

# HOLY WEEK



A Guide Through  
Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday  
April 5-12, 2020

*A book of personal devotions to use alone,  
or to use with online worship during  
COVID-19 2020, when gathering at the  
church is suspended.*

St. John's Episcopal Church  
Royal Oak MI

248-721-4325 (*our current number*)

[www.stjohnsroyaloak.org](http://www.stjohnsroyaloak.org)

Welcome, wherever you are, to **Holy Week**. For many centuries, followers of Jesus have gathered together to retrace and remember the last days of Jesus Christ, especially the three sacred days that make up the Triduum (“three days”). We believe that these days cannot be separated from one another, so they are celebrated as one liturgy. This year, we cannot gather as a community, because of the COVID-19 virus. We are refraining from being together, and we may still enter into the Holy Week of Jesus online at [stjohnsroyaloak.org](http://stjohnsroyaloak.org), through Zoom (we are happy to walk you through getting set up) in our homes and places of refuge. We are dispersed but not despairing.



Make a holy place. Throughout this week, we will be attentive to the worshipfulness of our homes and places where we observe Holy Week. Set aside a holy place in your home for Holy Week and follow the prompts when you see the *home* icon to the left. Perhaps a simple side table covered with a cloth, of any color. Whatever you have, is enough. Place a few things to help you enter the presence of God: a cross, a bible, a candle. If you have children, encourage them to choose one item for your holy place. The table should have at most 5-6 things—simplicity is best.

You will also find in this book links to online worship, which you are also encouraged to use. We will not celebrate or receive Holy Communion until the days of social distancing due to COVID-19 have come to an end. On that glorious day, we will remember this Holy Week and Easter as a season of fasting, exile and longing, even as Christ dies and rises in our midst.

It is our hope that within this Holy Week, each of us will be able to find that place of stillness and new presence with God in Christ, and that we will find ourselves transformed. We can do this even when the church cannot gather.

If you live alone, you may read and pray the words. If you are living with others, share the reading and the prayers. Notes or instructions during the devotions will be found in **red text**. These are not meant to be read aloud but are to help guide you.

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These links will have resources to supplement your Holy Week Devotions.



Facebook [www.facebook.com/groups/stjohnroyaloak/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/stjohnroyaloak/)

Website <https://www.stjohnsroyaloak.org/>

*If you have Pastoral Care Needs or Church Business questions,  
please call 248-721-4325*

# PALM SUNDAY + April 5



Palm Sunday is the day when we remember Jesus's entry into Jerusalem: "*As he rode along, they spread their garments on the road*" (Luke 19:36). Palm Sunday also includes the long reading of the Passion of Jesus, from his Last Supper to his death. It is fine to use branches from our local environment instead of palms—as a symbol of bringing what is growing near to us to celebrate the coming of God into our midst. This day ends with uncertainty, for uncertain times. It encompasses all of humanity—the glory of welcome and the shame of betrayal and the hope of forgiveness.



Find or gather some branches from a garden or outside of your door, or something growing. A houseplant is fine, or even a picture of a tree. Place it where you have set apart space to pray this Holy Week in your home.

## The Liturgy of the Palms

Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord:  
*Peace in heaven and glory in the highest.*

Assist us mercifully with your help, O Lord God of our salvation, that we may enter with joy upon the contemplation of those mighty acts, whereby you have given us life and immortality; through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
*Amen.*

## Matthew 21:1-11

When Jesus and his disciples had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, just say this, 'The Lord needs them.' And he will send them immediately." This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet, saying,

Tell the daughter of Zion, look, your king is coming to you,  
humble, and mounted on a donkey,  
and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting,

Hosanna to the Son of David!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

Hosanna in the highest heaven!

When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, "Who is this?" The crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee."

### **Prayer Over the Branches or Palms**

On this day Jesus entered the holy city of Jerusalem in triumph, and was proclaimed as King of kings by those who spread their garments and branches of palm along his way. Let these branches be for us signs of his victory, and grant that we who bear them in his name may ever hail him as our King, and follow him in the way that leads to eternal life; who lives and reigns in glory with you and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. *Amen.*

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord:

*Hosanna in the highest.*

## **☐ At 10:00am on Sunday**

**Homily**

The Rev. Beth Bingham

Join in for Sunday Morning On-line Worship at 10:00am on Sunday,

April 5 at **Zoom Meeting** <https://zoom.us/j/320278497>

Meeting ID: 320 278 497 or watch the Homily given on Palm Sunday later in the day/week on [www.stjohnsroyaloak.org](http://www.stjohnsroyaloak.org)

### **The Passion of Jesus**

Using your own Bible, read this story. It is all right to read from a children's bible if that is appropriate. You may also want to listen to the Passion from Matthew on this playlist <https://tinyurl.com/aidanPalm>

**Having read this passion ("passion" means "suffering"), think on these things:** How does the world suffer now? How am I a part of that? How

does Jesus love and care for people even as he suffers? What is hard to hear? What is beautiful? Where do you find yourself in this story?

