



UNLEASH  
THE GOSPEL

# FAMILY GUIDE

## FOR HOLY WEEK

2020



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# Introduction

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Holy Week and Easter are the most significant celebrations of the year for Catholics. Unfortunately, during this time of crisis families are unable to participate in these celebrations in their parishes. However, as Archbishop Vigneron points out in *Guideposts for Christians in the Time of the Coronavirus Pandemic*,

**“In these days when our large public gatherings for prayer and catechesis are suspended, the domestic church is all the more clearly “ground zero” for our response. Now it falls squarely on families to make their homes places to hear the Word of God, and to offer him praise. . .”**

10 Guideposts for Christians in the Time of the Coronavirus Pandemic,  
Now Is The Hour Of The Domestic Church

Clearly the spiritual responsibility for children rests firmly in the hands of parents. Fathers, in particular, have a leadership role given by God in the spiritual life of the family. Parents should not be afraid of this responsibility! This is a remarkable time for parents to step confidently into this role as spiritual heads of their domestic Church home. God has already provided the grace for parents through the sacrament of Matrimony; now is the time to tap into that grace! *The Family Guide for Holy Week* is intended to help parents lead their families confidently through Holy Week with special activities, readings, and rituals. This Family Guide includes the activities listed in the weekly [Spiritual Closeness Resources](#) which provide parents a variety of activities to engage the family in the most holy week of our liturgical year.

As you begin, start with prayer, and plan together as a couple and as a family. Involving the children in decision-making invests them in the process and will inspire them to enter in more deeply. Read through the guide in advance to develop a plan for the week. Share your plan with the whole family and decide on roles and responsibilities. Don't worry if something doesn't go as planned, and feel free to adapt the activities to fit your family's needs. Remember that perfection is not the goal. The goal is to bring the treasures of the faith and heart of our liturgy into the home where they can be experienced in personal and unique ways. The key is to enjoy your time together!

Lastly, remember that parents can't force their children to pray. What parents can do is create an environment for prayer, offer the tools for prayer and model the behavior they want their children to exhibit. A parent's example of ignoring distracting behavior from their children and turning their mind and heart to God is more powerful than any other faith incentive a parent can give.

Our God is a loving Father and he can't wait to spend time in prayer with your family during this Holy Week. May this time be blessed for you and your family!

# Palm Sunday - April 5, 2020

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Palm Sunday begins Holy Week. On the Sunday before his death, Jesus began his trip to Jerusalem, knowing that soon he would lay down his life for our sins. Nearing the village of Bethphage, he sent two of his disciples ahead, telling them to look for a donkey and its unbroken colt. The disciples were instructed to untie the animals and bring them to him.

Then Jesus sat on the young donkey and slowly, humbly, made his triumphal entry into Jerusalem, fulfilling the ancient prophecy in Zechariah 9:9:

*"Exult greatly, O daughter Zion! Shout for joy, O daughter Jerusalem! Behold: your king is coming to you, a just savior is he, Humble, and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey."*

*The crowds welcomed him by waving palm branches in the air and shouting,  
"Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!  
Hosanna in the highest!"*

## Livestream Events

- **Palm Sunday Mass**

Celebrant: Archbishop Allen H. Vigneron

Cathedral of the Most Blessed Sacrament 12:00 p.m.

- Holy Week Mission Retreat Part I – with Fr. J. J. Mech,  
followed by Q&A and Reflection with Fr. Stephen Pullis  
Cathedral of the Most Blessed Sacrament, 7:00 p.m.

## Weekly Family Activities

### Preparation for Holy Week

Want to learn more about Holy Week? Check out [this brief video](#) to learn about the significance of Holy Week and what happened to Jesus in his final days on earth.

## Daily Reflection for Parents

See the last chapter for a reading from today's Liturgy of the Hours - From the discourse "On the Palm Branches" by Saint Andrew of Crete.

# Monday of Holy Week – April 6, 2020

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After his triumphal entry into Jerusalem, Jesus was tired and returned to Bethany, a village close to the capital where he used to stay when he visited Jerusalem. Today's Gospel recounts the Anointing at Bethany where Mary takes a liter of costly perfumed oil, anoints Jesus' feet and dries them with her hair. This anointing is fitting as Jesus will soon die. Jesus reminds his disciples that soon he will no longer be with them.

The Chrism Mass is traditionally celebrated on the morning of Holy Thursday and presided over by Archbishop Vigneron together with all the priests of the archdiocese. At this Mass, Archbishop consecrates the sacred oils used in the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, Anointing of the Sick and Holy Orders. Each parish receives its annual supply of these oils at the Chrism Mass. This year, the Chrism Mass will be celebrated privately (not open to the faithful or the public) and livestreamed from Blessed Sacrament Cathedral on the Monday of Holy Week.

## Livestream Event

- **Chrism Mass**

Celebrant, Archbishop Allen H. Vigneron  
Cathedral of the Most Blessed Sacrament, 7:00 p.m.

## Weekly Family Activities

### The Significance of Anointing

Learn more about [the sacred oils](#) and reflect on the significance of the anointing of your family members.

- When have you been anointed? (Ex: Baptism, Confirmation, Anointing of the Sick)
- What do you remember or what do others remember about these events?
- Share some pictures or items from your baptism or confirmation. Discuss how this anointing empowers you as a disciple of Jesus Christ and a member of his Church.

## Daily Reflection for Parents

See the last chapter for a reading from today's Liturgy of the Hours - An excerpt from a sermon by Saint Augustine: Let us too glory in the cross of the Lord.

## Tuesday of Holy Week – April 7, 2020

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In today's Gospel, Jesus faces a double betrayal. First, that of Judas. Jesus announces solemnly, "One of you is going to hand me over." For all their weaknesses, the apostles cannot imagine any one of them planning such a thing. Peter asks the Beloved Disciple, who is closest to Jesus, to find out who it is. "It is the one to whom I hand the piece of bread after dipping it in the dish," says Jesus. In that very moment Judas knows he has made his fateful decision as Jesus tells him, "What you are going to do, do quickly." The Passion of the Christ is set into motion. Peter, well-meaning but weak, swears that he will go all the way with Jesus, and lay his life down for him; this is the second betrayal. 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."

### Livestream Event

- Holy Week Mission Retreat Part II – with Fr. Mario Amore followed by Q&A and Reflection with Fr. Stephen Pullis  
Cathedral of the Most Blessed Sacrament, 7:00 p.m.

