

Holy Week



Day by Day

Palm Sunday

Palm Sunday

Holy Week begins on Palm Sunday. It is a week when Christians remember in a special way the last week of Jesus' life on earth. Palm Sunday reminds us of the day Jesus arrived in Jerusalem on a donkey to the cheers of crowds of people. The people waved palm leaves to welcome him.

They shouted "Hosannah!"

Hosannah is a word that is used to express joy and praise.

On Palm Sunday we each receive a palm, which we can make into the shape of a cross.



Did you know ...?

People give back their palms before Lent begins. The palms are burned and are used to make the ashes for Ash Wednesday.



- 1 Why do you think the crowds were cheering and waving palms at Jesus?
- 2 What does "Hosanna" mean?
- 3 Think about how the crowds treated Jesus just five days later... What made them change their minds about Jesus?

Monday of Holy Week

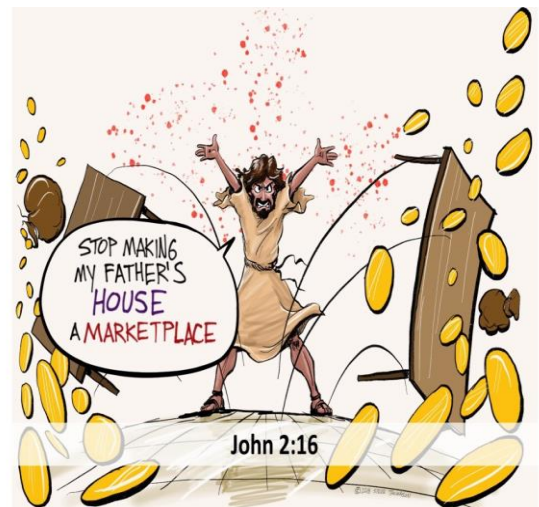
On Monday of Holy Week, many Christians remember the story of Jesus entering the temple and being very angry at what he found there: people were buying and selling things; the temple looked like a market instead of a holy place of worship.

The temple was a very special place to Jesus. It was a very special building in Jerusalem, just like a church, where people came to worship God. This is why Jesus was so upset.

The Gospel writer Mark wrote:

When Jesus reached Jerusalem, he entered the temple area. He began chasing out those who were buying and selling there. He turned over the tables of the people who were exchanging money...

He told them, "It is written that the Lord said, "'My house will be called a house where people from all nations can pray.'



- 1 What is a temple?
- 2 Why was Jesus upset?
- 3 The temple was a bit like a church building.
Think about how we should behave in a church.
What signs and gestures do we make to show that a church is a special place where we pray and worship God?

Tuesday of Holy Week (1)

By the Tuesday after Palm Sunday when the crowds welcomed Jesus with palms and cheers, Jesus was having to put up with a lot of suspicion and challenges, especially from a group of people called the **Pharisees and the Sadducees**. The Pharisees and Sadducees were very strict Jews who often tried to trick Jesus and turn others against him. They had political power too.

The Pharisees and Sadducees did not like the fact that Jesus was becoming very popular. They also did not like the fact that Jesus talked to sinners and even visited them in their homes. Things were getting difficult for Jesus ...

Around this time, we hear the story of the Widow's Mite:

One day, Jesus was sitting with his disciples watching people putting money into the collection box... Jesus watched as the rich were giving large sums of money, but a widow came along with two small coins in her hand. The widow put her coins into the box. Jesus called his disciples and told them: "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put more into the box than all the others. They all gave some of their money; but she, in her poverty, put in everything—all she had to live on - she gave everything she had."

(Mark 12:43-44)



- 1 Who were the Pharisees and the Sadducees ?
- 2 In what way was Jesus losing popularity?
- 3 What message was Jesus trying to give through the story (parable) of the Widow's Mite?

Tuesday of Holy Week (2)

On Tuesday of Holy Week, something very special happens in catholic cathedrals around the world:

The HOLY OILS that are used during the year in catholic churches are blessed at a special Mass called the CHRISM MASS.

