

PALM SUNDAY OF THE LORD'S PASSION

MARCH 25, 2018

MASS READINGS

MONDAY: IS 42:1-7, PS 27, JN 12:1-11

TUESDAY: IS 49:1-6, PS 71, JN 13:21-33,36-38

WEDNESDAY: IS 50:4-9A, PS 69, MT 26:14-25

HOLY TRIDUUM

THURSDAY: 7PM- EX 12:1-8, 11-14, PS 116, I
COR 11:23-26, JN 13:1-15

FRIDAY: 3PM- IS 52:13-53-12, PS 31, HEB 4:14-
16, 5:7-9, JN 18:1-19:42

SATURDAY: 8PM- SEE MISSAL

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**NEXT SUNDAY: EASTER SUNDAY-RDGS:
ACTS 10:34A,37-43, PS 118, COL 3:1-4, JN
20:1-9**

MASS INTENTIONS

MONDAY: KATHY LESTER

TUESDAY: JOHN SCOWDEN

WEDNESDAY: CHARLIE & CATHERINE
SPITZNAGLE

THURSDAY: CHARLIE & KAY CAMMER
NO MASS FRIDAY-LITURGY OF THE PAS-
SION

VIGIL: KATHY LESTER

7:30: PAUL & ANNE HENCHT

10:00: MARY JO DANAHER

NOON: FOR THE PARISH

MEMORIAL FLOWERS

All members of St. Ann's parish, families-living & deceased: Marian Schwartz. Brose & Miller families. (Bob Bohan & Melvin Elliott). Nufer-Vogel families. (Burnell, Anna, Henry Totten, Robert Stump, Victor & Dorothy Ringle. Bob Bennett. Griffin & Scowden families. (Ed & Judy Buckles, Ray Mowery, Mary Salvin, Debbie Johnston). Ann Hubertz. Margarete Duncan.

The Passion of Jesus Christ

FR. WILLIAM SAUNDERS

What do we mean by the "Passion" of Christ?

The Passion of Christ, from the Latin *patior* meaning "suffer," refers to those sufferings our Lord endured for our redemption from the agony in the garden until His death on Calvary. The Passion Narratives of the Gospels provide the details of our Lord's passion, and at least to some extent, they are corroborated by contemporary Roman historians — Tacitus, Seutonius and Pliny the Younger. Archeological discoveries combined with modern medical examination provide an accurate picture of what our Lord endured. In an age where the "risen" Jesus appears on the cross and "suffering" and "sacrifice" have become unpopular terms, we must not lose sight of the reality of the passion.

After the Last Supper, Jesus went to the Garden of Gethsemane at the Mount of Olives. Our Lord prayed, "Father, if it is your will, take this cup from me; yet not my will but yours be done" (Lk 22:42). Jesus knew the sacrifice He faced. He prayed so intensely that "his sweat became like drops of blood falling to the ground" (Lk 22:44). Medical science testifies that people may emit a bloody sweat when in a very emotional state (a condition called hematomidrosis or hemohidrosis), the result of hemorrhaging into the sweat glands. Little wonder the Father sent an angel to strengthen Him (Lk 22:43).

Our Lord was then arrested and tried before the Sanhedrin, presided over by the High Priest Caiphas. Responding to their questions, He proclaimed, "Soon you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power and coming on the clouds of heaven" (Mt 26:64). For this statement, He was condemned to death for blasphemy, and was then spat upon, slapped, and mocked. While the Sandhedrin could condemn our Lord to death, it lacked the authority to execute; only Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor, could order an execution.

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The Jewish leaders, therefore, took Jesus to Pilate. Notice how the charge changed: The Jewish leaders told Pilate, "We found this man subverting our nation, opposing the payment of taxes to Caesar, and calling Himself the Messiah, a king" (Lk 23:2). What happened to the charge of blasphemy? Pilate did not care if Jesus wanted to be a messiah, a prophet, or a religious leader; however, if Jesus wanted to be a king, He threatened the authority of Caesar. Any act of rebellion, treason or subversion has to be punished quickly and severely. So Pilate asked, "Are you the king of the Jews?" (Lk 23:3).

Pilate could not find conclusive evidence to condemn Jesus. Pilate challenged the chief priests, the ruling class, and the people, "I have examined Him in your presence and have no charge against Him arising from your allegations" (Lk 23:14). When offering to release a prisoner, Pilate asked the crowd about Jesus: "What wrong is this man guilty of? I have not discovered anything about Him that calls for the death penalty?" (Lk 23:22). Even Pilate's wife pleaded with him not to interfere in the case of "that holy man" (Mt 27:19).

