

It is Important to Remember

Holy Week – April 9, 2017

As a child, I did not appreciate Holy Week in the way I do today. There were parts I liked, candles, incense, waving palms and getting a new Easter dress. But I did not have an appreciation for the enormous story and truth that was being celebrated around me in those formative years. I was formally indoctrinated into the rituals and prayers of the Church. We never missed Mass. Seriously; we never missed unless we were VERY sick. We never missed anything of Holy Week either. So in the midst of all that ritual and prayer something must have stuck as I've passed into adulthood with a much deeper appreciation of what we as Christians celebrate on this holiest of weeks. The Church reminds us that it is important to remember.

The Church says that it's important to take time each year to consciously remember that the Church cannot celebrate Easter without celebrating Good Friday. We can't enter into the joy of the Resurrection without first entering into the depth of what Christ sacrificed for us, his life on the cross of Calvary. We must, as the People of God, keep reentering into this mystery, allowing the grace of the Holy Spirit to penetrate our lives, transforming us into Christ's disciples.

The events of Palm Sunday, Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday unfold into the story of the salvation of the world. This is something we are not to forget. Yet, it is easy to get busy with life, with kids and grandkids, letting this thing called salvation get put to the back burner. It's easy to be busy living life not entering into the mystery of God. Palm Sunday calls us to gather and process into the church as true followers of Jesus, renewing and remembering that he is King and Lord of all.

On Holy Thursday it is important to remember that Jesus instituted the celebration of the Eucharist at the Last Supper. This is the greatest gift we have, the Real Presence of the Living God. At each Mass Jesus transforms the bread and wine into this Body and Blood. Jesus himself tells us to **"Do this in memory of me."** He also demonstrated on the night of his Last Supper that to be one of his followers we must kneel before our brothers and sisters to wash their feet. We are called by the Lord himself to remember and to do as he has done. On Good Friday the Church enters into a time of grief and suspension. No Mass is celebrated. No Mass is allowed anywhere in the world on this day. We take time to remember Jesus' great sacrifice and death on the cross.

As we gather around the fire of Holy Saturday we remember that the truth of Jesus' victory over death has been celebrated for 2000 years. Before electricity and modern conveniences, cell phones and social media, the word of God, the message of Christ was shared and remembered around a simple fire. This is the night to remember. This is the night when Christians celebrate Jesus passing from death to new life. Our own death will be transformed because Jesus did this for us.

As the Church celebrates the joy of Easter morning, we stop to remember that this season is just beginning. Easter is not over on Sunday. Rather, Easter continues for 50 days. This truth is so important that the Church calls us to realize that this is a season of continual renewal and new life. Together let us celebrate this great mystery and remember what Jesus has done for each and everyone in the world.

Happy Easter!!

Sue Schettler

