

Grace Notes - Holy Week 2020



Dear People of Grace,

This Holy Week we will gather, not in church, but at home, just as the disciples did on that first Easter. They scattered and hid in fear, creeping out while it was still dark, to find the grave open and the body of their friend and rabbi missing. There were no Easter lilies, no glorious music, beautiful vestments and paraments, or shining brass and silver. There was only what seemed the added tragedy of a missing body. The disciples did not yet understand what had happened. I expect they didn't really comprehend the magnitude until much, much later.

We will celebrate the Holy Week and Easter services via online meeting on Zoom, to which those without internet access can dial in by phone to listen. They will contain pre-recorded music, video and pictures, as well as live interaction including Sunday virtual coffee hour. The technology is a blessing that allows us to observe this most holy season and interact with each other, while caring for our neighbors and ourselves by remaining physically apart. It will be different, but our Lord comes to us not only in the Holy Eucharist, but in the Word, and in the sacrament of his Body which is the church. I hope you will join us online or by phone.

Enclosed are some materials which you may wish to use at home with your family. Some will be the same as we do online, and some different. For those who have never attended the Holy Week services, this is an opportunity, as the Palm Sunday collect says "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".

Please note that you will need to click the appropriate link or supply the unique meeting ID for each of our services. This is in order to prevent others from "Zoombombing" our services. Please feel free to share these with friends, but do not post the IDs in public places such as Facebook.

Palm Sunday 8:00 AM Online: <https://zoom.us/j/560720124>

By phone +1 646 558 8656 Meeting ID: 560 720 124

10:30 AM Online: <https://zoom.us/j/941022529>

By phone +1 646 558 8656 Meeting ID: 941 022 529

Maundy Thursday 6:00 PM Online: <https://zoom.us/j/796666627>

By phone +1 646 558 8656 Meeting ID: 796 666 627

Good Friday 12 noon Stations of the Cross Online: <https://zoom.us/j/405643002>

By phone +1 646 558 8656 Meeting ID: 405 643 002

7:00 PM Online: <https://zoom.us/j/762905165>

By phone +1 646 558 8656 Meeting ID: 762 905 165

Easter Vigil 7:00 PM Online: <https://zoom.us/j/397738771>

By phone +1 646 558 8656 Meeting ID: 397 738 771

Easter Sunday 8:00 AM Online: <https://zoom.us/j/420513926>

By phone +1 646 558 8656 Meeting ID: 420 513 926

10:30 AM Online: <https://zoom.us/j/323449208>

By phone +1 646 558 8656 Meeting ID: 323 449 208

MARCH 2020 VESTRY HIGHLIGHTS

- Vestry passed a motion allowing us to vote remotely which will enable us to continue to conduct church business while practicing social distancing due to the Coronavirus guidelines. No change in by-laws was needed.
- We will be purchasing an AED (defibrillator). Price quotes are being sought while Vestry determines funding for this life-saving equipment.
- Volunteers are being sought to help create a means of staying in touch remotely. A mail chimp announcement will further explain the plan or you can contact the church office with questions.
- With graduation approaching, applications for the Lewis Scholarship will be sent out to high school seniors.
- Parishioners are sending in their pledges easing our concerns of being able to pay our operating expenses during this difficult time.

Palm Sunday
A Home Observance¹

DIRECTIONS FOR THE RITUAL:

The service moves from the door through four “stations” in the home, with the stations chosen as seem fitting in the particular configuration of the house. (Make this decision prior to the beginning of the rite.)

The rite may conclude with a simple meal.

In choosing stations, one might best give the sense that the house has been covered “end to end.” Alternatively, if it makes sense of the house, the stations might cover the “four directions” – north, south, east, west. In a one room or very small space, the rite can move from corner to corner or other spaces as convenient.

A single person could eliminate biddings and responses as appropriate.

As with all house blessings, those who are able to do so can move from station to station, while those who may be mobility-limited can remain in a central room while the procession moves and the prayers are offered, loudly enough for all to hear.

Gather in a room spacious enough for all. The presider greets any others participating. Palms may be distributed to all.

Now, proceed to a place at or near the front door.

Presider: The Lord be with you.

Response: And also with you.

Presider: Let us pray.

Almighty God, as your Son Jesus came to Jerusalem to bring to completion the work of our salvation, so come to the homes of your people and bless us by your presence. Call your church again to the way of the cross. Give us strength to follow it. Quicken our memories and stir our hearts as we contemplate those mighty acts, whereby you have given us life and immortality; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *AMEN.*

The following gospel is now read aloud, without introduction or conclusion.

Matthew 21:1-11

*The presider now says **three times:***

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

Response: Hosanna in the highest!

¹ A service for the observance of Palm Sunday during the pandemic 2020, adapted/created from the 1979 *Book of Common Prayer's* proper liturgy for Palm Sunday and from the liturgy for the “Celebration for a Home” in the Episcopal Church’s *Book of Occasional Services* 2018.

And now:

Presider: Let us go forth in peace;

Response: In the name of Christ. Amen.

Hymn could be sung in unison, with or without an instrument.

THE FIRST STATION

Proceed to the first station. When stopped, verses of Psalm 118 are read:

Presider: Open for me the gates of righteousness;

I will enter them

I will offer thanks to the Lord

Response: This is the gate of the Lord;

he who is righteous may enter.

Presider: I will give thanks to you, for you answered me

and have become my salvation.

Response: The same stone which the builders rejected

has become the chief cornerstone.

Presider: Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!

Response: Hosanna in the highest!

THE SECOND STATION

Proceed to the second station. When stopped, verses of Psalm 118 are read:

Presider: This is the Lord's doing,

and it is marvelous in our eyes.

Response: On this day the Lord has acted;

we will rejoice and be glad in it.

Presider: Hosannah, Lord, hosannah,

Lord, send us now success.

Response: Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord;

we bless you from the house of the Lord.

Presider: Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!

Response: Hosanna in the highest!

THE THIRD STATION

Proceed to the third station. When stopped, verses of Psalm 118 are read:

Presider: God is the Lord; God has shined upon us;
 form a procession with branches up to the horns of the altar.

*Response: You are my God, and I will thank you;
 you are my God, and I will exalt you.*

*ALL: Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
 God's mercy endures for ever.*

Presider: Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!