Pilate then had Jesus scourged (Jn 19:1). The Romans used a short whip (flagrum or flagellum) with several single or braided leather thongs. Iron balls or hooks made of bones or shells were placed at various intervals along the thongs and at their ends. The person was stripped of his clothing and whipped along the back, buttocks and legs. The scourging ripped the skin and tore into the underlying muscles, leaving the flesh in bloody ribbons. The victim verged on circulatory shock and the blood loss would help determine how long he would survive on the cross. To enhance the scourging of our Lord, the soldiers added other tortures: crowning Him with thorns, dressing Him in a purple cloak, placing a reed in His right hand, spitting upon Him, and mocking Him, "All hail, king of the Jews!" (Mt 27:27-31).

After the scourging, Pilate again presented Christ to the crowd who chanted, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" Fearing a revolt, Pilate capitulated and handed over Jesus to be crucified. The Romans had perfected crucifixion, which probably originated in Persia, to produce a slow death with the maximum amount of pain. Crucifixion was reserved for the worst of criminals. This punishment was so awful that Cicero (d. 43 BC) introduced legislation in the Roman Senate exempting Roman citizens from crucifixion; this is why St. Paul was beheaded rather than crucified for being a Christian.

The victim carried his own cross to further weaken him. Since the entire cross weighed around 300 pounds, he usually carried only the horizontal beam (patibulum) weighing 75-125 pounds, to the place of execution where the vertical beams (stipes) were already in place. A military guard headed by a centurion led the procession. A soldier carried the titulus which displayed the victim's name and his crime, and was later attached to the cross (Mt 27:37). For our Lord, the path from the praetorium to Golgotha was about 1/3 of a mile, and He was so weak Simon of Cyrene was forced to assist Him (Mt 27:32).

Upon arriving at the place of execution, the law mandated the victim be given a bitter drink of wine mixed with myrrh (gall) as an analgesic (Mt 27:34). The victim was then stripped of his garments (unless this had already occurred). His hands were stretched over the patibulum and either tied, nailed or both. Archeological evidence reveals the nails were tapered iron spikes approximately seven inches in length with a square shaft about 3/8 of an inch. The nails were driven through the wrist between the radius and the ulna to support the weight of the person. The patibulum was affixed to the stipes, and the feet were then tied or nailed directly to it or to a small footrest (suppedaneum).

As the victim hung on the cross, the crowds commonly tormented him with jeers (cf. Mt 27:39-44). The Romans often-times forced the family to watch to add psychological suffering. The soldiers divided the man's garments as part of their reward (Mt 27:35). The victim would hang on the cross anywhere from three hours to even three days. As he hung in agony, insects would feed on the open wounds or the eyes, ears, nose, and birds in turn would prey on the victim. With the combined effects caused by the loss of blood, the trauma of scourging and dehydration, the weight of the body pulled down on the outstretched arms and shoulders impeding respiration, the person dies from a slow asphyxiation. Perhaps this is why Jesus spoke only tersely from the cross. If the person tried to lift himself up on his feet to breathe, incredible pain would be felt at the nail wounds and the back wounds from the scourging. To hasten death, the soldiers would break the legs of the victim (Jn 19:32-33). When he appeared dead the soldiers insured the fact by piercing the heart with a lance or sword; when Jesus' heart was pierced, out flowed blood and water (pericardial fluid) (Jn 19:34). Commonly, the corpse was left on the cross until decomposed or eaten by birds or animals; however, Roman law allowed the family to take the body for burial with permission of the Roman governor. In our Lord's case, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for Christ's body, and He was then buried (Jn 19:38).

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As we contemplate Holy Week, we must remember what our Lord endured for our salvation. He offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice for sin on the altar of the cross and washed away our sins with His blood. We also must recognize our responsibility to repent of sin: The Catechism (#589), quoting the old Roman Catechism, asserts "Sinners were the authors and the ministers of all the sufferings that the divine Redeemer endured" and "Since our sins made the Lord Christ suffer the torment of the cross, those who plunge themselves into disorders and crimes crucify the Son of God anew in their hearts (for He is in them) and hold Him up to contempt." Our crucified Lord on the cross is a vivid image of His love for each of us. Meditating on His passion will strengthen us against temptation, move us to frequent confession, and keep us on the path of salvation. By embracing our crucified Lord and His cross we will come to the glory of the resurrection.

