

The Cathedral of St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception

The Mother Church of the Faithful of the Archdiocese of Kingston
The Most Reverend Brendan M. O'Brien, Apostolic Administrator of Kingston



Holy Week

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Parish Office Hours: Monday to Friday 10 to 4 pm, Closed 12 noon to 1 pm

Holy Week Mass & Confessions Schedule

St. James Chapel: Mon., Tues. & Wed. 7:45 am

Cathedral: Mon., & Wed., 12:10 pm (No Noon Mass Tuesday)

Lots of Opportunities for Confession "The Light is On!"

This Sunday Afternoon, Palm Sunday, April 14th: 2 to 4 pm.

One half hour before each Mass held in the Cathedral

Additionally: Wednesdays 1 pm – 7 pm, Holy Thursday, April 18th, 2-4 pm, &
Good Friday, April 19th, 9-11 am

Masses:

Holy Monday April 15th

7:45 am Special Intention
12:10 pm Mary Rupert

Holy Tuesday April 16th

7:45 am Andre Fistonc,
Cvjetka Fistonc
NO 12:10 pm Mass

7:30 pm Mass of Chrism

Holy Wednesday April 17th

7:45 am João Carlos Raposo,
2 yrs.
12:10 pm Mary & James Lyng

Holy Thursday April 18th

NO 7:45 am Mass
NO 12:10 pm Mass
**7 pm Mass of the Lord's
Supper**

Good Friday April 19th

NO 7:45 am Mass
NO 12:10 pm Mass
**3 pm The Passion of the
Lord**

Holy Saturday April 20th

NO 7:45 am Mass
NO 5 pm Mass
8 pm Easter Vigil

Easter Sunday April 21st

The Resurrection of the Lord

8 am For the People
10:30 am For the People
7:30 pm For the People

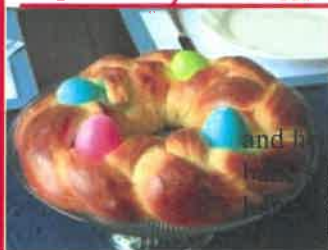
Please pray for our Sick: Ruth Caron, Isaac Cassim, Bob Clancey, Ken Davies, Father Jack Grainger, Lois Halligan, Teresa Khidir, Janice Lumb, Maria Matias, Lynn Orellano, and Ted Pedlar.

Workshop on Pastoral Ministry

is being offered by The Religious Education Office of the Archdiocese on Sat., 25 May 2019, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., at St. Paul The Apostle Church hall. Open to anyone involved in Pastoral Ministry, Prison Ministry, or who would like to learn more about the spirituality of listening and presence.

Presenter: Robert Mundle. To register, or for more information, please contact Gorett at 613-548-4461 ext. 112, or Mary- Jo, ext. 115. There is no cost for this workshop lunch is provided.

TODAY, PALM SUNDAY at 8:00 & 10:30 am



DOMENICA And Her ITALIAN BAKER

FRIENDS ARE BACK!!! Today, PALM SUNDAY, April 14th, Domenica Bracciodieta

and her Italian friends are having another
baking session making all different kinds of

bread to make Italian Easter Bread. Proceeds from

the fundraiser will go toward the Sanctuary Floor

Restoration. Many thanks to all for their generosity to St. Mary's in doing all this wonderful baking and to you for purchasing something.

PALM SUNDAY

Palm Sunday Bake Sale, April 14th after the 8 am and 10:30 am Masses. Domenica and her Italian Friends are back with lots of wonderful Easter breads and Easter baking. Let these fabulous cooks do some of your Easter baking for you.

St. Mary's Cathedral Youth Choir: Thursdays, 4:30 – 6 PM, in St. Mary's Parish Hall.

The Stations of the Cross: will be prayed Mon. to Fri. after the 12:10 pm and 40 minutes before the 5 pm Saturday Mass & 10:30 am and 7:30 pm Sunday Masses.

No Greater Love: A Biblical Walk Through Christ's Passion.

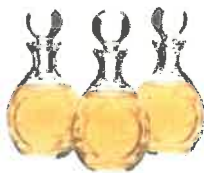
Continues Monday at 2 pm and repeated on Wednesday at 7 pm. It is a great way to prepare for Holy Week.

