

# PALM SUNDAY

March 16, 2008

40/3/50  
THE PASCHAL SEASON

Matthew 21:1-11

“Who is this?” As we recall this joyous celebration of the arrival of the prophet, Jesus of Nazareth we are also aware of what lies ahead, as Jesus was. At the start of this momentous week, let me sit and ponder this familiar story. Can I read it afresh, as though for the first time?

## MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK OF MARCH 17<sup>TH</sup>

Wednesday	7:30 p.m.	Chrism Mass – Saint Joseph Cathedral
Thursday	7:00 p.m.	Mass of the Lord’s Supper
Friday	3:00 p.m.	Celebration of the Lord’s Passion
	7:00 p.m.	Reflection/Meditation
Saturday	9:00 p.m.	Easter Vigil Coleman McConnell by the CWG Mario Mello by Dulce Lopes and Delia Mello
Easter Sunday	9:00 a.m.	Donald Mondor by Mary Callahan & Les Philippe
	11:00 a.m.	James Graham by Rosemary Lafreniere

**WEEKEND COLLECTIONS:** \$746.09 (Due to snow storm) Thank you!

## OUR FORTY-DAY LENTEN JOURNEY REACHES ITS GOAL

This coming week, on Holy Thursday evening, Lent comes to an end, or better it reaches its intended goal: the celebration of the Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ in the annual **Three Great Days**. The insert to the bulletin indicates the special services and the times that mark these special days. It also gives a brief description/explanation of these services.

We are not simply celebrating the Passover from death to life of Jesus Christ as a past event. Rather, we celebrate our Christian Passover, our participation in Christ’s Passover as we live it daily, weekly, annually in our own lives. We bring into clearer focus the basic orientation of our lives as Christians which we draw from Jesus Christ and which we celebrate starting Holy Thursday evening, leading to Good Friday liturgy, reaching its climax in the Easter Vigil.

Could we make an honest attempt to have life as usual stop from Thursday evening to Easter Sunday? Is that asking too much? Could we at least try on this Good Friday and on this Holy Saturday to refrain from doing certain things we normally do on any other Friday and Saturday of the year? Our being Christian can only benefit from it.



**The impact of the snowstorm on our Sunday Masses last weekend** That was quite a storm last weekend! For many it was hard to get out of the house and to get to church. Yes, we had our Masses, but there were not too many participants. Understandably so! What got squeezed was the **Share Lent** collection for **Development and Peace**. Don’t worry. You can hand in your contribution (which ideally is what we have saved by our fasting during Lent) the next few Sundays. Thank you.

## Still two time slots for Individual Confessions

Last Thursday evening we had our Communal Reconciliation Service. The same sacrament can also be celebrated in a more individual manner, in the so-called individual confessions:

**Monday, March 17** 4:30 – 5:30 p.m.

**Tuesday, March 18** 7:00 - 8:00 p.m.

It is understood that anyone can approach a priest at any time for the sacrament of God’s Forgiveness. **Please note:** No individual confessions are scheduled during the **Three Great Days**. The reason for that is that Lent

ends on Holy Thursday evening. The Sacrament of Reconciliation, whether celebrated individually or communally, is properly a Lenten practice. In this way we keep the **Three Great Days** free for celebrating the immense mystery of our faith.



### **After Holy Thursday's Mass: Please, observe a Prayerful Silence**

It is nice to see people mingle and chat after Sunday Mass. The one time we should refrain from that is after Holy Thursday's Mass. On Holy Thursday we keep some consecrated bread and wine on the altar; they contain for us the self-giving of Jesus, his Body and Blood. It is good to take some extra time to sit/kneel/stand in awe and adoration of that. That is what the period of adoration after Holy Thursday's Service is all about; we want to make that possible for each other by observing a prayerful silence.

### **Washing Feet on Holy Thursday**

Washing of the feet is very much part of the Holy Thursday service. In this, at first sight, embarrassing gesture, the basic thrust of what we celebrate in the **Three Great Days** is summed up: God's love for us in Jesus Christ, God's becoming the servant of us all. In Peter's estimation that is not God-like enough, so Peter objects. But if Peter seeks salvation, he must "allow" Jesus to be his God-given servant.



There is no reason why the number of persons who have their feet washed should be limited to twelve. In Jesus, God wants to be servant of us all. Hence, all should feel free to be part of this strange, but powerful gesture.

### **Palm Sunday (March 16) after 11 AM Mass: The Lent Event**

Holy Week is precious for us as Christians because of what we celebrate at the end of that week, during those **Three Great Days**. Let us do something extra to get us in the right frame of mind: **The Lent Event**. A number of activities are being planned that adults, youth, and children can take part in. In other words, this is not something for children only. We would like it to be intergenerational. We could all benefit from it, and it could serve as a good example of ongoing faith formation.

