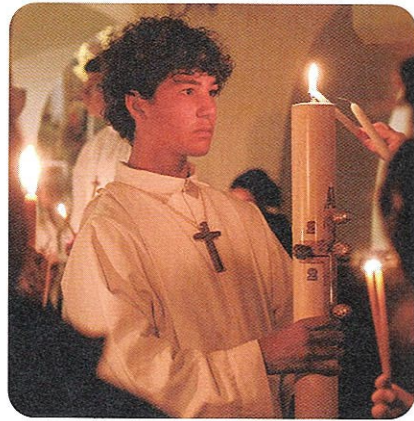


# Dear Padre,

*I'm thinking about going to the Easter Vigil, but why does it have to be so long?*

When an event seems long, it may have to do with our expectations. If we go to the Easter Vigil and expect it to be like a Sunday Mass, then it will seem long. The typical parish Easter Vigil lasts two to three hours. There are some communities who vigil all night. Why does it have to be so long? Because this is one night of the year when we Catholics tell our whole story.

There are four parts of the Vigil. Part One is the *Lucernarium* (Light) when we gather around the paschal fire from which the paschal candle is lit. Then follows the passing of the light to members of the congregation, who are holding candles. By candlelight, we hear the Exsultet—the Easter Proclamation, sung only on this night. Part Two is the Liturgy of the Word, when we take our time listening to readings, singing psalms, and reflecting on salvation history. Part Three is the Sacraments of Initiation, when new members are welcomed into the Church, baptized, and confirmed, and all renew their baptismal promises. And Part Four is the Liturgy of the Eucharist, when new members receive holy Communion for the first time. The Easter Vigil is rich with meaning, solemn as well as joyful, and to fully experience it, we must take our time. ●



ALEXANDROS MICHALIDIS / SHUTTERSTOCK

## The Redemptorists / Dear Padre.org

### Monday

April 14  
*Monday of Holy Week*  
Is 42:1–7  
Jn 12:1–11

### Tuesday

April 15  
*Tuesday of Holy Week*  
Is 49:1–6  
Jn 13:21–33, 36–38

### Wednesday

April 16  
*Wednesday of Holy Week*  
Is 50:4–9a  
Mt 26:14–25

### Thursday

April 17  
*Thursday of Holy Week (Holy Thursday)*  
*Chrism Mass:*

Is 61:1–3a, 6a, 8b–9  
Rv 1:5–8  
Lk 4:16–21  
*Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper:*

Ex 12:1–8, 11–14  
1 Cor 11:23–26  
Jn 13:1–15

### Friday

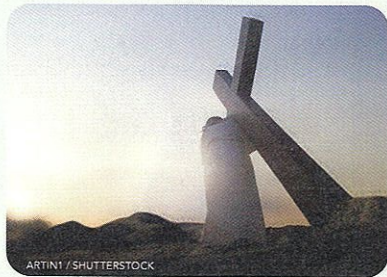
April 18  
*Friday of the Passion of the Lord (Good Friday)*  
Is 52:13–53:12  
Heb 4:14–16; 5:7–9  
Jn 18:1–19:42

### Saturday

April 19  
*Holy Saturday (Easter Vigil)*  
Gn 1:1–2:2 or 1:1, 26–31a  
Gn 22:1–18 or 22:1–2, 9a, 10–13, 15–18  
Ex 14:15–15:1  
Is 54:5–14  
Is 55:1–11  
Bar 3:9–15, 32–4:4  
Ez 36:16–17a, 18–28  
Rom 6:3–11  
Lk 24:1–12

### Sunday

April 20  
*Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord*  
Acts 10:34a, 37–43  
Col 3:1–4 or 1 Cor 5:6b–8  
Jn 20:1–9



## A WORD FROM POPE FRANCIS

*We are preparing to celebrate the victory of the Lord Jesus Christ over sin and death.... But today, there is a war.... Christ bore his cross to free us from the dominion of evil. He died so that life, love, peace may reign.... What victory is there in planting a flag on a pile of rubble?*