Chrism is an oil used in baptisms, at Confirmation and at priests' ordination. The oil of catechumens is also used at Baptisms (a catechumen is someone who is learning all about Jesus). The oil of the sick is used to anoint people when they are ill.

Oil is a sign of strength and of the Holy Spirit who gives us strength to live a Christian life.

All PRIESTS and DEACONS from the area go to the Chrism Mass. During this Mass, they renew their BAPTISMAL PROMISES and the promises they made at their ordination (the sacrament they make when they first become priests or deacons).



Oil of chrim, Oil of catechumens, Oil of the Sick

- 1 What happens at the Chrism Mass on the Tuesday of Holy Week?
- 2 When is chrim oil used?
When is the oil of catechumens used?
When is the oil of the sick used?
- 3 What is a "deacon"?

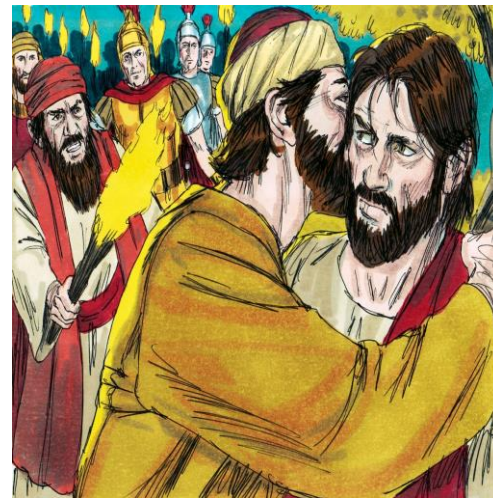
Wednesday of Holy Week

Wednesday of Holy Week is sometimes called "Spy Wednesday" because it is believed to be the day when Judas, the "spy" apostle betrayed Jesus by plotting and planning with leaders to have Jesus arrested.

Judas received a bribe of 30 silver coins (thirty pieces of silver) from the leaders.

On the night before Jesus' death, while Jesus was praying in the Garden of Gethsemane, Judas went up to Jesus, kissed him and called him "Rabbi"- a word meaning "Teacher"-pretending to be his friend.

But the kiss was a sign used by Judas to let the soldiers know who Jesus was. The soldiers arrested Jesus.



- 1 Why is the Wednesday of Holy Week often called "Spy Wednesday"?
- 2 Why did Judas give Jesus a kiss?
- 3 What does "Rabbi" mean?
- 4 Judas was at the Last Supper, Jesus' final meal with his friends.
How do you think Jesus felt when he was betrayed by one of his close friends?
- 5 How do you think Judas must have felt later when he realised what he had done?

Holy Thursday (1)

Holy Thursday is the Thursday before Easter. On Holy Thursday, Christians remember the Last Supper, when Jesus had his last meal with his disciples and began for the first time the EUCCHARIST, Holy Communion. The Last Supper was in fact the first ever Mass !!



Holy Thursday

On Holy Thursday evening, we go to the Mass of the Last Supper. This Mass is the start of The EASTER TRIDUUM. The Easter Triduum is the three days leading up to Easter Sunday and the resurrection of Jesus. These three days remember the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus.



On Holy Thursday, the priest washes the feet of twelve people to remember when Jesus himself washed the feet of his apostles on the same evening as the Last Supper.

