

Days to Draw Closer to Christ

Greetings!

As the Sacred Paschal Triduum draws near, we will want to help our children understand the importance of these days in our lives.

In the liturgy, we bring the events of Jesus' life into the present. We are not only remembering something that happened a long time ago. We are part of these events, and they are part of us. This is especially true during the Triduum, the most sacred time in the liturgical year. During the Triduum we celebrate God doing something wholly new, something that completely altered the course of history.

We know there are stories in Scripture of the dead being brought back to life. Those people later died again, but Jesus, who is risen, does not die again. It is our hope that we will share in his risen life. We celebrate the Resurrection as universal and specific; it changes the course of all history and the course of each Christian's history. It makes sense, then, that we honor the events of Holy Week in a very particular way, and indeed we know that the Triduum is very similar to the celebrations that took place early in Christian history.

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On Holy Thursday, we celebrate Christ instituting the Eucharist, saying, "Do this in memory of me." We watch the priest wash feet, and we wonder at the meaning of this gesture in much the same way that the Twelve did so many years ago. We celebrate the priesthood and its beginnings at the Last Supper, the special call that the Twelve received, and the call that continues to come for men today.

On Good Friday, we remember a day that looked like it was the end. In our lives, we experience moments of tragedy, loss, and hopelessness. The reality of suffering can be so profound that we cannot see past it. Yet on Good Friday, we see that God transformed this reality. God transformed an instrument of torture into an instrument of hope. We meditate on Jesus' suffering because that is how we take suffering seriously—his, ours, that of the vulnerable in our midst. We cannot skip to the Resurrection if it is to mean anything at all.



On Holy Thursday, we observe the priest washing feet just as Jesus did at the Last Supper.

On Holy Saturday, we wait. Indeed, keeping vigil means keeping watch. As we wait, we hear the story of God's plan as it unfolds in history, knowing that hearing this story will help us to understand how God is working today. We proclaim the Resurrection with great joy, and we witness those who have chosen to unite their lives to Jesus', being baptized into his death and Resurrection.

Throughout these days, we are given the opportunity to do the same, to bring our lives into deeper connection with the One who showed us how we are to live—lives of self-sacrificing love.