### Weekly Family Activities

#### Prepare for Holy Thursday: Make Homemade Bread

Make some homemade bread that will be shared by your family on Holy Thursday, either with yeast or without yeast. As you make the bread, discuss the following questions as a family:

- How do you think the disciples felt when Jesus changed the Passover prayer and told them to eat his body and drink his blood?
- If you've received your First Communion, what is it like to receive Jesus in the Eucharist? If you haven't yet received your First Communion, what do you think it will be like to receive Jesus in this way?
- How can we as a family better appreciate the gift of the Eucharist?

### Daily Reflection for Parents

See the last chapter for a reading from today's Liturgy of the Hours - From the book *On the Holy Spirit* by St. Basil the Great, Bishop: "By one death and resurrection the world was saved".

## Wednesday of Holy Week – April 8, 2020

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On Wednesday of Holy Week, we again recall the sad story of Judas. St. Matthew writes in his Gospel, “One of the twelve called Judas Iscariot went to the chief priests and said to them: ‘How much are you willing to give me for delivering him to you?’ They assigned to him thirty pieces of silver. And from then on he sought out an opportunity to betray him.”

### Livestream Event

- Holy Week Mission Part III – with Fr. John Riccardo  
followed by Q&A and Reflection with Fr. Stephen Pullis  
Cathedral of the Most Blessed Sacrament, 7:00 p.m.

### Weekly Family Activities

#### Prepare for Good Friday: Make a Cross

Today’s activity will help you to prepare for your family’s celebration of Good Friday. Cut a large cross out of cardboard or paper to display in the main room of your home or in your front window. Have each family member trace their hand on a piece of colored paper. Cut out each handprint and ask each family member to write their name on it. Save the handprints for the Good Friday activity later this week. These handprints symbolize each family members’ sins, and they will be attached to the cross on Good Friday to help us remember that Jesus died for our personal sins.

### Daily Reflection for Parents

See the last chapter for a reading from today’s Liturgy of the Hours - From a treatise on John by St. Augustine: “The perfection of love”



# Holy Thursday – April 9, 2020

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Holy Thursday marks the end of the season of Lent and begins the sacred Triduum, which continues through to the evening of Easter Sunday. Though chronologically three days, they are liturgically one day unfolding for us the unity of Christ's Paschal Mystery.

Today, we remember Jesus' last supper before his arrest and crucifixion. As part of their Jewish heritage, Jesus and his apostles gathered to celebrate Passover—an annual remembrance of how God saved the Israelites from slavery in Egypt centuries before. It was at this Passover meal that Jesus changed the prescribed rite by taking the bread and wine, saying, “This is my body; this is my blood. Do this in remembrance of me,” thus, giving himself to us in the Eucharist. Not just this Mass, but every Mass Catholics celebrate Jesus' Real Presence in the bread and wine made holy by the power of the Holy Spirit.

At the Mass of the Last Supper, we hear the story from the Gospel of St. John of Jesus washing his apostles' feet. Washing feet in the ancient world was a task usually reserved for the lowest slave of the house. Indeed, Jesus' own explicit words seem to present it as such, “If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you.” The foot washing scene in the Gospel of John is not only meant to be an example of humble service, but primarily a record of the institution of the priesthood.

After the Last Supper, Jesus is betrayed and arrested.

## Livestream Event

### ■ Mass of the Lord's Supper

Celebrant, Archbishop Allen H. Vigneron

Cathedral of the Most Blessed Sacrament, 7:00 p.m.

## Weekly Family Activities

### Foot-Washing at Home

Prepare a space for this activity. You'll need towels for drying the feet and for the floor, a chair, a pitcher or large glass of warm water and a basin or large bowl. Prepare the space with a towel on the floor and a chair on top of that. Have the other items nearby. When someone gets their feet washed:

- Have them sit in the chair.
- Place their feet over the large bowl.
- Pour the warm water over their feet.
- Dry their feet with a towel.
- Optional: Kiss the top of their feet when you are finished.
- Help them out of the chair so they don't step in the wet bowl.

Then, invite the next person to sit in the chair to have their feet washed. Adapt the ritual as needed for your family.

## Family Celebration of Holy Thursday

Call your family together and live out Holy Thursday in the form of prayers, rituals and sacramentals.

### Preparation

- Prepare a place in your home for the foot washing activity using the instructions above.
- Prepare background music.
- Prepare your dinner table and have your meal ready to go.
- Place the bread that was made on Tuesday on a plate and set it on your dinner table.

## I. Proclamation of the Gospel Reading for the Mass of the Lord's Supper

**LEADER:** Let us begin + In the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit

**ALL:** Amen.

### A Reading from the Gospel of John

Before the feast of Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to pass from this world to the Father.

He loved his own in the world and he loved them to the end.

The devil had already induced Judas, son of Simon the Iscariot, to hand him over.

So, during supper,  
fully aware that the Father had put everything into his power  
and that he had come from God and was returning to God,  
he rose from supper and took off his outer garments.  
He took a towel and tied it around his waist.  
Then he poured water into a basin  
and began to wash the disciples' feet  
and dry them with the towel around his waist.  
He came to Simon Peter, who said to him,  
"Master, are you going to wash my feet?"  
Jesus answered and said to him,  
"What I am doing, you do not understand now,  
but you will understand later."  
Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet."  
Jesus answered him,  
"Unless I wash you, you will have no inheritance with me."  
Simon Peter said to him,  
"Master, then not only my feet, but my hands and head as well."  
Jesus said to him,  
"Whoever has bathed has no need except to have his feet washed,  
for he is clean all over;  
so you are clean, but not all."  
For he knew who would betray him;  
for this reason, he said, "Not all of you are clean."

So when he had washed their feet  
and put his garments back on and reclined at table again,  
he said to them, "Do you realize what I have done for you?  
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."

The Gospel of the Lord

**ALL:** Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ

## II. Washing of the Feet

Begin background music.

**LEADER:** Let us enter this sacred time for our family. Just as Jesus demonstrated his servanthood to the apostles as he humbled himself to wash their feet, let this activity help us to better serve one another in love. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Invite each family member to have their feet washed. As the leaders of the family, parents may wash the feet of their children, starting with the youngest family member first. It can be powerful for children to see their parents wash each other's feet.

After the foot washing is concluded, invite everyone to wash their hands and move to the dinner table.