It starts with a potluck lunch after the 11:00 Mass in the basement. And that is followed by activities and crafts in the church from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. Please bring a potluck dish or dessert to share!

### **Chrism Mass: this Wednesday, March 19, 7:30 p.m. at the Cathedral**

The Archbishop invites us to participate in the *Chrism Mass* at which he will consecrate and bless the oils used for Baptism and Confirmation and for the Anointing of the Sick. At the end of the Mass, he will distribute them to representatives from the parishes where these oils will be used in the course of the year.

The Chrism Mass is celebrated at Saint-Joseph Cathedral (245, boul. St-Joseph, Hull sector). It would be good if we had a decent representation from our parish there to honour our place in the Gatineau Diocese and our bond with our Bishop.

**Interested in knowing more about the Services of the Three Great Days?** This Sunday evening, the Confirmation candidates have one of their meetings starting at 7:00 p.m. A good part of the evening is meant to serve as an introduction to the services of the **Three Great Days**. It would be great if more Catholics were familiar with the make-up, the rationale and the basic thrust of these three services that make up the so-called **Triduum**. If you are interested in joining our Confirmation candidates for this project, please, come and join us. In fact, that would make it into a good parish activity.



**The Way of the Cross through Aylmer** On Good Friday we will again join the Aylmer Christian communities for the annual **Way of the Cross**. We are all invited to participate. It starts at **St. Paul's Church at 10:45 a.m.** and ends at St. Mark's Church where a "Hunger Lunch" will be served by our CWG.

### **Fasting on Good Friday and, if possible, on Holy Saturday**

Observing a fast on Good Friday and on Holy Saturday makes a lot of sense. It is a fasting in anticipation of the Feast of Easter and, as such, it is different from a fast we may be observing during Lent. Eating less is one form of fasting. But a very appropriate form of fasting is to abstain from going out, from watching a movie, from shopping or other distractions that often fill our lives. The challenge is to keep these days special, to keep them indeed holy, to keep ourselves focused on the Lord Jesus and on what we are given in Him. Let us give it a try.

### **Easter Vigil: Participation more than desirable**

If there is one service (together with the service on Good Friday) at which you would like to see the church packed, it is the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday. It is a strange thing that many Catholics have never participated in it. "It is too long", some say. Really? A hockey game easily takes longer and there is less at stake in it.

At the Easter Vigil, we gather around the primary symbols of our faith: our assembling, the Cross, the Easter Candle, the Scriptures, the baptismal water, and the bread and wine of the Eucharist. All this to celebrate the new light and life with which God graces us in the Crucified and Risen Lord Jesus. Not to be missed!

### **At the Easter Vigil and at the Easter Masses: Our Baptism Renewed**

Baptism inserts us into Christ's victory over death and sin. But it takes a lifetime for baptism "to take". Easter is the best time to have it renewed so that the new life that Jesus won for us in his Death and Resurrection may progressively grow on us.

### **Keeping Vigil from Good Friday Evening until Dawn of Holy Saturday**

Keeping Vigil through the night of Good Friday is a beautiful way of entering into the Mystery of the **Three Great Days**. It is a very effective way of making this weekend different: spending an hour or so in church during the night reflecting, meditating, praying on the central mystery of our faith.

You find sign-up sheets at the entrances of the church divided into one-hour time slots, from 8:00 p.m. on Good Friday until 6:00 a.m. on Holy Saturday. It is important that all time slots are filled.

There are some parishioners for whom it is impossible to come to church during the night. They may want to spend some time in prayer at home during the night. A beautiful idea!

### **Join us for a Weekly Easter Reflection Group**

The Church celebrates Easter for 50 days until the day of Pentecost. It is a major challenge to keep the Easter flavour alive for 50 days. We have just come upon a beautifully illustrated book of 50 Easter Season Meditations: **In Shining Splendor** which proposes short, daily reflections. You are invited to join a group which will meet once a week during the Easter Season to work together through some of these meditations. You can check out the book on the magazine rack of the Marvee room any time between now and Easter. You will be able to buy a copy of the book shortly from the parish office. We would like to start meeting on Wednesday, March 26. If you are interested, please register with Julie Cool (819) 684-6416 or by e-mail at [juliecool@sympatico.ca](mailto:juliecool@sympatico.ca)



**EASTER LILIES:** Especially when we celebrate Christ's victory of life over death we want to remember our deceased relatives, that is the significance of bringing our Easter lilies to church and to have them be part of the Easter decorations. But please hold off **until the week of March 17**, and if possible bring them still closed, that way they will last longer. Thank You!

**PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:** Kindly remember Dave McCormick, Patrick Murphy, Wandaw Bobrowski, Hilda Preslawski and their families in your prayers.



**PRAYERS & SYMPATHY:** Our prayers and sympathies are extended to Grace Hamilton on the loss of her sister Jenny.