Response: Hosanna in the highest!

THE FOURTH STATION

Proceed to the fourth station. When stopped, verses of Psalm 78 are read:

Presider: Hear my teaching, O my people;
 incline your ears to the words of my mouth.

*Response: I will open my mouth in a parable;
 I will declare the mysteries of ancient times.*

Presider: That which we have heard and known,
 and what our ancestors have told us;
 we will not hide from their children.

*Response: We will recount for generations to come
 The praiseworthy deeds of the Lord,
 and the wonderful works God has done.*

Presider: The Lord be with you.

Response: And also with you.

Presider: Let us pray.

Almighty God, whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain, and entered not into glory until 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 our Lord. *AMEN.*

Return to a central room. All are seated, and a person appointed reads:

Philippians 2: 5-11

Silence is kept.

Now another person appointed reads the gospel.

Matthew 27: 1-66

After a moment of silence:

Presider: That love would go so far as this... that God's Son would die for us, for our salvation! Let us keep silence in thanksgiving and contemplate this great love.

Silence is kept for a time. Then...

Presider: Now I invite your prayers for all the needs of the world God so loved, silently or aloud.

After the prayers are offered:

Presider: Let us pray.

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.*

Presider: Let us bless the Lord.

Response: *Thanks be to God.*

Participants may adjourn to a simple meal. If palms were held during the service, they might be strewn about the dining table, and a Bible placed on the table in clear sight of all.

Dear People of Grace,

What follows here are resources for you and those with whom you live to use for praying together on the three central days of the Christian year. While Easter is every Sunday, these Three Days are like one great annual Sunday. But because of the pandemic, we cannot do these important services together in church. While Easter is a joyful festival, we keep it now in a time of difficulty and world-wide sorrow. Still, we believe that Christ is with us in his word, by his Spirit drawing us together as one before God. And we believe that the gospel of Christ gives us strength amid distress and comfort in the face of our sufferings.

These three services are really one event, stretched over three days. As a sign of our unity you might consider using these three resources for prayer on each of the three nights at the time at which we would have gathered in our church building.

On each occasion you will need to set out one or more physical symbols: first, a bowl of water and a clean towel; then a cross or crucifix; and finally a bowl of water and a candle.

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MAUNDY THURSDAY THE FIRST OF THE THREE DAYS

Set out a bowl of water and a clean towel. Sit with them before you and begin with these texts. First, remember God's forgiveness:

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us
even when we were dead in sin,
and made us alive together with Christ.
By grace we have been saved.
Our sins are forgiven in the name of Jesus Christ.
Almighty God strengthen us with power
through the Holy Spirit,
that Christ may live in our hearts through faith. **Amen.**

Then pray the prayer for this night:

Holy God, source of all love,
on the night of his betrayal,
Jesus gave us a new commandment,
to love one another as he loves us.
Write this commandment in our hearts,
and give us the will to serve others
as he was servant of all,
your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Then read this reading:

FIRST READING: Exodus 12:1–14

The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt: ²This month shall mark for you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year for you. ³Tell the whole congregation of Israel that on the tenth of this month they are to take a lamb for each family, a lamb for each household. ⁴If a household is too small for a whole lamb, it shall join its closest neighbor in obtaining one; the lamb shall be divided in proportion to the number of people who eat of it. ⁵Your lamb shall be without blemish, a year-old male; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. ⁶You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month; then the whole assembled congregation of Israel shall slaughter it at twilight. ⁷They shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. ⁸They shall eat the lamb that same night; they shall eat it roasted over the fire with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. ⁹Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted over the fire, with its head, legs, and inner organs. ¹⁰You shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn. ¹¹This is how you shall eat it: your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it hurriedly. It is

the passover of the LORD. ¹²For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike down every firstborn in the land of Egypt, both human beings and animals; on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the LORD. ¹³The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live: when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague shall destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

¹⁴This day shall be a day of remembrance for you. You shall celebrate it as a festival to the LORD; throughout your generations you shall observe it as a perpetual ordinance.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

Then pray this Psalm:

Psalm 116:1, 10-17

I love the Lord, because he has heard the voice of my supplication, *
because he has inclined his ear to me whenever I called upon him.

How shall I repay the Lord *
for all the good things he has done for me?

I will lift up the cup of salvation *
and call upon the Name of the Lord.

I will fulfill my vows to the Lord *
in the presence of all his people.

Precious in the sight of the Lord *
is the death of his servants.

O Lord, I am your servant; *
I am your servant and the child of your handmaid;
you have freed me from my bonds.

I will offer you the sacrifice of thanksgiving *
and call upon the Name of the Lord.

I will fulfill my vows to the Lord *
in the presence of all his people,

In the courts of the Lord's house, *
in the midst of you, O Jerusalem.
Hallelujah!

Then read this reading:

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 11:23–26

²³For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, ²⁴and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." ²⁵In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." ²⁶For as often

as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

Then read the Gospel

***GOSPEL: John 13:1–17, 31b–35**

The Holy Gospel according to John. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

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. ²The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper ³Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, ⁴got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. ⁵Then 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. ⁶He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" ⁷Jesus answered, "You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand." ⁸Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no share with me." ⁹Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" ¹⁰Jesus 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." ¹¹For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, "Not all of you are clean."

¹²After 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? ¹³You call me Teacher and Lord — and you are right, for that is what I am. ¹⁴So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. ¹⁵For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. ¹⁶Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. ¹⁷If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them. ^{31b}"Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. ³²If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. ³³Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.' ³⁴I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. ³⁵By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ**

Having read these readings, think of this:

This word about the love of Jesus is always the beginning of any time. By remembering the Passover and the Last Supper and the footwashing, we are not trying to get back to an old time. In the face of the suffering and death with which the world is filled, our trying would not come to much. But God's word comes to us now. To our time. Even when we cannot meet for the holy supper together, this word — which takes these three nights to say — comes to us: Jesus Christ is our forgiveness. He is the Lamb whose blood marks the doors of our houses and bodies. In the power of the Spirit, he has washed our feet and our lives. And he turns us toward our neighbors. In this word — and in the cross proclaimed tomorrow and the resurrection proclaimed on Saturday night — Easter comes out to hold us already.