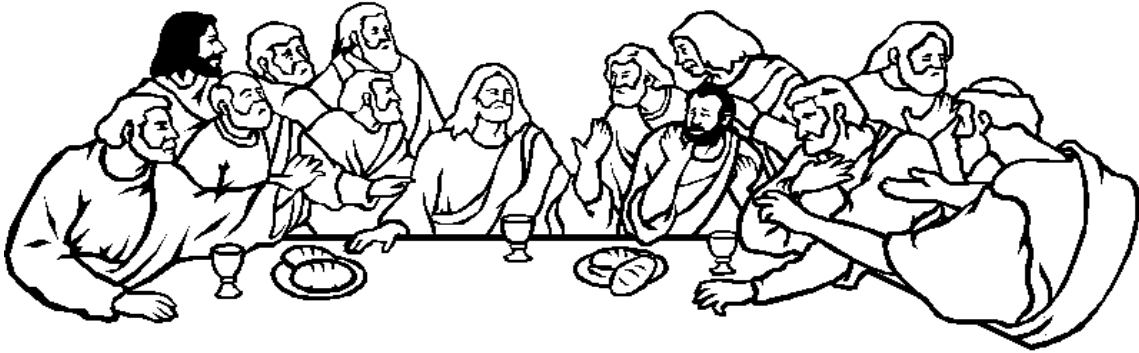
When Jesus washed his friends' feet he showed that he was humble and wanted to serve them. Jesus is often called "The Servant King". Jesus wants us to serve one another too.

Remember ...

Holy Thursday is the night on which Jesus was betrayed by Judas in the Garden of Gethsemane, where the soldiers came to arrest Jesus and take him away. Judas was one of Jesus' twelve apostles.

- 1 What special meal do Christians remember on Holy Thursday?
- 2 What is the EASTER TRIDUUM?
- 3 Why do people have their feet washed on Holy Thursday?

The Last Supper - A Very Special Meal



Jesus had a special meal with his friends to celebrate the feast of Passover, a Jewish feast. It was the last meal he ever had with them, The Last Supper.

During this meal, Jesus said some special words to bless the bread and wine. As he gave the bread to his disciples he said, "This is my body!" As he passed the cup to his disciples he said, "This is my blood!" Jesus' friends must have thought that Jesus' words were strange - it was hard to understand what he had said. But through his special power the bread and wine had changed into **the body and blood of Jesus**.



Jesus then said, "Do this in memory of me."

He meant that in future, every time people gather together and the special words are said by the priest, the bread and wine would change into his body and blood - **EVERY TIME !!!** This is what happens at Mass. This is why Jesus said he was going away but would never leave us!

The gift Jesus left for his apostles before he went away was the gift of HIMSELF. He leaves this gift for us too and we receive this gift every time we go to Mass. This is why it is so important not to miss Mass.

Jesus told his disciples that the bread and wine were his body and blood, and told them to eat and drink them. This means that the ordinary bread and wine had changed and become Jesus' own flesh and blood. Jesus did this through the power of God the Father.

When Jesus offers his disciples the bread (his body) and wine (his blood), he says that they will be "*given up for you*" and "*poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.*" These words mean that Jesus is offering himself as a sacrifice for the disciples and for the world.

Holy Thursday (2)

After the Mass of the Last Supper, we are invited to **keep watch** before the tabernacle.

During this very special time we are just like the disciples of Jesus who were asked by Jesus to "stay awake" with him during his "agony in the garden" before he was betrayed by Judas and arrested. After Holy Thursday, no Mass is celebrated again in the Church until the Easter Vigil which celebrates the Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ.



Altar of repose

The altar is stripped bare of all its linen cloths. The altar represents Christ. Stripping the altar reminds us of Jesus being stripped of his garments when he was arrested.

The church stays bare until the great celebration of the Easter vigil Mass.

- 1 What happens after the Mass of the Last Supper on Holy Thursday?
- 2 What is a monstrance?
- 3 In what way are we like Jesus' disciples when we stay and adore Jesus throughout the night?
- 4 Why is the altar stripped of its cloths?

Good Friday

Good Friday is the Friday before Easter when Christians remember the day Jesus was crucified. It is a day of mourning. It is also a day of fasting when we do not eat meat. We think deeply about Jesus' suffering and death on the cross, and what this means for us.

On Good Friday, a service (not Mass) takes place around 3 O'Clock. During the service we venerate the cross - we kiss a crucifix, which is Jesus on the cross.

We listen to the story of Jesus' suffering and death. We think deeply about the last words of Jesus before he died ...



"Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they are doing." (Luke 23:34)

"Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise." (Luke 23:43)

"Woman, here is your son ... Here is your mother." (John 19:26)

"Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?"

(My God, my God, why have you forsaken me)? (Mark 15:34)

"I am thirsty" (John 19:28)

"It is finished." (John 19:30)

"Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." (Luke 23:46)

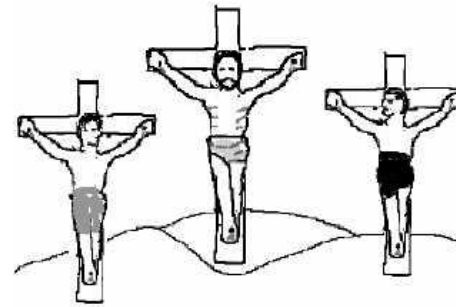
- 1 What happened to Jesus on Good Friday?
- 2 Why do we not eat meat on Good Friday?
- 3 Good Friday is a very sad day.
Why do you think we call it "Good" Friday if it is a sad day?
- 4 Read again the seven last phrases Jesus said when he was dying on the cross. Discuss with an adult what they all mean.

Good Friday (2)

Jesus Forgives Sinners

When Jesus was dying on the cross there were two other men on crosses beside him. They were both criminals. They were robbers. The first criminal made fun of Jesus and shouted unkind things to him like:
"Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!"

The second criminal, however, said,
"But we are criminals, we are getting what we deserved; but he has done nothing wrong."



And he said to Jesus,
"Remember me when you come as King."

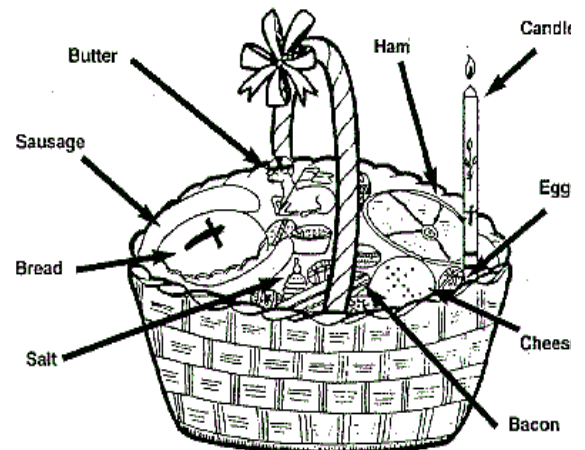
Jesus said to him, **"I promise you that today you will be with me in paradise."**

- 1 What is a "robber" ?
- 2 How do we know that the first criminal was not sorry?
- 3 What does the second robber ask Jesus?
- 4 What does it mean when Jesus says "You will be with me in paradise"?
- 5 What does this story tell us about being sorry ?

Holy Saturday (1)

On Holy Saturday, we remember the time Jesus lay in the tomb where he was buried. The church is usually empty and silent, just like the tomb. It is the last day of Lent.

Some communities have their own traditions on Holy Saturday. For example, the Polish community have "Święconka" or "the blessing of the Easter baskets." Families bring baskets of food to church to be blessed by the priest. The food is then taken back home and will be used at Easter during their celebration of the resurrection of Jesus.



Święconka

In the evening the **EASTER VIGIL** takes place. This is a very special Mass which lasts about two hours. The vigil begins in darkness but everyone is given a candle to be lit from the large **PASCHAL CANDLE**. The change from darkness to light is a symbol of Jesus coming into our lives and showing us the way. Jesus is the **LIGHT OF THE WORLD !**



- 1 Why is the church usually empty and silent on Easter Saturday during the daytime?
- 2 What do Polish communities do on Easter Saturday?
- 3 What is the name of the special Easter candle?
- 4 What do the candles represent?

Holy Saturday (2)

The Easter Vigil

The Easter Vigil is divided into four parts:

- 1) the service of light
- 2) the liturgy of the Word
- 3) the liturgy of Baptism
- 4) the liturgy of the Eucharist



Adults who have been preparing to become full members of the Church make their sacraments at the Easter vigil. These people are called **CATECHUMENS**. They have been preparing for at least a full year, learning all about Jesus. They receive the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and First Communion.