Billings Life Clinic is Mon. April 29 at St. Paul the Apostle Church from 7-8 (patio entrance). Call 613-544-8495 kingston@naturalfamilyplanning.ca

Archdiocesan Celebration of the Chrism Mass and Thanksgiving for Archbishop's O'Brien's

Ministry in the Archdiocese

You are cordially invited to join Archbishop O'Brien and the clergy of the Archdiocese to celebrate the Chrism Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral on Tuesday, April 16, 2019, at 7:30 p.m. Gathering as the visible Body of Christ, we express our communion with the Archbishop. On this special occasion, we will bid farewell to Archbishop



Brendan O'Brien, who will be retiring after serving for 12 years as the Archbishop of Kingston. After the Mass, join us for a Reception in his honour at École Cathédrale. There you will have an opportunity to say farewell and to express your gratitude for his dedicated service to the Archdiocese of Kingston. As in previous years at the Chrism Mass, the priests and deacons will renew their ordination promises, and the oils used for the Sacramental life of the Church will be blessed and distributed to each Parish and Institution.

Spring dinner and dance Sat. April 27 for 5-11pm with music by Odette and catering by Karawana Fine Dining at Rideau Acres in support of Neeje Assoc for Women & Family, a charity inspired by St. Josemaria Escriva, founder of Opus Dei. Tickets, \$55 per person, on-line at neeje.ca. Call Irene 613-549-7421 for info. All welcome.

Contacts

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Father Killian Eke
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613-876-1801

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We Need Your Help Paying for the Easter Flowers



IN MEMORY OF:

OR IN THANKSGIVING FOR:

Enclosed is \$ _____

Your Name(s): _____

(Envelopes are available at the back of the church or use a blank envelope and mark it with this information.)

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DEAR EVAN HANSEN MUSICAL – On Wednesday, June 12, Our Lady of Lourdes Parish will sponsor a bus trip to Toronto to see the Musical Dear Evan Hansen, the Broadway Hit that has clutched the hearts of thousands with its story and beautiful soundtrack. Focussing on the disastrous effect of neglected mental health in our youth, Dear Evan Hansen brings a poignant and thought provoking message to the stage. Laugh, cry and be moved with a tale that will stay with you for weeks. Tickets are \$215/person and includes the return trip to Toronto, dinner at the Mandarin Restaurant, Pickering, an orchestra theatre seat and a \$40. tax receipt. Tickets will be in great demand, with several already sold, so hurry and don't miss out. For further information call Caroline Manley at 613-542-8473 or Theresa McKay at 613-389-3532



Children's Liturgy
of the **Word**


ATTENTION: S.O.S. With the Queen's school year wrapping up the number of people helping with the Children's Liturgy of the Word at the 10:30 am Mass is quickly dwindling.

Help is needed. If you would like to volunteer your assistance with this ministry please contact this ministry's coordinator, Laura Raycraft, at laura.joel@hotmail.com.

Campaign Life Coalition's-Kingston meeting on Thurs. April 25, 2019 from 7:00 until 9:00p.m. at St. Paul the Apostle Church, main meeting room downstairs, 1111 Taylor-Kidd Blvd. Kingston. We are pleased that **Mr. Jim Hughes**, President Emeritus of CLC and Vice-President of International Right to Life will be our guest speaker and will be able to update us on the many the pro-life/pro-family issues facing our country and internationally. Please come and bring friends and relatives. More information call CLC at 613-389-4472 or 613-382-1084

Seven Last Words – Good Friday, April 19TH

On Good Friday from 12 noon to 2 p.m., the students of Newman House will be leading the Seven Last Words devotion – readings, meditations and music which prayerfully recall the seven times that Jesus speaks from the Cross. Father Raymond J. de Souza will preach the meditations on the theme, "The Scandal in the Church and the Scandal of the Cross". Please join these prayers and meditations in a spirit of penance and purification.



Annual Divine Mercy Sunday Celebrations at St. Mary's Cathedral

**Sunday, April 28th
Holy Mass at 2 pm**
(fulfills Sunday obligation)

**followed by
sung Divine Mercy Devotions
blessing of images, &
reverencing of the relic
of St. Faustina**

Jesus I Trust in You!