Here you may wash your hands, using the water in the bowl, recalling Jesus washing his disciples' feet.

Then you may pray together with all of us these intercessions for our church and world:

United with Christians around the globe on this Maundy Thursday, let us pray for the church, the earth, our troubled world, and all in need, responding to each petition with the words **Your mercy is great.**

A brief silence.

Blessed are you, holy God, for the church. Gather all the baptized around your presence in the Word. Strengthen the body of your people even when we cannot assemble for worship. Grant our Presiding Bishop Michael, our Bishop Dede, our rector Cathy, and all our clergy faithfulness and creativity for their ministry in this time, and accompany those preparing for baptism.

A brief silence.

Hear us, holy God. **Your mercy is great.**

Blessed are you, bountiful God, for this good earth and for the flowering of springtime. Save dry lands from destructive droughts. Protect the waters from pollution. Allow in this time the planting of fields for food. Make us into care-givers of your plants and animals.

A brief silence.

Hear us, bountiful God. **Your mercy is great.**

Blessed are you, sovereign God, for our nation. Inspire all people to live in peace and concord. Grant wisdom and courage to heads of state and to legislators as they face the coronavirus. Lead our elected officials to champion the cause of the needy.

A brief silence.

Hear us, sovereign God. **Your mercy is great.**

Blessed are you, faithful God, for you accompany suffering humanity with love. Abide wherever the coronavirus has struck. Visit all who mourn their dead; all who have contracted the virus; those who are quarantined or stranded away from home; those who have lost their employment; those who fear the present and the future. Support physicians, nurses, and home health aides; medical researchers; and the World Health Organization.

A brief silence.

Hear us, faithful God. **Your mercy is great.**

Blessed are you, gracious God, for you care for the needy. We beg you to feed the hungry, protect the refugee, embrace the distressed, house the homeless, nurse the sick, and comfort the dying. Especially we pray for Karen Huff, Barb Jensen, Nathan Linman, Jack Mulloy, and for those we name before you now.

A brief silence.

Hear us, gracious God. **Your mercy is great.**

Blessed are you, loving God, that your Son knelt before us, your unworthy servants. Preserve our lives, comfort our anxiety, and receive now the petitions of our hearts.

A longer period of silence.

Hear us, loving God. **Your mercy is great.**

Blessed are you, eternal God, for all who have died in the faith, and those whom we name before you here.

A brief silence.

At the end, bring us with them into your everlasting glory.

Hear us, eternal God. **Your mercy is great.**

Receive, merciful God, our prayers, for the sake of Jesus Christ, the host of our meal of life, who died and rose that we might live with you, now and forever.

Amen.

Finally, remembering Jesus going to his arrest and his death, the events from which all the mercy that fills this night flows, pray this Psalm.

PSALM 88

1 O Lord, my | God, my Savior,
by day and night I | cry to you.

2 Let my prayer enter in- | to your presence;
incline your ear to my | lamentation.

3 For I am | full of trouble;
my life is at the brink | of the grave.

4 I am counted among those who go down | to the pit;
I have become like one who | has no strength;

5 Lost among the dead, like the slain who lie | in the grave,
whom you remember no more, for they are cut off | from your hand.

6 You have laid me in the depths | of the pit,
in dark places, and in | the abyss.

7 Your anger weighs up- | on me heavily,
and all your great waves | overwhelm me.

8 You have put my friends far from me; you have made me to be ab- | horred by them;
I am in prison and can- | not get free.

9 My sight has failed me be- | cause of trouble;
Lord, I have called upon you daily; I have stretched out my | hands to you.

10 Do you work wonders | for the dead?
Will those who have died stand up and | give you thanks?

11 Will your lovingkindness be declared | in the grave,
your faithfulness in the land | of destruction?

12 Will your wonders be known | in the dark
or your righteousness in the country where all | is forgotten?

13 But as for me, O Lord, I cry to | you for help;
in the morning my prayer | comes before you.

14 Lord, why have you re- | jected me?
Why have you hidden your | face from me?

15 Ever since my youth, I have been wretched and at the | point of death;
I have borne your terrors | and am helpless.

16 Your blazing anger has swept | over me;
your terrors | have destroyed me;

17 They surround me all day long | like a flood;
they encompass me on | every side.

18 My friend and my neighbor you have put a- | way from me,
and darkness is my on- | ly companion.

The Three Days continue tomorrow with the service for Good Friday.



GOOD FRIDAY THE SECOND OF THE THREE DAYS

*Sit before a cross or a crucifix.
Begin with this prayer.*

Blessed be our God.
For ever and ever. Amen.

Almighty God, we pray you graciously to behold this your family, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed, and given into the hands of sinners, and to suffer death upon the cross; who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Then read the readings that follow.

FIRST READING: ISAIAH 52:13—53:12

¹³See, my servant shall prosper;
he shall be exalted and lifted up,
and shall be very high.

¹⁴Just as there were many who were astonished at him
— so marred was his appearance, beyond human semblance,
and his form beyond that of mortals —

¹⁵so he shall startle many nations;
kings shall shut their mouths because of him;

for that which had not been told them they shall see,
and that which they had not heard they shall contemplate.

Who has believed what we have heard?

And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?

²For he grew up before him like a young plant,
and like a root out of dry ground;
he had no form or majesty that we should look at him,
nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.

³He was despised and rejected by others;
a man of suffering and acquainted with infirmity;
and as one from whom others hide their faces
he was despised, and we held him of no account.

⁴Surely he has borne our infirmities
and carried our diseases;
yet we accounted him stricken,
struck down by God, and afflicted.

⁵But he was wounded for our transgressions,
crushed for our iniquities;
upon him was the punishment that made us whole,
and by his bruises we are healed.

⁶All we like sheep have gone astray;
we have all turned to our own way,
and the LORD has laid on him
the iniquity of us all.

⁷He was oppressed, and he was afflicted,
yet he did not open his mouth;
like a lamb that is led to the slaughter,
and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent,
so he did not open his mouth.

⁸By a perversion of justice he was taken away.
Who could have imagined his future?
For he was cut off from the land of the living,
stricken for the transgression of my people.

