

LOVE LIKE NO OTHER

HOLY WEEK E-JOURNAL
MARCH 28 - APRIL 4, 2021



Welcome to the Holy Week!

By God's grace, we have finally made it to this special time of remembering and reliving the passion, death and resurrection of our savior Jesus Christ.

But what does it really mean to celebrate the Holy Week? First, we must understand that the Holy Week are sacred days for us Christians. By the word "holy" which comes from the Hebrew word "qodesh" meaning set apart, we are reminded that this time is unique. It is truly set apart and different from other weeks.

We often connote this time as the holiest time of the year. And indeed, it is. In the Holy Week, we recall the final days that Jesus spent in His earthly life. It begins on Palm Sunday wherein we remember Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem. The days gradually move towards the Passion which climaxes on what we call the Triduum. The Sacred Triduum consists of the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday or also known as Maundy Thursday, the solemn Veneration of the Cross on Good Friday, and our Lord's Resurrection at the Great Easter Vigil and on Easter Sunday. Above any other days, we are called to remember that apart from the cross, we cannot experience the gift of resurrection.

As Catholic Youth Missionaries, we have eagerly looked forward to the Holy Week services and activities prepared by our parishes and communities.

However, our Holy Week journey might look different in this time of pandemic. We may feel isolated in our own homes, but despite this, let us continue to love and worship our Savior intently.

May this Holy Week be a period for us to grow immensely in our love for our Savior. Let us take time to ponder His life, death and resurrection. Finally, let the commemorations in the next seven days allow us to delve deeper into a LOVE LIKE NO OTHER: the supreme sacrifice of Jesus who suffered and died on the cross because of His great love for us.

We pray with you and may you continue to persevere in prayer, sacrifice and adoration. Never forget that you are loved more than you can ever imagine. Jesus loves each one of us with a LOVE LIKE NO OTHER.

In Christ,

MFC YOUTH TEAM

VIRTUE OF THE WEEK: FORGIVENESS

Challenge:

Allow the Lord to purify your heart by finally forgiving or asking forgiveness to a specific person in your life.

What to fast:

Social media / secular songs

Feast on:

WATCH: Preparing for Holy Week:
Praying with Jesus Through
the Agony in the Garden by
The Ascension Presents

"Apart from the cross, there is no other ladder by which we may go to heaven."

St. Rose of Lima

MARCH 28 (PALM SUNDAY)

Today marks the beginning of Holy Week and we celebrate Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem, days before He was crucified. Jesus rode a donkey instead of a high steed as a sign of humility, while palm branches traditionally symbolize peace and victory.

Readings

1st Reading: Is 50:4-7

Responsorial Psalm:

Ps 22:8-24

2nd Reading: Ph 2:6-11

Gospel: Mk 14:1-15:47

Opening prayer

Lord, help me to seek Your words. Open my heart to your revelations so that I may be able to trust even when I don't understand. Amen.

Reflection

Today as we enter the Holy Week through Palm Sunday, let us invite Jesus into our lives. Let us ask Him to allow us to take part in His suffering, death, and resurrection so that we may also be able to relive our own dying and rising in Him. May this whole week be full of passionate suffering, passionate forgiving, and passionate living - an active walk towards holiness.

How is Jesus calling me to confront my sins, embrace my sufferings, and rise with passionate love this whole week?

Dear Jesus, allow me to weep and mourn as I confront my sins through Your death. And by rising with You, help me find healing, reconciliation, and redemption so that I may rejoice as I encounter you again this whole week.

MARCH 29 (HOLY MONDAY)

Opening prayer

Lord Jesus, help me to focus on You this whole week. Silence the world and teach me to ponder on your wonderful expression of love. Amen.

Readings

1st Reading: Is 42:1-7

Responsorial Psalm:

Ps 27: 1-14

Gospel: Jn 12:1-11

Reflection

The gospel today reminds us that God should be the center of our lives. We don't know what is to come but we know who is with us now and that is Jesus. We should offer ourselves to His presence and be fully occupied by His Love.

What are my concrete ways to fully focus on
fasting and praying the whole week?

*Almighty Father, wrap me in Your loving arms and
surround me with Your peace. Allow me to devote this
time to hear You and be with You fully.*

St. Berthold, pray for us.

MARCH 30 (HOLY TUESDAY)

Opening prayer

Ever-living God, we ask for the grace to believe in the power of the Cross. May we not shy away from suffering but accept it in order to grow closer with You. Amen.

