

THE TRIDUUM

BY JONATHAN TEIXEIRA FOR THE FOCUS BLOG

HOLY THURSDAY

WHAT HAPPENED ON THAT DAY



Jesus celebrates the Passover Seder/Last Supper with the Apostles.



He washes their feet, showing them what type of leaders they are to be as priests.



"This is the Chalice of my blood."
"This is my body"
"Do this in remembrance of me"
Jesus institutes the Eucharist.



"Not my will, but yours be done."
Jesus suffers the Agony in the Garden, sweating blood in anguish as he prays.



Judas betrays Jesus and hands him over to the authorities. Jesus is arrested.



Jesus is taken away and imprisoned.

WHAT YOU'LL SEE AT CHURCH



The priest wears white because it's a joyful day, celebrating our love for Jesus in the Eucharist.



The priest will wash people's feet as a sign of his dedication to those whom he serves.



No Masses are celebrated on Good Friday, so the priest must plan (and consecrate) ahead.



After Mass, the altar is stripped, and most decorations are taken down or covered. The consecrated hosts are transferred to an "Altar of Repose" somewhere else in the Church until about midnight, then transferred to another tabernacle away from public view. This absence of the Eucharist helps us experience the loss and emptiness the Apostles felt on Good Friday.



The Chrism Mass, in which the Bishop blesses all the holy oils for his diocese, is also celebrated on Holy Thursday.

LIVE THE DAY



Cover or put away your holy pictures and/or statues.



Attend a Tenebrae service. Check around for times as it's held on various Triduum days.



Take on special fasts or increase your prayers and/or devotions.



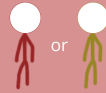
Simulate visiting Jesus in prison by making a pilgrimage to local parishes' Altars of Repose.

GOOD FRIDAY

WHAT HAPPENED ON THAT DAY



"I do not know him."
While Jesus is interrogated, Peter denies knowing him three times.



or
Pontius Pilate questions Jesus. He offers the crowd a choice: Jesus or Barabbas?



Jesus is scourged.



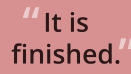
Jesus carries the cross on which he will be crucified.



Jesus is nailed to the cross and left to die.



He gives his mother Mary to John, and in turn, each of us.



"It is finished."

Jesus dies.



Guards come to break Jesus' legs to speed his death. Already dead, they pierce his side.



Jesus' body is taken down from the cross, prepared for burial, and placed in the tomb.

WHAT YOU'LL SEE AT CHURCH



The priest wears red to bring to mind the blood Jesus shed.



This is the one day all year on which no Masses are celebrated.



The tabernacle will still be empty and the church still undecorated.



Candles are lit only when Jesus (in the Eucharist) is present.



St. John's account of The Passion is read. The congregation often reads the part of the crowd demanding Jesus' crucifixion to reinforce how our sins made necessary the cross of Christ.



The Veneration of the Cross occurs during the Good Friday service. Those at the service show a sign of love (kiss, genuflect, etc) to a cross in thanksgiving for Jesus' cross.

LIVE THE DAY



Keep silence throughout the day, especially from 9:00am-3:00pm, when Jesus was on the cross.



Increase your time spent praying. Reflect on The Passion.



Pray the Stations of the Cross. Your parish may schedule a service.



Start the Divine Mercy Novena.



Take on extra fasting or increased other acts of piety.



Pray the sorrowful mysteries of the rosary.

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EASTER VIGIL

WHAT HAPPENED ON THAT DAY*

*CELEBRATION OF EASTER SUNDAY EVENTS START THE NIGHT BEFORE



Jesus rises from the dead and leaves the tomb.



The guards at the tomb report what happened to the chief priests, who pay them off to tell a cover story.



Peter and John check out the tomb. All they find are the burial cloths.



Mary! Rabbouni!
Mary Magdalene sticks around the tomb and encounters Jesus.



Jesus walks to Emmaus with two of his disciples. They realize it's him only after breaking bread.



Jesus appears to more disciples, shows them his wounds, gives them power to forgive sins.

WHAT YOU'LL SEE AT CHURCH



The priest wears white because we're joyfully celebrating Jesus' victory over death!



The Paschal Candle, the "Light of Christ," is carried into the church and the congregation's candles are lit from it.



The Exultet prayer and lots of extra readings help us recall salvation history.



We sing Alleluia for the first time since before Lent started!



We sing the Litany of the Saints, asking them to join us in prayer to God.



People coming into the Catholic Church are Baptized and Confirmed.

LIVE THE DAY



Take the day totally off from work and schoolwork.



Decorate your house. Easter Lilies symbolize the hope, joy, and new life found in the resurrection.



Have a feast!



Keep it up. Catholics celebrate the Octave of Easter; that means Easter is 8 days long!