



# Infifax



As we approach Holy Week and the feast of Easter, I want to draw your attention to some important celebrations that the Church offers us at this propitious time of the year.

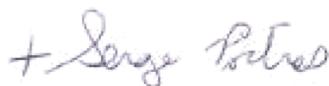
- 1- Holy Week begins March 29<sup>th</sup> with Palm Sunday. This celebration underlines the Messianic Entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem and is accompanied by the blessing of the palms. During the mass, the story of the Passion of the Lord is proclaimed, this year according to Saint Mark the evangelist. In this way, it is possible for us to enter into the climate of prayer that we are invited to maintain throughout the whole week.
- 2- This same Sunday is also the World Day of Youth, an initiative of Saint John Paul II. Again this year, our Holy Father Pope Francis has addressed a wonderful message to youth that we can all meditate upon. Here is an excerpt: *“We need to show a healthy concern for creation, for the purity of our air, water and food, but how much more do we need to protect the purity of what is most precious of all: our heart and our relationships. This “human ecology” will help us to breathe the pure air that comes from beauty, from true love, and from holiness.”*(n.2)  
[http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/youth/documents/papa-francesco\\_20150131\\_messaggio-giovani\\_2015.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/youth/documents/papa-francesco_20150131_messaggio-giovani_2015.html)
- 3- On Holy Tuesday, March 31<sup>st</sup> at 7 p.m. the Chrism Mass will be held at the Cathedral. It constitutes one of the main celebrations of diocesan life. The Bishop, surrounded by priests, deacons, pastoral associates, as well as representatives from the different parishes of the diocese, blesses the holy oils used for the celebration of Baptism and Anointing of the Sick and he consecrates the Holy Chrism for baptisms, confirmations and ordinations. On this occasion I will also give the Apostolic Blessing with a plenary indulgence.
- 4- On Holy Thursday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>, in the evening, at the Mass in honour of the Lord’s Supper, the Church invites us to celebrate the institution of the sacraments of Eucharist and Priesthood as well as the commandment of fraternal love that Jesus illustrated by washing the feet of his disciples. In many parishes the priest recreates this gesture of Jesus. After Mass, the faithful are invited to stay for a time of Eucharistic adoration. I will celebrate this mass at *Saint-Dominique-du Rosaire* Parish in Timmins.
- 5- Good Friday recalls the Lord’s death on the cross. There is no Mass. Nevertheless, the Church gathers to pray a special Liturgy that includes three parts: to begin with, the Liturgy of the Word, during which the great prophecy of Isaiah on the Suffering Servant and the story of the Passion according to

Saint John are proclaimed. Next, the faithful are invited to venerate the Cross, which reminds us of how far the love of God went for us; finally, communion, with hosts consecrated during the mass on Holy Thursday. I will preside over this celebration at *Saint-Laurent* Parish in Ramore.

- 6- During the April 3<sup>rd</sup> liturgy on Good Friday, the Pontifical Collection for the Holy Land will be taken up. The goal of this collection is to support the Christian presence in this country where Christ, the Blessed Virgin and the Apostles lived. Also, in the letter he wrote to us in this regard, Cardinal Leonardo Sandri, Prefect of the Congregation for the Eastern Churches, reminds us of the suffering of our Christian brothers and sisters from this region who are experiencing tragic times. *“Presently, there are millions of refugees fleeing Syria and Iraq, where the roar of arms does not cease ... senseless hatred seems to prevail instead ... If the Christians of the Holy Land are encouraged to resist, to the degree possible, the understandable temptation to flee, the faithful throughout the world are asked to take their plight to heart.”*
- 7- Before or after the liturgical celebration, many faithful also do the Stations of the Cross and rightly so, in order to continue their contemplation of the mystery of the suffering and death of Jesus and to intercede with Him for their suffering brothers and sisters.
- 8- On Holy Saturday, April 4<sup>th</sup>, in the evening, the Easter Vigil takes place that celebrates the victory of Christ over death, of light over darkness, of love over hate. I will preside this solemn celebration at the Cathedral. Some of the faithful will be baptized or received into the Catholic Church and will also receive the sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist. Some parishes will do the same. On Easter Sunday I will be present to greet the faithful at the Cathedral for the 11 a.m. mass.
- 9- Easter Communion. To truly participate in the paschal mystery, the Church teaches that: *“After being initiated into the Most Holy Eucharist, each of the faithful is obliged to receive holy communion at least once a year. This precept must be fulfilled during the Easter season unless it is fulfilled for a just cause at another time during the year.”* (Canon 920, 1 and 2) We can also receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation, as I related in my Pastoral Letter for Lent 2015, *“Repent, and Believe in the Gospel.”*

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In this way, let us take advantage of these special days to draw closer to the Lord, in solidarity with our brothers and sisters throughout the world who are suffering, so that his light enters hearts and spreads over the world!



✠ Serge Poitras  
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