Readings

1st Reading: Is 49:1–6

Responsorial Psalm:
Ps 71:1–17

Gospel: Jn 13:21–38

Reflection

We can strongly identify ourselves with Judas and Peter. Like them, we often betray Jesus when we sin. We choose to be faithful in other things instead of remaining loyal to Jesus. We are weak and our hearts are treacherous. But nevertheless, Jesus is willing to die for us over and over again. He still lovingly sees us as *little children* just like how He addressed the apostles at that time.

Like little children, may we also cling to Jesus. May we humbly come before Him and ask for His grace to resist sin at all times.

When are the times that I often betray Jesus?
Am I willing to rise above from my sins and weakness just like St. Peter?

Jesus, forgive me for my frailty. I hurt your loving heart over and over again. Grant me the courage and the will to avoid hurting You again.

St. Peter Regulatus, pray for us.

MARCH 31 (HOLY WEDNESDAY)

Opening prayer

Almighty Father, I want to be with You in Your sufferings as You are with me in my difficulties. Take away from me the things that are not for Your glory. Give me the courage to surrender my favorite sins to You. Amen.

Readings

1st Reading: Is 50:4–9

Responsorial Psalm:
Ps 69:8–34

Gospel: Mt 26:14–25

Reflection

Judas is the treasurer among Jesus' disciples. He was well-trusted and all along he witnessed the miracles and goodness of Jesus. But despite the trust given to him, Judas still managed to betray Jesus for thirty pieces of silver. Isn't it the same with us? Jesus has always shown His great love for us, He has never forsaken us and all He wants is the best for us. However, when things get harder, we often forget how God carries our burdens, leading us to take the other road we thought is a lot nicer.

Judas took an essential part in the fulfillment of the passion and crucifixion of Jesus. The same way that temptations will always come in our journey to holiness. In our places of glory and joy with the Lord, it is where the enemy is mostly threatened.

As humans, we make mistakes. But Jesus as God, He does not limit His forgiveness. May God's love and grace be enough for us to say no to the temptations presented to us by the enemy.

What are my favorite sins and the skeletons in my closet?
How much am I willing to surrender it to Jesus?

*My God, cleanse my heart and purify my intentions
in everything that I will do.
St. Benjamin, pray for us.*

APRIL 1 (MAUNDY THURSDAY)

Maundy Thursday commemorates the Last Supper and Jesus washing the feet of His disciples. The term maundy means "command", which refers to Jesus' commandment to the disciples to "Love one another as I have loved you".

Readings

1st Reading: Ex 12:1–14

Responsorial Psalm:

Ps 116:12–18

2nd Reading: 1 Cor 11:23–26

Gospel: Jn 13:1–15

Opening prayer

I thank You Lord for living within me mysteriously, I know I am home. I pray that I may always feel Your presence in silence and in darkness. Create in me the desire to have a deeper communion with You. Amen.

Reflection

There are various situations in our lives when we have asked God, "Lord, why? Why now?" Remembering Jesus' way to the cross in this season of pandemic, we wanted to go to mass and receive the sacrament of reconciliation, but we are too limited, still, Lord why now?

This has been a season of pressing on. Yet, we are reminded of today's Gospel that we cannot fully understand the complexity of things at the moment because God has His own timeline of revealing to us the purpose and the glory beyond our sufferings.

Today, we commemorate Jesus washing the feet of His disciples. This proves how His love is so humble that He gives His entire self for us, in spite of our sins. It was both self-giving and self-humiliating. Jesus gives His life, and He also allowed Himself to be humiliated through the cross because of His great love for us. The command to us is to repeat Jesus' own action of giving oneself and loving others without limitations.

How much am I willing to give and be humiliated for the sake of my love for others? How much do I want to follow Jesus?

*Lord Jesus, allow me to always look upon Your cross so
I can be reminded of Your selfless love and humility.
St. Ludovico Pavoni, pray for us.*

APRIL 2 (GOOD FRIDAY)

Why is Good Friday called "good" when Jesus died on the cross?

The truth is, it is called good precisely because Jesus died on the cross for the redemption of the world. Redemption means the "act of recovering something that was lost".

Good Friday is good because Jesus opened the possibility that we might live – forever.

Readings

1st Reading: Is 52:13–53:12

Responsorial Psalm:

Ps 31:2–25

2nd Reading: Heb 4:14– 5:9

Gospel: Jn 18:1–19:42

Opening prayer

Dear Jesus, remind us again of how great is the love that You have done for us at the cross. When times that life becomes more desperate, help us imitate your passion for sacrifice for the sake of others. For by your wounds we are healed, grant us the grace that we may also bring Your light to others. Amen.

Reflection

Jesus knew that the time is about to come to fulfill the promise of salvation. As He faces before the tribulation, Jesus continues to choose to love and was never worried about the heaviness of death. With great zeal, He demonstrated how we should overcome despair, by manifesting love through compassion and forgiveness towards our neighbors and our enemies.