### The Prayers

Please offer the prayers of your heart with each petition.

We pray for the Church throughout the world, its members, and its mission, the love, mercy and service it brings to those in need...

This nation, our cities, and neighborhoods, and for all in authority...

The welfare of the world...

The St. John's family and for concerns of the local community...

Those who suffer and those in any trouble...

Those who have died...

Thanksgivings and the blessings of this life . . .

Those we love, and those who have asked for our prayers . . .

### The Lord's Prayer

#### Closing Prayer

Almighty and everliving God, in your tender love for the human race you sent your Son our Savior Jesus Christ to take upon him our nature, and to suffer death upon the cross, giving us the example of his great humility; Mercifully grant that we may walk in the way of his suffering, and also share in his resurrection; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Let us bless the Lord.

*Thanks be to God.*

**Additional Reflection:** Did you know that the ashes that we use on Ash Wednesday are often made from the dried palm branches that are left from Palm Sunday? Our church year gives us many symbols in this cycle of life – the branches used to sing joyful Hosannas become the reminder that we come from dust and to dust we shall return. Even as we live through this wilderness time, let us also remember that we will return to a time of new life, joys, and celebration – even if we can't yet see them.

# Monday in Holy Week



Add to your place set apart for Holy Week something fragrant, like perfume or a hand cream you use.

## Psalm 36:7-8

- 7 How priceless is your love, O God! \*  
your people take refuge under the shadow of your wings.
- 8 They feast upon the abundance of your house; \*  
you give them drink from the river of your delights.

## A Reading

John 12:1-8

Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him. Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), said, "Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?" (He said this not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief; he kept the common purse and used to steal what was put into it.) Jesus said, "Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me."

**Having read this, think on these things:** How can I offer the gentleness of anointing to the poor close to me or my community? When have I been given this gentleness? Can you think of a hard choice—between caring for yourself, or others? Offer these things to God.

## The Collect of the Day

Almighty God, whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain, and entered not into glory before he was crucified: Mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

## The Lord's Prayer

# Tuesday in Holy Week



Add to your place set apart for Holy Week something that will grow, like a seed or a grain or even a bean.

## Psalm 71:5-6

- 5 For you are my hope, O Lord God, \*  
my confidence since I was young.
- 6 I have been sustained by you ever since I was born;  
from my mother's womb you have been my strength; \*  
my praise shall be always of you.

## A Reading

John 12:20-26, 36

Among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honor.

After Jesus had said this, he departed and hid from them.

**Having read this, think on these things:** What is dying inside of you, and what is growing? What in our world is changing, and how can Jesus be our hope in the midst of this time?

## The Collect of the Day

O God, by the passion of your blessed Son you made an instrument of shameful death to be for us the means of life: Grant us so to glory in the cross of Christ, that we may gladly suffer shame and loss for the sake of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

## The Lord's Prayer

# Wednesday in Holy Week



Add to your place set apart for Holy Week a coin or two.

## Psalm 70:5-6

- 5 But as for me, I am poor and needy; \*  
    come to me speedily, O God.  
6 You are my helper and my deliverer; \*  
    O Lord, do not tarry.

## A Reading

John 13:21-30

At supper with his friends, Jesus was troubled in spirit, and declared, "Very truly, I tell you, one of you will betray me." The disciples looked at one another, uncertain of whom he was speaking. One of his disciples-- the one whom Jesus loved-- was reclining next to him; Simon Peter therefore motioned to him to ask Jesus of whom he was speaking. So while reclining next to Jesus, he asked him, "Lord, who is it?" Jesus answered, "It is the one to whom I give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish." So when he had dipped the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas son of Simon Iscariot. After he received the piece of bread, Satan entered into him. Jesus said to him, "Do quickly what you are going to do." Now no one at the table knew why he said this to him. Some thought that, because Judas had the common purse, Jesus was telling him, "Buy what we need for the festival"; or, that he should give something to the poor. So, after receiving the piece of bread, he immediately went out. And it was night.

**Having read this, think on these things:** How is money used to glorify God? When is it used and it does not glorify God? What do you imagine Jesus was feeling and thinking on this day?

## The Collect of the Day

Almighty God, whose beloved Son willingly endured the shame of the cross for our redemption: Give us courage to take up our cross and follow him; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

## The Lord's Prayer

# MAUNDY THURSDAY + April 9



Maundy Thursday gets its name from the Latin word *Mandatum*, meaning “commandment,” and it is Jesus’ final commandment to his followers and to us: **“Love one another as I have loved you,”** He showed us this extraordinary love by bowing down and washing the feet of his friends. This ancient tradition has continued as one of the most universal rites in the Christian Church. It is a reminder of the humility necessary to truly love and care for one another. On Maundy Thursday we also remember the Last Supper – a meal that Jesus ate with his friends, and asks us to continue as we ‘remember him’. This meal has become for us what we know as Communion or the Holy Eucharist. This year, we can remember the last time we received Holy Communion, and look again to receive this gift, together, in the future. This prayer from Teresa of Avila (1515-1582) describes the heart of Maundy Thursday

*Christ has no body now on earth but yours;  
no hands but yours; no feet but yours.*

*Yours are the eyes through which the compassion of Christ must look out  
on the world.*

*Yours are the feet with which He is to go about doing good.  
Yours are the hands with which He is to bless His people.*



Add to your place set apart for Holy Week a bowl of water and a clean washcloth.