## III. Bread Breaking and Dinner

**LEADER:** + In the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit

**ALL:** Amen.

**LEADER:** Father you have called us together as a family to honor your Son and keep him central in our lives. We thank you for the gift of our family and we thank you for the gift of the Eucharist that your Son established on the night before he died. We ask you to bless the food we are about to eat and this bread that we are about to share. Although we cannot receive you sacramentally today, we ask that you come to us spiritually in our hearts.

**ALL:** Amen.

Each person breaks off a piece of bread and says what they are thankful for, passing the loaf of bread to the next person.

Proceed with the meal. During dinner, tell the story of what happened to Jesus after the Last Supper.

After clearing dinner plates and silverware, clear any religious items from your main living area (or cover with a cloth any religious items hanging on your wall) to symbolize the stripping of the altar done after the Mass of the Lord's Supper. Explain to your family that stripping of the altar (removing all ornaments, linens, candles, plants, flowers, etc.) is an ancient custom of the Church. It symbolizes the way Christ's life was stripped from him. This bare space reminds us of the bareness of life without the hope of Christ that we have through His resurrection. Keep this space bare until Saturday.

Invite family members to spend some quiet time in prayer after dinner, thinking about Jesus and what he went through on the night before he died.

## Daily Reflection for Parents

See the last chapter for a reading from today's Liturgy of the Hours - From an Easter homily by St. Melito of Sardis, Bishop: "The Lamb that was slain has delivered us from death and given us life."



# Good Friday – April 10, 2020

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On Good Friday, we commemorate our Lord's death on the cross. This is the most solemn day of the liturgical year as we recall Jesus' passion and death for our sins. The events of Good Friday are commemorated by praying the Stations of the Cross and celebrating the Liturgy of the Lord's Passion during which the cross is venerated by the faithful. Church bells are silent. Altars are left bare.

Because there is no public celebration of the Liturgy of the Lord's Passion this year, families are invited to do a Solemn Remembrance of the Lord's Passion at home as outlined below.

Good Friday is a day of fasting and abstaining from meat. Fasting means that a person between the ages of 18 and 59 is allowed one full meal as well as two small meals that do not equal a full meal. Abstaining means that anyone over the age of 14 does not eat meat on this day.

## Livestream Events

- Liturgy of the Lord's Passion – Celebrant, Archbishop Allen H. Vigneron  
Cathedral of the Most Blessed Sacrament, 1:00 p.m.
- Holy Week Mission Retreat Part IV – Stations of the Cross with Msgr. Dan Trapp  
followed by Q&A and Reflection with Fr. Stephen Pullis  
Cathedral of the Most Blessed Sacrament, 7:00 p.m.

## Weekly Family Activities

### Celebrate Good Friday and Prepare for Easter

After the Solemn Remembrance of the Lord's Passion, families may consider preparing for Easter with the following activities:

### Make a Paschal Candle

Each year at the Easter Vigil, the parish prepares a new Paschal candle. It reminds us of our eternal life in Jesus Christ. The Paschal Candle is lit during Mass on Easter through the feast of the Ascension of our Lord and during baptisms. The Paschal candle in a parish has four decorative features: the cross, the Alpha (A) and Omega (Ω) symbols, the numbers of the current calendar year and the five grains of incense, which symbolize the 5 wounds of Jesus.

Families are invited to [make a Paschal candle](#) to be used during their family's celebration of Easter. You can light it when you participate in a streaming Mass or when you make a Spiritual Communion during the Easter season.

## Color Easter Eggs

We see colored eggs everywhere this time of year! Why eggs? Easter eggs are symbols of the Risen Christ. As a chick breaks the shell when it is hatched and begins life, so our Lord comes forth living from the tomb. Jesus has conquered death! Invite your family to decorate some eggs to celebrate Christ's resurrection on Easter Sunday. Christians around the world color Easter eggs in different ways:

- Eggs can be hard boiled and dyed using dye kits.
- Eggs can also be hard boiled in onion skins and dried, and designs can be scratched with a needle or X-acto knife.

## Solemn Remembrance of Good Friday

### Preparation

- Invite all family members to “unplug” from technology from noon to 3:00 p.m., which is the time when Jesus hung on the cross. Turn off and put away all cell phones, tablets, game consoles, televisions, radios and computers, with the exception of any technology needed to livestream the Liturgy of the Lord's Passion.
- For younger children, prepare some blank sheets of paper or download a coloring page that shows Jesus on the cross. Prepare some crayons as well.
- Set an empty chair in the middle of the room to symbolize Jesus' absence. Place the Cross that was made on Wednesday on the seat. Have the cutout handprints and tape nearby.
- Prepare copies of the Act of Spiritual Communion prayer for each member of the family.

## I. Liturgy of the Word

### FIRST READING Isaiah 52:13 - 53:12

A Reading from the Prophet Isaiah

See, my servant shall prosper,  
he shall be raised high and greatly exalted.  
Even as many were amazed at him  
so marred was his look beyond human semblance  
and his appearance beyond that of the sons of man  
so shall he startle many nations,  
because of him kings shall stand speechless;

for those who have not been told shall see,  
those who have not heard shall ponder it.

Who would believe what we have heard?  
To whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?  
He grew up like a sapling before him,  
like a shoot from the parched earth;  
there was in him no stately bearing to make us look at him,  
nor appearance that would attract us to him.  
He was spurned and avoided by people,  
a man of suffering, accustomed to infirmity,  
one of those from whom people hide their faces,  
spurned, and we held him in no esteem.

Yet it was our infirmities that he bore,  
our sufferings that he endured,  
while we thought of him as stricken,  
as one smitten by God and afflicted.  
But he was pierced for our offenses,  
crushed for our sins;  
upon him was the chastisement that makes us whole,  
by his stripes we were healed.  
We had all gone astray like sheep,  
each following his own way;  
but the LORD laid upon him  
the guilt of us all.

Though he was harshly treated, he submitted  
and opened not his mouth;  
like a lamb led to the slaughter  
or a sheep before the shearers,  
he was silent and opened not his mouth.  
Oppressed and condemned, he was taken away,  
and who would have thought any more of his destiny?  
When he was cut off from the land of the living,  
and smitten for the sin of his people,  
a grave was assigned him among the wicked  
and a burial place with evildoers,  
though he had done no wrong

nor spoken any falsehood.  
But the LORD was pleased  
to crush him in infirmity.

If he gives his life as an offering for sin,  
he shall see his descendants in a long life,  
and the will of the LORD shall be accomplished through him.