THE SEVEN WORDS OF JESUS ON THE CROSS

Christ Jesus died on the Cross to redeem mankind, to save us from our sins because of his love for us. As recorded in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John in the Holy Bible, Jesus Christ was mocked, scorned, and tortured in the praetorium. He carried his cross up the Via Dolorosa in Jerusalem to Calvary, was nailed to the Cross, and hung between two common criminals. He suffered an indescribable end, recalled by the Church on Good Friday of Holy Week.

One may meditate on the Passion of Christ by reflecting on his Seven Words on the Cross or by a devotion known as The Way of the Cross. When religious pilgrimages to the Holy Land ended with military occupation of Jerusalem in the Middle Ages, a popular devotion known as The Way of the Cross arose during Lent retracing the Passion, Crucifixion, and Death of Jesus. The fourteen Stations of the Cross are (1) Pilate condemns Jesus to death; (2) Jesus takes up his Cross; (3) He falls the first time; (4) Jesus meets his sorrowful mother Mary; (5) Simon helps carry the cross; (6) Veronica cleans his face; (7) He falls the second time; (8) Jesus consoles the women of Jerusalem; (9) He falls the third time; (10) Jesus is stripped of his garments; (11) Jesus is nailed to the cross; (12) Jesus Christ dies on the cross; (13) Our Lord is taken down from the cross; (14) Christ is laid in the tomb.

THE FIRST WORD

Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do."

Luke 23:34

Jesus of Nazareth is looking down from the cross just after he was crucified between two criminals. He sees the soldiers who have mocked, scourged, and tortured him, and who have just nailed him to the cross. He probably remembers those who have sentenced him - Caiaphas and the high priests of the Sanhedrin. Pilate realized it was out of envy that they handed him over (Matthew 27:18, Mark 15:10). But is Jesus not also thinking of his Apostles and companions who have deserted him, to Peter who has denied him three times, to the fickle crowd who only days before praised him on his entrance to Jerusalem, and then days later demanded his crucifixion?

Is he also thinking of us, who daily forget him in our lives?

Does he react angrily? No! At the height of his physical suffering, his love prevails and He asks His Father to forgive! Could there ever be greater irony? Jesus asks his Father to forgive, but it is by His very Sacrifice on the Cross that mankind is able to be forgiven!

Right up to his final hours on earth, Jesus preaches forgiveness. He teaches forgiveness in the Lord's prayer: "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us" (Matthew 6:12). When asked by Peter, how many times should we forgive someone, Jesus answers seventy times seven (Matthew 18:21-22). He forgives the paralytic at Capernaum (Mark 2:3-12), the sinful woman who anointed him in the home of Simon the Pharisee (Luke 7:37-48), and the adulteress caught in the act and about to be stoned (John 8:1-11). During the Institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper, Jesus tells them to drink of the cup: "Drink of it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins" (Matthew 26:27-28). And even following his Resurrection, his first act is to commission his disciples to forgive: "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained" (John 20:22-23).

THE SECOND WORD

Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise."

Luke 23:43

Now it is not just the religious leaders or the soldiers that mock Jesus, but even one of the criminals, a downward progression of mockery. But the criminal on the right speaks up for Jesus, explaining the two criminals are receiving their just due, whereas "this man has done nothing wrong." Then, turning to Jesus, he asks, "Jesus, remember me when you come in your kingdom" (Luke 23:42). What wonderful faith this repentant sinner has in Jesus - far more than the doubting Thomas, one of his own Apostles. Ignoring his own suffering, Jesus responds with mercy in His second word, living out his own Beatitude, *Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.*"

The second word again is about forgiveness, this time directed to a sinner. Just as the first word, this Biblical expression is found only in the Gospel of Luke. Jesus shows his Divinity by opening heaven for a repentant sinner - such generosity to a man that only asked to be remembered! This expression offers us hope for salvation, for if we turn our hearts and prayers to Him and accept his forgiveness, we will also be with Jesus Christ at the end of our lives..

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THE THIRD WORD

***Jesus said to his mother: Woman, this is your son."
Then he said to the disciple: This is your mother."***

John 19:26-27

Jesus and Mary are together again, at the beginning of his ministry in Cana and now at the end of his public ministry at the foot of the Cross. John is the only Evangelist to record Our Lord's mother Mary at the Cross. The Lord refers to his mother as *woman* at the Wedding Feast of Cana (John 2:1-11) and in this passage, recalling the *woman* in Genesis 3:15, the first Messianic prophecy of the Redeemer, anticipating the *woman* clothed with the sun in Revelation 12.