ANGELUS, ROME, APRIL 10, 2022

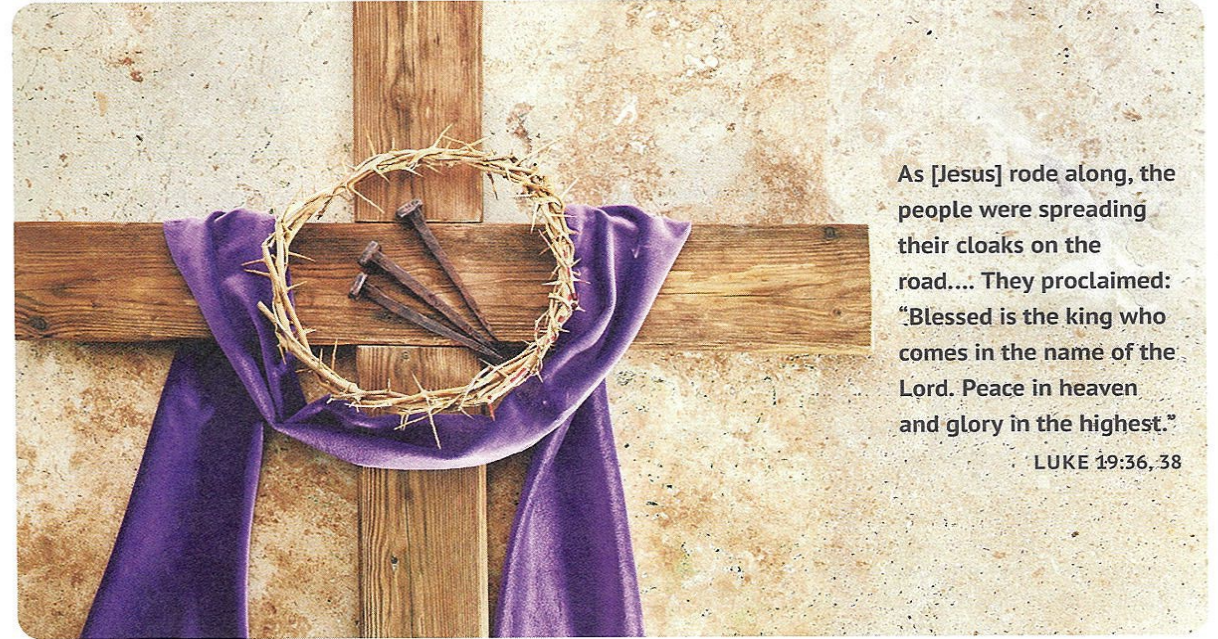
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# Our Parish COMMUNITY

April 13, 2025

**Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord (C)**

Luke 19:28–40 / Isaiah 50:4–7 / Philippians 2:6–11 / Luke 22:14–23:56 or 23:1–49



As [Jesus] rode along, the people were spreading their cloaks on the road.... They proclaimed: "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord. Peace in heaven and glory in the highest."

LUKE 19:36, 38

## The Emptying Process

FR. JOSEPH JUKNIALIS

**W**e like to fill life with good things—good friends, good times, good jobs, good memories. They are all graced moments of life. Life is also marked by an emptying process. Friends move away, good times come to an end, jobs become boring. Saint Teresa of Kolkata (Mother Teresa) once noted how even God can't fill what is already full. The emptying process may very well be the action of God in our lives, emptying us to make room for God's gift of resurrection and life in its fullest.

Holy Week is the story of such a process—one long saga that begins with Palm Sunday as it focuses on how Jesus willingly emptied himself even unto death. The story moves on to Holy Thursday and the gift of the Eucharist to sustain us in the emptying. On to Good Friday, where, once more, a narration in stark liturgical strokes tell of the emptying of Jesus. Finally, the Easter Vigil and the Feast of the Resurrection, the culmination of a journey through death into life. We tell this weeklong story because the story of Jesus is also our story—more of God working in us rather than our own doing. The Jesuit theologian Karl Rahner once noted that one of the tasks of life is to learn how to die well. Our willingness to learn that lesson, again and again, is how we begin to share in the resurrection, even as we live our lives today. ●