⁹They made his grave with the wicked
and his tomb with the rich,
although he had done no violence,
and there was no deceit in his mouth.

¹⁰Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him with pain.
When you make his life an offering for sin,
he shall see his offspring, and shall prolong his days;
through him the will of the LORD shall prosper.

¹¹Out of his anguish he shall see light;
he shall find satisfaction through his knowledge.
The righteous one, my servant, shall make many righteous,
and he shall bear their iniquities.

¹²Therefore I will allot him a portion with the great,
and he shall divide the spoil with the strong;
because he poured out himself to death,
and was numbered with the transgressors;

yet he bore the sin of many,
and made intercession for the transgressors.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

Pray this Psalm:

PSALM 22

- ¹My God, my God, why have you for-^lsaken me?
Why so far from saving me, so far from the words ^l of my
groaning?
- ²My God, I cry out by day, but you ^l do not answer;
by night, but I ^l find no rest.
- ³Yet you are the ^l Holy One,
enthroned on the prais-^les of Israel.
- ⁴Our ancestors put their ^l trust in you,
they trusted, and you ^l rescued them.
- ⁵They cried out to you and ^l were delivered;
they trusted in you and were not ^l put to shame.
- ⁶But as for me, I am a worm ^l and not human,
scorned by all and despised ^l by the people.
- ⁷All who see me laugh ^l me to scorn;
they curl their lips; they ^l shake their heads.
- ⁸"Trust in the LORD; let the ^l LORD deliver;
let God rescue him if God so de- ^l lights in him."
- ⁹Yet you are the one who drew me forth ^l from the womb,
and kept me safe on my ^l mother's breast.
- ¹⁰I have been entrusted to you ever since ^l I was born;
you were my God when I was still in my ^l mother's womb.
- ¹¹Be not far from me, for trou-^lble is near,
and there is no ^l one to help.
- ¹²Many young bulls en- ^l circle me;
strong bulls of Ba-^lshan surround me.
- ¹³They open wide their ^l jaws at me,
like a slashing and ^l roaring lion.
- ¹⁴I am poured out like water; all my bones are ^l out of joint;
my heart within my breast is ^l melting wax.
- ¹⁵My strength is dried up like a potsherd; my tongue sticks to the
roof ^l of my mouth;
and you have laid me in the ^l dust of death.
- ¹⁶Packs of dogs close me in, a band of evildoers ^l circles round me;
they pierce my hands ^l and my feet.
- ¹⁷I can count ^l all my bones
while they stare at ^l me and gloat.
- ¹⁸They divide my gar-^lments among them;
for my clothing, ^l they cast lots.
- ¹⁹But you, O LORD, be not ^l far away;
O my help, hasten ^l to my aid.
- ²⁰Deliver me ^l from the sword,

my life from the power | of the dog.
²¹Save me from the | lion's mouth!
 From the horns of wild bulls you have | rescued me.
²²I will declare your name | to my people;
 in the midst of the assembly | I will praise you.
²³You who fear the LORD, give praise! All you of Jacob's | line, give glory.
 Stand in awe of the LORD, all you off-|spring of Israel.
²⁴For the LORD does not despise nor abhor the poor | in their
 poverty; neither is the LORD's face hid-|den from them;
²⁵From you comes my praise in the | great assembly;
 I will perform my vows in the sight of those who | fear the LORD.
²⁶The poor shall eat | and be satisfied.
 Let those who seek the LORD give praise! May your
 hearts | live forever!
²⁷All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn | to the LORD;
 all the families of nations shall bow | before God.
²⁸For dominion belongs | to the LORD,
 who rules o- | ver the nations.
²⁹Indeed, all who sleep in the earth shall bow | down in worship;
 all who go down to the dust, though they be dead, shall
 kneel be- | fore the LORD.
³⁰Their descendants shall | serve the LORD,
 whom they shall proclaim to genera- | tions to come.
³¹They shall proclaim God's deliverance to a people | yet unborn,
 saying to them, "The | LORD has acted!"

Then read the Gospel.

GOSPEL JOHN 18:1 - 19:42

The Holy Gospel according to John. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹[Jesus] went out with his disciples across the Kidron valley to a place where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered.²Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place, because Jesus often met there with his disciples. ³So Judas brought a detachment of soldiers together with police from the chief priests and the Pharisees, and they came there with lanterns and torches and weapons. ⁴Then Jesus, knowing all that was to happen to him, came forward and asked them, "Whom are you looking for?" ⁵They answered, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus replied, "I am he." Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. ⁶When Jesus said to them, "I am he," they stepped back and fell to the ground. ⁷Again he asked them, "Whom are you looking for?" And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth." ⁸Jesus answered, "I told you that I am he. So if you are looking for me, let these men go." ⁹This was to fulfill the word that he had spoken, "I did not lose a single one of those whom you gave me." ¹⁰Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his right ear. The slave's name was Malchus. ¹¹Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword back into its sheath. Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?"

¹²So the soldiers, their officer, and the Jewish police arrested Jesus and bound him. ¹³First they took him to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. ¹⁴Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was better to have one person die for the people.

15 Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. Since that disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest, 16 but Peter was standing outside at the gate. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out, spoke to the woman who guarded the gate, and brought Peter in. 17 The woman said to Peter, "You are not also one of this man's disciples, are you?" He said, "I am not." 18 Now the slaves and the police had made a charcoal fire because it was cold, and they were standing around it and warming themselves. Peter also was standing with them and warming himself.

19 Then the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching. 20 Jesus answered, "I have spoken openly to the world; I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews come together. I have said nothing in secret. 21 Why do you ask me? Ask those who heard what I said to them; they know what I said." 22 When he had said this, one of the police standing nearby struck Jesus on the face, saying, "Is that how you answer the high priest?" 23 Jesus answered, "If I have spoken wrongly, testify to the wrong. But if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?" 24 Then Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

25 Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. They asked him, "You are not also one of his disciples, are you?" He denied it and said, "I am not." 26 One of the slaves of the high priest, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, "Did I not see you in the garden with him?" 27 Again Peter denied it, and at that moment the cock crowed.