What sorrow must fill Mary's heart! How she must have felt meeting her Son as he carried the Cross on the Via Dolorosa. "Behold I make all things new" (Revelation 21:5). And then she had to watch him being nailed to the Cross. Once again, a sword pierces Mary's soul: we are reminded of the prophecy of Simeon at the Presentation of the infant Jesus in the Temple (Luke 2:35).

The loved ones of Jesus are with Him. There are four at the foot of the cross, Mary his Mother, John, the disciple whom he loved, his mother's sister Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. He addresses his third word to his mother Mary and John, the only eye-witness of the Gospel writers.

Jesus again rises above the occasion as he cares for the ones that love him. The good son that He is, Jesus is concerned about looking after his mother. St. Joseph was noticeably absent. St. Joseph was not present at family occasions like the Wedding Feast of Cana and had probably died before the public ministry of Jesus, or else he would have been the one to take care of Mary following the Passion of Our Lord. In fact, this passage indicates that Jesus was the only child of Mary, because if he did have natural brothers or sisters, they would have provided for her. But Jesus looks to John to care for her.

Another striking phrase indicating Jesus of Nazareth was an only child is Mark 6:3, referring to Jesus: "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, and the brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?" The terms *brother* and *sister* in Hebrew or Aramaic at that time could mean either biological sibling, cousin or kinsman, or a spiritual brother or sister. Now if James, Joses and Judas and Simon were also natural sons of Mary, Jesus would not have been called the "son of Mary," but rather "one of the sons of Mary."

THE FOURTH WORD

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

Matthew 27:46 and Mark 15:34

This was the only expression of Jesus in the Gospels of Matthew and Mark. Both Gospels related that it was in the ninth hour, after 3 hours of darkness, that Jesus cried out this fourth word. The ninth hour was three o'clock in Judea. After the fourth Word, Mark related with a horrible sense of finality, "And Jesus uttered a loud cry, and breathed his last" (Mark 15:37).

One is struck by the anguished tone of this expression in contrast to the first three words of Jesus. This cry is from the painful heart of the human Jesus who must feel deserted by His Father and the Holy Spirit, not to mention his earthly companions the Apostles. As if to emphasize his loneliness, Mark even has his loved ones "looking from afar," not close to him as in the Gospel of John. Jesus feels separated from his Father. He is now all alone, and he must face death by himself.

But is not this exactly what happens to all of us when we die? We too are all alone at the time of death! Jesus completely lives the human experience as we do, and by doing so, frees us from the clutches of sin.

His fourth Word is the opening line of Psalm 22, and thus his cry from the Cross recalls the cry of Israel, and of all innocent persons who suffer. Psalm 22 of David makes a striking prophecy of the crucifixion of the Messiah at a time when crucifixion was not known to exist: "They have pierced my hands and my feet, they have numbered all my bones" (22:16-17). The Psalm continues: "They divide my garments among them, and for my vesture they cast lots" (22:18).

There can not be a more dreadful moment in the history of man as this moment. Jesus who came to save us is crucified, and He realizes the horror of what is happening and what He now is enduring. He is about to be engulfed in the raging sea of sin. Evil triumphs, as Jesus admits: "But this is your hour" (Luke 22:53). But it is only for a moment. The burden of all the sins of humanity for a moment overwhelm the humanity of our Savior.

But does this not have to happen? Does this not have to occur if Jesus is to save us? It is in defeat of his humanity that the Divine plan of His Father will be completed. It is by His death that we are redeemed. "For there is one God. There is also one mediator between God and the human race, Christ Jesus, himself human, who gave himself as ransom for all" (1 Timothy 2:5-6).

*He himself bore our sins in his body upon the cross,
so that, free from sin, we might live for righteousness.
By his wounds you have been healed."*

First Peter 2:24

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THE FIFTH WORD

I thirst."

John 19:28

The fifth word of Jesus is His only human expression of His physical suffering. Jesus is now in shock. The wounds inflicted upon him in the scourging, the crowning with thorns, losing blood on the three-hour walk through the city of Jerusalem on the Via Dolorosa to Golgotha, and the nailing upon the cross are now taking their toll.

The Gospel of John first refers to thirst when Jesus meets the Samaritan woman at the well. After first asking for "a drink," he answers the woman, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life" (John 4:13-14). This passage implies there is more than just physical thirst.