Maundy Thursday is offered in the evening as you are eating your evening meal. Begin the prayers before you start to eat, sitting down,

## Psalm II6:15-17

- 15 I will offer you the sacrifice of thanksgiving \*  
and call upon the Name of the Lord.
- 16 I will fulfill my vows to the Lord \*  
in the presence of all his people,
- 17 In the courts of the Lord’s house, \*  
in the midst of you, O Jerusalem.

## Collect of the Day

Almighty God, whose dear Son, on the night before he suffered, instituted the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Mercifully grant that we may, when the time comes, receive it thankfully in remembrance of Jesus Christ our Lord, who in these holy mysteries gives us a pledge of eternal life; and who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

## The Reading

Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" Jesus answered, "You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand." Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no share with me." Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" Jesus said to him, "One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you." For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, "Not all of you are clean."

After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you.

Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them. Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I

said to the Judeans so now I say to you, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.' **I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.** By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

Any of these blessings that are appropriate are prayed over the meal. When the meal is served, if you are eating with others, it is good to serve one another. If you are eating alone, know that you are in the presence of Jesus.

### **Over Wine**

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Ruler of the universe. You create the fruit of the vine; and you refresh us with the cup of salvation in the Blood of your Son Jesus Christ. May the time come quickly when we can share that cup again, even as you are with us now in our very thirst for you. Glory to you for ever and ever. *Amen.*

### **Over Bread**

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Ruler of the universe. You bring forth bread from the earth; and you have fed us on our way with the bread of life in the Body of your Son Jesus Christ. Let us be fed again soon with that bread of life. And as grain scattered upon the earth is gathered into one loaf, so gather your Church in every place into the kingdom of your Son. To you be glory and power for ever and ever. *Amen.*

### **Over the Other Foods**

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Ruler of the universe. You have blessed the earth to bring forth food to satisfy our hunger. Let this food strengthen us in the fast that is before us, that following our Savior in the way of the cross, we may come to the joy of his resurrection. For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, now and for ever. *Amen.*

Now you may eat the meal for which you have given thanks.

When you are finished with the meal use these words:

The Lord Jesus, after he had supped with his disciples and had washed their feet, said to them, "Do you know what I, your Lord and Master, have done to you? I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done."

*Peace is my last gift to you, my own peace I now leave with you; peace which the world cannot give, I give to you.*

I give you a new commandment: Love one another as I have loved you.

*Peace is my last gift to you, my own peace I now leave with you; peace which the world cannot give, I give to you.*

By this shall the world know that you are my disciples: That you have love for one another.

*Peace is my last gift to you, my own peace I now leave with you; peace which the world cannot give, I give to you.*

If you are with others, you may wash each other's feet gently with the water and clean cloth, or use a larger basin and warm water. If you are alone, use the clean cloth to gently wash your hands or your feet. You may also choose to symbolically wash the cross on your table—a sign of the body of Christ. You may also consider how you are called to service, now and in the future.

The washing of feet is a sign of humble service. In the face of suffering and death with which the world is filled, God's word of service comes to us. Even when we cannot meet for the Holy Communion meal together, the words of Jesus draw us together as we love the world—to serve for the reconciliation of all.

## **The Prayers**

Pray for the world and for those deep in your heart, aloud or in the silence of your heart. You may use the prayer on the back page of this book if desired.

## **The Lord's Prayer**

### **Closing Prayer**

O God of the crucified and risen One, from whom no trial or trouble can separate us: you feed us with your Word and soothe us with your Spirit, closer to us than breath itself. Make us glad this night for the life of your servant Jesus; Make us servants of all for the sake of Jesus; who for our sake gave his life for the salvation of all. In the Name of Jesus, your Son, our Lord. *Amen.*



After this prayer, gently remove everything except the cross from your place set apart for Holy Week.

### Hymn *Were you there?*

Sing on your own or sing with the video on this playlist

<https://tinyurl.com/aidanMTH>

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?  
Were you there when they crucified my lord?  
Oh-o—oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.  
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?  
...nailed him to the tree?  
...pierced him in the side?  
...laid him in the tomb?

