

Palm Sunday

of the Lord's Passion - April 5, 2009

They took palm branches and went out to meet Jesus, and cried out, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, the King of Israel." John 12: 12-16

Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas to them, and after he had Jesus scourged, handed him over to be crucified. Mark 14: 1-15, 47

The Broken Heart of God

One of the world's greatest art treasures is Michelangelo's *Pieta*, created from a single piece of marble in 1498, when Michelangelo was only twenty-three. It shows Mary, the Mother of Jesus, holding the broken body of her son on her lap. One does not have to be Christian to be moved by the image. The combination of love and sorrow on Mary's face, the sense of longing to take onto herself some of her son's pain that she might lessen it, speaks to anyone who has ever loved and cared for another.

There is only one problem. The scene probably never happened. Only in John's Gospel is Mary even present at the Crucifixion. Others, not Mary, are involved in Jesus' being taken down from the cross and buried.

Yet, in moving us so deeply, the *Pieta* strikes us as so right and true. Why? Rabbi Harold S. Kushner, in his recent *The Lord is My Shepherd*, offers this insight into Michelangelo's creation. He sees in Mary the love and tenderness of "God in his feminine aspect ... the God who created life in all of its fragile vulnerability, the way a mother creates life, a God who grieves for His children when they are cruel to one another, when they hurt and kill one another. Every mother, every parent who suffers the loss of a child is reenacting God's grief at the death of one of His own children ... God's was the first heart to break."

In the passion and death of his beloved, God is rejected and humiliated, God suffers and dies - just as every human being experiences. But God allows himself to be broken in order that we might understand the fragile, impermanent nature of this life. As we will see as the Gospel unfolds this Holy Week, the brokenness we both suffer and inflict can be healed in the love of God - love that is humble, love that is sincere, love that is centered in gratitude and selflessness. In the broken body of Jesus, we are reconciled with God; in the broken body of Jesus, our lives are transformed in the perfect love of Christ; in the broken body of Jesus, God's Spirit of humility and compassion becomes a force of hope and re-creation in our hurting and despairing world.

Pray for the Deceased

Deacon Joseph H. Newman,
Holy Spirit Parish

Palm Sunday Pancake Breakfast

Be sure to join your parish family today for a delicious pancake breakfast which will be held from 9AM-1PM in our church hall. There will be a basket raffle and, also, a 50/50 raffle. Tickets will be available at the door.



Mass Intentions for the Week

April 6 - Monday of Holy Week

5:15 PM Mass followed by Confessions

April 7 - Tuesday of Holy Week

8:00 AM

April 8 - Wednesday of Holy Week

5:15 PM Mass followed by Confessions

April 9 - Holy Thursday

8:00 PM See Holy Week Schedule

April 10 - Good Friday

3:00 PM See Holy Week Schedule

April 11 - Holy Saturday

9:00 PM See Holy Week Schedule

Scripture Readings for the Week

Monday: Isaiah 42: 1-7; John 12: 1-11

Tuesday: Isaiah 49: 1-6; John 13: 21-33,36-38

Wednesday: Isaiah 50: 4-9; Matthew 26: 14-25

Thursday: Ex 12: 1-8,11-14; 1 Corinthians
11:23-26; John 13: 1-15

Friday: Is 52: 13--53: 12; Hebrews 4: 14-16;
5: 7-9; John 18: 1-- 19: 42

Saturday: Exodus 14: 15--15:1; Romans 6: 3-11
Mark 16: 1-7

Sunday: Acts 10: 34,37-43; Colossians 3:1-4;
John 20:1-9

Financial News

Offertory Contributions

Last Sunday \$ 5891.81

Year ago \$ 4912.19

Peter Cottontail or Jesus?

Today marks the beginning of Holy Week. It reminds us of Easter being one week away. It forces us (at least those of us who are used to procrastinating) to begin planning for the great feast. But what is our priority in the planning? Getting ready for the Easter Bunny? - the sumptuous Easter ham and all the trimmings? - or the celebration of the Pascal Mystery - Christ's suffering, death and resurrection? Oh, I know that a Malley's trip will be there along with the gathering of the Easter baskets and grass. Tie dye egg coloring is the rage this year. A trip to Honeybaked Ham may be included along with the egg cheese ball hanging in its netting. We'll watch the annual Easter egg hunt on the White House lawn and may have our children participate in local egg hunts, or even hunts of our own.

But let us remember who and why we celebrate this week - Jesus Christ - His life, death and resurrection. Without Easter there is no Christmas - without Good Friday there is no salvation. All of the aforementioned activities are good, but without Jesus being our center this week they are meaningless. Jesus suffered greatly for us. He rose so that victory over death shows us the way to Eternal Life. Christ has died! Christ is Risen! Christ will come again! Let us this week walk our journey of faith with Jesus our Savior and with each other. *Fr. John*

Senior Clementines and Friends

All older adults are invited to join the Senior Clementines and Friends on Thursday, April 16th, from 1-3 PM in the church hall. Please join us as we welcome Mazie Adams from the Lakewood Historical Society. She will be discussing "Lakewood's Sacred Landmarks". We will also be holding a 50/50 raffle. All are welcome to come for the presentation, refreshments and good company. Don't forget to bring a donation of a non-perishable food item for the St. Vincent de Paul Society. If this will be your first gathering, please call Fran Bellomo at 221-1301.

Living Stations

The Living Stations, presented by our area youth, will be presented on Palm Sunday at 4:30 PM and on Good Friday at 7:30 PM at St. James Church. Come for a service that won't be forgotten.

Holy Week Schedule - 2009

Holy Thursday, April 9

8 AM - Morning Prayer
7 PM - Mass of the Lord's Supper
(followed by Adoration in Church until 10 PM)

Good Friday, April 10

8 AM - Morning Prayer
Noon - Stations of the Cross
3 PM - Solemn Liturgy

Holy Saturday, April 11

8 AM - Morning Prayer
Noon - Blessing of Easter Food
9 PM - Easter Vigil

Easter Sunday, April 12

Masses:
9:00 AM
11:00 AM

Please Note

During Holy Week confessions will be heard only on Monday and Wednesday after the 5:15 Mass.

Easter Vigil Mass

Celebrate the Resurrection of Our Lord and baptism and profession of faith of our newest members of the parish family at the Easter Vigil Mass. We will have a reception with refreshments in the church hall immediately following the Mass. Please join us in welcoming the new members of our faith community!

RCIA Committee

Pot of Gold Winners

(\$25) Toni VandeKerkhoff
(\$100) Walt Devor;
Andy Bodi, Marty Caja, Karen Coleman, Manny Scimenti, Jr.



Divine Mercy Sunday

All are invited to join in a Eucharistic Holy Hour on Divine Mercy Sunday at St. Luke Church on April 19th at 3 PM. Our Holy Father has granted a plenary indulgence for this day under the usual requirements established by the church. Please join us in the Easter celebration of God's love and mercy on Divine Mercy Sunday.