Because of his affliction  
he shall see the light in fullness of days;  
through his suffering, my servant shall justify many,  
and their guilt he shall bear.  
Therefore I will give him his portion among the great,  
and he shall divide the spoils with the mighty,  
because he surrendered himself to death  
and was counted among the wicked;  
and he shall take away the sins of many,  
and win pardon for their offenses.

**READER:** The word of the Lord

**ALL:** Thanks be to God

## **RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Psalm 31**

**ALL:** Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.

**LEADER:** In you, O Lord, I take refuge; let me never be put to shame. In your justice rescue me.  
Into your hands I commend my spirit; you will redeem me, O Lord, O faithful God.

**ALL:** Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.

**LEADER:** For all my foes I am an object of reproach, a laughingstock to my neighbors, and a dread  
to my friends; they who see me abroad flee from me. I am forgotten like the unremembered dead; I  
am like a dish that is broken.

**ALL:** Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.

**LEADER:** But my trust is in you, O Lord; I say, "You are my God. In your hands is my destiny;  
rescue me from the clutches of my enemies and my persecutors."

**ALL:** Father, into your hand I commend my spirit.

**LEADER:** Let your face shine upon your servant; save me in your kindness. Take courage and be stouthearted, all you who hope in the Lord.

**ALL:** Father, into your hand I commend my spirit.

## GOSPEL

### The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John

*Note: This Gospel reading is very long. Before reading make sure, if young children are in your midst, they have a coloring page or a blank page and crayons, to use as the Gospel is being read. Invite children to draw or color about what they hear in the story. Consider choosing family members to take turns reading.*

Jesus went out with his disciples across the Kidron valley  
to where there was a garden,  
into which he and his disciples entered.  
Judas his betrayer also knew the place,  
because Jesus had often met there with his disciples.  
So Judas got a band of soldiers and guards  
from the chief priests and the Pharisees  
and went there with lanterns, torches, and weapons.  
Jesus, knowing everything that was going to happen to him,  
went out and said to them, "Whom are you looking for?"  
They answered him, "Jesus the Nazorean."  
He said to them, "I AM."  
Judas his betrayer was also with them.  
When he said to them, "I AM, "  
they turned away and fell to the ground.  
So he again asked them,  
"Whom are you looking for?"  
They said, "Jesus the Nazorean."  
Jesus answered,  
"I told you that I AM.  
So if you are looking for me, let these men go."  
This was to fulfill what he had said,  
"I have not lost any of those you gave me."  
Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it,  
struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his right ear.  
The slave's name was Malchus.



Jesus said to Peter,  
“Put your sword into its scabbard.  
Shall I not drink the cup that the Father gave me?”

So the band of soldiers, the tribune, and the Jewish guards seized Jesus,  
bound him, and brought him to Annas first.  
He was the father-in-law of Caiaphas,  
who was high priest that year.  
It was Caiaphas who had counseled the Jews  
that it was better that one man should die rather than the people.

Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus.  
Now the other disciple was known to the high priest,  
and he entered the courtyard of the high priest with Jesus.  
But Peter stood at the gate outside.  
So the other disciple, the acquaintance of the high priest,

went out and spoke to the gatekeeper and brought Peter in.  
Then the maid who was the gatekeeper said to Peter,  
“You are not one of this man’s disciples, are you?”  
He said, “I am not.”  
Now the slaves and the guards were standing around a charcoal fire  
that they had made, because it was cold,  
and were warming themselves.  
Peter was also standing there keeping warm.

The high priest questioned Jesus  
about his disciples and about his doctrine.  
Jesus answered him,  
“I have spoken publicly to the world.  
I have always taught in a synagogue  
or in the temple area where all the Jews gather,  
and in secret I have said nothing. Why ask me?  
Ask those who heard me what I said to them.  
They know what I said.”  
When he had said this,  
one of the temple guards standing there struck Jesus and said,  
“Is this the way you answer the high priest?”  
Jesus answered him,

“If I have spoken wrongly, testify to the wrong;  
but if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?”  
Then Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

Now Simon Peter was standing there keeping warm.  
And they said to him,  
“You are not one of his disciples, are you?”  
He denied it and said,  
“I am not.”  
One of the slaves of the high priest,  
a relative of the one whose ear Peter had cut off, said,  
“Didn’t I see you in the garden with him?”  
Again Peter denied it.  
And immediately the cock crowed.

Then they brought Jesus from Caiaphas to the praetorium.  
It was morning.  
And they themselves did not enter the praetorium,  
in order not to be defiled so that they could eat the Passover.  
So Pilate came out to them and said,  
“What charge do you bring against this man?”  
They answered and said to him,  
“If he were not a criminal,  
we would not have handed him over to you.”  
At this, Pilate said to them,  
“Take him yourselves, and judge him according to your law.”  
The Jews answered him,  
“We do not have the right to execute anyone, “

in order that the word of Jesus might be fulfilled  
that he said indicating the kind of death he would die.  
So Pilate went back into the praetorium  
and summoned Jesus and said to him,  
“Are you the King of the Jews?”  
Jesus answered,  
“Do you say this on your own  
or have others told you about me?”  
Pilate answered,  
“I am not a Jew, am I?

Your own nation and the chief priests handed you over to me.  
What have you done?"

Jesus answered,

"My kingdom does not belong to this world.

If my kingdom did belong to this world,  
my attendants would be fighting  
to keep me from being handed over to the Jews.  
But as it is, my kingdom is not here."

So Pilate said to him,

"Then you are a king?"

Jesus answered,

"You say I am a king.

For this I was born and for this I came into the world,  
to testify to the truth.

Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice."

Pilate said to him, "What is truth?"

When he had said this,

he again went out to the Jews and said to them,

"I find no guilt in him.

But you have a custom that I release one prisoner to you at Passover.

Do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?"

They cried out again,

"Not this one but Barabbas!"

Now Barabbas was a revolutionary.

Then Pilate took Jesus and had him scourged.

And the soldiers wove a crown out of thorns and placed it on his head,

and clothed him in a purple cloak,

and they came to him and said,

"Hail, King of the Jews!"

And they struck him repeatedly.

Once more Pilate went out and said to them,

"Look, I am bringing him out to you,  
so that you may know that I find no guilt in him."

So Jesus came out,

wearing the crown of thorns and the purple cloak.

And he said to them, "Behold, the man!"

When the chief priests and the guards saw him they cried out,

"Crucify him, crucify him!"