2019 Holy Week and Easter Mass & Confessions Schedule

Palm Sunday, APRIL 14th: regular Mass schedule

Confessions: Sat. April 13th, 4 to 5 pm

Mass: Saturday, April 13th, 5 pm

Sunday, April 14th, 8 am, 10:30 am

& 7:30 pm

Confessions: Sunday, April 14th from 2 to 4 pm

Monday, April 15th: regular Masses: 7:45 am and 12:10 pm

Confessions: 11:30 am to 12:00 noon

**Tuesday, April 16th, Mass at 7:45 am, No noon Mass & Mass of
Chrism at 7:30 pm**

Wednesday, April 17th, regular Masses: 7:45 am and 12:10 pm

Confessions: 11:30 am to 12 noon & 1- 7 pm

Tenebrae: 8 pm

Holy Thursday, April 18th, Confessions: 2-4 pm

Mass of the Lord's Supper: 7 pm

Adoration following Mass to 11 pm

Good Friday, April 19th

9 am - 11 am Confessions

11 am Stations of the Cross (devotion)

12 pm to 2 pm: The Seven Last Words (devotion)

3 pm-The Passion of the Lord (Primary Liturgy)

7 pm Stations of the Cross (devotion)

Holy Saturday, April 20th, The Easter Vigil: 8 pm

Easter Sunday, April 21st, regular Sunday Schedule:

8 am, 10:30 am & 7:30 pm

UPCOMING EVENT AFTER EASTER

THE EIGHT DOORS OF THE KINGDOM: MEDITATIONS ON THE BEATITUDES

by Father Jacques Philippe

Using this great spiritual master's contemporary insights, Father Shawn will lead us through this beautiful meditation on the Beatitudes.

Beginning Tuesdays, April 30th at 3 – 4:30 pm and repeated Wednesdays, May 1st at 7 – 8:30 pm. And for the four subsequent Tuesdays or Wednesdays. (Tuesdays: May 7th, 14th, 21st, 28th and Wednesdays: May 8th, 15th, 22nd and 29th)

JACQUES PHILIPPE



The Gospel of St. Matthew shares with us Jesus' astonishing words that promise everlasting happiness. A promise far removed from the usual recipes for gratification. Blessed are the poor in spirit! Blessed are those who mourn! Happy are the meek!... Fr. Jacques shares with us a profound clarity to the full scope of meaning behind Christ's eight beatitudes, and in turn, outlines for us a way in which we can live them in our daily lives. We learn how each beatitude gives insight into how we can situate ourselves in an honest and fulfilling relationship with God, with oneself, and with others, and how to confront head-on the difficult realities of life.

Fr. Jacques Philippe is a member of the Community of the Beatitudes, founded in France in 1973. After studying in Nazareth, Jerusalem, and Rome, he was ordained a priest in 1985. This contemporary spiritual master primarily devotes himself to spiritual direction and preaching retreats internationally, and his published books on spirituality are the consolidated result of such work. His books include a) Real Mercy, Interior Freedom, b) Fire & Light c) Thirsting for Prayer, among others, are also available from Scepter.

To register and get your copy of Father Jacques's book (\$20) please contact Ann Lyng at alyng@cogeco.ca or 613-5465-5521 ext. 5.



THE LIGHT IS ON!!!!

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONFESSION

this upcoming Holy Week

Palm Sunday April 14th, 2 to 4 pm

Monday, April 15th, 11:30 am to 12 noon

Wednesday, April 16th, 11:30 am to 12 noon AND 1 PM TO 7 PM

Holy Thursday, April 17th, 2 to 4 pm

Good Friday, April 18th, 9 to 11 am

Examinations of Conscience and a review of How to Go to Confession are at all the entrances of the cathedral.

PRAYING LENT

From the *Online Ministries*, CREIGHTON UNIVERSITY

Preparing for Holy Thursday

As we prepare to celebrate this wonderful liturgy we begin by entering into a new movement. As this liturgy begins, Lent has ended. Our 40 days of Lent helped us "prepare to celebrate the Paschal Mystery with mind and heart renewed." Now we come to three liturgies which help us experience what is offered us in the new Passover. Each liturgy helps us enter more deeply into the mystery and meaning. Holy Thursday evening takes us to the heart of the gift and to our mission.

The Elect and the Children.

We begin with the Catechumens and Candidates with whom we have been journeying all year. If there are no persons preparing for full communion with us in our parish, or if we have not been aware of them, this is the time to become conscious of and sensitive to the Elect, in our community, our city and around the world. Through the rites of Acceptance and Election, our brothers and sisters have grown to "hunger" for communion with us. We have welcomed them, blessed them, anointed them, and cared for them as our own. For the last three weeks we have prayed for them and supported them in the temptations that come at the end of a long journey.

