



SPiRIT

Jesus Enters Jerusalem.

NARRATOR: As Jesus went up to Jerusalem, he sent two of his disciples ahead.

JESUS: Go into the next village. As you enter it, you will find an ass tied there which no one has yet ridden. Untie it and lead it back. If anyone should ask, say, "The master has need of it."

NARRATOR: Jesus' disciples found things just as he said, untied the ass, explained the master needed it, and led the animal to Jesus. Laying their cloaks on it, they helped him mount. As he rode along, people spread their cloaks on the road. The entire crowd of disciples began to rejoice and praise God loudly for the deeds of power they had seen.

DISCIPLES: Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest.

PHARISEES: Teacher, order your disciples to stop.

JESUS: If they were silent, the very stones would shout out.

Luke 19.28-40

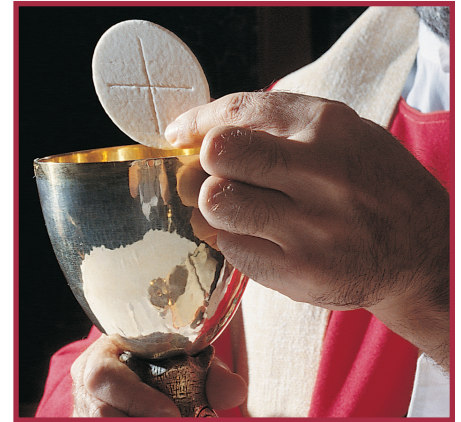


Palm/Passion Sunday

begins Holy Week. Eucharist on this Sunday begins with the blessing of palms, often outdoors, and a procession to remember and reenact the welcome people gave Jesus when he arrived in Jerusalem.

During Holy Week, the holiest week of the Church's calendar, Christians gather to remember and reenact the last events in Jesus' life.

Holy Thursday evening the Church remembers and celebrates Jesus' last supper with his followers. He washed their feet to give them an example of service. He broke bread, blessed it, and gave it to his friends and poured a cup of wine, blessed it, and gave it to them, too, asking them to do the same to remember him.



Good Friday remembers Jesus' passion and death. On this day that remembers Jesus' giving of his life, Catholics gather and pray for the needs of the Church and the people of the world. We kiss the cross or show it reverence in this liturgy.



Easter Vigil is Holy Saturday evening. The parish community gathers in darkness to light the Easter candle, symbolizing Jesus' resurrection. By the light of the Easter candle we stay awake and listen to stories of God's goodness, beginning with the creation of the world and going all the way to God's raising Jesus from the dead. We baptize new Christians on this night that celebrates Jesus' passage from death to life.

HOLY WEEK



An Upper Room Experience

Set a festive table—a large low table your group can gather around and sit on the floor, or a regular table that all can sit around. Set it with three candles, plates, and wine or juice glasses for all. Place the following symbolic foods for the meal in the center:

- matzos (unleavened bread);
- a drink for making toasts. Sparkling catawba juice makes a festive substitute for wine.

GATHERING

LEADER: On the first day of Passover, the Festival of Unleavened Bread, the day before he died, Jesus gathered with his closest friends for a sacred meal in an upstairs room. Now, we also gather in our upper room to pray and to celebrate the care God has shown us through Jesus and through each other.

BLESSING OF LIGHT

Light one candle with each blessing.

CANDLE 1: Creator God, you light our days with sun and our nights with stars. You turn our world toward spring and bring us to this night of freedom.

ALL: Blessed are you, Creator God, Giver of Light.

CANDLE 2: Compassionate God, open our eyes to the holy in our human lives as we celebrate this night of breaking bread.

ALL: Blessed are you, Redeeming God, who gather us as your friends.

CANDLE 3: Spirit God, you are with us in our anger and desire, our dreams and discontent. Bring us in this night through death to life.

ALL: Blessed are you, holy fire of love, who make your home with us.

LEADER: Our God has created us all and summons us all to friendship. Quietly tell God about the people and things on your mind today. Pray a special prayer that Christ's light will shine on those who need help with a

problem or relationship. Listen and reflect during the music.

MUSIC: "We Shall Be Free," by Garth Brooks, or "One Road to Freedom," by Ben Harper.

LEADER: That we will come to know and love you, God.

ALL: Life-giving God, show us how to love.

LEADER: That we will learn to see you in the needs of others.

ALL: Life-giving God, show us how to love.

LEADER: That we will be there for others in times of need.

ALL: Life-giving God, show us how to love.

LEADER: That we will be signs of your love in our relationships.

ALL: Life-giving God, show us how to love.

LEADER: That we will do what you ask of us in the world.

ALL: Life-giving God, show us how to love.

BLESSING OF BREAD AND WINE

Fill a glass with juice for each person.

STORYTELLER: We come together this night to eat unleavened bread. It is the bread of freedom our ancestors ate when they escaped from slavery in Egypt. In this upper room today let us be a community God sets free to love.

ALL: Blessed are you, Giver of Life.

GIVER OF THE TOAST: Our God, you call us to freedom and service. You give us this wine, this supper, these friends. May we be poured out for others as this drink is poured out for us.

ALL: Blessed are you who challenge us to give. *All drink.*

BLESSER OF THE BREAD: (*Holds up the matzos*) Blessed are you, Creator of the earth. You call us this night to throw out the old yeast of our lives and to become new leaven for others.

ALL: May this bread make us hungry for a table where all eat.

MARY MAGDALENE: This is the moment when Jesus broke the bread and gave it to us, his friends, saying, “Take this and eat. This is my body to be given for you. Do this to remember me.” And we always have.