## At 7:00pm on Maundy Thursday

### Homily

Rev. Beth Bingham

Join in for Holy Week/Maundy Thursday Homily On-line at 7:00pm on Thursday, April 9 at **Zoom Meeting** \_\_\_\_\_

**Meeting ID:** \_\_\_\_\_ or watch the Homily given for Maundy Thursday later in the day/week on [www.stjohnsroyaloak.org](http://www.stjohnsroyaloak.org)

**Additional Reflection:** Did you know? When we are together in regular times, that at the end of the Maundy Thursday worship service, the St. John's Altar Guild (the people who care for the vessels, linens, and vestments and who set and clean the altar for Holy Eucharist each week) participate in a slow and profound ritual called "The Stripping of the Altar". During this time, they carefully remove everything from the worship space, and remove all the adornments leaving only the cold bare marble of the altar. This helps us to imagine what it might have been for Jesus to be betrayed and left all alone on the night before his death. We typically also set up a temporary space called "The Altar of Repose" in a side area (West Transsept) of the church. There, many people light a candle and spend a quiet hour of prayer with Jesus. Tonight, consider lighting a candle and finding time to pray with Jesus. Pray for anyone in the world (including yourself) who may be experiencing feelings of abandonment and betrayal. Rest in the strong promise that God never abandon us, even in the most trying times. You are not alone.

# GOOD FRIDAY + April 10



Good Friday is the most solemn day of the Church Year. Elements of this liturgy (worship service) date back to the 4<sup>th</sup> century practices of Christians in Jerusalem. Pilgrims would come to the Holy Land and move from location to location where the actual events of events of Jesus's last week to place.

Much of what we know of Holy Week comes from the account of a woman named Egeria, widely regarded to be the author of a detailed account of a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. The long letter, titled *Peregrinatio* or *Itinerarium Egeriae*, is addressed to a circle of women at home. The historical details it contains set the journey in the early 380s, making it the earliest of its kind. Many of the acts of Good Friday worship are as Egeria described so long ago.

## GOOD FRIDAY OFFERING

The Good Friday Offering is a tradition since 1922 to support the Episcopal Church in the Holy Land. Our Presiding Bishop Michael Curry writes, "We walk the walk of Christ when we walk in solidarity with the Christians of the Middle East, who keep the faith in the very land Jesus called home. We walk the walk of Christ when we advocate for the voices of those who work fearlessly for peace in the midst of unrelenting violence. We walk the walk of Christ when we support ministries of healing, education, pastoral care, and interfaith cooperation rooted in a deep desire for a future full of reconciliation and hope. The Good Friday Offering is our opportunity to add some of the substance of our lives to the substance of our prayers."

**To make a donation to the Good Friday Offering, please write a check payable to the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society, write "Good Friday Offering" in the memo line, and mail to:**

**DFMS – Protestant Episcopal Church US  
P.O. Box 958983  
St. Louis, MO 63195-8983**



for unity in faith, in witness and in service;  
for Bonnie, our bishop, and for the people of this diocese and in this  
congregation of St. John's, especially those who are to be baptized;  
for those who are mocked and persecuted for their faith;  
That God will confirm the Church in faith, increase it in love, and  
preserve it in peace. Lord, in your mercy; *Hear our prayer.*

Let us pray for the nations of the world and their leaders:  
for Donald, the President of the United States;  
for the Congress and the Supreme Court;  
for Gretchen our Governor;  
for this City of Royal Oak; for Michael, our Mayor, and the City  
Commissioners;  
for all who serve in public office and for all who serve the common good;  
That by God's help they may seek justice and truth, and live in peace and  
concord. Lord, in your mercy; *Hear our prayer.*

Let us pray for all who suffer and are afflicted in body or in mind;  
For the hungry and the homeless, the destitute and the oppressed  
For those in darkness, in doubt, in loneliness and in fear;  
For prisoners, captives and refugees;  
For the victims of false accusations and violence;  
For the sorrowful and for those in mortal danger;  
For all at the point of death and those who watch beside them;  
That God will sustain them in mercy and love; and stir up in us the will  
and patience to minister to their needs. Lord, in your mercy; *Hear our  
prayer.*

*Gracious God, the comfort of all who sorrow, the strength of all who  
suffer: Let the cry of those in misery and need come to you, that they may  
find your mercy present with them in all their afflictions; and give us, we  
pray, the strength to serve them for the sake of him who suffered for us,  
your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Let us pray for all who have not received the Gospel of Christ;  
For those who have lost their faith  
For those hardened by sin or indifference  
For the contemptuous and the scornful  
For those who in the name of Christ have persecuted others

That God will open their hearts to the truth, and lead them to faith and obedience. Lord, in your mercy; *Hear our prayer.*

*Merciful God, the comfort of the sad, the strength of those who suffer: hear the prayers of your children who cry out of any trouble, and to every distressed soul grant mercy, relief and refreshment. Give us, we pray, the strength to serve them for the sake of him who suffered for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Let us commend ourselves and all God's children to God's unfailing love, and pray for the grace of a holy life, that, with all who have died, we may come to the fullness of eternal life and the joy of resurrection. Lord, in your mercy; *Hear our prayer.*

The prayers may be ended here using the prayer below, or may also include Veneration of the Cross. Veneration is a time of contemplation of the cross, and these words may be used along with silent contemplation. You may wish to pause here and write your own prayers, and place them at the foot of the cross in your place set apart.

