

# NEWSLETTER

for the Churches of St Arvans, St Mary, Penterry,  
St Deiniol, Itton, St James, Devauden & Holy Cross, Kilgwrrwg  
forming part of the Severn Wye Ministry Area

## IMPORTANT - PLEASE NOTE

St Arvan's Church is open during the day both for worship, private prayer and a time of stillness.

**Our current live-streamed services are as follows: Sunday Eucharist at 10.**

**a.m.,** and it can be accessed on the St Arvans Parish Group page on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/vicaragecello1/>

and available to watch later

The St Arvans Parish website can be found here:

<http://www.starvanschurch.org.uk/>

Please help to keep us informed of anyone who is in need or is isolated over the next weeks and months, and anyone in need of our prayer and support  
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The Vicarage, St Arvans  
01291 622064;  
Mobile 07867803479  
E-mail: frmichael1@aol.com

**29<sup>th</sup> March 2026**  
**PALM SUNDAY**

## The Collect

### THE COMMEMORATION OF THE LORD'S ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM

**Hosanna to the Son of David, the King of Israel.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you**

Dear friends in Christ, during Lent we have been preparing by works of love and self-sacrifice for the celebration of our Lord's death and resurrection. Today we come together to begin this solemn celebration in union

with the Church throughout the world. Christ enters his own city to complete his work as our Saviour, to suffer, to die, and to rise again. Let us go with him in faith and love, so that, united with him in his sufferings, we may share his risen life.

*The palms are blessed in the following words, and then distributed .*

God our Saviour, whose Son Jesus Christ entered Jerusalem as Messiah to suffer and to die, + let these palms 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 with you and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you**

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

**A**nd when he had said this, Jesus went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. When he drew near to Beth'phage and Bethany, at the mount that is called Olivet, he sent two of the disciples, saying, "Go into the village opposite, where on entering you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever yet sat; untie it and bring it here. If any one asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' you shall say this, 'The Lord has need of it.'" So those who were sent went away and found it as he had told them. And as they were untying the colt, its owners said to them, "Why are you untying the colt?" And they said, "The Lord has need of it." And they brought it to Jesus, and throwing their garments on the colt they set Jesus upon it. And as he rode along, they spread their garments on the road. As he was now drawing near, at the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise

God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen, saying, "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" And some of the Pharisees in the multitude said to him, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples." He answered, "I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out."

*At the end the deacon or priest says*

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

Let us go forth, praising Jesus our Messiah, as did the crowds who welcomed him to Jerusalem.

*The following hymn is sung (in procession):*

## PROCESSIONAL HYMN

*All glory, laud and honour,  
To Thee, Redeemer, King,  
To Whom the lips of children  
Made sweet hosannas ring.*

Thou art the King of Israel,  
Thou David's royal Son,  
Who in the Lord's Name comest,  
The King and Blessèd One.

Refrain: *All glory, laud and honour etc*

The company of angels  
Are praising Thee on High,  
And mortal men and all things  
Created make reply.

*Refrain*

The people of the Hebrews  
With palms before Thee went;  
Our prayer and praise and anthems  
Before Thee we present.

*Refrain*

To Thee, before Thy passion,  
They sang their hymns of praise;  
To Thee, now high exalted,  
Our melody we raise.

*Refrain*

Thou didst accept their praises;  
Accept the prayers we bring,  
Who in all good delightest,  
Thou good and gracious King.

*Refrain*

### **The Collect**

Almighty and everlasting God,  
who in your tender love towards  
the human race sent your Son  
our Saviour Jesus Christ  
to take upon him our flesh  
and to suffer death upon the cross:  
grant that we may follow the example  
of his patience and humility,  
and also be made partakers  
of his resurrection;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever. **AMEN.**

### **A reading from the prophet Isaiah**

The servant of the LORD said:  
The Lord GOD has given me the tongue  
of a teacher, that I may know how to  
sustain the weary with a word.  
Morning by morning he wakens -  
wakens my ear to listen as those who are  
taught. The Lord GOD has opened my  
ear, and I was not rebellious, I did not turn  
backwards. I gave my back to those who  
struck me, and my cheeks to those who  
pulled out the beard; I did not hide my  
face from insult and spitting.  
The Lord GOD helps me;  
therefore I have not been disgraced;  
therefore I have set my face like flint,  
and I know that I shall not be put to  
shame; he who vindicates me is near.  
Who will contend with me? Let us stand  
up together. Who are my adversaries?  
Let them confront me.  
It is the Lord GOD who helps me;  
who will declare me guilty?

