

Daily Prayers

Holy Thursday

God of love, you anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit and made him our Redemer. On this Holy Thursday we remember how he gave us the gift of his Body and Blood so that we can have eternal life. Grant us that we love and serve one another as he commanded when he gathered for the Last Supper with his disciples. We ask this in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Good Friday

Creator God, by the passion and death of Jesus Christ, our Lord, you abolished the death inherited from ancient sin and give us the opportunity to share in his Resurrection. Grant that we can unite with him in his suffering by our Lenten sacrifices and penance on this special day, as to bear in our lives the image of Jesus, the Suffering Servant. We ask this in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Holy Saturday

O God of the living, on this day your Son our Savior descended to the place of the dead: look with kindness on all of us who wait in hope for the liberation from the corruption of sin and death and give us a share in the glory his resurrection. We ask this in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.



For more information



The Missionary Childhood Association (MCA) inspires children throughout the Diocese of Los Angeles to live out their baptismal call to mission. Through prayer, learning, and acts of charity, MCA helps young people grow in a genuine missionary spirit - encouraging them to share their faith and material resources with children in greatest need around the world.

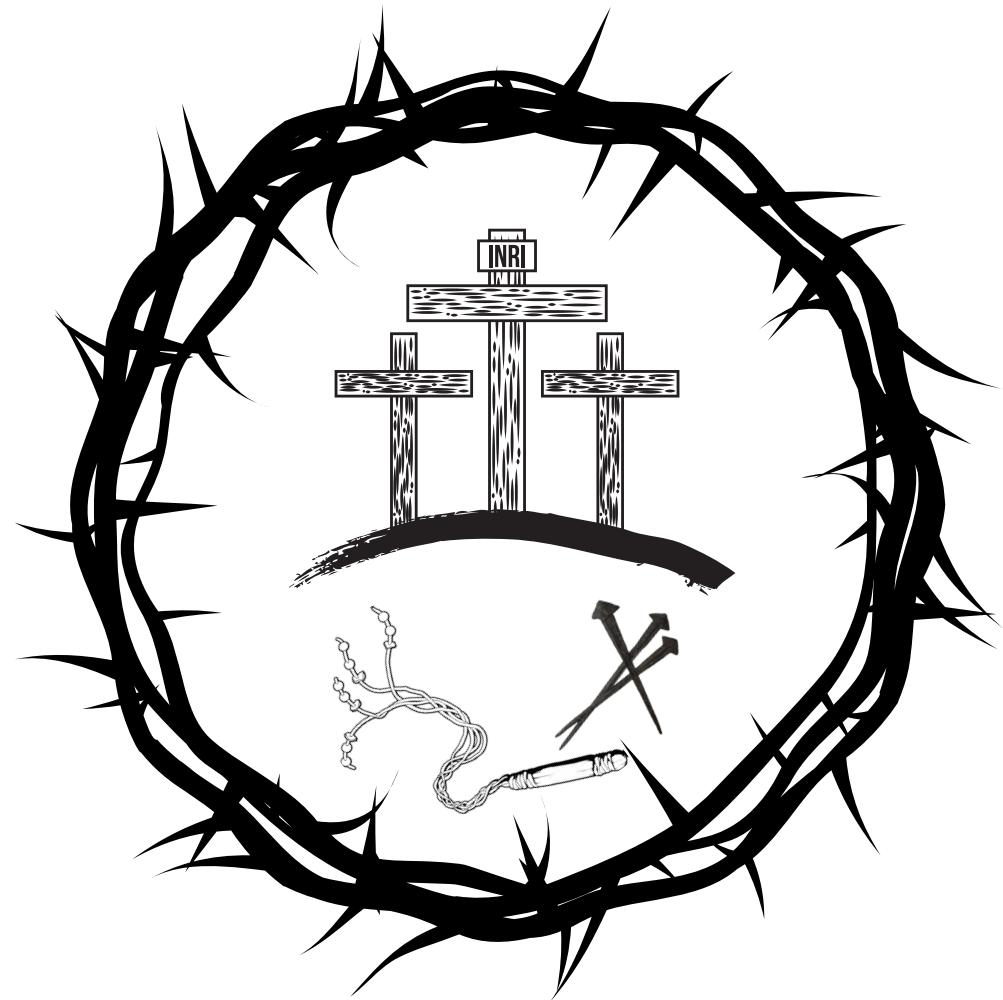
By nurturing compassion, service, and global awareness, MCA strengthens the faith of our youth and fosters future vocations to missionary discipleship. It is a powerful way for children to deepen their relationship with Christ while developing a true sense of universal solidarity.