Pilate said to them,  
“Take him yourselves and crucify him.  
I find no guilt in him.”  
The Jews answered,  
“We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die,  
because he made himself the Son of God.”  
Now when Pilate heard this statement,  
he became even more afraid,  
and went back into the praetorium and said to Jesus,  
“Where are you from?”  
Jesus did not answer him.  
So Pilate said to him,  
“Do you not speak to me?  
Do you not know that I have power to release you  
and I have power to crucify you?”  
Jesus answered him,  
“You would have no power over me  
if it had not been given to you from above.  
For this reason the one who handed me over to you  
has the greater sin.”  
Consequently, Pilate tried to release him; but the Jews cried out,  
“If you release him, you are not a Friend of Caesar.  
Everyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar.”

When Pilate heard these words he brought Jesus out  
and seated him on the judge’s bench  
in the place called Stone Pavement, in Hebrew, Gabbatha.  
It was preparation day for Passover, and it was about noon.  
And he said to the Jews,  
“Behold, your king!”  
They cried out,  
“Take him away, take him away! Crucify him!”  
Pilate said to them,  
“Shall I crucify your king?”  
The chief priests answered,  
“We have no king but Caesar.”  
Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.

So they took Jesus, and, carrying the cross himself,  
he went out to what is called the Place of the Skull,  
in Hebrew, Golgotha.  
There they crucified him, and with him two others,  
one on either side, with Jesus in the middle.  
Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross.  
It read,

“Jesus the Nazorean, the King of the Jews.”

Now many of the Jews read this inscription,  
because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city;  
and it was written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek.  
So the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate,

“Do not write ‘The King of the Jews,’  
but that he said, ‘I am the King of the Jews’.”

Pilate answered,

“What I have written, I have written.”

When the soldiers had crucified Jesus,  
they took his clothes and divided them into four shares,  
a share for each soldier.

They also took his tunic, but the tunic was seamless,  
woven in one piece from the top down.

So they said to one another,

“Let’s not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it will be, “  
in order that the passage of Scripture might be fulfilled that says:  
They divided my garments among them,  
and for my vesture they cast lots.

This is what the soldiers did.

Standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother  
and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas,  
and Mary of Magdala.

When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple there whom he loved  
he said to his mother, “Woman, behold, your son.”

Then he said to the disciple,

“Behold, your mother.”

And from that hour the disciple took her into his home.



After this, aware that everything was now finished,  
in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled,  
Jesus said, "I thirst."  
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.

Now since it was preparation day,  
in order that the bodies might not remain on the cross on the sabbath,  
for the sabbath day of that week was a solemn one,  
the Jews asked Pilate that their legs be broken  
and that they be taken down.  
So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first  
and then of the other one who was crucified with Jesus.  
But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead,  
they did not break his legs,  
but one soldier thrust his lance into his side,  
and immediately blood and water flowed out.  
An eyewitness has testified, and his testimony is true;  
he knows that he is speaking the truth,  
so that you also may come to believe.  
For this happened so that the Scripture passage might be fulfilled:  
Not a bone of it will be broken.  
And again another passage says:  
They will look upon him whom they have pierced.

After this, Joseph of Arimathea,  
secretly a disciple of Jesus for fear of the Jews,  
asked Pilate if he could remove the body of Jesus.  
And Pilate permitted it.  
So he came and took his body.  
Nicodemus, the one who had first come to him at night,  
also came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes  
weighing about one hundred pounds.  
They took the body of Jesus  
and bound it with burial cloths along with the spices,

according to the Jewish burial custom.  
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.

**LEADER:** The Gospel of the Lord.

**ALL:** Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

## II. Breaking Open the Word

Facilitate a discussion with your family about the Gospel reading:  
What stood out to you in the Gospel reading?

- Children, what did you draw and why?
- Why were so many people against Jesus?
- How does it make you feel to know that Jesus died for your sins?

## III. Intercessions

**LEADER:** Let us pray, dearly beloved, for the holy Church of God and all those suffering during this pandemic, that God will guard the whole world and lead us to a place of healing, unity and peace.

**ALL:** [Respond with a moment of silence.]

**LEADER:** Let us pray for our Holy Father Pope Francis, that our God and Lord, who chose him to lead our Church, will keep him safe so he can continue to guide us and pray for us.

**ALL:** [Respond with a moment of silence.]

**LEADER:** Let us pray for our bishops, priests, deacons and those in religious orders, along with all the lay faithful, that we, too, remain safe so we can continue to build the Kingdom of God.

**ALL:** [Respond with a moment of silence.]

**LEADER:** Let us pray for all those who desire to become a member of the Catholic Church, that their hearts will be open to what God desires to teach them, that they will seek forgiveness for their sins and the waters of baptism wash over them so their love for Jesus Christ flows abundantly.

**ALL:** [Respond with a moment of silence.]

**LEADER:** Let us pray for the unity of all Christians so that together, we are united in one Church.

**ALL:** [Respond with a moment of silence.]

**LEADER:** Let us pray for all Jewish people to whom the Lord our God first spoke.

**ALL:** [Respond with a moment of silence.]

**LEADER:** Let us pray for those who don't believe in Jesus Christ, for those who don't believe in God, for the Holy Spirit to act in their lives to make known the truth of Jesus.

**ALL:** [Respond with a moment of silence.]

**LEADER:** Let us pray for all those in public office, all those in the health profession, all in the military and all who seek to serve the wellness of mankind.

**ALL:** [Respond with a moment of silence.]

**LEADER:** Let us pray for all those who are suffering, for those who will die this day.

**ALL:** [Respond with a moment of silence.]

#### **IV. Adoration of the Holy Cross**

Move to the place with the empty chair and the cross. Ask each person to tape their handprint on the cross and venerate the cross as appropriate. Invite family members to think about the fact that Jesus died for their sins as they tape the handprint to the cross. To venerate the cross, family members may kiss the cross or bow or genuflect in front of it.

#### **V. Act of Spiritual Communion**

**Pray the Our Father as a Family:**

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name;  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil. Amen.

### **Recite the Act of Spiritual Communion together as a family:**

My Jesus,  
I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.  
I love You above all things,  
and I desire to receive You into my soul.  
Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally,  
come at least spiritually into my heart.  
I embrace You as if You were already there  
and unite myself wholly to You.  
Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

### **VI. Closing Prayer**

**LEADER:** Almighty ever-living God, who has restored us to life by the blessed death and resurrection of your Son, Jesus, preserve in us the work of your mercy, that, partaking of this mystery, we may have a life always devoted to you. Through Christ our Lord.

