

Homily for 5 April 2020

Fr. Mark Mertes

Therefore, with all faith and devotion, let us commemorate the Lord's entry into Jerusalem for our salvation, following in his footsteps, so that, being made by his grace partakers of the cross, we may have a share also in his Resurrection and in his life. (Introduction from Palm Sunday of the Lord's passion, Roman Missal)

This year we have an amazing opportunity to celebrate Holy Week in our domestic churches *"so that we may have a share also in his Resurrection and in his life."* Often we are so busy with commitments and work and school it is very difficult to pay attention to Holy Week. I can recall Lents and Holy Weeks when I paid no attention to the miracle of spring blooming all over. Well, this year we have an opportunity! I offer the following suggestions for the Domestic Church (read: Our Home) during the Paschal Triduum, the Three Days, so we can enter fully into the mystery of Jesus' dying and rising happening in us.

Holy Thursday (April 9)

For the disciples of Jesus, this day was also the Preparation Day when they made arrangements so that they could celebrate the Passover the next day. They purchased, prepared and cooked food, cleaned homes, did their shopping and made ready their prayer resources. We could do some spring cleaning, iron our Easter clothes, prepare Easter baskets and do any essential shopping. Then, in the evening, about the time that Jesus and his disciples gathered, gather somewhere near the meal table. Before you sit down take turns using warm fragrant water and a fresh towel to wash one another's feet. Then, after washing your hands, sit down for your supper and share a high point and a low point from the last few days. Then if possible join us for the Livestream of our Holy Thursday mass at stpatrickkck.org. Finally, after this, perhaps spend some time in quiet prayer outside, or in some lonely place, remembering Jesus' time in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Good Friday (April 10)

Even in the midst of coronavirus, Good Friday is a *Day of Fast (for those aged 18-59) and Abstinence from meat (over the age of 14)*. Good Friday is a

good day to fast from the news cycle! Give yourself some peace! Perhaps we could also fast from cell phones, computers and technology for a few hours in the afternoon. My mother always emphasized the time between noon and three p.m. as a quiet time, remembering Jesus' time on the cross. The Liturgy of the Passion of the Lord will be livestreamed, again at stpatrickkck.org at 3:00 pm. If you like, sometime in the afternoon or evening get the family together and pray the Stations of the Cross, using the link on the parish web site. Feel free to include a time of veneration of the cross, which is a simple bowing toward or kneeling or making some other gesture of reverence.

Holy Saturday (April 11)

Holy Saturday is all about waiting, about not getting back to business as usual. We watch with the whole creation (*"For creation waits with eager expectation the revelation of the children of God"* (Romans 8.19) to see what new life God is going to bring us at Easter. Just as the first disciples had to wait to encounter the Risen Christ so do we watch and wait for his coming. And Christ will be revealed! Personally I find Holy Saturday a great day to be out in nature, work in the garden, prepare ground for planting; pay attention to the paschal mystery as it unfolds in the natural seasonal process. For those who stay up late we will live stream the Easter Vigil beginning at 8:30 pm.

Easter Sunday (April 12)

Celebrate! Eat! Enjoy! Sing! Laugh! Smile! Be made new!

We'll live stream our St. Patrick Easter Mass at 9:15 am. I promise you and your family: If you and your domestic church walk the path of Jesus' descent into suffering and death you will rise with him to the power of your personal Easter miracle. Amen!