28 Then they took Jesus from Caiaphas to Pilate's headquarters. It was early in the morning. They themselves did not enter the headquarters, so as to avoid ritual defilement and to be able to eat the Passover. 29 So Pilate went out to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?" 30 They answered, "If this man were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you." 31 Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and judge him according to your law." The Jews replied, "We are not permitted to put anyone to death." 32 (This was to fulfill what Jesus had said when he indicated the kind of death he was to die.)

33 Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" 34 Jesus answered, "Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?" 35 Pilate replied, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?" 36 Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here." 37 Pilate asked him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice." 38 Pilate asked him, "What is truth?"

After he had said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them, "I find no case against him. 39 But you have a custom that I release someone for you at the Passover. Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?" 40 They shouted in reply, "Not this man, but Barabbas!" Now Barabbas was a bandit.

19:1 Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. 2 And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe. 3 They kept coming up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and striking him on the face. 4 Pilate went out again and said to them, "Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know that I find no case against him." 5 So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Here is the man!" 6 When the chief priests and the police saw him, they shouted, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him; I find no case against him." 7 The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has claimed to be the Son of God."

8 Now when Pilate heard this, he was more afraid than ever. 9 He entered his headquarters again and asked Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. 10 Pilate therefore said to him, "Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you, and power to crucify you?" 11 Jesus answered him, "You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above; therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin." 12 From then on Pilate tried to release him, but the Jews cried out, "If you release this man, you are no friend of the emperor. Everyone who claims to be a king sets himself against the emperor."

13When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus outside and sat on the judge's bench at a place called The Stone Pavement, or in Hebrew Gabbatha. 14Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover; and it was about noon. He said to the Jews, "Here is your King!" 15They cried out, "Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!" Pilate asked them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but the emperor." 16Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.

So they took Jesus; 17and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha. 18There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them. 19Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." 20Many of the Jews read this inscription, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek. 21Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but, 'This man said, I am King of the Jews.'" 22Pilate answered, "What I have written I have written." 23When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. 24So they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it." This was to fulfill what the scripture says,

"They divided my clothes among themselves,
and for my clothing they cast lots."

25And that is what the soldiers did.

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. 26When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son." 27Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

28After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill the scripture), "I am thirsty." 29A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth. 30When Jesus had received the wine, he said, "It is finished." Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

31Since it was the day of Preparation, the Jews did not want the bodies left on the cross during the sabbath, especially because that sabbath was a day of great solemnity. So they asked Pilate to have the legs of the crucified men broken and the bodies removed. 32Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him. 33But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. 34Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out. 35(He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth.) 36These things occurred so that the scripture might be fulfilled, "None of his bones shall be broken." 37And again another passage of scripture says, "They will look on the one whom they have pierced."

38After 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. 39Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. 40They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews. 41Now 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. 42And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ**

Having read these readings, think of this:

Jesus Christ is a root out of dry ground. By his wounds we are healed. These paradoxes of Isaiah are echoed in the account in John about his death: he is arrested, yet when he speaks the soldiers fall down; he is tried,

yet he is King and Son of God and The Man; he is thirsty and dying, yet he is the source of the Spirit and of water and blood to heal us; finally he is buried, but it is in a garden. All of this means to tell us that God shares our sorrow and need and death and yet transforms it to life and salvation and hope. More than just a root out of dry ground, his cross is the great tree of life in which we all may shelter. You may shelter there today. And all those things in all the world that we pray for today, God holds together in him.

Then pray

Dear People of God: Our heavenly Father sent his Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved; that all who believe in him might be delivered from the power of sin and death, and become heirs with him of everlasting life.

We pray, therefore, for people everywhere according to their needs.

Let us pray for the holy Catholic Church of Christ throughout the world;

For its unity in witness and service
For all bishops and other ministers and the people whom they serve
For N., our Bishop, and all the people of this diocese
For all Christians in this community
For those about to be baptized

That God will confirm his Church in faith, increase it in love, and preserve it in peace.

Silence

Almighty and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of your faithful people is governed and sanctified: Receive our supplications and prayers which we offer before you for all members of your holy Church, that in their vocation and ministry they may truly and devoutly serve you; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Let us pray for all nations and peoples of the earth, and for those in authority among them;

For N., the President of the United States
For the Congress and the Supreme Court
For the Members and Representatives of the United Nations
For all who serve the common good

That by God's help they may seek justice and truth, and live in peace and concord.

Silence

Almighty God, kindle, we pray, in every heart the true love of peace, and guide with your wisdom those who take counsel for the nations of the earth; that in tranquillity your dominion may increase, until the earth is filled with the knowledge of your love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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 the sick, the wounded, and the disabled
For those in loneliness, fear, and anguish

For those who face temptation, doubt, and despair
For the sorrowful and bereaved
For prisoners and captives, and those in mortal danger

That God in his mercy will comfort and relieve them, and grant them the knowledge of his love, and stir up in us the will and patience to minister to their needs.

Silence

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 never heard the word of salvation
For those who have lost their faith
For those hardened by sin or indifference
For the contemptuous and the scornful
For those who are enemies of the cross of Christ and persecutors of his disciples
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.

Silence

Merciful God, creator of all the peoples of the earth and lover of souls: Have compassion on all who do not know you as you are revealed in your Son Jesus Christ; let your Gospel be preached with grace and power to those who have not heard it; turn the hearts of those who resist it; and bring home to your fold those who have gone astray; that there may be one flock under one shepherd, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Let us commit ourselves to our God, and pray for the grace of a holy life, that, with all who have departed this world and have died in the peace of Christ, and those whose faith is known to God alone, we may be accounted worthy to enter into the fullness of the joy of our Lord, and receive the crown of life in the day of resurrection.

Silence

O God of unchangeable power and eternal light: Look favorably on your whole Church, that wonderful and sacred mystery; by the effectual working of your providence, carry out in tranquillity the plan of salvation; let the whole world see and know that things which were cast down are being raised up, and things which had grown old are being made new, and that all things are being brought to their perfection by him through whom all things were made, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Then as you look upon the cross or crucifix, read the following

|

We glory in your cross, O Lord,
and praise and glorify your holy resurrection;
for by virtue of your cross

joy has come to the whole world.

May God be merciful to us and bless us,
show us the light of his countenance, and come to us.

Let your ways be known upon earth,
your saving health among all nations.

Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.