Each Sunday, as we dismissed them after the homily and before the "Prayer of the Faithful," we told them that we "longed for the day" when we could be with them at the table of the Lord. Throughout the year, our care for them helps us understand who we are, the way a good teacher learns more about a subject through the process of education.

On this night, we act out the meaning of the Eucharist, the meaning of salvation, and the meaning of discipleship.

We remember our children, whom we are continually forming in the life of our faith community. All our community's "religious education" comes to a special focus for our youngest members.

This Holy Thursday liturgy has the Elect in mind, and it is a wonderful night for children. On this night we "act out" the meaning of the Eucharist, the meaning of our salvation, and the meaning of discipleship. In our preparing for Holy Thursday, it helps to enter into this

experience as a member of a community that desires to "show" to our newest and youngest members, who we are and who we desire to be.

The Word.

To begin to prepare, let us read the readings of this Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper. Our chewing starts here, as does our nourishment. The Exodus account of the Passover tradition reminds us of the exit, the liberation, of the people

To come to this night prepared to celebrate, we can reflect on all the reasons we have to be grateful.

in slavery in Egypt, and meal that commemorates it. "This day shall be a memorial feast for you, which all your generations shall celebrate." During our Lenten journey, we have desired greater freedom, and a deeper liberation from the patterns that keep us from being free. We want to come to the Holy Thursday memorial with those desires alive with hunger and thirst.

Psalm 116 asks, "How shall I make a return to the LORD for all the good he has done for me?" The word, "eucharist" means "thanksgiving." To come to this night prepared to celebrate, we can reflect on all the reasons we have to be grateful. The Spirit of Jesus uses the gift of gratitude to gather us for Eucharist.

Paul tells us the simple and profound words of Jesus, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." The gift and the mandate. And Paul says, "For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes." Our celebration on Holy Thursday will show us how to proclaim the meaning of the Lord's gift to us.

John's gospel is a puzzle and a revelation. The account of the

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In addition to this resource for Lent, there are many others to support our journey through Lent. And, there is a ***Lenten Daily Prayer*** for each day of Lent.

www.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/online.html

Last Supper in this gospel does not include the narrative Paul gives us, as do the accounts in Mark, Matthew and Luke. In this account of the Last Supper, Jesus does not take bread and wine, say the prayer of thanksgiving, break the bread and share the cup, with the words, "This is my body; this is my blood; do this in memory of me." In this

By his action Jesus says, here I am as servant for you, do this in memory of me.

narrative of the institution of the Eucharist, Jesus washes his disciples' feet. With this ritual Jesus shows us how he gives us his body and allows his blood to be poured out for us. By his action Jesus says, here I am as servant for you, do this in memory of me.

The Foot Washing.

It is not enough for us to simply hear this gospel and to "break open" this word in a homily. Our tradition is to engage us in the drama of this ritual. So, it is not enough to simply go to the Holy Thursday liturgy and "watch" it happen. We need to prepare.

In the ritual we will experience on Holy Thursday, Jesus washes our feet. The twelve representatives of our community have their feet washed, but each of us is having our feet washed. Each of us needs to "feel" the resistance of Peter. We have to "let" Jesus wash our feet, let Jesus give himself to us, let him be our servant.

One of the best preparations is to "taste" my resistance, my independence, my rationalizing which almost convinces me that I don't need washing or healing or saving. Perhaps I need to "name" the part of my life, the part of myself, I want to surrender to the Lord to be embraced and loved, washed and healed. Perhaps on Thursday morning, I can stand in the shower and experience the Lord's love pour over me. Or, if I live in a part of the world where water is not so plentiful, I can wash my face slowly and thankfully. Preparing is a matter of opening our hearts to the gift we will ritualize on Holy Thursday.

In the ritual we will experience on Holy Thursday, Jesus gives us a "mandate." He gives us the one commandment of the gospel, "Love one another, as I have loved you." He gives his very self to us, is broken and poured out, and calls us to give our very selves, to be broken and poured out, in love for others. It is important for us to "taste" our resistance to love.

We can come to Holy Thursday prepared by our reflection on how difficult it is to love some people, either because we recoil at their "smelly-ness" or because we find them unattractive or unable to love us in return. The liberation happens when we let ourselves have our feet washed by Jesus. Then Eucharist flows from our gratitude. Gratitude is the seed for great loving - the "return" I can make to the Lord for his great love for me.