Lord Christ, As we kneel at the foot of your cross and watch with you, open our hearts to see and know your love for us, so that we may place at your feet all that we have and all that we are. Help us to see the cost of our forgiveness so that we may be made new through your love. *Amen.*

### **Closing Prayer**

Out of love for us, Jesus accepted death and, lifted high upon the cross, he drew the whole world to himself;

Holy God, as we bow our heads beneath the cross, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us so that we may place our whole trust in you.

This we pray through Jesus Christ, your Word made flesh. *Amen.*

**☐ At 7:00pm on Good Friday**

### **Homily**

The Rev. Dcn. Tim Spannaus

Join in for Holy Week/Good Friday Homily On-line at 7:00pm on Friday, April 10 at **Zoom Meeting** \_\_\_\_\_

**Meeting ID:** \_\_\_\_\_ or watch the Homily given for Good Friday later in the day/week on [www.stjohnsroyaloak.org](http://www.stjohnsroyaloak.org)

# HOLY SATURDAY AND THE GREAT VIGIL + April II



The day after someone has died is disorienting. After Good Friday, Saturday dawns, and we wonder what is to come of this person, Jesus. The Church also prepares for the joy of Easter on this day.

The Great Vigil, the worship service on the eve of Easter, uses the symbols of life and earth: fire, water, bread, wine. We use the power of sacred story to remember that we are the people of God and that God works in us and through us in the world. The vigil is a night that begins in darkness, in the shadow of death. But death is not the final word, in Christ, so we kindle a fire as a sign that the love of God is deeper and stronger than death. *Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus* (Romans 8:39).

In the light of the fire and candles, we take the journey of the great stories of scripture, woven into the stories of our own lives. Then we journey again through the gift of baptism, especially remembering the promises made in our own baptism. At last, with joyful song and peace in our hearts, we proclaim the Resurrection of Christ, and look forward to when we will, in the future, again be gathered around God's table.

*The church understands the prayers of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday as one great liturgy celebrating the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.*

# Holy Saturday Morning



In preparation for this evening, place some joyful symbols on the place set apart in your home, three or four of them, including a new, unlit, candle (if you have one available), and perhaps a bowl of oil, and some spices

O God, Creator of heaven and earth: Grant that, as the crucified body of your dear Son was laid in the tomb and rested on this holy Sabbath, so we may await with him the coming of the third day, and rise with him to newness of life; who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

## Psalm 31:1-2

- 1 In you, O Lord, have I taken refuge; let me never be put to shame; \*  
deliver me in your righteousness.
- 2 Incline your ear to me; \*  
make haste to deliver me.

## The Reading

John 19:38-42

After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body. Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews. Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

## The Prayers

Please offer the prayers of your heart with each petition.

We pray for the Universal Church, its members, and its mission...

The welfare of the whole world...

The concerns of the local community...

Those who suffer and those in any trouble...

For those who have died, just as Jesus our Lord died...

## The Lord's Prayer

## The Grace

The almighty and merciful Lord, †Creator, Christ and Holy Spirit, bless us and keep us. *Amen.*

**Additional Reflection:** Did you know, when we are together in regular times, that many people spend the whole day on Holy Saturday preparing the Church for the Easter Vigil and Easter Sunday? All the signs of the wilderness of the Lenten season (the color purple and the prayer stations of Lent) are stored away. Brass is polished, spaces are cleaned, flowers (lots and lots and LOTS of flowers are brought into the church), the altar is partially re-adorned with the White cloths (called paraments) of the Easter Season. A new Pashchal Candle with the year 2020 is placed in a stand (for use at Baptisms and Burials throughout the year). Musicians rehearse, actors prepare for the telling of the stories at the Vigil. Food and champagne and other treats for a big party are prepared. We won't be doing these things together this year. And yet – we can prepare for the eternal joy of Easter resurrection. Wherever you are today, find ways to prepare your own space – perhaps your dining table, your seating area, your porch, your entry way, your place set apart - with some new adornment and some sign of hope.

At St. John's, we also ring bells at the point in the service where Christ's resurrection is announced. Find a bell or something that makes noise in your home this morning. Place it on your place set apart in anticipation of ringing it at the Easter Vigil and on Easter Sunday morning. Also, picture other Christians in St. John's community – and all over the world – ringing bells along with you!



# Holy Saturday Evening

## The Great Vigil of Easter



Prepare your holy place set apart with some matches or a way to light the new, unlit candle, and a bowl of clean water, along with a new plant or flower, or something that is beautiful to you. You may also include a picture or reminder of friends and family who are not with you this day.