### Reflect

*How does my faith help me through times of emptiness?*

**Pastor:**  
Rev. Thien Nguyen, SVD  
tdnguyen@dwc.org  
Phone: 304-364-5895

**Director of Religious Education**  
Mrs. Pat McPherson  
Email ppy82pjm@hotmail.com  
More information on our parish website:  
<https://stthomasgassaway.org>

**Sharing God's Blessings**

Date	Collection
April 5&6	\$ 1095

**Catholic Sharing Appeal Raised \$1,790 (34%) of \$5,300 with 9 gifts.**  
Thanks for your contribution

**CCD Class will be held on April 13 & 27**  
Parents, please bring your kids to the class

- Bishop Mark Brennan will meet our Elects and Candidates and their God parents, Sponsors at 7:00 p.m on April 19, 2025

**HOLY WEEK ECUMENICAL SERVICES**

Please join us to  
**The Schedule as follow:**  
**Monday, April 14 at St. Thomas**  
Tuesday April 15 at the Methodist church in Sutton  
Wed April 16 at the Methodist church in Gassaway  
**Each Church will have lunch and then pray together.**  
**From 12:00 a.m —1:00 p.m**  
Everyone is Welcome. Thanks.

**LITURGY SCHEDULE**

**THIS HOLY WEEK**

SATURDAY: 5:00 p.m  
SUNDAY 11:00 a.m  
WEEKDAY: Tue, Wed 5:00 p.m  
*Thur and Fri 6:00 p.m*

**MASS INTENTIONS**

Saturday April 12 for *Beata's intentions*  
**SUNDAY APRIL 13**  
**FOR PARISHIONERS OF ST. THOMAS**  
**Tue, April 15** —for Beata's intentions  
**Wed, April 16** for Beata's intentions  
HOLY TRIDUUM SCHEDULE IS BELOW

Bishop Mark Brennan will celebrate the Easter Vigil at St. Thomas on April 19, where he will welcome 13 people into full communion with the Catholic Church—10 from St. Thomas and three from Risen Lord Mission in Clay. His presence will be a great encouragement to our parishioners as we continue sharing the Gospel with the people of West Virginia!

**PLEASE JOIN OUR BISHOP AND US TO CELEBRATE, PRAY FOR OUR NEW MEMBERS, AND WELCOME THEM INTO OUR FAITH COMMUNITY.**

As St. Arnold Janssen, founder of the SVD, said:  
**"To proclaim the Good News is the first and greatest act of love of neighbor."**



**Pastor's Pondering**

**Have a Blessed Palm Sunday!**

We have finally entered Holy Week, the holiest week of the entire year. Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday, which commemorates Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, culminating in a great public demonstration of acclaim.

This week, we begin the commemoration of the high points in the history of salvation: the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ — the Paschal Mystery.

Today, we accompany Jesus on His solemn entry into Jerusalem, where He will suffer, die, and rise again. On this day, the Passion narrative is read. The Church calls us on Palm Sunday to look toward the Cross and recognize Christ's immense love for us, encouraging us to be true followers of Christ — not just part of the crowd.

Lent ends on the evening of Holy Thursday, and we begin the Sacred Triduum — the three days from the evening of Holy Thursday to the evening of Easter Sunday.

**Holy Thursday** commemorates the Last Supper and Christ's institution of the Sacraments of the Holy Eucharist and the Sacred Priesthood. We bring to the altar the blessed oils, consecrated by our Bishop, Mark, to be used for the sacraments throughout the year. As an act of service and ministry, our priest will wash the feet of several parishioners, just as Jesus washed the feet of His disciples. The liturgy concludes on a somber note as we keep vigil with the Blessed Sacrament until midnight, echoing the Apostles who kept vigil with our Lord in the Garden of Gethsemane.

**Good Friday** is the *Celebration of the Lord's Passion*, commemorating the Crucifixion. It is the most sorrowful day of the entire year. On Good Friday, the Sacrifice of the Mass is not celebrated. Instead, we gather for the solemn Celebration of the Lord's Passion.

**Easter Vigil:** Bishop Mark Brennan will celebrate the Easter Vigil at St. Thomas on April 19 at 8:00 PM. During this special liturgy, he will welcome 13 individuals into full communion with the Catholic Church — 10 from St. Thomas and 3 from Risen Lord Mission in Clay. His presence will be a great encouragement to our parishioners as we continue sharing the Gospel with the people of West Virginia!