[50. 4 - 9a]

*Reader / This is the Word of the Lord*  
*Response / Thanks be to God*

### **Psalm 31** 9 - 16

**R My God, my God,  
why have you forsaken me?**

Have mercy on me, O Lord,  
for I am in trouble;  
my eye is consumed with sorrow,  
and also my throat and my belly.  
For my life is wasted with grief,  
and my years with sighing;  
my strength fails me because of affliction,  
and my bones are consumed.

**R My God, my God,  
why have you forsaken me?**

I have become a reproach  
to all my enemies  
and even to my neighbours,  
a dismay to those of my acquaintance;  
when they see me in the street  
they avoid me.  
I am forgotten like the dead, out of mind;  
I am as useless as a broken pot.

**R My God, my God,  
why have you forsaken me?**

For I have heard the whispering  
of the crowd; fear is all around;  
they put their heads together against me;  
they plot to take my life.  
But as for me, I have trusted  
in you, O Lord.  
I have said, 'You are my God.  
My times are in your hand;  
rescue me from the hand of my enemies,  
and from those who persecute me.  
Make your face to shine  
upon your servant,  
and in your loving-kindness save me.'

**R My God, my God,  
why have you forsaken me?**

### **A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Philippians** [2. 5 - 11]

Let the same mind be in you that was in  
Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the  
form of God, did not regard equality with  
God as something to be exploited, but  
emptied himself, taking the form of a  
slave, being born in human likeness. And  
being found in human form, he humbled  
himself and became obedient to the point  
of death - even death on a cross.  
Therefore God also highly exalted him and  
gave him the name that is above every  
name, so that at the name of Jesus every

knee should bend, in heaven and on earth  
and under the earth, and every tongue  
should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father

*Reader / This is the Word of the Lord*  
*Response / Thanks be to God*

Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal  
glory:  
Christ was humbler yet,  
even to accepting death, death on a cross.  
But God raised him high  
and gave him the name which is above all  
names.  
**Praise to you, O Christ, king of eternal  
glory:**

*There are no responses made before and  
after the Passion Narrative*

### **THE PASSION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ACCORDING TO SAINT MATTHEW**

*Evangelist* When morning came, all  
the chief priests and the elders of the  
people took counsel against Jesus to put  
him to death; and they bound him and led  
him away and delivered him to Pilate the  
governor. When Judas, his betrayer, saw  
that he was condemned, he repented and  
brought back the thirty pieces of silver to  
the chief priests and elders:

*Judas* I have sinned in  
betraying innocent blood.

**Priests** What is that to us? See  
to it yourself.

*Evangelist* And throwing down the  
pieces of silver in the temple, he departed;  
and he went and hanged himself. But the  
chief priests, taking the pieces of silver,  
said:

**Priests** It is not lawful to put  
them into the treasury, since they are  
blood money.

*Evangelist* So they took counsel,  
and bought with them the potter's field, to  
bury strangers in. Therefore that field has  
been called the Field of Blood to this day.  
Then was fulfilled what had been spoken  
by the prophet Jeremiah, saying: 'And  
they took the thirty pieces of silver, the  
price of him on whom a price had been set  
by some of the sons of Israel, and they  
gave them for the potter's field, as the  
Lord directed me'.

Now Jesus stood before the governor; and  
the governor asked him:

*Pilate* Are you the King of the Jews?

*Jesus* You have said so.

*Evangelist* But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he made no answer. Then Pilate said to him:

*Pilate* Do you not hear how many things they testify against you?

*Evangelist* But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge; so that the governor wondered greatly. Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to release for the crowd any one prisoner whom they wanted. And they had then a notorious prisoner, called Barabbas. So when they had gathered, Pilate said to them:

*Pilate* Whom do you want me to release for you, Barabbas or Jesus who is called Christ?