Jesus also thirsts in a spiritual sense. He thirsts for love. He thirsts for the love of his Father, who has left him unaided during this dreadful hour when He must fulfill his mission all alone. And he thirsts for the love and salvation of his people, the human race. Jesus practiced what he preached:

This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

Greater love has no man than this,

That he lay down his life for his friends."

John 15:12-13

THE SIXTH WORD

***When Jesus had received the wine, he said, It is finished;
and he bowed his head and handed over the spirit.***

John 19:30

The Gospel of John recalls the sacrifice of the Passover Lamb in Exodus 12 in this passage. The soldiers offered wine on a sprig of hyssop to the Lord. Hyssop is a small plant that was used to sprinkle the blood of the Passover Lamb on the doorposts of the Hebrews (Exodus 12:22). John's Gospel related that it was the Day of Preparation, the day *before* the actual Sabbath Passover, that Jesus was sentenced to death (19:14) and sacrificed on the Cross (19:31). John continues in 19:33-34: *But when they came to Jesus and saw he was already dead, they did not break his legs, 'recalling the instruction in Exodus 12:46 concerning the Passover Lamb. He died at the ninth hour (three o'clock in the afternoon), about the same time as the Passover lambs were slaughtered in the Temple. Christ became the Paschal or Passover Lamb, as noted by St. Paul: For Christ our Passover lamb has been sacrificed' (First Corinthians 5:7). The innocent Lamb was slain for our sins, so that we might be forgiven. It is now a fait accompli. The sixth word is Jesus' recognition that his suffering is over and his task is completed. Jesus is obedient to the Father and gives his love for mankind by redeeming us with His death on the Cross.*

And the Gospels as a group captured this paradox. The Synoptic Gospels narrated the horror of the event - the agony in the garden, the abandonment by his Apostles, the trial before the Sanhedrin, the intense mockery and torture heaped upon Jesus, his suffering all alone, the darkness over the land, and his death, starkly portrayed by both Matthew (27:47-51) and Mark (15:33-38).

In contrast, the passion of Jesus in the Gospel of John expresses his Kingship and proves to be His triumphant road to glory. John presents Jesus as directing the action the entire way. The phrase "It is finished" carries a sense of accomplishment. In John, there is no trial before the Sanhedrin, but rather Jesus is introduced at the Roman trial as "Behold your King!" (John 19:14). Jesus is not stumbling or falling as in the Synoptic Gospels, but the way of the Cross is presented with majesty and dignity, for "Jesus went out bearing his own Cross" (John 19:17). And in John, the inscription at the head of the cross is pointedly written "Jesus of Nazareth, The King of the Jews" (John 19:19). The inscription **INRI** at the top of the cross is the Latin *Jesus Nazarenus, Rex Iudaeorum*.

When Jesus died, He "handed over" the Spirit. Jesus remained in control to the end, and it is He who handed over his Spirit. One should not miss the double entendre here, for this may also be interpreted as His death brought forth the Holy Spirit.

The Gospel of John gradually reveals the Holy Spirit. Jesus mentions *living water* in John 4:10 and during the Feast of Tabernacles refers to living water as the Holy Spirit in 7:37-39. At the Last Supper, Christ announces he would ask the Father to send "another Advocate to be with you always, the Spirit of truth" (14:16-17). The word Advocate is also translated as Comforter, Helper, Paraclete, or Counselor. "But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you" (14:26). The symbolism of water for the Holy Spirit becomes more evident in John 19:34: "But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and immediately there came out blood and water." The piercing of his side fulfills the prophecy in Zechariah 12:10: "They will look on me whom they have pierced." The piercing of Jesus' side prefigures the Sacraments of Eucharist (blood) and Baptism (water), as well as the beginning of the Church.

THE SEVENTH WORD

***Jesus cried out in a loud voice,
Father, into your hands I commend my spirit."***

Luke 23:46

The seventh word of Jesus is from the Gospel of Luke, and is directed to the Father in heaven, just before He dies. Jesus recalls Psalm 31:5 - "Into thy hands I commend my spirit; thou hast redeemed me, O Lord, faithful God." Luke repeatedly pleads Jesus' innocence: with Pilate (Luke 23:4, 14-15, 22), through Dismas the criminal (by legend) (Luke 23:41), and immediately after His death with the centurion - "Now when the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God and said, "Certainly this man was innocent" (Luke 23:47).

Jesus was obedient to His Father to the end, and his final word before his death on the Cross was a prayer to His Father.