**ALL:** Amen.

### **Daily Reflection for Parents**

See the last chapter for a reading from today's Liturgy of the Hours - From the Catecheses by Saint John Chrysostom, bishop: The power of Christ's blood

# Holy Saturday – April 11, 2020

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On Holy Saturday, the people of God wait in stillness until the Resurrection of the Lord. On Saturday morning, parishes traditionally bless Easter baskets filled with food for the Easter celebration and decorate the church in preparation for the Easter liturgies.

Families are invited to celebrate Holy Saturday in their homes by following the Easter basket blessing ritual and by decorating their homes for Easter.

## Livestream Events

### ■ Easter Vigil Mass

Celebrant, Archbishop Allen H. Vigneron

Cathedral of the Most Blessed Sacrament, 9:00 p.m.

## Weekly Family Activities

### Decorate Your Home for Easter

Just as parishes prepare the church with beautiful decorations for the celebration of Easter, families are invited to do the same in their home. You can decorate in spring colors, but also consider the liturgical colors of gold and white. Consider [creative options](#) for [crafting some decorations](#) among your family.

Any religious items that were cleared or covered on Holy Thursday evening should now be placed back where they belong.

### Blessing of Easter Baskets

Prepare an Easter basket that contains special foods you will serve at your Easter table. Invite the head of the household to pray the following prayer over the basket:

Christ, the Living Bread,  
you came down from heaven and  
gave the gift of the Eucharist to the world.  
Bless our bread that recalls both the manna  
with which the Father fed the Israelites  
as they wandered in the desert,  
and the bread with which you miraculously fed  
those who followed you in the wilderness.



Lamb of God,  
you who conquered death  
and redeemed us from our sins,  
bless the meats, sausages and all the foods  
that we eat in memory of the Paschal Lamb,  
who shared the Passover meal  
with His Apostles at the last Supper.

Bless the salt and,  
as salt keeps food from spoiling,  
protect us from the corruption of sin.

Christ, our life and our hope,  
bless the eggs,  
a symbol of new life,  
that we will share with  
each other and thus, share with them  
the joy of your presence among us.  
Invite us to your eternal feast,  
the heavenly banquet,  
where You live and reign forever and ever.

**ALL:** Amen

### **Daily Reflection for Parents**

See the last chapter for a reading from today's Liturgy of the Hours – From An Ancient Homily for Holy Saturday.

# Easter Sunday – April 11, 2020

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Easter Sunday is the day we celebrate the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus and the gift of eternal life that he gained for us. This is the most joyous feast in the liturgical year and the whole foundation of the Christian faith. Our redeemer lives and we rejoice in his victory over death and the new life we have through our baptism! Today is a day of great celebration.

Families are invited to follow the guidelines to celebrate Easter, renew their baptismal vows, and engage in the activities suggested in 52 Sundays.

## Livestream Events

### ■ Easter Sunday Mass

Celebrant, Archbishop Allen H. Vigneron  
Cathedral of the Most Blessed Sacrament, 11:00 a.m.

## Weekly Family Activities

### Family Fun Activity from 52 Sundays

Share the Good News with others by decorating your yard with rocks that have an inspirational message on them.

## Celebration of Easter and Renewal of Baptismal Vows

After viewing a livestream Mass, gather your family together for a special meal to celebrate Christ's resurrection from the dead. Include the items from your blessed Easter basket. Light the Paschal Candle that was made on Good Friday, reminding family members that Jesus is the light of the world and that today, he sits at the right hand of the Father. Jesus knows us, loves us and calls us to spread the Good News of his resurrection to others.

Before saying grace, take the opportunity to renew your baptismal vows as a family. If you have holy water in the house, use it to sprinkle family members after the renewal of vows.

**LEADER:** Do you reject Satan?

**ALL:** I do.

**LEADER:** And all his works?

**ALL:** I do.

**LEADER:** And all his empty promises?

**ALL:** I do.

**LEADER:** Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth?

**ALL:** I do.

**LEADER:** Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary was crucified, died, and was buried, rose from the dead, and is now seated at the right hand of the Father?

**ALL:** I do.

**LEADER:** Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?

**ALL:** I do.

**LEADER:** God, the all-powerful Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has given us a new birth by water and the Holy Spirit, and forgiven all our sins. May he also keep us faithful to our Lord Jesus Christ for ever and ever.

**ALL:** Amen.

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**HAPPY EASTER!**

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# Daily Reflections for Parents

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## Office of Readings: Second Reading – Palm Sunday

From the discourse "On the Palm Branches" by St. Andrew of Crete  
"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord; blessed is the King of Israel."

Let us go together to meet Christ on the Mount of Olives. Today he returns from Bethany and proceeds of his own free will towards his holy and blessed passion, to consummate the mystery of our salvation. He who came down from heaven to raise us from the depths of sin, to raise us with himself, we are told in Scripture, above every sovereignty, authority and power and every other name that can be named, now comes of his own free will to make his journey to Jerusalem. He comes without pomp or ostentation. As the psalmist says: He will not dispute or raise his voice to make it heard in the streets. He will be meek and humble, and he will make his entry in simplicity.

Let us run to accompany him as he hastens towards his passion, and imitate those who met him then, not by covering his path with garments, olive branches or palms, but by doing all we can to prostrate ourselves before him by being humble and by trying to live as he would wish. Then we shall be able to receive the Word at his coming, and God, whom no limits can contain, will be within us.

In his humility Christ entered the dark regions of our fallen world and he is glad that he became so humble for our sake, glad that he came and lived among us and shared in our nature in order to raise us up again to himself. And even though we are told that he has now ascended above the highest heavens – the proof, surely, of his power and godhead – his love for man will never rest until he has raised our earthbound nature from glory to glory, and made it one with his own in heaven.

So let us spread before his feet, not garments or soulless olive branches, which delight the eye for a few hours and then wither, but ourselves, clothed in his grace, or rather, clothed completely in him. We who have been baptized into Christ must ourselves be the garments that we spread before him. Now that the crimson stains of our sins have been washed away in the saving waters of baptism and we have become white as pure wool, let us present the conqueror of death, not with mere branches of palms but with the real rewards of his victory. Let our souls take the place of the welcoming branches as we join today in the children's holy song: Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Blessed is the king of Israel.