*Evangelist* For he knew that it was out of envy that they had delivered him up. Besides, while he was sitting on the judgement seat, his wife sent word to him:

*Pilate's wife* Have nothing to do with that righteous man, for I have suffered much over him today in a dream.

*Evangelist* Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the people to ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. The governor again said to them:

*Pilate* Which of the two do you want me to release for you?

**Crowd** Barabbas!

*Pilate* Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?

*Crowd* Let him be crucified.

*Pilate* Why? What evil has he done?

*Crowd (louder)* Let him be crucified.

*Evangelist* So when Pilate saw that he was gaining nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took water and washed his hands before the crowd:

*Pilate* I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves.

**Crowd** His blood be on us and on our children!

*Evangelist* Then Pilate released for them Barabbas, and having scourged Jesus, delivered him to be crucified. Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the praetorium, and they gathered the whole battalion before him. And they stripped him and put a scarlet robe upon him, and plaiting a crown of thorns they put it on his head, and put a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him they mocked him:

**Soldiers** Hail, King of the Jews!

*Evangelist* And they spat upon him, and took the reed and struck him on the head. And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the robe, and put his own clothes on him, and led him away to crucify him.

As they were marching out, they came upon a man of Cyrene, Simon by name; this man they compelled to carry his cross. And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means 'the place of a skull'), they offered him wine to drink, mingled with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. And when they had crucified him, they divided his garments among them by casting lots; then they sat down and kept watch over him there. And over his head they put the charge against him, which read, 'This is Jesus the King of the Jews'.

Then two robbers were crucified with him, one on the right and one on the left. And those who passed by derided him, wagging their heads:

**Passers-by** You who would destroy the Temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.

*Evangelist* So also the chief priests, with the scribes and elders, mocked him:

**Priests** He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him.

He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he desires him; for he said: 'I am the Son of God'.

*Evangelist* And the robbers who were crucified with him also reviled him in the same way.

Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice:

*Jesus* Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?

*Evangelist* That is, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' And some of the bystanders hearing it said:

**Bystanders** This man is calling Elijah.

*Evangelist* And one of them at once ran and took a sponge, filled it with vinegar, put it on a reed, and gave it to him to drink. But the others said:

**Bystanders** Wait; let us see whether Elijah will come to save him.

*Evangelist* And Jesus cried again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit.

And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom; and the earth shook, and the rocks were split; the tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised, and coming out of the tombs after his resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many. When the centurion and those who were with him, keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were filled with awe, and said:

*Centurion* Truly this was the Son of God!

## For Your Prayers

That we may have confidence in the new life that the passion and death of Christ has won for us

The peoples of Iran, Lebanon and of the Persian Gulf.

For peace and justice throughout the region. All those caught up in hostilities. For world leaders – for wisdom, restraint and respect for human life.

The government & people of Ukraine and a just and peaceful end to Russia's war of aggression there.

The people of Sudan.

All those without adequate food or shelter

Those who suffer as a result of the climate emergency & for responsible stewardship of our planet

For compassion and responsibility

in those elected to govern us.

For migrants & refugees, and all forced

to flee from their homelands

### For the Church:

For the bishops of the Church:

Cherry, Bishop of Monmouth, & Archbishop of Wales; the Episcopal Visitor of the Society of the Holy Cross in Wales, & for all who hold and teach the Catholic faith that comes to us from the Apostles.

All bishops, priests and deacons and all baptised Christians

For the reunion of all Christians:

for Pope Leo, for Orthodox Patriarch Bartholomew, & for the leaders of the Reformed traditions

For the Severn Wye Ministry Area, for its priests, licensed lay ministers and all its people.

### For the Sick & those in need:

Roy Staples, Ralph Hamilton, Sylvia Jackson; The Revd Helen Rodwell;

Elisabeth; Anne-Louise; Mary; Margaret; Althea; Margi & Bob Osborne.

