



Maunder Thursday



Palm Sunday



Good Friday



Holy Saturday

PALM SUNDAY

Today is the first day of Holy Week. It was on this day that Our Lord entered Jerusalem riding on a donkey as the people threw palms in His path saying, "Hosanna to the King." The palms are blessed before the High Mass today. Then carried in procession around the Church before the Mass and given to the faithful at the Communion rail. Some of the blessed palms are saved for next year to be burned to make the ashes for the next Ash Wednesday. The palms symbolize triumph, and the ashes, symbolize death and penitence.

HOLY OR MAUNDY THURSDAY

It was on this day that Our Lord gathered together His twelve Apostles for the Last Supper. It was then that He instituted the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. After the Last Supper He went to the Garden of Gethsemani and it was here that He suffered the Agony in the Garden and where Judas betrayed Him with a kiss. During Mass on this day the Bishop blesses the oils used in Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Orders and Extreme Unction. After the Gloria in the evening Mass the bells are rung no more until the Easter Vigil.

HOLY SATURDAY

Christ is in His tomb. Rather, His Body is in the tomb, but His Soul left His Body to release the just that were in limbo and Purgatory. Because of this great silence, today there will be no Mass (until the Vigil Mass tonight, which technically is Easter); instead there is a solemn service. Very late in the evening -- there will be a true Mass, the Vigil Mass that begins Easter -- a most joyous Mass during which Catechumens are baptized into the Church and the alleluia returns. It is a very long service, but so beautiful, and when it is finished, Easter is here and the somberness that began on Good Friday is over. The Vigil Mass starts in darkness; the lights of the church are extinguished. Then comes the Blessing of the New Fire and Blessing of the Paschal Candle. This new fire is a symbol of Christ Who enlightens us.

GOOD FRIDAY

On this day Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ died on the Cross for us. It is the most somber day of the entire year. A silence pervades, socializing is kept to a minimum, things are done quietly; it is a day of mourning; it is funeral. Because Jesus was on the Cross between the hours of Noon and 3:00 PM, these three hours today are considered the most sacred of all. Draw the curtains, take the phone off the hook, turn off televisions and radios, quiet your environment and yourself, and meditate on what Christ has done for you. At 3:00, "The Hour" He died, the atmosphere should be as if you are standing next to the deathbed of your father who died a moment ago. No true Mass is offered today instead a liturgy called the "Mass of the Presanctified" is offered, which is not a true Mass because no consecration takes place.