## Office of Readings: An Excerpt from the Second Reading – Monday of Holy Week

From a sermon by St. Augustine  
“Let us too glory in the cross of the Lord”

The passion of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is the hope of glory and a lesson in patience. . .

. . . In other words, he performed the most wonderful exchange with us. Through us, he died; through him, we shall live.

The death of the Lord our God should not be a cause of shame for us; rather, it should be our greatest hope, our greatest glory. In taking upon himself the death that he found in us, he has most faithfully promised to give us life in him, such as we cannot have of ourselves.

He loved us so much that, sinless himself, he suffered for us sinners the punishment we deserved for our sins. How then can he fail to give us the reward we deserve for our righteousness, for he is the source of righteousness? How can he, whose promises are true, fail to reward the saints when he bore the punishment of sinners, though without sin himself?

Brethren, let us then fearlessly acknowledge, and even openly proclaim, that Christ was crucified for us; let us confess it, not in fear but in joy, not in shame but in glory.

The apostle Paul saw Christ and extolled his claim to glory. He had many great and inspired things to say about Christ, but he did not say that he boasted in Christ’s wonderful works: in creating the world, since he was God with the Father, or in ruling the world, though he was also a man like us. Rather, he said: Let me not boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

## Office of Readings: Second Reading - Tuesday of Holy Week

From the book *On the Holy Spirit* by St. Basil the Great, Bishop  
“By one death and resurrection the world was saved”

When mankind was estranged from him by disobedience, God our Savior made a plan for raising us from our fall and restoring us to friendship with himself. According to this plan Christ came in the flesh, he showed us the gospel way of life, he suffered, died on the cross, was buried and rose from the dead. He did this so that we could be saved by imitation of him and recover our original status as sons of God by adoption.

To attain holiness, then, we must not only pattern our lives on Christ’s by being gentle, humble and patient, we must also imitate him in his death. Taking Christ for his model, Paul said that he wanted to become like him in his death in the hope that he too would be raised from death to life.

We imitate Christ's death by being buried with him in baptism. If we ask what this kind of burial means and what benefit we may hope to derive from it, it means first of all making a complete break with our former way of life, and our Lord himself said that this cannot be done unless a man is born again. In other words, we have to begin a new life, and we cannot do so until our previous life has been brought to an end. When runners reach the turning point on a racecourse, they have to pause briefly before they can go back in the opposite direction. So also, when we wish to reverse the direction of our lives there must be a pause, or a death, to mark the end of one life and the beginning of another.

Our descent into hell takes place when we imitate the burial of Christ by our baptism. The bodies of the baptized are in a sense buried in the water as a symbol of their renunciation of the sins of their unregenerate nature. As the apostle says: The circumcision you have undergone is not an operation performed by human hands, but the complete stripping away of your unregenerate nature. This is the circumcision that Christ gave us, and it is accomplished by our burial with him in baptism. Baptism cleanses the soul from the pollution of worldly thoughts and inclinations: You will wash me, says the psalmist, and I shall be whiter than snow. We receive this saving baptism only once because there was only one death and one resurrection for the salvation of the world, and baptism is its symbol.

## Office of Readings: Second Reading – Wednesday of Holy Week

From a treatise on John by St. Augustine  
"The perfection of love"

Dear brethren, the Lord has marked out for us the fullness of love that we ought to have for each other. He tells us: No one has greater love than the man who lays down his life for his friends. In these words, the Lord tells us what the perfect love we should have for one another involves. John, the evangelist who recorded them, draws the conclusion in one of his letters: As Christ laid down his life for us, so we too ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. We should indeed love one another as he loved us, he who laid down his life for us.

This is surely what we read in the Proverbs of Solomon: If you sit down to eat at the table of a ruler, observe carefully what is set before you; then stretch out your hand, knowing that you must provide the same kind of meal yourself. What is this ruler's table if not the one at which we receive the body and blood of him who laid down his life for us? What does it mean to sit at this table if not to approach it with humility? What does it mean to observe carefully what is set before you if not to meditate devoutly on so great a gift? What does it mean to stretch out one's hand, knowing that one must provide the same kind of meal oneself, if not what I have just said: as Christ laid down his life for us, so we in our turn ought to lay down our lives for our brothers? This is what the apostle Paul said: Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we might follow in his footsteps.

This is what is meant by providing “the same kind of meal.” This is what the blessed martyrs did with such burning love. If we are to give true meaning to our celebration of their memorials, to our approaching the Lord’s table in the very banquet at which they were fed, we must, like them, provide “the same kind of meal.”

At this table of the Lord we do not commemorate the martyrs in the same way as we commemorate others who rest in peace. We do not pray for the martyrs as we pray for those others, rather, they pray for us, that we may follow in his footsteps. They practiced the perfect love of which the Lord said there could be none greater. They provided “the same kind of meal” as they had themselves received at the Lord’s table.

This must not be understood as saying that we can be the Lord’s equals by bearing witness to him to the extent of shedding our blood. He had the power of laying down his life; we by contrast cannot choose the length of our lives, and we die even if it is against our will. He, by dying, destroyed death in himself; we are freed from death only in his death. His body did not see corruption; our body will see corruption and only then be clothed through him in incorruption at the end of the world. He needed no help from us in saving us; without him we can do nothing. He gave himself to us as the vine to the branches; apart from him we cannot have life.

Finally, even if brothers die for brothers, yet no martyr by shedding his blood brings forgiveness for the sins of his brothers, as Christ brought forgiveness to us. In this he gave us, not an example to imitate but a reason for rejoicing. Inasmuch, then, as they shed their blood for their brothers, the martyrs provided “the same kind of meal” as they had received at the Lord’s table. Let us then love one another as Christ also loved us and gave himself up for us.

## **Office of Readings: Second Reading – Holy Thursday**

**From an Easter homily by St. Melito of Sardis, Bishop**

**“The Lamb that was slain has delivered us from death and given us life”**

There was much proclaimed by the prophets about the mystery of the Passover: that mystery is Christ, and to him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

For the sake of suffering humanity, he came down from heaven to earth, clothed himself in that humanity in the Virgin’s womb and was born a man. Having then a body capable of suffering, he took the pain of fallen man upon himself; he triumphed over the diseases of soul and body that were its cause, and by his Spirit, which was incapable of dying, he dealt man’s destroyer, death, a fatal blow.