Just as the foot washing isn't just about those twelve representatives, it isn't just about me and the family and friends I need to love. This ritual can be as big as we prepare to let it be. The love of Jesus is for all of God's people. We need to come to Holy Thursday with the whole world in our hearts. The mandate to love, as Jesus loves, calls us to be people whose self giving love reaches out to all who need liberation and the dignity God desires.

The Table of the Lord.

Now we are prepared for the Eucharist. Now we can say, with a much louder voice, "It is right to give God thanks and praise!" Now, when we remember and celebrate how he loved us, the words are joined to the ritual of foot washing, servanthood, ministry for others. Now, when we open our hands to receive his body and blood, we can feel, with great devotion, the power of this gift and the meaning of its mission.

The Stripping of the Altar and Sanctuary.

Our final preparation is to be ready to appreciate the ritual of transition with which Holy Thursday concludes. The Body and Blood of Jesus, which we share at this Eucharist is taken to a special place, so that we might continue to be nourished with this Sacrament on Good Friday.

Then our liturgy engages us in a rich ritual. The altar and the whole sanctuary are stripped bare. With this solemn gesture, we ritualize what we as a community are doing to prepare for Good Friday. We strip our focus down to Jesus alone. All the signs and symbols are put aside. We are left with the taste of the Eucharist and the gratitude in our hearts. We leave in focused silence. We leave with the image of Jesus, as servant for us, our hearts readied to celebrate the mystery of his passion and death for us.

PRAYING LENT

From the *Online Ministries*, CREIGHTON UNIVERSITY

Preparing for Good Friday

Good Friday Opening Prayer:

**Remember your mercies, O Lord,
and with your eternal protection sanctify your
servants,
for whom Christ your Son,
by the shedding of his Blood,
established the Paschal Mystery.
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.**

We enter the liturgy on Good Friday in silence. We don't need a "gathering rite." It is as though we have been "gathered" since the night before. The first act of the liturgy is for the Presider and ministers to lay face down before the cross, in silence. As with all liturgical rituals, that invites *us* to lay prostrate before the cross as well. That takes some preparation.

*When the Presider lays face down,
perhaps I will want to simply open my
hands and say "I know this is for me;
thank you."*

We can prepare to begin the Good Friday celebration by reflecting upon ourselves laying there - with all the feelings we want to identify and pay attention to. Our feelings may not be consistent or even inspiring. I might feel awe, gratitude, guilt, powerlessness, all at once. In my reflection preparing for Good Friday, I prepare that brief silent moment at the beginning of the service. Perhaps I will want to simply open my hands when the Presider lays face down and say "I know this is all for me; thank you."

The scripture readings take on a special power today, from the quiet and solemnity of the service.

The General Intercessions

These prayers, and their style, are perhaps the oldest liturgical ritual we have. They link us to the prayer of our sisters and brothers down through the centuries. They also give us a sense of our long tradition of public prayer. The Presider makes an invitation to pray - saying who it is we pray for and

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what it is that we ask. We respond to the invitation with our silent prayer. Then, the Presider prays out loud in our name, first praising God and naming how God has been loving and caring for the person or need we present, then asking for a particular grace. We affirm that prayer with our "Amen." We could prepare for these great intercessions by reflection on our prayer for each of the people and needs to the right. That will help us with our responding to the invitation to pray in silence, and to appreciate the powerful words of these ancient prayers.

Adoration of the Holy Cross.

We adore the cross upon which our Savior gained for us the salvation of the world. We do that concretely by venerating an actual cross in our churches, which represents that divine act of love. This rite of veneration is called "The Showing of the Holy Cross."

Visit the *Online Ministries* site: **Praying Lent.**

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www.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/online.html

To "venerate" is becoming a lost experience to many of our cultures. In our growing "equal-itarianism," we want and expect everyone to be "equal" (which is a good thing). But, sometimes it is at the expense of reverence. To revere a wise person, an extraordinary role model, or someone who has struggled heroically, is still very important. And part of that is to have reverence for places or objects or symbols which are full of meaning and very special significance for us, because they re-connect us with relationships.

Visiting the place where I grew up, holding a newborn baby, treasuring a gift from a loved one, seeing a photograph or piece of art that stirs my spirit, and a thousand other places and things, all can become "religious" and objects of veneration.