Jesus traded heaven for the sake of us all. He loves us so much that He came to this world even in the worst of our condition. He took responsibility for our unworthiness, and in His death, we gained life again. This was the death that brought reconciliation for all.

This is an invitation for all of us. Jesus wants us to win heaven by not dealing with wickedness through evil but rather, to show compassion and love beyond all we could expect to give.

When was the last time that I made a meaningful sacrifice for the Lord?

Dear Jesus, despite our unworthiness, You still chose to love us even it cost You your precious life. Thank You for showing us the way to heaven even when there seems to be no light in the darkest of our life.

Help us, oh Lord, in embracing our cross and live a life that is pleasing to you. Amen.

St. Pedro Calungsod, pray for us.

APRIL 3 (BLACK SATURDAY)

Today, we remember Jesus laid in the tomb. We keep still, endure with patience, and prepare a joyous celebration.

Opening prayer

I thank You Lord for living within me mysteriously, I know I am home. I pray that I may always feel Your presence in silence and in darkness. Create in me the desire to have a deeper communion with You. Amen.

Reflection

At times that Jesus is too silent, He teaches us to remain faithful and to put our trust in Him. There is nothing for us to worry, God knows exactly what He is doing. He knows our pain, our fears, and our weaknesses. Jesus has never left us alone because He lives within our hearts.

Long days of mourning will end; feasting is about to come. Today, we are reminded that God can turn horrible things into something beautiful. We need not to fear, we just have to be still. Jesus is coming and all the sufferings will soon make sense.

When everything is loud and we barely hear God's message, let us pause and allow Him to simply surprise us in the midst. Jesus is the light we cling to in darkness. May we be affirmed that He is always with us, beside us, and within us.

As I reflect and ponder this Holy Week, where is God leading me to?

*Heavenly Father, give me the grace to always trust
Your ways even if I do not fully understand.
St. Agape, pray for us.*

Readings

1st Reading: Gn 1:1–2:2

Responsorial Psalm:

Ps 104:1–35

2nd Reading: Rom 6:3–11

Gospel: Mk 16:1–7

APRIL 4 (EASTER SUNDAY)

Alleluia! He has risen!

Jesus kept His promise that He would rise again from the dead and He did — He came back for all of us! The Resurrection is the foundation of our hope. We are affirmed of God's faithfulness and that He truly is a promise keeper.

Opening prayer

Lord Jesus, teach us how to find you whenever we feel like we're losing your presence in our lives. Point us to the beautiful message of your resurrection and help us find our way towards your loving embrace. Amen.

Reflection

When everyone thought that they lost all hopes to be with the Lord again, Jesus Christ rose from the dead just as He promised. He manifested victory over death, and the good news of the resurrection has finally come to bring light for all of us.

Our gospel tells us about the story of the disciples' discovery of an empty tomb of Jesus Christ. Sometimes we share the same stories with the disciples. We start losing ourselves and panic about the beautiful things we tend to fail to understand, that at the end of the day, Christ will conquer death for all of us. When things make it easy for us to be discouraged and lose hope, this Easter Sunday tells us that our sufferings can become a source of great joy as long as we believe that God can transform it into part of the good news of His resurrection.

What does the resurrection of Jesus Christ mean to me?

Lord Jesus, help us cling to the purpose of Your resurrection. May all our sufferings in life always transform into joy with You at the very end. And as we continue to journey in this life, may You always be the constant source of our strength. Amen.

Saint Isidore, bishop and doctor of the Church, pray for us!

Readings

1st Reading: Acts 10:34–43

Responsorial Psalm:

Ps 118:1–23

2nd Reading: Col 3:1–4

Gospel: Jn 20:1–9

Community Prayer 2021

Heavenly Father, your light shines forth in the darkness, and you have made us a light to the world. Instill in our hearts an ardent desire for holiness and let us bring honor and glory to you in everything we say and do.

Lord Jesus, you commanded us to be instruments of your salvation to the ends of the earth. Enable us to proclaim the gospel boldly. Open up the hearts of those destined for eternal life to accept you as Savior and Lord. Help us in making disciples of all the nations.

Holy Spirit, you equip us as holy warriors to engage the enemy. Extend to us your mantle of protection and give us the strength and courage to withstand the onslaughts of the evil one. May we always rest secure in your guidance and care.

Mama Mary, you brought the Savior into the world. Help us bring Jesus into the hearts of many. Be our consolation in times of trouble and pain. Keep us always in your maternal embrace all the days of our life. Amen.

St. Joseph, Pray for us.
Our Lady of Victory, pray for us