On this most holy night, in which our Lord Jesus passed over from death to life, the Church invites her members, dispersed throughout the world, to linger in vigil and prayer. For this is the Passover of the Lord in which, by virtue of our baptism into his death, into the hope of his resurrection, we celebrate the New Life we have received by his Mercy, awaiting the time when we may gather again around your holy altar.

Let us pray.

O God, you have bestowed upon your people the brightness of your light: We light this new fire as a symbol of that Light, and grant that we may so burn with heavenly desires, that with pure minds we may attain to the festival of everlasting life through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Light the new candle.

It is the tradition of the Church that a Deacon pray the Exsultet, one of the most ancient Christian Prayers. Because Tim, our Deacon, can be with us to sing the Exsultet tonight, you will sing or say the Exsultet.

**The Exsultet**

**The Book of Common Prayer 286**

Rejoice now, heavenly hosts and choirs of angels, and let your trumpets shout Salvation for the victory of our mighty King.

Rejoice and sing now, all the round earth, bright with a glorious splendor, for darkness has been vanquished by our eternal King.

Rejoice and be glad now, Mother Church, and let your holy courts, in radiant light, resound with the praises of your people.

It is truly right and good, always and everywhere, with our whole heart and mind and voice, to praise you, the invisible, almighty, and eternal God, and your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ our Lord; for he is the true Paschal Lamb, who at the feast of the Passover paid for us the debt of Adam's sin, and by his blood delivered your faithful people.

This is the night! when you brought our ancestors, the children of Israel, out of bondage in Egypt, and led them through the Red Sea on dry land.

This is the night! when all who believe in Christ are delivered from the gloom of sin, and are restored to grace and holiness of life.

This is the night! when Christ broke the bonds of death and hell, and rose victorious from the grave.

How wonderful and beyond our knowing, O God, is your mercy and loving-kindness to us, that to redeem us, you gave a Son.

How holy is this night, when wickedness is put to flight, and sin is washed away. It restores innocence to the fallen, and joy to those who mourn. It casts out pride and hatred, and brings peace and concord.

How blessed is this night, when earth and heaven are joined and we are reconciled to God.

Holy God, accept our living sacrifice of this candle in your honor. May Christ, the light of the world, bring us healing. May Christ, your light in us, drive away darkness and fear. May Christ, the Morning Star who knows no setting, find our faith ever burning, our love of mercy and justice ever afire – he who gives his light to all creation, and who lives and reigns for ever and ever. *Amen.*

## **Sacred Stories of Salvation History**

The Bible tells us the story of Salvation History, the record of God's saving deeds in history, how God saved God's people in ages past, and the story of redemptive love that is fulfilled in the person of Jesus. On the eve of Easter, we remember and share some of those stories.

Use your own Bible to read these stories. If you are in a household, you may read the stories together, or from a Bible appropriate for the group gathered. You can also tell the stories in your own words, if you know them. You may read fewer stories, but always include the Crossing of the Red Sea.

After each story, pause for some conversation on the them, or some silence for reflection, followed by the prayer. These stories (and other parts of this service) may also be found, along with a testimony for each lesson, on this playlist <https://www.tinyurl.com/aidanGVE>

## The Creation

*The world is beautiful and good and made by a loving creator. Remember that God, said that it is good. And then God made us! – in God’s own image – and said that we are VERY good!  
So good!*

### A Story from Genesis Chapters 1:1-2:2

*Collect for the Second Sunday after Christmas Day, modified*

O God, who wonderfully created, and yet more wonderfully restored, the dignity of human nature; Grant that we may share the divine life of him who humbled himself to share our humanity, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

## Crossing the Red Sea

*God hears the cries of God’s people and saves them.*

### A Story from Exodus Chapters 14:10 -15:1

*Collect for the Easter Vigil*

O God, whose wonderful deeds of old shine forth even to our own day, you once delivered by the power of your mighty arm your chosen people from slavery under Pharaoh, to be a sign for us of the salvation of all nations by the water of Baptism: Grant that all the peoples of the earth may be numbered among the offspring of Abraham, and rejoice in the inheritance of Israel; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

## The Valley of Dry Bones

*God gives us a vision of a new life, of life being restored.*

### A Story from the Prophet Ezekiel 37: I-14

*Prayer for Departed Souls* (from “Changes” Prayer Book, pg 78)

We thank you for those who have gone before us. Through their lives you helped us learn that in every season of life and death you are near us, standing firm when we falter. We long for the time when your own hand will dry all our tears. Be our companion this day, our path on the way, and our door to life eternal, as we place ourselves in your love, O Christ, who with the Creator and the Holy Spirit, live in glory everlasting. *Amen.*

