

# Holy Saturday

## The Easter Vigil (7.30pm)

This night of Passover, when Jesus passed from death to the glory of the resurrection, is the most important moment in the whole liturgical year. We celebrate our own passing over from the death of sin to the newness of life in the Risen Lord.

From the earliest times Christians devoted this night of the resurrection to watching and waiting. As faithful people we keep the light of our faith alive, so that when Christ emerges from the tomb he will find us awake and ready to celebrate his victory over sin and death.

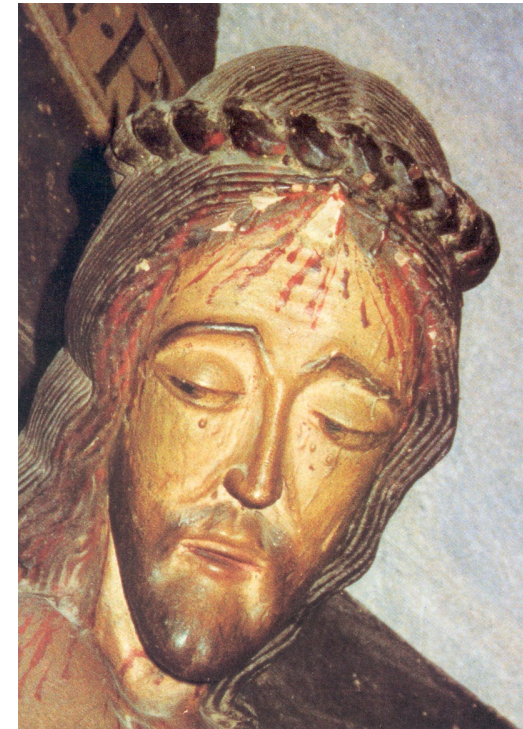
The Easter Vigil is arranged in four parts:

1. **The Service of Light**, during which we light the Paschal Candle from the Easter Fire to remind us that the darkness of death has given way to the bright glory of new life.
2. **The Liturgy of the Word**, during which we hear of the mighty works God has done for us throughout our salvation history.
3. **The Liturgy of Baptism**, during which we bless the water in the baptismal Font and renew our baptismal promises.
4. **The Liturgy of the Eucharist**, when we share in Easter Communion and witness to the Eucharist as the source and focal point of our Christian worship and spirituality.

Attending the Easter Vigil on Saturday fulfils the Sunday Obligation. The 11.00am Mass on Easter Sunday Morning takes place as normal.

*The Roman Catholic Parish of  
Our Lady Help of Christians, Portico*

# The Holy Week Services



*Celebrating the Passion, Death  
and Resurrection of our Saviour*

# Jesus Christ

# Palm Sunday

On this day we celebrate the triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, when the Jews hailed him as their King, and threw palm branches in front of the donkey on which he was riding. Little did they realise that Jesus had come to Jerusalem to suffer and to die for us all.

**5.30pm (Sat)** Mass, with Blessing of Palms

**11.00am** Mass, with Blessing of Palms

## Monday

**9.30am** Mass

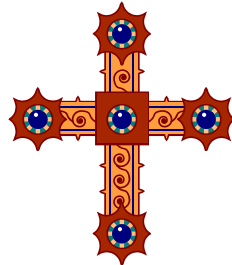
**7.00pm** Service of Reconciliation

## Tuesday

**9.30am** Mass

## Wednesday

**9.30am** Mass



## 7.30pm The Mass of Chrism:

This Mass is celebrated this evening by the Archbishop in the Cathedral. During this Mass the Holy Oils are blessed, and with these oils the ministry of Christ's service is continued in the Church: the Oil of Catechumens is the sign of the Church's strengthening of the weak; with the Oil of Chrism the Church seals with the Holy Spirit those who are to bear witness to him in the world (Baptism and Confirmation), and commissions those whose lives are specially consecrated to his sacrificial service (Ordination); finally the Oil of Infirmitas brings his ministry of healing to those who are sick (Anointing of the Sick)

At this Mass priests throughout the world gather with their Bishop to renew their personal commitment to their priestly service, and to the service of those who are entrusted to their care.

## 2. The Veneration of the Cross

The cross of Jesus is absolutely central to the Christian Faith. It was by dying on the cross that Jesus destroyed sin and death and gave us all the assurance of salvation and eternal life. The cross is the source of all our graces and the banner of our hope.

At this part in the service the cross is shown to the congregation, and we are invited to come forward to kneel before the cross and venerate it.



## 3. Holy Communion

In Holy Communion we receive the body of Jesus and enter into his life-giving sacrifice. Because Mass is not celebrated today, the hosts that we receive were consecrated at yesterday evening's Mass of the Lord's Supper.

**There is no blessing or final hymn at the end of the Service, and as befits the dignity of the occasion we leave the Church in absolute silence when the Service has ended. The Altar remains bare of any adornment until the celebration of the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday Night.**

# Good Friday

**10.00am Stations of the Cross**

**3.00pm Liturgy of the Lord's Passion**

The afternoon Liturgy of the Lord's Passion is one of the most moving liturgies of the Church's year. Good Friday is the only day in the year when Holy Mass is not celebrated. Instead we hold this solemn liturgy, at the time of Jesus' death, to commemorate the death he endured on the cross for our salvation.