We revere and venerate the wood of the cross, because our Savior was nailed there, and gave his life for us there. Preparing for this special veneration on Good Friday is very important. We may want to pray by making the Stations of the Cross, in our church, or in the privacy of our home, or with our Online version at:
<http://www.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/stations.html>

We want to be prepared to touch, kiss, embrace the cross with the greatest devotion we can express. We want our gesture to be able to ritualize our acceptance for the love, forgiveness and everlasting life that flows from that cross. We want to feel the love of Jesus, to feel it as being "for me," and to express our grateful response as reverence.

Receiving the Eucharist from the Holy Thursday Celebration of the Lord's Supper.

We fast from celebrating the Eucharist today, but we are gathered by the Spirit to re-connect with our celebration of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday. We do not want to forget what that liturgy continues to mean for us. This is the bread that gives life. This is his self-giving love for us. This is our nourishment for our mission.



Prayer After Communion.

**Almighty ever-living God,
who have restored us to life
by the blessed Death, Resurrection
of your Christ,
preserve in us the work of your mercy,
that, by partaking of this mystery,
we may have a life unceasingly devoted to you.
Through Christ our Lord.**

Departing in Silence, Again.

With closing prayer and a blessing, we again depart in silence. We are a people who are full of faith, but who continue to wait for the fullness of our redemption. Our leaving in silence links this celebration to the Easter Vigil, as our beginning in silence connected us with Holy Thursday.

Good Friday Closing Prayer:

**May abundant blessings, O Lord, we pray,
descend upon your people,
who have honored the Death of your Son
in the hope of their resurrection:
may pardon come,
comfort be given,
holy faith increase,
and everlasting redemption be made secure.**

**After the celebration, the altar is stripped
but the cross remains with two candles lit.**

PRAYING LENT

From the *Online Ministries*, CREIGHTON UNIVERSITY

Preparing for the Easter Vigil

Darkness

The Easter Vigil begins with darkness. The darkness itself is the first movement of the liturgy, so we begin our preparations with that darkness. It represents all darkness, and all the meanings of darkness - devoid of light; evil thoughts, motivations, deeds; all that is hidden and secret, deceitful and dishonest, divisive and abusive, immoral and sinful. It's the darkness of our world, and the darkness in my heart. If I come to the vigil and restlessly and impatiently fidget in the dark "until something happens," I miss the power of what is about to happen. So, we prepare by readying ourselves to experience the darkness. It is distasteful and reprehensible, embarrassing and humbling, fearful and despairing.

Then a light is struck. It breaks into the darkness.

"Make this new fire holy, and inflame us with new hope."

"May the light of Christ, rising in glory, dispel the darkness of our hearts and minds."

The Light of Christ

The candle lit from the new fire is then processed into the community, and we receive its light and experience the power of that light as it grows. When the candle is brought front and center, we hear the Easter Proclamation, or Exultet. [It can be found in the Online Ministries at: www.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/Lent/exultet.html]

Nine readings and eight psalms help us with our night's vigil. "The reading of the word of God is the fundamental element of the Easter Vigil."

This prayer sounds like a Eucharistic Prayer. We give thanks and praise over this symbol of the Light of Christ in our midst and "consecrate" it as Christ's presence among us. Reading this proclamation carefully and letting its joyful song into our hearts is a wonderful way to prepare to feel its exultant praise at the Vigil.

"Dear friends in Christ, we have begun our solemn vigil. Let us now listen attentively to the word of God, recalling how God saved his people throughout history and, in the fullness of time, sent his own Son to be our Redeemer."

The Word of Our Salvation History

There are nine readings and eight psalms or songs that have been prepared to help us with our night's vigil. Each reading is followed by an invitation to pray in silence, which is followed by a special prayer designed for that reading. (The help that comes with the liturgy says this: "The number of readings from the Old Testament may be reduced for pastoral reasons, but it must always be borne in mind that the reading of the word of God is the fundamental element of the Easter Vigil.") If we have time on Saturday, a wonderful way to prepare for the Vigil would be to read the readings and psalms and then articulate prayer to the Lord, expressing gratitude to God for an extraordinary story of fidelity and love for us.



After the last reading from the Old Testament, the candles are lit and the bells ring as we sing our *Glory to God*. Now we are ready to hear the New Testament word in the light of Christ, and the good news, "He has been raised!" Powerful religious experience is prepared for. At this point in the liturgy, we want to be prepared to be exultant with joy at the resurrection of Jesus - the victory of our God over sin and death - for us.