4311 Wilshire Blvd. 2nd floor, Los Angeles CA 90010

Phone: (213) 637-7229 Email: mca@la-archdiocese.org

www.missionsla.org/mca

FAMILY REFLECTIONS FOR



Holy Week

Introduction

Holy Week is the last week of Lent. The time spent on reflection and sacrifices during lent, prepare us for this week. There are many liturgical celebrations taking place during this week in our parishes.

For those who wish to receive their initiation sacraments for the very first time at the Easter Vigil, it's a time of anticipation and preparation.

The events of Holy Week remind us of the events that led to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Through these events all the promises God made to us came to be. These events show the love that God has for all of us, His children.

Let us reflect on the events of Holy Week and reflect and how they impact our own faith journey. As you share them as a family, spend some time talking about the Scripture passages of the day.

Daily Prayers

Palm Sunday

Heavenly Father, as an example of humility for us to follow you sent your Son to be incarnated and then submit to the Cross. Grant, we pray, that as he enters his Passion on this Palm Sunday, we heed his lesson of patient suffering, of sacrifice, of following him and carrying our cross to bear and thus share in his Resurrection. We ask this in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Holy Monday

Almighty and ever-living God, grant us the strength we need to overcome our weakness to sin and to amend for our failures through the power of our baptismal anointing. May his anointing at the house of Mary of Bethania, be a constant reminder of our call to follow your Son this Lent as he enters his Passion and gain for us eternal Salvation. We ask this in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

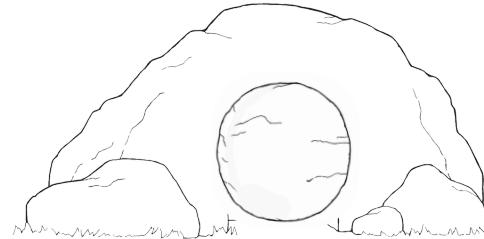
Holy Tuesday

Merciful Father, your Son Jesus was submitted to the yoke of the Cross in order to drive from us the power of the enemy and make us his faithful friends. Grant us the strength to be faithful to your Son's calling to be his disciple and help us avoid denying his love for us with our words and our actions in front of other people. We ask this in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Holy Wednesday

Father of mercies and of all consolation: like Judas Iscariot, we too turn our backs on you when we are focused on our own desires and pleasures. We call upon your love and forgiveness during our Lenten journey to help us acknowledge our sins and turn our lives over to you who are always merciful. We ask this in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Holy Saturday



Scripture:

John 19: 41-42
Now in the place where he had been crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had yet been buried. So they laid Jesus there because of the Jewish preparation day; for the tomb was close by.

Reflection:

Today marks the conclusion of the Paschal Triduum. On Holy Saturday, the Church reflects on the anguish and pain experienced by Mary and the apostles, who believed they had lost their friend and teacher. This day is dedicated to mourning the death of Jesus but looking forward to the transformation taking place in the tomb, the resurrection of Jesus.

We remember the silence and darkness of the tomb where Jesus was laid to rest. The church appears bare, with all images covered to symbolize the tomb's darkness. In our homes, we are encouraged to spend the first half of Holy Saturday in quiet reflection. In some households, families refrain from using the TV, radio, or music, choosing instead to spend this time in silence or speaking softly. The atmosphere resembles that of mourning a loved one or enduring significant loss.

In this moment, the apostles likely felt that all hope was lost. However, scripture reveals that this despair was temporary, as Jesus ultimately resurrected. During our most challenging times, we are called to place our hope in God, who never abandons us. He understands our suffering, and as His children, we are never alone in facing the difficulties in our lives.

Questions for discussion:

Reflect on a time when you have put your hope in God during a difficult moment as a family. How did your faith help you overcome or bear that difficult moment?

Instructions for home

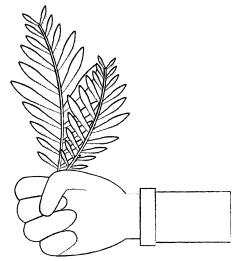
Families are invited to gather every day of Holy Week to reflect on the readings of the day and the liturgical rituals we are celebrating. A prayer space should be prepared in advance with a bible, a candle and a cross or crucifix. In that same space, leave room to place the base of the wreath that will be assembled by your children. More symbols will be added to the prayer space as the family lives out Holy Week.

As families gather each day, the children will be adding a scripture passage and a picture to their Holy Week wreath and the parents or adults present will be adding a symbol to their prayer space. The symbols can be gathered ahead of time and have them ready for Holy Week.