He was led forth like a lamb; he was slaughtered like a sheep. He ransomed us from our servitude to the world, as he had ransomed Israel from the hand of Egypt; he freed us from our slavery to the devil, as he had freed Israel from the hand of Pharaoh. He sealed our souls with his own Spirit, and the members of our body with his own blood.

He is the One who covered death with shame and cast the devil into mourning, as Moses cast Pharaoh into mourning. He is the One who smote sin and robbed iniquity of offspring, as Moses robbed the Egyptians of their offspring. He is the One who brought us out of slavery into freedom, out of darkness into light, out of death into life, out of tyranny into an eternal kingdom; who made us a new priesthood, a people chosen to be his own forever. He is the Passover that is our salvation.

It is he who endured every kind of suffering in all those who foreshadowed him. In Abel he was slain, in Isaac bound, in Jacob exiled, in Joseph sold, in Moses exposed to die. He was sacrificed in the Passover lamb, persecuted in David, dishonored in the prophets.

It is he who was made man of the Virgin, he who was hung on the tree; it is he who was buried in the earth, raised from the dead, and taken up to the heights of heaven. He is the mute lamb, the slain lamb, the lamb born of Mary, the fair ewe. He was seized from the flock, dragged off to be slaughtered, sacrificed in the evening and buried at night. On the tree no bone of his was broken; in the earth his body knew no decay. He is the One who rose from the dead, and who raised man from the depths of the tomb.

### **Office of Readings: Second Reading – Good Friday**

**From the Catecheses by St. John Chrysostom, Bishop**  
**“The power of Christ's blood”**

If we wish to understand the power of Christ's blood, we should go back to the ancient account of its prefiguration in Egypt. “Sacrifice a lamb without blemish,” commanded Moses, “and sprinkle its blood on your doors.” If we were to ask him what he meant, and how the blood of an irrational beast could possibly save men endowed with reason, his answer would be that the saving power lies not in the blood itself, but in the fact that it is a sign of the Lord's blood. In those days, when the destroying angel saw the blood on the doors he did not dare to enter, so how much less will the devil approach now when he sees, not that figurative blood on the doors, but the true blood on the lips of believers, the doors of the temple of Christ.

If you desire further proof of the power of this blood, remember where it came from, how it ran down from the cross, flowing from the Master's side. The Gospel records that when Christ was dead, but still hung on the cross, a soldier came and pierced his side with a lance and immediately there poured out water and blood. Now the water was a symbol of baptism and the blood, of the holy Eucharist. The soldier pierced the Lord's side, he breached the wall of the sacred temple, and I have found the treasure and made it my own. So also with the lamb: the Jews sacrificed the victim and I have been saved by it.

“There flowed from his side water and blood.” Beloved, do not pass over this mystery without thought; it has yet another hidden meaning, which I will explain to you. I said that water and blood symbolized baptism and the holy Eucharist. From these two sacraments the Church is born: from baptism, “the cleansing water that gives rebirth and renewal through the Holy Spirit,” and



from the holy Eucharist. Since the symbols of baptism and the Eucharist flowed from his side, it was from his side that Christ fashioned the Church, as he had fashioned Eve from the side of Adam. Moses gives a hint of this when he tells the story of the first man and makes him exclaim: “Bone from my bones and flesh from my flesh!” As God then took a rib from Adam’s side to fashion a woman, so Christ has given us blood and water from his side to fashion the Church. God took the rib when Adam was in a deep sleep, and in the same way Christ gave us the blood and the water after his own death.

Do you understand, then, how Christ has united his bride to himself and what food he gives us all to eat? By one and the same food we are both brought into being and nourished. As a woman nourishes her child with her own blood and milk, so does Christ unceasingly nourish with his own blood those to whom he himself has given life.

## **Office of Readings: Second Reading – Holy Saturday**

### **From An Ancient Homily for Holy Saturday**

Something strange is happening – there is a great silence on earth today, a great silence and stillness. The whole earth keeps silence because the King is asleep. The earth trembled and is still because God has fallen asleep in the flesh and he has raised up all who have slept ever since the world began. God has died in the flesh and hell trembles with fear.

He has gone to search for our first parent, as for a lost sheep. Greatly desiring to visit those who live in darkness and in the shadow of death, he has gone to free from sorrow the captives Adam and Eve, he who is both God and the son of Eve. The Lord approached them bearing the cross, the weapon that had won him the victory. At the sight of him, Adam, the first man he had created, struck his breast in terror and cried out to everyone: “My Lord be with you all.” Christ answered him: “And with your spirit.” He took him by the hand and raised him up, saying:

“Awake, O sleeper, and rise from the dead, and Christ will give you light.

“I am your God, who for your sake have become your son. Out of love for you and for your descendants I now by my own authority command all who are held in bondage to come forth, all who are in darkness to be enlightened, all who are sleeping to arise.

“I order you, O sleeper, to awake. I did not create you to be held a prisoner in hell. Rise from the dead, for I am the life of the dead. Rise up, work of my hands, you who were created in my image. Rise, let us leave this place, for you are in me and I am in you; together we form only one person and we cannot be separated. For your sake I, your God, became your son; I, the Lord, took the form of a slave; I, whose home is above the heavens, descended to the earth and beneath the earth.

“For your sake, for the sake of man, I became like a man without help, free among the dead. For the sake of you, who left a garden, I was betrayed to the Jews in a garden, and I was crucified in a garden.

“See on my face the spittle I received in order to restore to you the life I once breathed into you. See there the marks of the blows I received in order to refashion your warped nature in my image. On my back see the marks of the scourging I endured to remove the burden of sin that weighs upon your back. See my hands, nailed firmly to a tree, for you who once wickedly stretched out your hand to a tree.

“I slept on the cross and a sword pierced my side for you who slept in paradise and brought forth Eve from your side. My side has healed the pain in yours. My sleep will rouse you from your sleep in hell. The sword that pierced me has sheathed the sword that was turned against you.

“Rise, let us leave this place. The enemy led you out of the earthly paradise. I will not restore you to that paradise, but I will enthrone you in heaven. I forbade you the tree that was only a symbol of life, but see, I who am life itself am now one with you. I appointed cherubim to guard you as slaves are guarded, but now I make them worship you as God.

“The throne formed by cherubim awaits you, its bearers swift and eager. The bridal chamber is adorned, the banquet is ready, the eternal dwelling places are prepared, the treasure houses of all good things lie open. The kingdom of heaven has been prepared for you from all eternity.”