ALL: We pray for our companions in breaking bread and the whole Church to which we belong.

THE QUESTIONS

QUESTIONER 1: Why is this night different from all other nights?

QUESTIONER 2: On other nights we eat leavened bread. Why on this night do we eat unleavened bread?

QUESTIONER 3: On all other nights we talk about many things. Why on this night do we remember the Passover?

The upper room in Jerusalem



THE STORY

MIRIAM THE PROPHETESS: Let me tell you the ancient stories of this night. Once my people were slaves of Pharaoh in Egypt. Life was good there, but not for us. Our hands made the bricks for Pharaoh’s cities. He was afraid of us because we grew so numerous, so he told the midwives to kill every male baby. Shiphrah and Puah were our midwives.

The midwives didn’t do what Pharaoh said. They told him the Hebrew women always had their babies before they could get there. In my own family I’m the one who hid my brother in a basket in the rushes where Pharaoh’s daughter bathed. She saw him and wanted him saved. That was when I turned up and offered to find him a wet nurse—our mother.

ALL: We outsmarted Pharaoh.

MOSES: Our people cried out in our suffering and God heard and created a future for us with a strong hand and an outstretched arm. God called me to speak even though I stuttered. I did as our God commanded. Such plagues befell the Egyptians!

The Nile turned to blood; frogs and gnats and flies came; pestilence, boils, hail, locusts; then darkness and the night we still remember when Death passed over our houses and

God opened a dry path through the midst of the sea where Pharaoh’s armies pursued us.

ALL: Our strength and courage is God, who sets us free.

QUESTIONERS: What is the meaning of the unleavened bread?

STORYTELLER: This is the bread of freedom like that our ancestors took with them out of Egypt when they left too quickly for bread to rise. *Passes matzos. Each takes one.*

CHRISTIAN: This bread is like the unleavened bread that Jesus and his followers ate at their special supper long ago. Let us each eat a piece to show each other we are willing to carry the gift of Jesus’ life to the world.

ALL: We believe in the great gift Jesus gave us, the Eucharist. *All eat matzo.*

LEADER: Let us join hands. We have shared together a sign that we want to be ready for the mission Jesus has given us—to share him with the whole world, particularly those most in need of Christian help. Let us pray as he taught us. *Pray the Our Father.*

MEAL

After these prayers at a passover meal, everyone eats a full dinner. Do so, too, at this point if you plan to have food besides the symbolic foods.

FOOTWASHING

JOHN: This was the night Jesus washed all our feet like a house slave. He put a towel around him and washed our feet one by one. Peter objected, but Jesus insisted. I'll never forget what he said when he finished. "What I just did was to give you an example. As I have done, so you must do."

LEADER: Jesus showed us how to be Christians who serve others. We invite you, in the spirit of Jesus' example, to share a sense of togetherness and a sign of the service we will give the world once we leave our upper room. *Hand out warm, wet wash cloths and wash one another's hands in pairs.*

**Beginning with
the Easter
Triduum as its
source of light,
the new age of
the resurrection
fills the whole
liturgical
year with its
brilliance.**

Catechism of the Catholic Church #1168

MUSIC: "Wondrous Love," *Music for Lent and Easter*, Marty Haugen.

LEADER: Let us join hands. God, our Creator, we have shared a special sense of togetherness and friendship in Jesus. As we prepare to leave our upper room, we thank you for giving Jesus to us. And we thank you for the challenge to serve which he hands on to each of us. We ask that you be with us as we try to share ourselves in service for others.

ALL: Amen.

MUSIC: "Beautiful Day," U2; or "No Greater Love," Michael Joncas; *Gather*, #628.

ALL: Praise to you, Jesus Christ. You are the seed that falls into the ground to grow in our faith and love. Amen.

SUNDAY GOSPEL

Palm/Passion Sunday

Ours to live...a gospel rap



You must die to live
was what he said.
They tried to believe it
as he lay dead.
The disciples shook,
locked upstairs in a room,
fighting feelings of sadness,
fear, and gloom.

They tried to remember
those last gray days,
and wondered really
if loving pays,
if truly the only thing in life
that makes a difference
will cause them strife.
They thought for sure
the end was near
and huddled together,
blinded in fear.

They hadn't seen Jesus
as he climbed that hill,
determined to follow

his Father's will.
His eyes were clear
even through the thorns,
and his spirit shone,
though his body was worn.
The women consoled him
as best they could,
when his legs buckled
under the weight of the wood.

Even Pilate who sat in
greatness knew
that Jesus' message
was simple and true,
but because the crowd
went nuts that day,
he closed his heart
and turned away.
He gave them Barabbas,
a cheat and a thief,
sent Jesus to death
whose only crime
was belief.

Soldiers hung Jesus
out to dry.
All day long people passed by.
"Hey, Jesus! You fool!
Come down from your cross."
They laughed and pointed,
"Now prove you're boss!"
Jesus' mother heard them.
Jesus felt full of shame.
But all he could do
was take the blame.

As he hung on the cross
in a rush of despair,
he cried, "Father,
don't leave me.
Are you really there?"
The answer came clearly
for just as he died,
the veil of the temple
was ripped open wide.

When Jesus was buried,
his friends' hopes were, too.
His disciples were frightened,
didn't know what to do.
And then the women
flew through the door,
crying, "Jesus lives!
He's not dead anymore.
He told us he'd die,
but now he's back.
He'll give us his Spirit
to keep us on track."

So remember now
that Jesus lives,
in all of those hearts
who freely give.
Easter wasn't just then;
it's now—each day.
The message is ours
to live and say.

Mary Flood