

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Dear Parishioners,

Well, the Season of Lent is soon coming to an end. I don't know about you, but for me the forty days of Lent have gone by quickly. Not the penance part of course, that always seems long. Now that Holy Week has arrived I am hoping that the next seven days pass a little more slowly. This week is the most important one on the Christian calendar. We should step back from our usual busy-ness and spend time praying about and reflecting on the saving mysteries of our redemption—the passion, death and resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

The observance of Holy Week begins today of course with **Palm Sunday**. After the year 312, when it became legal for Christians to worship in public, Christians in Jerusalem began to prayerfully reenact the events of the Passion. On Palm Sunday they gathered in the streets and read the Gospel account of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem to the cheers of the crowd who hailed Him as the Messiah and shouted "Hosanna to the Son of David" as they waved palm branches and laid them on the ground before Him. This is the first part of the liturgy today. The blessed palm branches we have should be taken home and hung by the family crucifix as a reminder that we proclaim Jesus our Savior. *(Every Catholic home should have at least one crucifix prominently displayed as a sign to all of our Faith.)* The tone of the Mass turns more somber as we hear the account of our Lord's passion and death from the Gospel according to St. Matthew. The readings at the daily Masses for the next three days recount Jesus' prediction of His death, His betrayal by Judas, and Judas' selling out of Jesus on "spy Wednesday."

On **Holy Thursday**, the **Sacred Triduum** begins (Triduum means "three days" in Latin.) There is only one Mass in the parish on Holy Thursday so that we can all celebrate the Eucharist together. This celebration is a time to recall how at the **Last Supper** Jesus presented the Church the Holy Eucharist when He gave the Apostles bread and wine that He had blessed saying "**This is my Body...This is My Blood....**" At the Holy Thursday Mass we also remember how our Lord established the Sacrament of **Holy Orders** by commanding that His Apostles continue to offer the Eucharist when He said "**Do this in memory of Me.**" The Holy Thursday Mass concludes with a procession with the Blessed Sacrament so that the Eucharist may be reposed in a tabernacle other than the one we normally use. The removal of the Blessed Sacrament from the main altar and the stripping of the altar of all adornments are to focus our thoughts on the darkness and absence of consolation Jesus endured after His arrest in the Garden of Olives.

On the Friday of Holy Week, *which is called "Gott Freitag" in German, meaning "God's Friday," and which became "Good Friday" in English*, God brought about our salvation through the sacrifice of His Son. The church remains dark and the tabernacle empty. We commemorate the sacrifice of Jesus on that evening by reading St. John's account of our Lord's passion and death. We then have the Veneration of the Cross. This liturgy also goes back to the 300s. It began in Jerusalem where the faithful would kiss or in other ways reverence a relic of the true cross, the instrument of our salvation, on Good Friday.

The Sacred Triduum comes to a joyful climax with the **Easter Vigil Mass** which is offered after sunset on Holy Saturday. At that Mass we celebrate Christ's victory over the darkness of sin and death in a special way by **baptizing and welcoming new members into the Church**. The following individuals will be baptized Maelyn Altman, Milan Altman, Florence Edelen, Jennifer Emerson, Mark Emerson, Michaela Gough, Charles House, Sunny Schemery, Heather Young. They will also be Confirmed and receive the Eucharist for the first time. Additionally, Jason Crawford, Lisa Redden, Dawn Strain, Wendy Wenzlick, Tammy Zarychta will be welcomed into the Church, Confirmed and make their first Communion. Danielle Dade, Christian Grimes, Jessica Middleton, Kayla Stalcup, Shawn Wenzlick, will complete their initiation into the Church by receiving Confirmation with the others. And all of us together at each of the Easter Masses will renew our baptismal promises as we celebrate our being born again into eternal life through the saving death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

We remember what our Lord did at the Last Supper and on the cross at every Mass of course. However, the Holy Week services provide us with an opportunity to remember and give thanks in an especially beautiful and moving way. So I encourage all of you to come to the Mass on Holy Thursday and the Good Friday service. Although there is no obligation to attend, these are truly the high holy days of our Catholic faith. **Could anything else you want to do on Holy Thursday and Good Friday evenings be more important than spending a little time thinking about what our Lord Jesus went through for our salvation?** Participating in the liturgies of Holy Thursday and Good Friday also deepens our joy when we celebrate the greatest of all feasts, Easter. Please come to our Holy Week services. They are guaranteed sources of graces and blessings.

