

March 28, 2021

From Fr. Jim . . .

Holy Week: Unlike last year, we can have an assembly to celebrate the Triduum -Holy Thursday, Good Friday and the Easter Vigil this year. But limited seating with safe distancing, the wearing of masks, washing hands must continue because of the virus. We will be live streaming the services and the obligation to attend Sunday Mass even for Easter is dispensed. For Palm Sunday, I with a minister will begin at the front doors. The people are at their seats, standing and holding unblessed palm branches that they will receive when they enter church. I will bless the palm and proclaim the Gospel of the triumphal entry into Jerusalem and the minster, and I will process in. The gospel selection is the Passion of St. Mark's Gospel. For Holy Thursday because we cannot do it like we always do it safely this year, with all the restrictions and precautions, we will not have the foot washing. Good Friday, there will be eleven petitions instead of ten. One has been added for the Pandemic. Also, when we reverence the cross, we must do so without touching it. Bowing, genuflecting, kneeling and then bowing is most appropriate. Easter Vigil, there will be an Easter Fire but only me and the ministers will process. There will be no candles for the people. We have no one elected for the Easter Sacraments this year. Water will return to the Baptistry and the holy water fonts, Song Books and Missalettes have already returned to the pews.

This is the greatest week of prayer for the Church. Our liturgy throughout the year moves us to this week and climaxes in the three days of the Triduum and the celebration of Easter. "If we die with the Lord then we will truly rise with Him." There is no greater love than this than to lay down one's life for one's friends." This is what we believe, pray and live in this holiest of weeks.

As the church gathers all over the world to celebrate the liturgies of Holy Week as they have been given to us throughout the ages to be prayed, we grow together as the church, the Body of Christ, brothers and sisters in the Lord Jesus Christ. This holiest of weeks and the way that the Church of God is invited to pray sees itself as one with God, through Jesus and in their Spirit and one with each other in Christ.

As we enter into the prayer of Holy Week, can we do so with open hearts and with a genuine desire to let this greatest week of prayer in the church really change us? If the prayer of this week is about the continual formation of the whole church in the love and image of Christ then it, too, provides great formation for us, as St. Leo, to be formed into the Body of Christ, especially with our many and wonderful diversities. It is important for all of us to come together and pray this week of prayer in person, if possible, or at home with live stream.

For your reflection and prayer: William Arthur Ward, American author, teacher and pastor, 1921-1994, wrote: Fast from judging others; Feast on Christ dwelling in them. Fast from emphasis on differences; Feast on the unity of life. Fast from apparent darkness; Feast on the reality of light. Fast from thoughts of illness; Feast on the healing power of God. Fast from words that pollute; Feast on phrases that purify. Fast from discontent; Feast on patience. Fast from anger; Feast on patience. Fast from pessimism; Feast on optimism. Fast from worry; Feast on Divine order. Fast from complaining; Feast on appreciation. Fast from negatives; Feast on affirmatives. Fast from unrelenting pressures; Feast on unceasing prayer. Fast from hostility; Feast on non-resistance. Fast from bitterness; Feast on

forgiveness. Fast from self-concern; Feast on compassion for others. Fast from personal anxiety; Feast on eternal truth. Fast from discouragements; Feast on hope. Fast from facts that depress; Feast on verities that uplift.

Fast from lethargy; Feast on enthusiasm. Fast from thoughts that weaken; Feast on promises that inspire. Fast from shadows of sorrow; Feast on the sunlight of serenity. Fast from idle gossip; Feast on purposeful silence. Fast from problems that overwhelm; Feast on prayer that strengthens.

May our fasting lead us to the great love of Holy Week and the incredible glory of Easter!

Sunday Mass: 10:30am, limited seating available, or join Fr. Jim as he livestreams Sunday Mass at 10:30am at: RCC St. Leo Church Cincinnati
https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=rcc%20st%20leo%20church%20cincinnati&epa=SEARCH_BOX

You can read the Sunday bulletin at: www.saint-leo.org/Publications/StLeoSundayBulletin
You can read Fr. Jim's letter at:
www.saint-leo.org/Publications/FromtheDeskofFrJim

Now that Spring is here we are in need of a new Lawn Mower!!
<https://www.homedepot.com/p/Toro-Lawn-Boy-21-in-Rear-Wheel-Drive-Gas-Walk-Behind-Self-Propelled-Lawn-Mower-with-Bagger-17752/315052423>

Please consider donating Plastic Easter Eggs, and Easter Candy to fill the eggs. Toddler size (1 year, 2T, and 3T) bibs for the Sacrament of Baptism. We also are in need of gift cards to help with our everyday needs, please consider Staples, Amazon, Kroger, or Home Depot when donating. You can see our latest needs on our Amazon Wish List Link https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/1Y6S276N39W08?ref_=wl_share. Please call the office at 513-921-1044 if you have questions or would like to donate these items.

Good Friday April 2nd Collection- Pope Francis has asked our parish to support the Pontifical Good Friday Collection for Christians in the Holy Land. Your support helps the church minister in parishes, provide Catholic schools, offer religious education, and preserve the sacred shrines. For more information about Christians in the Holy Land, visit <https://myfranciscan.org/good-friday/>.

Serving the Suffering Christ- As we enter Holy Week and celebrate Palm Sunday, let's reflect on how our Lord suffered from our indifference: those who proclaimed him king of Jerusalem were the same who called to crucify him. We recognize we are all one human family. Are we contributing to the suffering of our sisters and brothers with our indifference to their realities? How does our faith inspire us to care for them and share the gifts that God has bestowed on us? Visit csrcricebowl.org to learn more.