### **For the Departed:**

The recently departed; our own departed loved ones, and those whose anniversaries of death fall this week: John North-Row; Philip Bell, priest; Horace Davies, priest; May Fitzpatrick; Betty Clay

### **A Prayer of Spiritual Communion**

My Jesus, I believe that you are in the Blessed Sacrament. I love you above all things, and I long for you in my soul. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. As though you have already come, I embrace you and unite myself entirely to you; never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.  
*(The Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament)*

## **The Jereboam Interview**

*We continue our series of extracts from the Jerusalem and Galilee Gazette, an imaginary first-century newspaper. Week by week, the correspondent Jereboam interviews people whose lives have been affected in some way by Jesus Christ and his teaching*

### **Mardocheus**

*Jereboam:* Can you explain something to me please, Mardocheus? I'm a little baffled by this business of the bread and wine being the body and blood of Jesus. Or have I misunderstood?

*Mardocheus:* No, you're quite right. It all stems from what we call the "Last Supper", the meal that Jesus shared with his apostles on the evening before his crucifixion. He gave bread and wine to the apostles and told them that they were consuming his own body and blood. He also asked them to continue the same practice in the future. So that's what we've done ever since.

*Jereboam:* But he could simply have meant that people should think of his body whenever they eat, and

think of his blood whenever they have a drink. There needn't be any great significance about the bread and wine. He probably just wanted to make sure that they didn't ever forget about him.

*Mardocheus:* It's more significant than that. We believe that Jesus inherited the role of Melchisedech – do you remember him? He was the priest who offered bread and wine as a sacrifice to God on behalf of Abraham. So in a very literal way Jesus was incorporating his own body and blood into the priestly sacrifice from all those years ago.

*Jereboam:* I see; that's interesting, but it still doesn't explain why the Church seems to regard the bread and wine as really becoming Jesus' body and blood. I can understand that there might be a symbolic meaning, but taking it so literally – isn't that a bit fanciful?

*Mardocheus:* I don't know if everyone would agree with me here, but I like to compare this with poetry. I'll tell you why: you see a poem written down – or a story, it doesn't matter what the text is – and you presumably understand it more or less. Then you hear it read aloud, and you appreciate it in a new light. It's still the same piece of writing, but it's taken on a new dimension. It's the same with the bread and the wine. They acquire an extra nature through the action of the priest. In one sense they stay the same, but in another, very important sense, something new is added to them.

*Jereboam:* Which implies that a priest has some sort of special power...

*Mardocheus:* Absolutely true: we believe that when Jesus asked his apostles to continue this sacrifice, he gave them the authority to effect the transformation of the bread and wine. Those apostles have subsequently passed on this special duty to a succession of priests over the years.

*Jereboam:* And you actually believe that Jesus physically enters you when you receive him through the bread and the wine?

*Mardocheus:* Yes, I do.

*Jereboam:* Well, I never... Thank you, Mardocheus.

## **THIS WEEK**

**On Palm Sunday** we make our way into Holy Week. We hear the gospel about

Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, St Paul's invitation to us to imitate Jesus who emptied himself, and the whole Passion, this year from St Matthew's Gospel. The next three days - Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of this week - are the final days of Lent. The first readings are from the Suffering Servant Songs of Isaiah. Though originally sung about Israel, God's servant, and perhaps a specific servant, they clearly spoke to the early Christian community about Jesus and his mission.

Monday and Tuesday's gospels are from St John. The anointing at Bethany - at the home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus - has taken place at a wonderful celebration of Lazarus' return to life and a fine thanksgiving to Jesus. Mary anoints Jesus' feet with the precious oil that reminds us of his burial. Then, at the Last Supper (skipping over the reading we will use on Holy Thursday about the washing of feet) Jesus identifies his betrayer. Finally, Jesus talks with Peter who professes his loyalty to Jesus who predicts Peter would deny him three times later that night.

Wednesday's Gospel is the story of Judas' betrayal of Jesus, from Matthew's perspective. We can feel the tension and pressure Jesus is under. There is a sadness at hearing the arrangement Judas makes - 30 pieces of silver - to deliver Jesus into the hands of his enemies.

The stage is now set for the Triduum - Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday.