When you gather each day

1. Light the candle in your prayer space and invite all to make the sign of the cross. (Use a real or battery-operated candle.)
2. Read the scripture from the heart shape your child created, assigned to each day. The readings are taken from the corresponding Gospel the day.
3. After reading the Gospel there can be a moment of silence or instrumental music can be played for a brief moment.
4. After a few minutes of silence, read the reflection for each day out loud.
5. Then take some time to answer the questions and talk about it. Speak about the symbols the adults are adding to the prayer space, and the pictures children are adding to the wreath.
6. Allow the children to add the heart with scripture passage and picture to the wreath that correspond to the day you are reflecting on.
7. Stand around the prayer space, pray the Our Father out loud, and close with the daily prayer. (Daily prayers are in the last two pages of this booklet. Pick the one corresponding to each day of Holy Week.)

Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion



Scripture: Luke 19:38

They proclaimed: "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord. Peace in heaven and glory in the highest."

Reflection:

During today's mass, we began by commemorating Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem with palm branches. Just as those who heard him speak, witnessed his miracles, or listened to his disciples welcomed him as a king, we too carried palms that were blessed during this Sunday service. We listened to the full reading of the passion of Christ, where Jesus is hailed as a king, only to be later rejected, treated as a criminal, and made to suffer on the cross.

Those who greeted Jesus with palms ultimately turned away from him when he was condemned, as they did not truly comprehend his identity. Similarly, we may also turn away from Jesus in our own lives, lacking a full understanding of how we are called to live our faith. If we practice our faith merely because others do or under pressure, we may not be prepared to embody the teachings of Jesus and might easily stray. Jesus did not condemn those who initially welcomed him with palms and then turned against him. Likewise, he continually welcomes and embraces us every time we return to him, inviting us into a relationship with him and the Church.

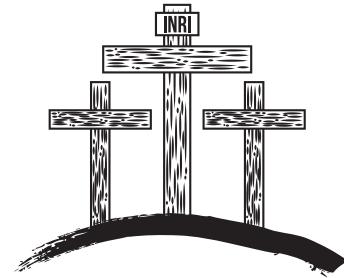
As we bring the blessed palms into our homes, let us joyfully welcome Jesus into our hearts. As we live this Holy Week, let us commit ourselves to deepening our understanding of our faith and strengthening our relationship with Jesus Christ.

Questions for discussion:

Where in your home do you place the blessed palms?

Has there ever been a time when you did not understand something about the faith? How did that make you feel?

Good Friday



Scripture: John 19: 29-30

There was a vessel filled with common wine. So they put a sponge soaked in wine on a sprig of hyssop and put it up to his mouth. When Jesus had taken the wine, he said, "It is finished." And bowing his head, he handed over the spirit.

Reflection:

Today, we continue the celebration of the Paschal Triduum. Good Friday is a time we remember the suffering of Jesus Christ on the cross. Some parishes may host a live re-enactment of the Passion of Christ or gather as a community to pray the Stations of the Cross.

By choosing to become one of us, Jesus embraced all our fragility. He experienced pain just as we do, and at this moment, he faced a depth of suffering that is beyond our comprehension. Yet, the physical agony Jesus endured on the cross was because of his profound love for us. To save us from sin and grant us eternal life, Jesus recognized that he needed to make the ultimate sacrifice—he gave his life for our salvation.

As missionary disciples, we are reminded that God is aware of our own suffering, whether it be physical or emotional. We can bring our pain and struggles to God, knowing that he understands our experiences, and we can seek his strength to endure and overcome our challenges. Let us also commit to being compassionate toward the suffering of others, praying to God for relief for those in pain.

Questions for discussion:

Have you ever helped someone who was in need? What did you do and how did you help?

Holy Thursday- Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 11:26 and John 13: 13-15

For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes.

You call me 'teacher' and 'master,' and rightly so, for indeed I am. If I, therefore, the master and teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another's feet. I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do.

Reflection:

Today we begin the celebration of the Paschal Triduum in which we celebrate the life, suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We remember the night in which Jesus gave us the Sacrament of the Eucharist and showed his disciples that he came to serve, and that he called them to serve their brothers and sisters.

On this day, we are reminded that we are one family in faith, charged with serving one another with love and respect, just as Jesus served and loved his disciples. During Mass, we gather at the table set by God, breaking bread together as brothers and sisters in Christ, where everyone is embraced regardless of nationality or language. When we celebrate the Eucharist, it is not just a symbolic act; we actually make present the sacrifice of Jesus by offering bread and wine, which become his Body and Blood.

As missionary disciples we are called to invite and share this news with everyone.

Questions for discussion:

How does your family prepare to receive the Eucharist at mass?