We glory in your cross, O Lord,
and praise and glorify your holy resurrection;
for by virtue of your cross
joy has come to the whole world.

II

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,
because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

If we have died with him, we shall also live with him;
if we endure, we shall also reign with him.

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,
because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.

III

O Savior of the world,
who by thy cross and precious blood hast redeemed us:
Save us and help us, we humbly beseech thee, O Lord.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Christ for us became obedient unto death
Even death on a cross

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, we pray you to set your passion, cross, and death between your judgment and our souls, now and in the hour of our death. Give mercy and grace to the living; pardon and rest to the dead; to your holy Church peace and concord; and to us sinners everlasting life and glory; for with the Father and the Holy Spirit you live and reign, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

The Three Days continues tomorrow with the Vigil of Easter



RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD
VIGIL OF EASTER
THE THIRD OF THE THREE DAYS

Sit before an unlit candle and a bowl of water.

Light the candle, saying:

The light of Christ, rising in glory, dispel the darkness of our hearts and minds.
Thanks be to God.

Then read this "Easter Proclamation"

Rejoice, all heavenly choirs of angels!
Christ has conquered; the risen Savior shines upon you.
This is the night in which the true Lamb is slain.
This is the night: **this is the night.**

This the night in which the children of Israel were led through the sea.
This is the night: **this is the night.**

This is the night in which all who believe in Christ are renewed in grace.
This is the night: **this is the night.**

The holiness of this night restores joy to those who mourn and humbles earthly pride.
Therefore this night, O God, receive our praise for the resurrection of Jesus Christ.
May Christ, the Morning Star, rising from the grave,
shed light on the whole human race.
And we pray, O God: preserve and protect your church,
giving us peace, in this time and forever.
Amen.

And pray this prayer:

O God,
you are the creator of the world,

the liberator of your people,
and the wisdom of the earth.
By the resurrection of your Son,
free us from our fears,
restore us in your image,
and ignite us with your light,
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.
Amen.

Then choose among these five OLD TESTAMENT READINGS, reading as many as you decide:

FIRST READING *Genesis 1:1—2:4a*

¹In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, ²the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. ³Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light. ⁴And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. ⁵God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

⁶And God said, “Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.” ⁷So God made the dome and separated the waters that were under the dome from the waters that were above the dome. And it was so. ⁸God called the dome Sky. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

⁹And God said, “Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.” And it was so. ¹⁰God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. ¹¹Then God said, “Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it.” And it was so. ¹²The earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seed of every kind, and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it. And God saw that it was good. ¹³And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

¹⁴And God said, “Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, ¹⁵and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth.” And it was so. ¹⁶God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. ¹⁷God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth, ¹⁸to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. ¹⁹And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

²⁰And God said, “Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky.” ²¹So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm, and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. ²²God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.” ²³And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

²⁴And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind.” And it was so. ²⁵God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind, and the cattle of every kind, and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good.

²⁶Then God said, “Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.”

²⁷So God created humankind in his image,

in the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.

28God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.” 29God said, “See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. 30And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. 31God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

2:1Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their multitude. 2And on the seventh day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done. 3So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that he had done in creation.

4aThese are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

About this reading: Especially now, we long for an ordered world. In spite of death and sorrow, the resurrection of Jesus Christ contains the promise of a new creation. Baptized into his death and resurrection, we are made witnesses to God's new creation, and it is very good.

SECOND READING *Exodus 14:10-31; 15:20-21*

10As Pharaoh drew near, the Israelites looked back, and there were the Egyptians advancing on them. In great fear the Israelites cried out to the Lord. 11They said to Moses, “Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us, bringing us out of Egypt? 12Is this not the very thing we told you in Egypt, ‘Let us alone and let us serve the Egyptians’? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness.” 13But Moses said to the people, “Do not be afraid, stand firm, and see the deliverance that the Lord will accomplish for you today; for the Egyptians whom you see today you shall never see again. 14The Lord will fight for you, and you have only to keep still.”

15Then the Lord said to Moses, “Why do you cry out to me? Tell the Israelites to go forward. 16But you lift up your staff, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the Israelites may go into the sea on dry ground. 17Then I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they will go in after them; and so I will gain glory for myself over Pharaoh and all his army, his chariots, and his chariot drivers. 18And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I have gained glory for myself over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his chariot drivers.”

19The angel of God who was going before the Israelite army moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from in front of them and took its place behind them. 20It came between the army of Egypt and the army of Israel. And so the cloud was there with the darkness, and it lit up the night; one did not come near the other all night.

21Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The Lord drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night, and turned the sea into dry land; and the waters were divided. 22The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. 23The Egyptians pursued, and went into the sea after them, all of Pharaoh’s horses, chariots, and chariot drivers. 24At the morning watch the Lord in the pillar of fire and cloud looked down upon the Egyptian army, and threw the Egyptian army into panic. 25He clogged their chariot wheels so that they turned with difficulty. The Egyptians said, “Let us flee from the Israelites, for the Lord is fighting for them against Egypt.”

26Then the Lord said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, so that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots and chariot drivers." 27So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at dawn the sea returned to its normal depth. As the Egyptians fled before it, the Lord tossed the Egyptians into the sea. 28The waters returned and covered the chariots and the chariot drivers, the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea; not one of them remained. 29But the Israelites walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left.

30Thus the Lord saved Israel that day from the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. 31Israel saw the great work that the Lord did against the Egyptians. So the people feared the Lord and believed in the Lord and in his servant Moses.

15:20Then the prophet Miriam, Aaron's sister, took a tambourine in her hand; and all the women went out after her with tambourines and with dancing. 21And Miriam sang to them:

"Sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously;
horse and rider he has thrown into the sea."

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

About this reading: We long for freedom from fear and confusion, sin and death. The resurrection of Christ brings us through the sea to new life, and baptism has enacted that exodus.

THIRD READING *Ezekiel 37:1–14*

1The hand of the Lord came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. 2He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. 3He said to me, "Mortal, can these bones live?" I answered, "O Lord God, you know." 4Then he said to me, "Prophecy to these bones, and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. 5Thus says the Lord God to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. 6I will lay sinews on you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am the Lord."