At the Easter vigil, we all renew our baptismal promises. This means that we make the same promises that our parents and godparents made on our behalf when we were baptised as babies.



The church is no longer bare. It is decorated again with flowers and images. The priest wears white and gold colours. We sing the "Alleluia" which was absent all throughout the forty days of Lent.

Easter is a celebration of the resurrection of our Lord and of new life. It is the most important time of the year.



Easter Sunday

Easter Sunday is what we've all been waiting for!
For 40 days we have been preparing for this day!

On Easter Sunday we remember the day Jesus rose from the dead, the **RESURRECTION**.

At Mass, we listen to the story of the women who visited Jesus' tomb and found that he had risen from the dead.

Everyone renews their baptismal promises.

The week after Easter is called the "**Octave of Easter**" and is a week of more celebration! In fact, the Easter season, Eastertide, lasts for **fifty days** until Pentecost. During these fifty days, we listen to stories of Jesus appearing to his disciples and others.

Just imagine how joyful the disciples must have felt when they saw Jesus again!

Eastertide is a season of **CELEBRATION**.

- 1 For how long do we prepare for Easter?
- 2 What story do we listen to at Mass on Easter Sunday?
- 3 What is the "Octave of Easter"?
- 4 For how long does the Easter season last?



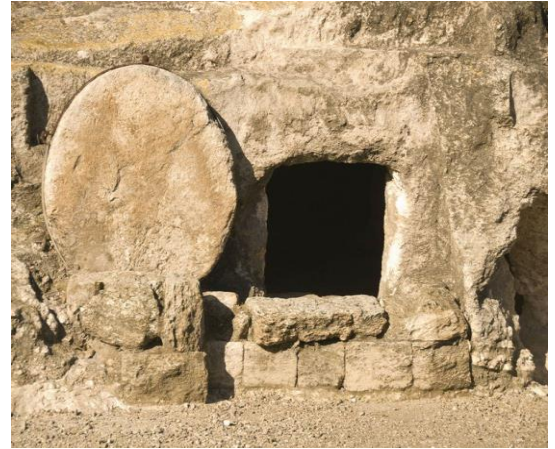
The Easter eggs we give to one another at Easter are symbols of the stone that guarded the tomb, and of new life



Easter Sunday Morning

Early in the morning, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb where Jesus' body had been buried. She saw that the stone had been rolled away from the tomb. She ran to tell Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said:

"They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!"



Simon Peter and the other disciple ran to the tomb. Both were running, but the other disciple outran Simon Peter and reached the tomb first. He looked in at the strips of linen lying there but did not go in. Then Simon Peter came along behind him and went straight into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there, and the cloth that had been wrapped around Jesus' head. The cloth was still lying in its place, separate from the linen. Finally the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. **He saw and believed.**



Then the disciples went back to where they were staying.

Mary stood by the tomb crying. As she cried, she looked into the tomb and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot. They asked her:

"Woman, why are you crying?"

**"They have taken my Lord away," she said,
"and I don't know where they have put him."**

Then she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realise that it was Jesus. She thought he was a gardener. He asked her,

"Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?"

Thinking he was the gardener, she said,

"Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him."

Jesus said to her, **"Mary."**

She turned towards him and cried out in Aramaic, **"Rabboni!"** (which means **"Teacher"**).

Jesus said:

"Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'"

Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news:

"I have seen the Lord!"

And she told them that he had said these things to her.



- 1 Why did Mary Magdalene go to Jesus' tomb?
- 2 How do you think Mary felt when she saw the empty tomb?
- 3 Mary ran to tell Simon Peter and "the disciple Jesus loved".
Who was "the disciple Jesus loved"?
- 4 Mary did not recognise Jesus at first. When did she eventually recognise him?
- 5 What does "Rabboni" mean?
- 6 What do you think the disciples said to Mary when she told them that she had seen Jesus?