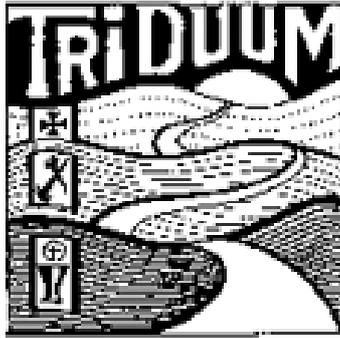


Preparing the liturgies of the Triduum:

Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper Service of Good Friday Easter Vigil



As a parish looking to these celebrations it is helpful to carry with you some starting points for consideration:

- Think of these liturgies as one celebration – we are greeted at the beginning of Thursday evening's liturgy and are not dismissed again until the end of the Easter vigil.
- These liturgies mark the high point of the whole of our Church year. As parishioners we should come away from them knowing that what we have experienced was indeed that highpoint.
- All the liturgical resources of the parish should come together to prepare, celebrate and evaluate these liturgies. We shouldn't be afraid to say that we need our best musicians, readers etc for these celebrations – if we regard them highly enough it will be obvious that we would want our best for them.
- In these liturgies we meet many unique rituals that we only celebrate once a year – this calls us to celebrate them well, but to do so with a sense of the familiar. Reinventing what we do every year hinders, rather than aids, the assembly/congregation from entering into them.

- For each of these days think of how the space will be for people who walk into the Church – how will you create an atmosphere/space of welcome, hospitality, reverence and solemnity? This draws on the physical space itself (light, heating, décor, tidiness, freshness etc.) but also on the people themselves as they gather and the ministers of the liturgy who serve the prayer of the congregation.
- In these liturgies we will encounter many symbols: how do we make them speak as loudly as possible? Symbols such as the taking, blessing and sharing of bread and wine, the washing of feet, the veneration of one cross, the gathering and blessing of a fire, the sharing of the light of Christ, the waters of baptism, the pouring of oil...Notice how the “things” of symbols find their life in the actions we do with them. If we can’t taste bread and wine, see water, touch wood, feel the heat of fire, smell the perfume of oil, we haven’t allowed the symbols to breathe for us.
- In these liturgies we encounter much movement and procession. How do we choreograph this element? Who processes where? What music accompanies that procession? How are the people facilitated to know and claim their role/posture in the movements?
- The musical demands of the liturgy are greatest in these days. Do we know and facilitate the different styles of sung prayer – acclamations; psalms; hymnody; processional music; choir pieces; accompaniments to liturgical actions, i.e. washing of feet, veneration of the cross; litanies...
- We celebrate these days as a Christian community called to serve and be served. Encourage all ministers to support one another in these days.
- Each day has its own focus – know what these are and use them to help you prepare.

