "Drink from it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which will be shed on behalf of many for the forgiveness of sins". This is the transubstantiation – the changing of bread and wine into Jesus' body and blood. It is not symbolic, it actually is Jesus. Peter said his faith would never be shaken, but it was. Jesus knew that Peter would deny him. "The spirit is willing but the flesh / nature is weak" - what does this mean? We will give into temptation at some point. Peter eventually went on to become the first Pope! Think about that! When Jesus went off to pray it was a very intense experience for him as he was praying for his own life to be spared one last time. He wanted some company and support, but they fell asleep so Jesus was alone and isolated in dealing with this by himself, but he still had the strength to go through with it! "Those who use the sword are destroyed by it" - nonviolence. Jesus knew he had to die now to fulfill the scriptures. Again, they abandoned him after Judas turned him over. Judas eventually hung himself out of guilt. "Destroy the temple and I will rebuild it in three days" - they thought the building when Jesus meant himself being resurrected. So in the end all they could "get" him on was blasphemy. Pilate didn't really find evidence against Jesus and knew it was wrong but caved into the people's wishes in releasing Barabbus. After Jesus died, some did realize he was the son of God but it was too late at that point. The guards went and secured the tomb, which is an important detail later when Jesus resurrects from the dead in the tomb with them still out there.

#### **Cycle B:**

Isaiah 50:4-7 - (see above)

Phillipians 2:6-11 - (see above)

Mark 14:1-15:47 or 15:1-39 - Passion of the Lord

### **Cycle C:**

Isaiah 50:4-7 - (see above)

Phillipians 2:6-11 - (see above)

Luke 22:14-23:56 or 23:1-49 - **The Passion of the Lord**

After Jesus dies in Gospel readings we pause and kneel as a thank you to Jesus for dying for us. Then we continue on with the readings.

4. Mass continues as usual

### **TRIDIUM – (Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday)**

1. The 3 feasts are uniative - one picks up where the one before it left off so it's really 1 service in 3 parts.
2. All 3 services are about life, death, resurrection, not 1 theme each day. It's about past, present, and future events.
3. It's about remembering and making past events present
4. It's about reunion and bringing people together.

### **HOLY THURSDAY (Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper):**

Holy Thursday is when Jesus gave us the Eucharist or mass through the Last Supper. All over the world the priests, including the pope, wash people's feet to show they are following Jesus' example of service. There is only 1 mass allowed on that day and it's in the evening. The readings are always the same each year regardless of what cycle we are in!

#### **Cycle A, B, C:**

Exodus 12:1-8.11-14 -Story of the institution of the Passover where God told Moses and Aaron how to celebrate it.

1 Corinthians 11:23-26 - Paul passing on what he received from Jesus in the form of the Last Supper/Eucharist. "New covenant in my blood" - fitting since today's feast is the Body and Blood of Christ, established God's final covenant with us. "proclaim" = recall and share Eucharist as a: 1. Holy meal and 2. sacrifice of Jesus for us.

John 13:1-15 - Jesus washes the apostles feet at the Last Supper as an example to show them what they must do for others after he is gone.

1. The priest then gives a homily and washes 12 (to represent the 12 apostles) parishioners feet as an example of service to them, just as Jesus did at the start of the Last Supper.

2. Mass goes on as usual. The priest consecrates enough communion for today and Good Friday since there is no consecration Good Friday because technically Jesus is dead so he can't come present in the Eucharist.
3. After communion, the priest then incenses and puts the Blessed Sacrament in the monstrance and processes it to the place of repose, which is in the chapel at Nativity, until 9pm for adoration by the congregation.
4. Mass **pauses** and people leave in silence/adoration with no closing procession or song. It **resumes** at the Good Friday Service.

### **GOOD FRIDAY (Celebration of the Lord's Passion):**

It's called "Good" because God showed us how good he is by sending his son Jesus to die for us. 2pm service because Jesus died on the cross about 3pm (according to Mark 14; 1-15:47). This is not a mass, but similar. This is the one day of the year where there is no mass. (Mass = Consecration and Jesus can't come present in the Eucharist today since he is dead.) The altar is stripped, no sanctuary lamp, austere setting, like a funeral. The readings are always the same each year regardless of what cycle we are in!

The three parts of the service are:

#### **1. Liturgy of the Word**

##### **Cycle A, B, and C**

Isaiah 52:13-53:12 - Jesus ("the servant") shall prosper and be exalted and be thought of for a long time. He was a normal child growing up - the people had no idea he was God's son. Jesus took everyone's sins upon his back and suffered and died for them to be freed. "Pierced" = sword they stuck in him on the cross. "Like a lamb" Jesus is Lamb of God. He was treated unfairly and did it all for us. Jesus takes away the sins of many and justifies us by winning pardon for our sins.

Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9 - Jesus can relate to us because he was fully human and divine. He can help us. He was the source of eternal salvation for those who follow him. He can help us get forgiveness because he has been through human life also and can relate.