**On Holy Thursday** we hear a reading from the Book of Exodus which describes the Passover celebration. Paul, in his First Letter to the Corinthians, gives us the earliest account we have of of the Last Supper - probably written relatively soon after the event. Then, we have the unique view of the Last Supper from John's Gospel. Instead of the traditional narrative, we see Jesus washing his disciples' feet. Out of profound respect for the day on which our salvation was won, there is no Eucharist on **Good Friday**. The liturgy begins with a Liturgy of the Word. Isaiah 52-53 contains the last of the Suffering Servant songs. With the eyes of faith, it describes what Jesus became. The Letter to the Hebrews proclaims the good news of this day. The gospel is the Passion from

John's Gospel. For a description of the whole Good Friday liturgy, as well as a reflection on the Passion.

Holy Communion is received from the Sacrament reserved at the Mass of the Lord's Supper.

There is no liturgy at all during the day on Holy Saturday. We spend this day in the in between place - between the remembering the death of our Lord and celebrating his Resurrection.

**The Easter Vigil Liturgy**, which is celebrated after sunset, is a full celebration of our Lord's resurrection. The Liturgy of the Word has a series of eleven readings to choose from. The idea is that we remain in vigil this night, reviewing the story of our salvation - from the story of Creation, to the great story of the Exodus from slavery in Egypt, through a number of the prophets, culminating in Paul's Letter to the Romans - "Are you not aware that we who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into his death?" The readings begin in the dark, and are then read by the light of the Easter Candle. Then the lights come on, bells are rung as we sing the Gloria. The gospel story of the Resurrection is then proclaimed in the full light, with Easter joy.

#### **Next Sunday**

During the day on Easter Sunday, we hear in the Acts of the Apostles Peter's preaching about the Resurrection. The Letter to the Colossians reminds us "You have died and your lives are hidden with Christ in God." The gospel is from St John and gives us the first story of that Easter morning - Mary Magdalene discovers the empty tomb and runs to tell Peter and the "disciple Jesus loved" to tell them. They run to the tomb and discover for themselves that it was empty.

## **St Arvans Tea and Chat**

**Saturday April 11<sup>th</sup>**  
*and usually every second Saturday of the month*  
Childrens activity table  
For assistance or a lift  
please ring Diane on 628084

## **A meditative introduction to Palm Sunday & Holy Week**

+ With today's Palm Sunday Eucharist we begin our experience of Holy Week.

Today is one of those days where the liturgy speaks for itself.

We begin with the blessing of palms, & the Gospel reading which describes the first Palm Sunday, and then, where we would usually take part in a dramatised reading of Jesus' Passion, we read or hear the Passion narrative, this year from St Matthew.

And there's not a huge amount I usefully can add to that.

The story of Holy Week - from today through to Easter Sunday - is very much a journey - a pilgrimage, a dramatic unfolding where in the mysterious depths of its joys and sorrows, loyalties and betrayals and its profound psychological testing of everyone involved, has the capacity - if we enter into it imaginatively and prayerfully - to change us, and to show us how to walk in the footsteps of Christ towards the new life of the Resurrection.

We will see and encounter Jesus in a particularly intense way this coming week, which is why we should try to experience as much of it as we possibly can in whatever ways we can.

In Holy Week the liturgy comes alive perhaps more than at any other time, and it speaks directly to us about the things which really matter.

## **CLOCKS GO FORWARD THIS WEEKEND**

**British Summer Time begins in the early hours of Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> Don't be caught out!**

## **SERVICES IN OUR CHURCHES**

### **TODAY**

### **PALM SUNDAY**

**29<sup>th</sup> March 2026**

- 10 a.m. Sung Eucharist at St Arvan's  
11.30 a.m. Holy Eucharist at St Deiniol's, Itton

### **NEXT SUNDAY**

### **EASTER SUNDAY**

**5<sup>th</sup> April 2026**

- 9 a.m. Holy Eucharist at St James, Devauden  
10 a.m. Sung Eucharist at St Arvan's  
11.30 a.m. Holy Eucharist at St Deiniol's, Itton  
11.30 a.m. Holy Eucharist at St Mary's, Penterry

#### *Readings:*

Acts 10.34-43,  
Psalm 118. [1, 2,] 14-24  
Colossians 3.1-4  
St John 20.1-18

The Eucharist will be celebrated this week at St Arvan's at 10 a.m. on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.  
See the poster included in this mailing for ALL Holy Week and Easter Services

For all services in the wider Ministry Area please see [www.severnwyema.co.uk](http://www.severnwyema.co.uk)

## **The Ministry Area Prayer Group**

Thursdays at 7.45 – 9.00 p.m.  
During the colder months we meet at The Cedars, Chapel Lane, Pwllmeyric, NP16 6LE  
From 9<sup>th</sup> April until 24<sup>th</sup> September 2026 we will be meeting in Churches around the Ministry Area.  
Please join us, everyone is welcome and no experience is

necessary!