The relationship of Jesus to the Father is revealed in the Gospel of John, for He remarked, "The Father and I are one" (10:30), and again at the Last Supper: "Do you not believe I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on my own. The Father who dwells in me is doing his works" (14:10). And He can return: "I came from the Father and have come into the world; again, I am leaving the world and going to the Father" (16:28). Jesus fulfills His own mission and that of His Father on the Cross:

*For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son,
So that everyone who believes in him
may not perish but have eternal life.*

John 3:16

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Announcements and Upcoming Events



This prayer is designed to be said within the family before a Crucifix on Palm Sunday and during Holy Week.

Prayer:

Mother or a child: (From the words of Pope Pius XII *On the Sacred Liturgy*.) Dearly beloved, in Holy Week, when the most bitter sufferings of Jesus Christ are put before us by the liturgy, the Church invites us to come to Calvary and follow in the blood-stained footsteps of the divine Redeemer, to carry the Cross willingly with him, to reproduce in our hearts his spirit of expiation and atonement, and to die together with him.

Father: We ought to glory in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ

Family: in whom is our salvation, life and resurrection.

Father: Let us pray. All-powerful, eternal God, you have chosen to give mankind a model of humility; our Savior took on our flesh, and subjected himself to the Cross. Grant us the grace to preserve faithfully the lessons he has given us in his Passion and to have a share in his resurrection. This we ask of you through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son.

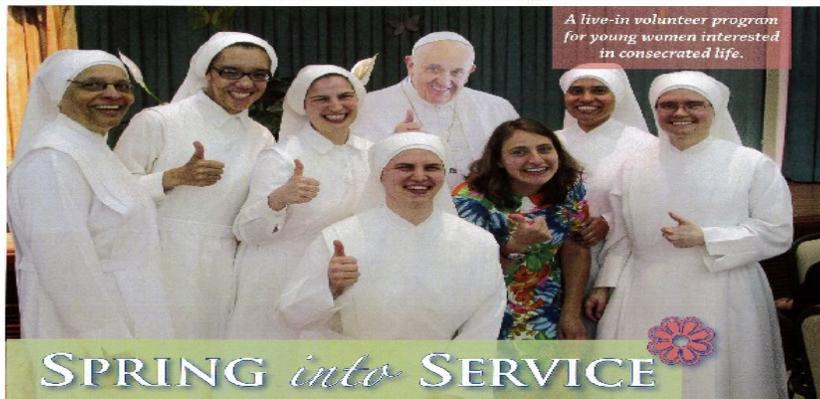
Family: Amen. Favor this dwelling, Lord, with your presence. Far from it repulse all the wiles of Satan. Your holy angels — let them live here, to keep us in peace. And may your blessing remain always upon us. This we ask of you through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son.

Father: Let us bless the Lord.

Family: Thanks be to God.

Father: May the almighty and merciful Lord, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, bless and keep us.

Family: Amen.



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MINISTER SIGN-UP AND REHEARSAL

Eucharist Minister and/or Reader practice will be held on Saturday, April 14th at 9:30am in the church.

If you are interested in learning about either ministry, please plan on attending.

We look forward to seeing you there.

Rose Killian-Alenduff; 765-714-7692 or

killianrm54@gmail.com

STEWARDSHIP BY THE BOOK: In his letter to the Philippians, our Second Reading on this Palm Sunday, St. Paul writes, "...he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross." Everything we hear today and during Holy Week relates to this statement.

For some 2,000 years scholars and theologians have debated what the phrase "emptied himself" means. As is sometimes the case, in the midst of these debates and discussions they lose focus of what is really Paul's point and teaching perhaps. One of the things Paul might be trying to get us to think about is emptying ourselves to a certain extent. If you have ever been a retreat or been part of a spiritual exercise, you may be encouraged to "empty yourself" so you are prepared to in reality add something.

Jesus gave much up to be the Son of Man. At this point in our Lenten journey, we need to grasp that He gave up His life so that we might have life. That is what should be on our minds as we hear the Passion today and as we continue and complete our own preparation for Christ's resurrection on Easter.

Have you ever heard someone say about someone else "He (or she) is so full of himself (or herself)?" Jesus was not "full of Himself." He emptied Himself, and that is something we, too, must strive to do to be His disciple.

SUNDAY OFFERING

\$7171.00

"FIND OUT HOW MUCH GOD HAS GIVEN YOU, AND FROM IT TAKE WHAT YOU NEED; THE REMAINDER IS NEEDED BY OTHERS"

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