With my prayers,
Fr. Conley

Schedule for Holy Week**Monday through Wednesday****Confessions 7:30-7:50am Mass 8:00****Holy Thursday****Mass of the Lord's Supper 7:30pm****Good Friday****Stations of the Cross 3:00pm****Confessions 3:30-4:30pm****Liturgy of the Lord's Passion 7:30pm****Holy Saturday****Confessions 3:00-4:00pm****Easter Vigil Mass 8:00pm****EASTER SUNDAY****Masses at 8:00, 10:00 & 12:00noon****SOUL OF JESUS PRAYER OF MOTHER SETON**

Soul of Jesus sanctify me, Blood of Jesus wash me
 Passion of Jesus comfort me, Wounds of Jesus hide me
 Heart of Jesus receive me, Spirit of Jesus enliven me
 Goodness of Jesus pardon me, Beauty of Jesus draw me
 Humility of Jesus humble me, Peace of Jesus pacify me
 Love of Jesus inflame me, Kingdom of Jesus come to
 me Grace of Jesus replenish me, Mercy of Jesus sanctify
 me Purity of Jesus purify me, Cross of Jesus support me
 Nails of Jesus hold me, Mouth of Jesus
 bless me in life, in death -- in time and Eternity
 In the hour of death defend me call me to come to thee,
 Receive me with thy Saints in glory everlasting.

CALLING ALL LECTORS, EMS AND SERVERS!

Since you participate in a special way in our celebration of the Mass we would like you to help with the Eucharistic procession on Holy Thursday. Please be in the church by 7:15pm and sit in your reserved seats (servers in the pews in front of St. Joseph's altar, Lectors & EMs in the pews in front of the Blessed Mother's altar.) Servers will take part in the procession around the church which will take place immediately after Mass. Lectors and EMs will remain in their places. **The church will remain open on Holy Thursday night until 10pm for those who can "watch one hour" with our Lord.**

2018 ANNUAL JUBILARIAN MASS

The annual Jubilarian Celebration of marriage honoring couples married 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50 and 51+ years will be held Sunday, June 17, 2018 at 2:00pm at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. Cardinal Wuerl will preside at the Mass. Please use the forms in the back of Church to register and then return the form to the rectory. Names of jubilarians need to be turned in to Mary at the rectory by Monday, April 16.

RELIGIOUS GOODS STORE NEEDS HELP

We need some help to work after the 4 & 12 PM Mass. Please call Ellen Walls at 301- 579-2557 or Fay Adriani at 301-645-3531.

COPIES OF SHARING IN THE JOY OF LOVE IN MARRIAGE AND FAMILY BY CARDINAL

WUERL are available on the table in back of the church. Please help yourself.

THERE WILL BE NO MORNING MASS ON MONDAY, APRIL 2ND.

PILGRIMAGE TO MOTHER SETON SHRINE IN EMMITSBURG, SATURDAY, APRIL 28. We will leave at 8am and be back by 7pm. Fr. Conley will be leading this pilgrimage to the Shrine of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton where we will offer Mass, have a tour, and eat lunch. While in Emmitsburg we will also visit the Lourdes Grotto. On the way back from Emmitsburg we will stop at the Springfield Manor Winery in Thurmont for a wine and cheese tasting. Thanks to the generosity of a benefactor and the Keller Bus Company, the cost of the trip is just \$35 per person and includes lunch and the winery visit. For more information and to register contact Lauren Balderson at 301-870-2220 ext 11 or smbassist@comcast.net. Payment is due at registration. **Checks should be made out to St. Mary's Church.**

CAMP ST. CHARLES in Issue, Maryland— Boys and Girls Catholic Over-Night Summer Camp – 2 OPEN HOUSES – April 8, and May 6, 2018 11 AM TO 3 PM For more information, directions and to sign up for an open house, see our web site: www.campstcharles.org or call us at 301-934-8799 or email director@campstcharles.org.

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THIS WEEK:

SUN: 8am Mary Helen Tippet, 10am Parishioners, **12N:** Gladys Brown, **MON:** 8am Doris Gross, **TUES:** 8am Carol Ann Chagnon, **WED:** 8am Eleanor Kalamar-Haupt.

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR DAILY

PRAYERS: Mary Bowes, Frances Card, Joe Cross, Kendall Farrell, George Fassel, Arlene Gandolfi, Martha Gehring, Judy Istvan-Windsor, Irma Johnson, Regina Kijesky, Marie Knobel, Lillian Komar, Susie Logan, Maurice Long, Jim Middleton, Mary Emma Middleton, Larry Miller, Joseph Mona, Wayne Mullings, Ryan Myers, Lenora Proctor, Joseph Quade, Sylvene Savoy, William Leon Savoy, Edna Sweeney, Beth Weise, Tim Welch, Brice Zimmer.

OFFERTORY COLLECTION LAST WEEKEND, \$8,914.26. The unidentified donations totaled \$707.26. We received \$36.00 for our School Support.