What can you do to be of service to others? Are you treating everyone with respect as your brother or sisters in Christ?



Holy Monday

Scripture: John 12: 3

Mary took a liter of costly perfumed oil made from genuine aromatic nard and anointed the feet of Jesus and dried them with her hair; the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil.



Reflection:

Today, we reflect on how Jesus was anointed with oil. Similarly, we are anointed at various points throughout our lives. In the Bible, anointing signified that God had a special purpose for someone. Although Jesus was God and did not require an anointing, he acknowledged that Mary's act of anointing would prepare him for his burial.

The Church utilizes three sacred oils: the Oil of the Sick, which provides grace and strength to those who are ill; the Oil of Catechumens, which empowers individuals to resist temptation and choose to follow Christ; and the Holy Chrism, representing the "aroma of Christ," used to consecrate people and sacred objects. These oils are blessed during the annual Chrism Mass held at the Cathedral, where the bishop presides alongside all the priests of the diocese.

At our baptism, we are anointed with the Oil of Catechumens and Holy Chrism, uniting us with Christ in his death and resurrection and connecting us to his Church. During confirmation, we receive the Holy Chrism, which consecrates us for service to God and the community, sealing us with the Gifts of the Holy Spirit and empowering us to witness our faith. When we face illness, the Oil of the Sick is administered to provide strength and help us bear our afflictions with courage and faith. Additionally, those ordained as priests and bishops are anointed with Holy Chrism, committing themselves to serve the People of God.

As anointed children of God, we are granted the grace and strength to fully engage in the Church's mission of evangelization.

Questions for discussion:

How many times have you been anointed? Name the sacraments you have received.

Holy Tuesday

Scripture:

John 13: 38
Peter said to him, "Master, why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you." Jesus answered, "Will you lay down your life for me? Amen, amen, I say to you, the cock will not crow before you deny me three times."



Reflection:

When we spend significant time with others, we often cultivate friendships that can last a lifetime or leave a profound impact on our lives. Jesus and his disciples formed a close bond during their time together, traveling and sharing meals, which fostered a deep and meaningful connection.

Peter was determined to follow Jesus at all costs. However, on the night of Jesus's arrest, fear engulfed him, leading him to deny being one of Jesus's disciples when questioned about it. When the rooster crowed, he wept bitterly, recalling Jesus's words.

Jesus continually invites us into friendship with him, even after we have denied him. He understands that our fears and doubts can sometimes overwhelm us. Peter denied Jesus out of fear of being captured and condemned, focusing solely on his own safety, Jesus still forgave him and entrusted him with the significant mission of leading the disciples in spreading the Good News.

We too are called to follow Christ, and if we stray from him, we can take comfort in knowing that he will forgive us. By nurturing our friendship with Jesus through Adoration, attending Mass, receiving the Eucharist, praying, and helping others, we gain the strength to turn away from sin and remain steadfast in our faith.

Let us commit ourselves to spending more time with our dear friend Jesus.

Questions for discussion:

Has there ever been a time you have denied or turned your back to Jesus? How did that make you feel?

Holy Wednesday

Scripture:

Matthew 26:14-16a
One of the Twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, "What are you willing to give me if I hand him over to you?" They paid him thirty pieces of silver...



Reflection:

Have you ever felt the sting of a friend's betrayal? Perhaps they spoke ill of you or spread falsehoods. The betrayal of Judas Iscariot stands as the most profound treachery a friend could commit, driven by greed.

As we entered Lent, we were reminded of the need to turn away from sin and seek repentance. Sin damages and fractures our bonds with God and one another. When we sin, we turn our backs on God, distancing ourselves from Him. However, God's love is so immense that He offers us the chance to reconcile and repair our relationships by seeking forgiveness. For many, this can be challenging, as asking for forgiveness requires humility and an acknowledgment of how we've hurt others and distanced ourselves from God.

Acknowledging our susceptibility to sin, God continually reaches out to us with His boundless grace and love. It is essential to remember that with God comes compassion and forgiveness, which we experience through the Sacrament of Reconciliation. All that God desires from us is to change (convert) and strive for holiness in our lives.

Receiving the sacrament of reconciliation provides a pathway to approach God and mend our relationship with Him. The grace bestowed through the sacrament and God's mercy in our lives inspire us to transform and become the missionary disciples that Jesus calls us to be. This grace also allows us to restore our relationships with others in our communities. When we wholeheartedly embrace God and refuse to let sin separate us from him, we can truly grow in holiness.

Questions for discussion:

When was the last time you received the sacrament of reconciliation? Share a feeling you had after receiving the sacrament?
