



Palm Sunday 2026

Dear Friends in Christ,

We are now entering Holy Week, the most important week in the life of the Church. The central focus for us as Catholics is the **Triduum**, a Latin word meaning *The Three Days*. These Three Days, begin on Holy Thursday with the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper, and ends with the Easter Vigil on Saturday night. During the Triduum, we gather as a community a number of times, and we listen to some of the Church's most beautiful prayers and readings.

On Holy Thursday at 7:00pm in the *Mass of the Lord's Supper*, we remember the events of the last Supper, when Jesus gave to his friends, his Disciples, his Church – that is you and me, the Sacrament of His Body and Blood. After the Homily in this Mass, the feet of 12 parishioners will be washed. Jesus gave us the image of what the Church should be like when he said “you should wash each other's feet” (Gospel of St. John – Chapter 13). That is, we are called by God to be servants of one another. The link between the Mass and service of others is very clearly made, as we move from the washing of feet to the Celebration of the Eucharist.

After the Distribution of Holy Communion, the Blessed Sacrament is taken out of the Sanctuary to the Altar of Repose which is in the side chapel– this becomes our Garden of Gethsemane, where we can unite ourselves with our praying Lord. The altar is then stripped, and the Sanctuary laid bare.

There is an immense feeling of emptiness in the Church as we look to the starkness of Good Friday. There is no formal ending to the Service, and people leave in Silence. Some people may choose to wait in prayer for a while, or others until 10:00pm, but all will leave into the darkness of the night – the darkness of the Passion.

This night helps us focus on the Summit of our lives of Faith as Catholics – The Mass; where Christ gives of himself by His Body and His Blood. We come to a deeper realisation that our Catholic Faith must be linked with lives of service of one-another, most especially the sick, the poor and the outcast. We remember not solely those who are financially poor, but also those who suffer from the poverty of loneliness, rejection, sadness and depression. Holy Mass is the Sacrament of love, which we must mirror to others in our own lives – this is our Faith.

On Good Friday at 3:00pm, we gather again in the bare Co-Cathedral. In silence, we listen to Scripture, and hear of our Lord's Passion. We then reverence the Cross with a kiss or a touch and by genuflecting or bowing, and we sing not only of the sorrow, but also of the Glory of the Cross.

On this most solemn of days, as we recall Christ's suffering on the Cross, we become aware and remember the crosses, pain and suffering – past and present – we carry in the depths of our own hearts, maybe only known to ourselves and God, and we unite them with the suffering of Christ.

On Holy Saturday Evening at 8:00pm, we gather outside the Co-Cathedral as the People of God in the darkness of the evening – the darkness of Christ's death, and we light a fire from which we light the Easter (Paschal) Candle, which is a symbol of Christ's victory over sin and death – we share and spread the light of Christ.

Entering the darkened Church, by candlelight we listen to some of the most powerful readings of the Old Testament, of God's dealings with His people – from the dawn of time and creation, through the prophets and salvation history. We sing the Gloria and illuminate the Church, as a symbol of our light coming from the Resurrection of Christ. We then Sing Alleluia, and listen to the Holy Gospel of the Resurrection.

On this holy night, as our candles light up the darkened Church, as Christ triumphed over sin and death, so too can we walk from the despair of our own crosses, and journey from the darkness of our sufferings on the road of hope, guided by the light of Christ. We come to see that there is always, light at the end of the darkness beyond our pain, – there is the light of Christ – the light of life.

The Triduum, celebrated well, sees us enter the whole mystery of our Faith, as well as the mystery of our lives.

I hope you will come and celebrate the Triduum together, and grow in grace, hope, faith and love.

God bless you.

Fr. Phillip