John 18:1-19:42 - (The Passion of the Lord)

After Jesus dies in Gospel readings we pause and kneel as a thank you to Jesus for dying for us. Then we continue on with the readings.

The prayers of intention (General Intercessions) or (Solemn Prayers) are long and include everyone to show we leave no one out of our circle of love. They also show our Catholic attitude toward everyone.

2. **Veneration of the Cross** - (where priest holds cross in hands/arms that are covered by a cloak and everyone comes up and kisses it on the feet - like going to communion). It is a symbolic thank you to Jesus for dying for us.

3. **Holy Communion** that was consecrated yesterday at the Holy Thursday mass since there is no consecration Good Friday cause technically Jesus is dead so he can't come present in the Eucharist.

After the final blessing we depart in silence. The altar is stripped if there is anything left. The Eucharist is then absent until the consecration at the Vigil on Holy Saturday, to represent what life is like without Jesus - empty. The mass that began on Holy Thursday is still not over yet, this was just part 2, and it will continue on Holy Saturday at the Easter Vigil or on Easter Sunday, depending on which one you attend.

### **HOLY SATURDAY (Easter Vigil):**

Easter Vigil happens after dark Saturday and before dawn on Sunday morning. The Easter candle is lit for all Easter season to represent Christ's light of rising from the dead. Baptisms/Sacraments of RCIA usually occur here. It is the start of our Easter celebration. There are four parts to the Vigil. It usually starts in a dark church and everyone lights their candles from the Easter candle at the start.

#### **1. Service of Light/lighting of Easter Candle/Procession**

#### **2. Liturgy of the Word**

There are from 2-7 readings from the Old Testament and those options are the same for cycles A, B, and C. Exodus 14:15-15:1 must always be read. The readings are the word of God and how he saved his people throughout history and sent Jesus to be our redeemer and the saving work he has started in us.

Genesis 1:1-2:2 or 1:1, 26-31a - one of the creation stories.

Genesis 22:1-18 or 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18 - We should withhold nothing from God and he will give it all back to us plus more. Discipline and sacrifice themes from bulletin.

Exodus 14:15-15:1 - God is a liberator.

Isaiah 54:5-14 - The Lord is with us.

Isaiah 55:1-11 - God gives you whatever you need. There is no cost to loving God. Listen to God and he will take care of you. It's hard for us to understand God. He is part of us but is not like us. "Who is generous in forgiving" – generous and forgiving themes past few weeks and generous theme this week. God's word will make us fruitful and strong and enable us to do his will. We can take what we need from God and he will give it to us. We have to make ourselves ready to accept what it (God) has to offer. The seed that lands on good ground will yield a fruitful harvest - responsorial. Our price for generosity has to be us doing the same for others. God thinks much bigger than we do.

Baruch 3:9-15, 32-4:4 - Be open to God when he calls.

Ezekiel 36:16-17a, 18-28 - We have a new start in Jesus.

**Cycle A:**

Opening Prayer

Gloria

Romans 6:3-11 - Baptism represents death to sin up to that point in life so last sentence is talking about a fresh start in life in Jesus. This passage was the sole instruction received by candidates for baptism in early church. Buried = living in sin. "Baptizein" = plunged. Do we plunge - totally immerse - ourselves into the gospel message?

Matthew 28:1-10 - The resurrection of Jesus.

**Cycle B:**

Opening Prayer

Gloria

Romans 6:3-11 - see above

Mark 16:1-7 - Easter Gospel - ultimate liberation from death!

**Cycle C:**

Opening Prayer

Gloria

Romans 6:3-11 - see above

Luke 24:1-12

**3. Blessing of Baptismal waters/Renewal of baptismal promises/Celebration of Sacraments of Initiation for RCIA**

**4. Liturgy of the Eucharist** - mass continues as usual

**EASTER SUNDAY (Commemoration of the Lord's Resurrection):**

Easter Sunday is basically a regular mass but focusing on Christ's resurrection from the dead. Easter is the holiest day of the Church year for Catholics. It is a day of great celebration because we are saved and that is reflected in the contexts of the mass. The readings each year are the same regardless of what cycle we are in.

**Cycle A, B, C:**

Acts 10:34a, 37-43 - Peter saying what Jesus left them to do. Telling everyone to believe in Jesus and they will be forgiven their sins.

Colossians 3:1-4 - Act as Christ did and concentrate on heaven.

OR

1 Corinthians 5:6b-8 -

(2 choices but idea is same - we have died and have new life in Christ!)

John 20:1-9 - Simon Peter and John run and find an empty tomb after Mary Magdalene tells them the stone had been rolled away - but they didn't yet understand what had happened.

After the readings we have the Renewal of Baptismal promises and then mass continues on as usual with the Liturgy of Eucharist.

<https://nativitycatholic.weconnect.com/youth-ministry>