7So I prophesied as I had been commanded; and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. 8I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them; but there was no breath in them. 9Then he said to me, "Prophecy to the breath, prophesy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." 10I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

11Then he said to me, "Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, 'Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.' 12Therefore prophesy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord God: I am going to open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. 13And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people. 14I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken and will act, says the Lord."

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

About this reading: We are the dry bones. The Spirit of God, poured out from Christ's death and resurrection, makes us alive together with him, a whole people standing together in new life, even when we are separated from each other.

FOURTH READING *Jonah 1:1—2:1*

1Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah son of Amittai, saying, 2“Go at once to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it; for their wickedness has come up before me.” 3But Jonah set out to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord. He went down to Joppa and found a ship going to Tarshish; so he paid his fare and went on board, to go with them to Tarshish, away from the presence of the Lord.

4But the Lord hurled a great wind upon the sea, and such a mighty storm came upon the sea that the ship threatened to break up. 5Then the mariners were afraid, and each cried to his god. They threw the cargo that was in the ship into the sea, to lighten it for them. Jonah, meanwhile, had gone down into the hold of the ship and had lain down, and was fast asleep. 6The captain came and said to him, “What are you doing sound asleep? Get up, call on your god! Perhaps the god will spare us a thought so that we do not perish.”

7The sailors said to one another, “Come, let us cast lots, so that we may know on whose account this calamity has come upon us.” So they cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah. 8Then they said to him, “Tell us why this calamity has come upon us. What is your occupation? Where do you come from? What is your country? And of what people are you?” 9“*I am a Hebrew,*” he replied. “I worship the Lord, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land.” 10Then the men were even more afraid, and said to him, “What is this that you have done!” For the men knew that he was fleeing from the presence of the Lord, because he had told them so.

11Then they said to him, “What shall we do to you, that the sea may quiet down for us?” For the sea was growing more and more tempestuous. 12He said to them, “Pick me up and throw me into the sea; then the sea will quiet down for you; for I know it is because of me that this great storm has come upon you.” 13Nevertheless the men rowed hard to bring the ship back to land, but they could not, for the sea grew more and more stormy against them. 14Then they cried out to the Lord, “Please, O Lord, we pray, do not let us perish on account of this man’s life. Do not make us guilty of innocent blood; for you, O Lord, have done as it pleased you.” 15So they picked Jonah up and threw him into the sea; and the sea ceased from its raging. 16Then the men feared the Lord even more, and they offered a sacrifice to the Lord and made vows.

17But the Lord provided a large fish to swallow up Jonah; and Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

2:1Then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from the belly of the fish.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

About this reading: We have often run away from our vocation as witnesses to new life, hope and forgiveness in Christ. His resurrection, like Jonah coming out of the fish after three days, and our baptism into that resurrection, making us like Jonah, restores us to that vocation.

FIFTH READING *Daniel 3:1–29*

1King Nebuchadnezzar made a golden statue whose height was sixty cubits and whose width was six cubits; he set it up on the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon. 2Then King Nebuchadnezzar sent for the satraps, the prefects, and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the justices, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces, to assemble and come to the dedication of the statue that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. 3So the satraps, the prefects, and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the justices, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces, assembled for the dedication of the statue that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. When they were standing before the statue that Nebuchadnezzar had set up, 4the herald proclaimed aloud, “You are commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, 5that when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, drum, and entire musical ensemble, you are to fall down and worship the golden statue that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up. 6Whoever does not fall down and worship shall immediately be thrown into a furnace of blazing fire.” 7Therefore, as soon as all the peoples heard the sound of the horn,

pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, drum, and entire musical ensemble, all the peoples, nations, and languages fell down and worshiped the golden statue that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

8Accordingly, at this time certain Chaldeans came forward and denounced the Jews. 9They said to King Nebuchadnezzar, "O king, live forever! 10You, O king, have made a decree, that everyone who hears the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, drum, and entire musical ensemble, shall fall down and worship the golden statue, 11and whoever does not fall down and worship shall be thrown into a furnace of blazing fire. 12There are certain Jews whom you have appointed over the affairs of the province of Babylon: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. These pay no heed to you, O king. They do not serve your gods and they do not worship the golden statue that you have set up."

13Then Nebuchadnezzar in furious rage commanded that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego be brought in; so they brought those men before the king. 14Nebuchadnezzar said to them, "Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods and you do not worship the golden statue that I have set up? 15Now if you are ready when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, drum, and entire musical ensemble to fall down and worship the statue that I have made, well and good. But if you do not worship, you shall immediately be thrown into a furnace of blazing fire, and who is the god that will deliver you out of my hands?"

16Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to present a defense to you in this matter. 17If our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire and out of your hand, O king, let him deliver us. 18But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods and we will not worship the golden statue that you have set up."

19Then Nebuchadnezzar was so filled with rage against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego that his face was distorted. He ordered the furnace heated up seven times more than was customary, 20and ordered some of the strongest guards in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and to throw them into the furnace of blazing fire. 21So the men were bound, still wearing their tunics, their trousers, their hats, and their other garments, and they were thrown into the furnace of blazing fire. 22Because the king's command was urgent and the furnace was so overheated, the raging flames killed the men who lifted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. 23But the three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down, bound, into the furnace of blazing fire.

24Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished and rose up quickly. He said to his counselors, "Was it not three men that we threw bound into the fire?" They answered the king, "True, O king." 25He replied, "But I see four men unbound, walking in the middle of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the fourth has the appearance of a god." 26Nebuchadnezzar then approached the door of the furnace of blazing fire and said, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out! Come here!" So Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out from the fire. 27And the satraps, the prefects, the governors, and the king's counselors gathered together and saw that the fire had not had any power over the bodies of those men; the hair of their heads was not singed, their tunics were not harmed, and not even the smell of fire came from them. 28Nebuchadnezzar said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent his angel and delivered his servants who trusted in him. They disobeyed the king's command and yielded up their bodies rather than serve and worship any god except their own God. 29Therefore I make a decree: Any people, nation, or language that utters blasphemy against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego shall be torn limb from limb, and their houses laid in ruins; for there is no other god who is able to deliver in this way."

Word of God, Word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

About this reading: In this difficult time, we are in the fire. But the Crucified and Risen Christ is with us in the fire, and we are saved. And Nebuchadnezzar once again does not get it: no one is to be torn limb from limb! God's mercy is for all.