## A Widow’s Kindness

*There is enough for everyone when we risk being generous.*

### A Story from the First Book of Kings Chapter 17:I-16

*Collect for Heroic Service, modified*

O Judge of all the nations, we remember before you with grateful hearts the persons from all times who in the day of decision were brave for others. Grant that we may not rest until all people share true freedom and respect among all peoples, faiths and nations. This we ask in the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

## God Gathers God’s People

*The gathering of the people of God will come again.*

### A Reading from the Prophet Zephaniah Chapter 3:12-20

*Prayer for Those We Love*

Almighty God, we entrust all who are dear to us to your never-failing care and love, for this life and the life to come, knowing that you are doing for them better things than we can desire or pray for; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*



Renew the vows of your baptism and receive the gifts of salvation history by remembering the promises of baptism. The response is “I will, with God’s help.” Use the water in the bowl in your holy place and make the sign of the cross on your forehead. Remember, you are called, beloved, and renewed. Peace.

## Remembering the Promises of Your Baptism

Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers? *I will, with God's help*

Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord? *I will, with God's help*

Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ? *I will, with God's help*

Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself? *I will, with God's help*

Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being? *I will, with God's help*

**Additional Reflection:** Did you know? When we are together in regular times, that at this point in the service, there are three loud knocks on the back doors of St. John's church (X, X, X), followed by a "Great Noise" played by the deepest notes of the organ. All the lights of the Church are turned back on, the altar is adorned with the White Easter paraments, and we begin ringing our bells and singing a great hymn to share our joy in the resurrection. The whole church comes alive!

Now is the time to ring your bell or noise maker, and proclaim the resurrection of Jesus and the alleluias of Easter!

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

*The Lord is risen indeed! Alleluia!*

Sing a joyful song or listen to one, or if you have a Hymnal 1982, sing Hymn #182 (found on page 31 of this booklet) or another Easter hymn that you love.

### Collect for the Great Vigil

O God, who made this most holy night to shine with the glory of the Lord's resurrection; Stir up in your church that spirit of adoption which is given to us in Baptism, that we, being renewed both in body and mind, may worship you in sincerity and truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

*The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia!*

## The Gospel

Matthew 28:1-10

After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from the dead, and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.' This is my message for you." So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

Alleluia. Christ is risen.

*The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia*

## An Easter Homily by St. John Chrysostom ca. 400AD

Are there any who are devout lovers of God?

Let them enjoy this beautiful bright festival!

Are there any who are grateful servants?

Let them rejoice and enter into the joy of their Lord!

Are there any weary with fasting?

Let them now receive their wages! . . .

Let no one fear death, for the Death of our Savior has set us free.

He has destroyed it by enduring it.

He destroyed Hell when He descended into it.

He put it into an uproar even as it tasted of His flesh. . . .

Hell took a body, and discovered God.

It took earth, and encountered Heaven.

It took what it saw, and was overcome by what it did not see.

O death, where is thy sting?

O Hell, where is thy victory?

Christ is Risen, and you, o death, are annihilated!

Christ is Risen, and the evil ones are cast down!

Christ is Risen, and the angels rejoice!

Christ is Risen, and life is liberated!

Christ is Risen, and the tomb is emptied of its dead;

for Christ having risen from the dead,

is become the first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep.

To Him be Glory and Power forever and ever. Amen!

### **The Prayers**

Pray for the church and the world using the prayer on the back page. Add your own prayers of intercession and thanksgiving. If you are reading the prayers with friends and family, you can respond “Alleluia” after each petition is read.

### **The Lord’s Prayer**

#### **Grace**

Almighty God, †Creator, Christ and Holy Spirit,

*Bless us now and forever. Amen.*

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

*The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia!*

## **☐ At 7:00pm on Holy Saturday, Great Vigil**

### **Homily**

The Rev. Beth Taylor

Join in for Holy Week/Great Vigil Homily On-line at 7:00pm on Saturday, April 11 at **Zoom Meeting** \_\_\_\_\_

**Meeting ID:** \_\_\_\_\_ or watch the Homily given for the Great Vigil later in the day/week on [www.stjohnsroyaloak.org](http://www.stjohnsroyaloak.org)

# EASTER SUNDAY + April 11



On Sunday morning, take a walk if you are able, or step outside and breathe the fresh air. Give thanks for a new day, and for all the blessings of this life. Pick a flower or a beautiful leaf or a blade of grass, place it on your place set apart for Holy Week. You may want to add an Easter egg or some other tradition you hold for celebrating Easter.

*Remembering the tradition of St. John's, you may wish to ring 'bells' to express joy in Christ's resurrection*

## **Easter Acclamation**

Rejoice and be glad!