The Liturgy of Baptism

The Presiders and ministers go to the font of baptism, thereby drawing us together there. (The ritual says that if the font can't be

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And, there is a *Lenten Daily Prayer* for each day of Lent and Easter Week.

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seen by the congregation, then "water is placed in the sanctuary.") Those who are to be baptized are called forward, along with their sponsors. In our excitement for them, we realize that this is very much about the renewal of our whole community. Initiation and revitalization become one this night.

"Dear friends in Christ, as our brothers and sisters approach the waters of rebirth, let us help them by our prayers and ask God, our almighty Father, to support them with his mercy and love."

The Litany

We turn to the community of saints in glory to ask for their help. We remember that we do this same litany before the ordination of priests. As we turn to each of these saints we recall how these very special women and men journeyed in situations very much like ours and let God transform their lives, and that they are now in glory interceding for us. In our hearts we might also turn to the saints we have known, who are not part of this list, whose love we have known and to whom we can turn tonight to intercede for these candidates for baptism and for our whole community.

"Give new life to these chosen ones by the grace of baptism."

The Blessing of the Water

The Presider now blesses the water. These wonderful prayers are like a mini lesson, both for those about to be baptized, and for us. We can prepare by praying this prayer before the Vigil, at the link to the right. When the priest inserts the candle in the water and pull it out and lifts it up, we experience the ritual that announces the meaning of our baptism into these waters - one with him in dying that we might be one with him in rising.

All the power of this night's rituals and sacraments, lead us to celebrate the Eucharist, to "give thanks and praise."

The Profession of Faith and Renunciation of Evil

We have renewed our baptismal promises many times. We can prepare to make the Easter Vigil a powerful experience of grace if we make each of the renunciations and professions with a meaning that is personal to us.

"Do you reject sin, so as to live in the freedom of God's children?"

That question begs me to spontaneously say, "YES! Of course!" But, reflection tells me that I long to be free at the same time that I cling to some of my unfreedoms. So the next question takes me deeper.

"Do you reject the glamour of evil, and refuse to be mastered by sin?"

There really is a glamour to evil and it does claim a mastery over me. The renunciation that is asked of me is about freedom, so I am asked if I will personally choose to be free and reject the rules the sin and darkness.

"Do you reject Satan, father of sin and prince of darkness?"

Now I am ready to profess the faith of the Church, choosing to believe in the One who gives me life.

Baptism and the Rites Explaining Baptism

The candidates are baptized. Even if our church isn't able to immerse the baptized into the water, the ritual of pouring water over their heads is meant to be a sign of their entry into the waters of baptism. We should feel the power of this moment and open our hearts to its joy, for them and for ourselves.

The newly baptized are anointed, with the same oil used to anoint priests.

"He now anoints you with the chrism of salvation, so that, united with his people, you may remain forever a member of Christ who is Priest, Prophet, and King."

They are then clothed in a white garment.

"You have become a new creation and have clothed yourselves in Christ. Receive this baptismal garment and bring it unstained to the judgment seat of our Lord Jesus Christ, so that you may have everlasting life."

Finally, they receive a candle lit from the Easter fire.

"You have been enlightened by Christ. Walk always as children of the light and keep the flame of faith alive in your hearts. When the Lord comes, may you go out to meet him with all the saints in the heavenly kingdom."

The Celebration of Confirmation

The newly baptized and those who are about to be received into full communion are ready to "share in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit." We all pray in silence, and feel the power of God's Spirit among us. And in silence, the Presider lays hands on each person, the same sign used in ordination to the priesthood. As they are anointed, we can imagine the gifts of the Spirit that we have received and can let ourselves feel the grace offered us to be strong witnesses to the union with Jesus in mission that we are offered. The newly confirmed take their places in the assembly of the faithful, ready to join us for the first time at the table of the Lord.

The Eucharist

All our preparations, all the power of this night's rituals and sacraments, lead us to celebrate the Eucharist, to "give God thanks and praise." As the newly confirmed receive the final Sacrament of Initiation, the Body and Blood of Jesus, we are ready to celebrate Easter.

The tomb is empty. There is Light in the midst of our darkness. We've been fed by the Word and given new life in the waters of baptism. Now we eat his Body and drink his Blood and receive the life in him that he promises.

Alleluia, Alleluia!