**PLEASE JOIN OUR BISHOP AND US TO CELEBRATE, PRAY FOR OUR NEW MEMBERS, AND WELCOME THEM INTO OUR FAITH COMMUNITY.**

On **Easter Sunday**, we renew our baptismal promises and glorify Christ in His Resurrection.

As we approach this sacred week, I pray that each of us takes time to reflect on the Passion of Jesus. If you have never participated in any of the Holy Week liturgies, I strongly encourage you to do so — you will not regret it. The liturgies of the Triduum are worth taking time off work and rearranging our schedules for. Attentive participation in Holy Week will deepen our relationship with God, increase our faith, and strengthen our lives as disciples of Jesus. **HAVE A BLESSED HOLY WEEK.**  
*Fr. Thien*



**THANK YOU**

**A Big Thank You** to Marian Agostino, Connie Moore, Collen Mahon, Pat McPherson, Dale & Louise Elwood, Rick Allen, and Mac Bailes, Fr. Dominic Pham and 6 volunteers from St. Joseph the Worker, Weirton, WV for the help for the Food Pantry April 9 & 10  
**We served 119 families this month and 15 moms in need of diapers, baby wipe, high chair, clothes**  
*"If you can't feed a hundred people, then feed just one."* Mother Teresa  
**Also, Thanks All Benefactors have been supporting us with this ministry.** ~ Fr. Thien

**Holy Land Collection for Good Friday**

Pope Francis has asked our parish to support the Pontifical Good Friday Collection, which helps Christians in the Holy Land. Through the Pontifical Good Friday Collection, you stand in solidarity with the Church in the Holy Land as a witness of peace, supporting Catholics there in parishes and schools, maintaining Christian shrines and caring for refugees in the Holy Land.

**Almsgiving During Lent: CRS Rice Bowls**

- Please bring your bowls in on Easter Sunday. Thanks

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY**

Westley Carpenter Apr. 16  
Ciaran McLaughlin Apr. 18  
**Wishing you all Happy & Blessed Birthday**

**Notice:** We are looking for Volunteers both Children and Adults to participate in the Holy Thursday Mass **by having your feet washed.**

*The Mass of Lord's Supper (Holy Thursday): The Mass concludes with a procession of the Blessed Sacrament to the place of reposition in the Hall, where adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament takes place until midnight.* Please sign up the lists in the vestibule FOR ADORATION. Thanks.

**Fr. Thien**

**Holy Week—Easter Liturgy Schedule—at St Thomas**

Holy Thursday April 17, 2024	<b>The Mass of Lord's Supper</b> <b>Please sign up the list for Washing feet</b> The Mass concludes with a procession to the Altar of Repose in the Hall this year where adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament takes place until midnight or (Please sign up the list)	6:00 P.M
Good Friday April 18 (Fast & Abstinence)	<b>Celebration of the Lord's Passion</b>	6:00 P.M
Holy Saturday April 19	<b>EASTER VIGIL - Bishop Mark Branen will be presider</b>	8:00 P.M
Sunday of Easter April 20	<b>Easter Sunday Mass at Risen Lord</b> <b>EASTER SUNDAY MASS—St. Thomas</b>	8:30 am 11:00 A.M

Last Thursday April 9 & 10, our parish, St. Thomas Food Pantry gave about 6,500 pounds of meat and foodstuff to 119 families. And they assisted 14 mothers who needed diapers, baby wipes, highchairs, clothes and formula. Six volunteers traveled almost three hours one way from Weirton to Gassaway to help. To serve others, they awoke at 3 a.m. to arrive at St. Thomas by 8 a.m. This group of volunteers also found the benefactor who donated the forklift to St. Thomas Food Pantry, enabling us to continue serving people. We are so grateful for all the support! THANKS ALL BENEFACTORS AND VOLUNTEERS!

**March 26 & 27, Risen Lord Food Pantry served food for 259 family of the needy in Clay County. Thank you all Benefactors and Volunteers.**