*This is the day the Lord has made.*

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

*The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia!*

## **The Collect of the Day**

God of mercy, we no longer look for Jesus among the dead, for he is alive and has become the Lord of life. Increase in our minds and hearts the risen life we share with Christ, and help us to grow as your people toward the fullness of eternal life with you, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, on God, now and forever. *Amen.*

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

*The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia!*

## **☐ At 10:00am on Easter Sunday Morning**

### **Homily**

The Rev. Beth Taylor

Join in for an Easter Homily On-line at 10:00am on Sunday, April 12 at

**Zoom Meeting** \_\_\_\_\_

**Meeting ID:** \_\_\_\_\_ or watch the Homily given for the Great Vigil

later in the day/week on [www.stjohnsroyaloak.org](http://www.stjohnsroyaloak.org)

*Blessed Easter!*

## *About this Book...*

- Readings from The New Revised Standard Version of the Bible © 1989 by The Division of Christian Education of The National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., used by permission. Artwork is used with permission.
- Some of the appointed readings have been shortened or changed, with permission of the Bishop, for the purposes of providing a useful devotional for use by individuals and households during physical isolation.
- Prayers are drawn from The Book of Common Prayer 1979, The Book of Occasional Services 2018, and Changes: Prayers and Services Honoring Rites of Passage. Some of the notes “Having heard/read this, think on these things:” are drawn from the work of Gail Ramshaw and Gordon Lathrop for Resurrection Evangelical Lutheran Church, Holy Week for 2020, used with permission. Modifications to the Book of Common Prayer recommended by Dr. James Farwell, Virginia Theological Seminary, particular to this season of the church not gathering publicly for COVID-19
- Many thanks to The Rev. Mary Kate Rejous, Episcopal Diocese of Colorado, for assembling and sharing this resource for our adaptation.

## *Dearest St. John’s,*

Continue to pray for each other, care for each other, stay connected, remain faithful, feel your feelings, say your prayers, ask for help, receive care from others, acknowledge your longings, and know that we serve a Risen Christ who will join us together again. You are beloved! Peace always, *Rev. Beth T+*

### Giving to St. John’s

*We encourage you to keep current on your pledges or to make contributions to St. John’s so that we can continue our ministries, support our staff, and care for the building during the suspension of in-person services and meetings.*

- **Mail pledges/contributions** - St. John’s Episcopal Church 26998 Woodward Ave, Royal Oak, MI 48067
- **Give online** – make one-time or recurring donations with a credit card or checking account by going directly to our website:  
<https://www.stjohnsroyaloak.org/giving>
- **Text** - Text “StJohnsRoyalOak” to 73256 and follow the donation link to select the giving opportunity of your choice
- **Bank** – Set up a personal bill pay through your bank to be issue to St. John’s Episcopal Church in Royal Oak, MI

## An Easter Hymn (182 from The Hymnal 1982)

1 He is ris - en, he is ris - en! Tell it out with  
 2 Come, ye sad and fear - ful - heart - ed, with glad smile and  
 \*3 Come, with high and ho - ly hymn - ing, hail our Lord's tri -  
 4 He is ris - en, he is ris - en! He hath o - pened

joy - ful voice: he has burst his three days' pris - on;  
 ra - dian't brow! Death's long sha - dows have de - part - ed;  
 um - phant day; not one dark - some cloud is dim - ming  
 hea - ven's gate: we are free from sin's dark pris - on,

let the whole wide earth re - joice: death is con - quered,  
 Je - sus' woes are o - ver now, and the pas - sion  
 yon - der glo - rious morn - ing ray, break - ing o'er the  
 ris - en to a ho - lier state; and a bright - er

we are free, Christ has won the vic - to - ry.  
 that he bore— sin and pain can vex no more.  
 pur - ple east, sym - bol of our Eas - ter feast.  
 Eas - ter beam on our long - ing eyes shall stream.

# A Corona Virus Prayer

Jesus Christ, you traveled through towns and villages “curing every disease and illness.” At your command, the sick were made well. Come to our aid now, in the midst of the global spread of the coronavirus, that we may experience your healing love.

Heal those who are sick with the virus. May they regain their strength and health through quality medical care.

Heal us from our fear, which prevents nations from working together and neighbors from helping one another. Heal us from our pride, which can make us claim invulnerability to a disease that knows no borders.

Jesus Christ, healer of all, stay by our side in this time of uncertainty and sorrow. Be with those who have died from the virus. May they be at rest with you in your eternal peace.

Be with the families of those who are sick or have died. As they worry and grieve, defend them from illness and despair. May they know your peace.

Be with the doctors, nurses, researchers and all medical professionals who seek to heal and help those affected and who put themselves at risk in the process. May they know your protection and peace.

Be with the leaders of all nations. Give them the foresight to act with charity and true concern for the well-being of the people they are meant to serve. Give them the wisdom to invest in long-term solutions that will help prepare for or prevent future outbreaks. May they know your peace, as they work together to achieve it on earth.

Whether we are home or abroad, surrounded by many people suffering from this illness or only a few, Jesus Christ, stay with us as we endure and mourn, persist and prepare. In place of our anxiety, give us your peace.

Jesus Christ, heal us.

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## St. John's Episcopal Church

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**Everyone is Welcome! Everyone Belongs!**