

HOLY WEEK



The last week of Lent is Holy Week. The week begins on Palm Sunday and ends on Holy Saturday night.

PALM SUNDAY is the beginning of Holy Week. There are two Gospels this Sunday. The first one is read at the beginning of Mass and reminds us of how Jesus came to Jerusalem to celebrate the feast of Passover with his friends. He arrived into the city on a donkey and the people waved palms and shouted 'hosanna' as he passed by. This was their way of showing that they believed that Jesus was indeed the 'Messiah,' the one sent by God to save them. This is why we bless palms and carry them in procession to church at the beginning of Mass on Palm Sunday. Then we take the palms home with us and put them somewhere that we can see them during the coming year. The priest wears red vestments today because red is the colour of blood and reminds us of Jesus' death on the cross. The second Gospel is the story of how Jesus was crucified. We call it the Passion and we will hear this Gospel again on Good Friday.



THE TRIDUUM

The last three days of the week are called the Triduum. The Easter Triduum is the most important celebration in the Church year. Triduum means 'three days' and it begins on **Holy Thursday** with the Mass of the Lord's Supper. Jesus knew it was time to leave his friends and he wanted to share one last meal with them. We call this meal 'The Last Supper.' Jesus did two very important things at the Last Supper; he washed his disciples' feet and then he took bread, broke it, blessed it and shared it with his friends. He did the same with the cup of wine. He told his disciples to 'do this in memory of me.' So when we come to Mass we are remembering what Jesus did at the Last Supper and doing what he did. At the end of this Mass the Blessed Sacrament is removed from the Tabernacle and brought to a special place in the church where it will remain until **Holy Saturday** when we next celebrate Mass.



On **Good Friday** we remember that Jesus died on the cross. In church on Good Friday we listen to the story of Jesus' death and then we are invited to come and kiss the cross. On this day we celebrate Jesus' triumph over death and that is why we call the day 'Good.'

The **Triduum** continues on **Holy Saturday** night with the Vigil Mass during which we light both the Paschal Fire and a new Paschal Candle, we listen to the story of our faith and we bless holy water. Many new Christians are welcomed into the community by being baptised on this night. On Easter Sunday we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. The Easter season continues until Pentecost Sunday.