Please contact David

on 07887 853479

([david-carne@outlook.com](mailto:david-carne@outlook.com))

for any prayers that you would like us to include or for any questions that you have.

## Daily Prayer

This is the week we call "Holy" because it is a memorial of God's saving deeds for us in Jesus. There is a solemn nature to this week. We might be tempted to be sad or conflicted this week. It is not easy to get close to the reality that we are sinners and our Lord and Saviour went through this betrayal, suffering and death for us. So, sometimes, we avoid looking at this week closely, and praying with it, because we fear getting into our guilt. The invitation this week is to come closer to the reality of God's profound love for us. Yes, we are all sinners. But, we are loved sinners. We are being invited to be grateful, not to beat our breasts. We are invited, in this spirit to feel all that we can feel this week. Yes, we will feel some discomfort - after all, we feel discomfort when anyone puts themselves through some sacrifice for us. And, the sacrifice here is the gift of his very self - so that we might always know how completely Jesus entered into the reality of our human existence - "even death, death on a cross." [Phil. 2:6-9]

This week we follow our ongoing pattern of connecting with our Lord, as early as we can each morning. For even a few moments we name our desire: "Lord, let me be with you this week and open my heart to feel what you want me to feel about your love for me, personally."

Then, throughout the day, in many background, in between moments, we can continue our brief conversations with our Lord as we relate this desire with the people and events of our day. Finally, each night, we can pause, perhaps before a crucifix, or placing ourselves in our imagination before the cross, and speaking to our Lord, friend to friend, the gratitude we feel for the gift of mercy and eternal life his love has gained for us.

Maundy Thursday is a day to wake up and

ask for the grace to grow in our sense of the gift of the Eucharist for us. Even if we can't join in a celebration of the evening Mass of the Lord's Supper, we can take moments throughout this day to remember how he loved us by giving himself to us in the Bread that gives life and the Cup that is poured out for us. To show how the Eucharist is the memorial of how he was taken, blessed, broken and given for us, Jesus washes his disciples' feet. And he tells us that this is a mandate, a mission for us - to follow his example and to wash each others' feet, i.e., to allow ourselves to be taken, blessed, broken and given in love for others. We could reflect today on how I resist his washing my feet - how I resist his intimate love for me. And, we can reflect upon our mission gratefully. For those of us who will celebrate tonight, let this be a day of reflective preparation to enter into this Eucharist and come away with a renewed sense of the meaning of love. "Where there is love, God is present."

On Good Friday we can spend the day with an inner quiet. We can practice this as a day of fast to heighten our awareness of the sacrifice of Jesus. If we are unable to attend a celebration of the Lord's Passion we can surely enter into it in many ways. We can place a crucifix in a central place in our home. We can download an image of the crucifixion from the web. We can read the Passion in John's Gospel or pray with the Stations of the Cross. We can pause - at some time between 12 noon and 3 pm and simply say "thank you." If we are able to celebrate with others, we can let our veneration of the cross be full of intimacy and personal gratitude - beyond where words can take us - for God's mercy and love.

Holy Saturday is a solemn day to ask for the grace to imagine Jesus lying in the tomb, in death. It is from this death - the same death we will all experience - that Jesus is raised. We can not feel the deepest joy of Easter without spending some reflecting on this good news. We can pause in background moments to give thanks for the gift of mercy and life we have been given.

The Easter Vigil liturgy is the fullest celebration of the Resurrection and a renewal of our sense of Baptism. If we are unable to celebrate the Vigil, we might go to bed on this night, thanking God for what

the dawn brings: our opportunity to celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus, who draws us to the fullness of life with him.

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