After the readings, read the Gospel:

***GOSPEL: John 20:1–18**

The holy gospel according to John. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

1Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. 2So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.” 3Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. 4The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. 5He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. 6Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, 7and the cloth that had been on Jesus’ head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. 8Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; 9for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. 10Then the disciples returned to their homes.

11But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; 12and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. 13They said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them, “They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.” 14When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. 15Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?” Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.” 16Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to him in Hebrew, “Rabbouni!” (which means Teacher). 17Jesus said to her, “Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’” 18Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord”; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

About this Gospel: Mary weeps; so do we. But do not weep. The Risen Christ calls each of us by name. And remember the other readings: he is rescue from the fire, restored vocation, our dry bones made alive, freedom from slavery and fear, and the very downpayment on a new creation. Alleluia! Christ is risen!

You may wish to read St. John Chrysostom’s Easter Sermon here

Then, in remembrance of your baptism into the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, confess the baptismal creed:

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,

he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

Make the sign of the cross on your forehead with water from the bowl.

*Pray the **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION***

On this most holy night, we pray for the church, the earth, the world, those in need, and all the members of God's family, responding to each petition with the words **Hear our prayer**.

A brief silence.

We pray, O God, for all the churches around the globe: for their bishops and clergy; for the newly baptized; for the believers who cannot assemble for worship; for faithful endurance during this time of sorrow and distress; and for a deepening sense of your presence among us.

A brief silence.

O God, you are our Temple: in your mercy, **Hear our prayer**.

We pray, O God, for the well-being of creation: for the health of seas and rivers and lakes; and for the will to care for your earth.

A brief silence.

O God, you are our Rainbow of promise: in your mercy, **Hear our prayer**.

We pray, O God, for peace and justice in the world: for an end to war and international turmoil; for concord in our troubled society; for the heads of state, legislators, and local civic leaders, that they enact wise procedures to deal with the coronavirus.

A brief silence.

O God, you are our Mighty Fortress: in your mercy, **Hear our prayer**.

We pray, O God for all who are facing the coronavirus: for all who mourn their dead; all who have contracted the virus; those who are quarantined or stranded away from home; those who have lost their employment; those who fear the present and the future. We pray for physicians, nurses, and home health aides; EMTs and medical researchers; and the World Health Organization. Fill the aching in our hearts with your merciful power.

A brief silence.

O God, you are our Everlasting Arms: in your mercy, **Hear our prayer**.

We pray, O God, for all in need: for those suffering for the faith; for those who are poor, hungry, and homeless; for those who are sick and those awaiting death; and for those we name before you here.

A brief silence.

O God, you are the Healer of our every ill: in your mercy, **Hear our prayer**.

We pray, O God, for the desires of our hearts:

A longer period of silence.

O God, you are our Heart's Desire: in your mercy, **Hear our prayer**.

Receive our thanks for all who died in the faith, and bring us at the final resurrection into your everlasting life, where sorrows will be no more.

A brief silence.

O God, our Beginning and our End, in your mercy, **Hear our prayer**.

Into your gracious and mighty hands, O God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy,

through your Son Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen

Pray The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Pray this prayer and speak these final sentences:

Eternal giver of life and light, this holy night shines with the radiance of the risen Christ. Renew your church with the Spirit given us in baptism, that we may worship you in sincerity and truth and may shine as a light in the world, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Almighty God, Father, +Son, and Holy Spirit, bless us now and forever. **Amen.**

Alleluia! Christ is Risen!

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

THE EASTER SERMON OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

Whoever is devout and a lover of God, come, enjoy this beautiful and radiant Feast of Feasts!

Whoever is a good and faithful servant, rejoice, and enter into the joy of your Lord.

Whoever is weary of fasting, receive now your recompense.

All who have labored from the first hour, let them today receive their just reward. Those who have come at the third hour, with thanksgiving let them keep the feast. Those who have arrived at the sixth hour, let them have no misgivings; for they shall suffer no loss. Those who have delayed until the ninth hour, let them draw near without hesitation. Those who have arrived even at the eleventh hour, let them not fear on account of their delay.

For the Lord is gracious, and receives the last even as the first; he gives rest to the one who comes at the eleventh hour, just as to the one who has labored from the first. He has mercy upon the last, and cares for the first; to the one he is just, and to the other he is gracious. He both honors the work, and praises the intention.

Enter all of you, therefore, into the joy of our Lord, and whether first or last receive your reward. O rich and poor, one with another, dance for joy! O you zealous and you negligent, celebrate the Day! You that have fasted, and you that have disregarded the fast, rejoice today! The table is rich-laden, feast royally, all of you! The calf is fatted, let no one go forth hungry!

Let all partake of the Feast of Faith. Let all receive the riches of goodness.

Let none lament their poverty, for the Universal Kingdom has been revealed.

Let none mourn their transgressions, for Pardon has dawned from the Tomb!

Let no one fear Death, for the Saviour's death has set us free!

He that was taken by Death has annihilated it!

He descended into Hell, and took Hell captive!

He embittered it when it tasted of his Flesh! And anticipating this Isaiah exclaimed, "Hell was embittered when it encountered thee in the lower regions."

It was embittered, for it was abolished!

It was embittered, for it was mocked!

It was embittered, for it was purged!

It was embittered, for it was despoiled!!

It was embittered, for it was bound in chains!!!

It laid hold of a mortal body, and found that it had seized God! It laid hold of earth, but confronted heaven!! It seized what it saw, but crumbled before what it had not seen!!!

"O Death, where is thy sting? O Hell, where is thy victory?"

Christ is risen, and Hell is overthrown!

Christ is risen, and the demons are fallen!

Christ is risen, and the angels rejoice!!

Christ is risen, and Life reigns!!!

Christ is risen—and not one dead remains in the tombs!!!

For Christ being raised from the dead, has become the first-fruits of them that slept. To him be glory and dominion through all the ages of ages! AMEN.

V. Christ is risen!

R. HE IS RISEN INDEED!

V. Christ is risen!!

R. HE IS RISEN INDEED!!

V. Christ is risen !!!

R. HE IS RISEN INDEED!!!