



# Did You Know?

March 28, 2021

Today is Palm Sunday and the beginning of Holy Week. Our Elect are in the last week of preparation before they are fully initiation into the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil this Saturday. The focus of this week's 'Did You Know?' column will be on the Holy Triduum. It is hoped that you will come and celebrate these most holy days with our Elect.

Holy Triduum refers to the three most holy days of the liturgical year; Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter. In celebrating these holy days, the Church is not meant to reenact the events of Jesus. In 'The Three Days of Pascha' Nathan Mitchell writes, *"What the paschal triduum actually celebrates is mystery, not history... The liturgies of these days do not 'take us back' to the upper room or the path to Calvary. Their ultimate purpose is ...to celebrate not what once happened to Jesus, but what is now happening among us a people called to conversion, gathered in faith, and gifted with the Spirit of holiness."*

During the Triduum, our Elect will join the Church in rituals that are not done at any other time. Sadly, due to Covid restrictions, some of these rituals will be a bit different or not done at all. But that will not take away from these three holiest of days.



**Holy Thursday:** The Holy Triduum begins after sundown with The Mass of the Lord's Supper (celebrated at 7:00 pm), and marks the end of the forty days of Lent and the

Paschal fast begins. At the Last Supper, Jesus washed the feet of his apostles, then commanded them to also do. We are called to do the same, to serve as Jesus served. (Because of Covid restrictions, the traditional washing of each other's feet will not be allowed this year.) Also at the Last Supper, Jesus gave us, the Church, the Sacrament of Eucharist. We are reminded of who we are in Jesus Christ and that the

Eucharist mystically unites us with Christ and to each other as the Body of Christ.



**Good Friday:** The Celebration of the Passion of the Lord (at 7:00 pm) is a liturgy like no other. The church is stripped of all

decoration, the altar is bare, and the door of the empty tabernacle stands open. This day is a somber day, as we remember the passion and death of our Lord. The Elect will join us as we venerate the cross of Christ, this year with a moment of silence. There is enough bread consecrated at the Mass of the Lord's Supper to distribute at this liturgy, as there is no Liturgy of the Eucharist other than the distribution of communion. We leave the church in silence. This day is 'good' because such good comes from Christ's suffering and death – our salvation.



**The Easter Vigil/Easter:** At the Easter Vigil (Saturday at 8:30 pm), we enter a dark church, reminiscent of Christ's tomb. The Easter fire is lit outside the

doors and the new Paschal candle is lit. From the lit Paschal candle, all other candles are lit, slowly illuminating the darkness. After a series of readings and psalms that tell our salvation history, the moment our Elect have been working toward – they will be baptized, confirmed and receive Jesus for the first time in the Eucharist as they become full members of the Catholic family! We continue our joyful celebration of the Resurrection of the Lord Easter Sunday morning. Happy Easter!