We know that the day can be called “good” because on that day Christ, by his death, brought to life all who believe in his name. Although the liturgy is full of immense sadness at the death of Christ, we are also filled with joy as we reflect on the salvation that his death won for us. The reading of the Passion is from St John's Gospel, and it stresses that Christ is the conqueror of sin and death

The Liturgy of the Passion has three parts:

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

We listen to the powerful and beautiful reading from the prophet Isaiah, which tell of the suffering servant: “So will the crowds be astonished at him, and kings stand speechless before him; for they shall see something never told, and witness something never heard before.” We try to understand the wonderful self-giving of Christ.

In the General Intercessions, we pray in the shadow of the cross for the needs of the world which Christ has redeemed.

# The Easter Triduum

The next three days plunge us into the central mystery of our faith, the “solemnity of solemnities”, the event by which we are saved. The three days, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday night are the climax of the whole Christian year. It is the time when the mystery of the cross and resurrection brings us new life through the sacraments.

**All the sacraments are consequences of the Lord's death and resurrection. The central sacrament of our faith is the Holy Eucharist, the Body and Blood of Christ. All the other sacraments of the Church either prepare us for the Eucharist or complete its effects.**

**By laying down his life, Christ entered the glory of the resurrection, and sent the Holy Spirit to renew the face of the earth. Christ loved us so much that he was obedient to his Father even to the point of offering himself on the cross for our salvation.**

**It was through his death and resurrection that Christ conquered sin and death and gave us all the promise of salvation and eternal life. It is that death and resurrection that we celebrate in the Easter Triduum. In celebrating this greatest of all feasts we are acknowledging with joy the immense love that Christ must have for us to suffer and to die for us in this way – and recognising that his love for us means that we can share in his life for all eternity.**

# Maundy Thursday

## 5.30pm Mass of the Lord's Supper

This Mass commemorates two events of great significance. Firstly, the Last Supper was the First Mass, when Jesus instituted the Eucharist and gave us his body and blood for the forgiveness of our sins. He commanded that we should eat his body and drink his blood as a memorial of what he has done for us.

Secondly, this Mass emphasises the importance to the Christian of service. Christ came to earth as a servant. It was in the service of others that he lived and died. As Christians we



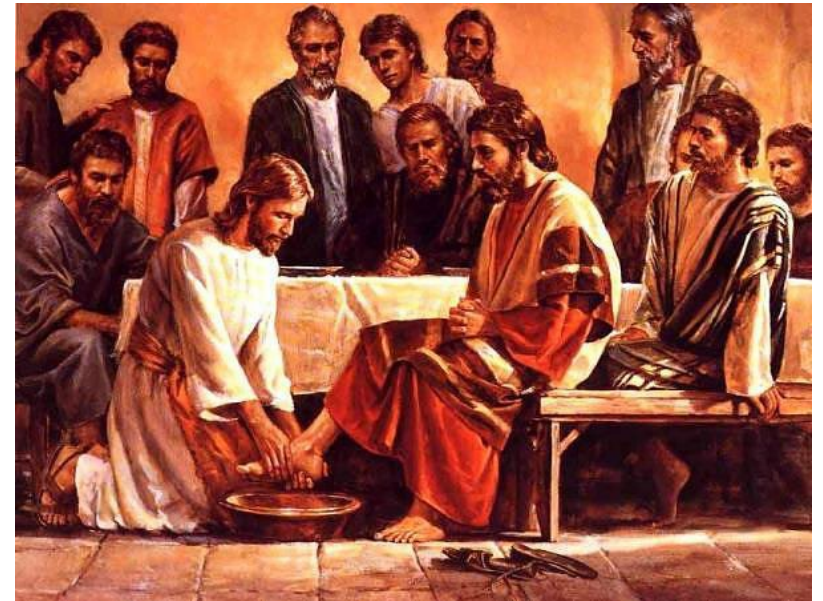
are called to the service of others, following the example of Christ himself. Christ showed his love for his apostles when he washed their feet: *“When he had washed their feet and put on his clothes again he went back to the table. ‘Do you understand,’ he said, ‘what I have done to you? You call me Master and Lord, and rightly; so I am. If I, then, the Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you should wash each other’s feet. I have given you an example so that you may copy what I have done to you.’”*

(John 13: 12 – 15)

## Watching at the Altar of Repose

After the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper, the Blessed Sacrament is carried in solemn procession to a separate Tabernacle at the Altar of Repose. A Eucharistic Hymn is sung, and the Blessed Sacrament is incensed. After the service the main Altar and the Tabernacle are stripped bare.

The evening after the Last Supper was when Jesus endured the Agony in the Garden, contemplating the horrors of the crucifixion that he was about to endure for our sakes. Such was his mental agony that he sweated blood. There is an opportunity for us to pray in silence before the Altar of Repose, meditating on the immense love that Jesus must have had for us to enable him to suffer and to die for us. In spending this time in prayer we are answering Jesus' plea to his disciples: *“Could you not watch with me even one hour?”*



**The Watching will finish at 8.00pm with Night Prayer of the Church**