

April 2023

Liturgical Resources



The Resurrection of Jesus Christ (1463)
Piero della Francesca



diocese
of limerick
our catholic community

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April 2023

Liturgical Resources

Selected Significant Dates

2 April – Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion

6/7/8 April – The Triduum

8/9 April – Easter Vigil & Easter Day

14 April – 10th Anniversary of the Episcopal Ordination of Most Rev. Brendan Leahy, 2013

16 April – Divine Mercy Sunday

18 April – 41st Anniversary of the Episcopal Ordination of Most Rev. Donal Murray, 1982

21 April – St. Anselm

23 April – Third Sunday of Easter

25 April – St. Mark, Evangelist

28 April – St. Peter Chanel

29 April – St. Catherine of Siena, Virgin and Doctor of the Church, Patron of Europe

30 April – Fourth Sunday of Easter (Day of Prayer for Vocations)



April is traditionally celebrated as the month of the Holy Spirit. He is the third person of the Trinity, and "with the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified." There are 12 fruits of the Holy Spirit traditionally: charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, generosity, gentleness, faithfulness, modesty, self-control, and chastity.

2 April – Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion

Liturgical Resources

Holy Week begins today, with the proclamation of the Passion of Jesus Christ. In Cycle A, we read Matthew's Gospel – which focuses on the obedience of Jesus to His Father's will. Matthew also draws attention to Jesus' role as the fulfilment of what the Old Testament foretold. When we read the Passion narrative, the people have “many vantage points from which to engage in Jesus' Passion. In the characters of Matthew's Gospel, we find reflections of ourselves and the many ways in which we sometimes respond to Jesus. Sometimes we are like Judas, who betrays Jesus and comes to regret it. We are sometimes like Peter, who denies him, or like the disciples, who fell asleep during Jesus' darkest hour but then act rashly and violently at his arrest. Sometimes we are like Simon, who is pressed into service to help Jesus carry his cross. Sometimes we are like the leaders who fear Jesus or like Pontius Pilate, who washed his hands of the whole affair. Jesus dies so that our sins will be forgiven.”

Suggestions for Mass

Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem is commemorated with a procession of the faithful at one Mass on the weekend: all the people, including the priest, carry blessed palms in a procession. At all Masses, the Passion narrative is read by multiple people. The priest always takes the part of Christ, a second person (either the deacon or a lay reader) is the narrator, and the people for the remaining parts.

Suggestions for Parish Bulletin/Newsletter

Why palms? Palms were “symbols of life among the nomadic tribes” and were also associated with victory and glory! When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the people greeted him with palms – “affording Him the honours of a conquering hero and simultaneously defying the Roman occupiers.” Now, on Palm Sunday, we greet Jesus, waving our palms before our joy turns to gravity as we hear the narrative of Christ's passion. His victory comes through the Cross.

Drawn From:

<https://www.simplycatholic.com/hosanna-what-is-the-meaning-of-palm-sunday/>
<https://www.loyolapress.com/catholic-resources/liturgical-year/sunday-connection/palm-sunday-of-the-lords-passion-cycle-a/>

The Triduum

6 April - Holy Thursday

Liturgical Resources

The Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper should be celebrated once, at each parish, and it reminds us of the institution of the Eucharist and the priesthood. The Triduum begins with this Mass. Triduum comes from Latin, meaning "three days" (*tri* = three, *dies* = days). Holy Thursday was an eventful day.

What happened on Holy Thursday?

Recorded in the Gospels, Jesus:

- Sent Peter and John to arrange for them to use the Upper Room to hold the Passover meal.
- Washed the apostles' feet.
- Held the first Mass.
- Instituted the priesthood.
- Announced that Judas would betray him.
- Gave the "new commandment" to love one another.
- Indicated that Peter had a special pastoral role among the apostles.
- Announced that Peter would deny him.
- Prayed for the unity of his followers.
- Held all the discourses recorded across five chapters of John (John 13-18).
- Sang a hymn.
- Went to the Mount of Olives.
- Prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane.
- Was betrayed by Judas.
- Stopped the disciples from continuing a violent resistance.
- Healed the ear of Malchus, the high priest's servant, after Peter cut it off with a sword.
- Was taken before the high priests Annas and Caiaphas.
- Was denied by Peter.
- Was taken to Pilate.

7 April - Good Friday

Liturgical Resources

Good Friday is the day when "Christ our Passover was sacrificed" (1 Cor 5:7). Where does the name "Good" Friday come from? It's disputed – perhaps "God's Friday" or the Medieval meaning of the word *good* as "holy." Thus, Good Friday might mean *Holy Friday*.

What happened on Good Friday?

A lot happened on Good Friday, because Jesus:

- Was taken before Pilate in the morning
- Sent to Herod
- Returned to Pilate
- Was mocked and beaten
- Saw Barabbas released in his stead
- Was crowned with thorns
- Was condemned to death

(continued next page)

7 April - Good Friday

Liturgical Resources Continued

What happened on Good Friday?

- Carried the crushing burden of his cross
- Told the weeping women what would happen in the future
- Was crucified between two thieves
- Forgave those who crucified him
- Entrusted the Virgin Mary to the beloved disciple
- Assured the good thief of his salvation
- Said his famous seven last words
- Cried out and died

In addition:

- There was darkness over the land
- There was an earthquake
- The veil of the temple was torn in two
- Many saints of the Old Testament period were raised
- A soldier pierced Christ's side and blood and water flowed out
- Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus went to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body
- He was buried in Joseph's own tomb
- A guard was set over the tomb
- All Jesus' friends and family grieved at his death

On Good Friday, the Divine Mercy novena begins. It was given by Jesus to St. Faustina. Find the prayers of the Divine Mercy novena here:

<https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/devotions/novena-13366>

8 April - Holy Saturday

Liturgical Resources

“On Holy Saturday the Church is as it were at the Lord’s tomb, meditating on his passion and death, and on his descent into hell, and awaiting his resurrection with prayer and fasting.” (Liturgical Calendar for Ireland 2023, p. 86)

What happened on Holy Saturday?

On Holy Saturday,

- Here on earth, Jesus' disciples mourned his death and, since it was a sabbath day, they rested.
- Luke notes that the women returned home "and prepared spices and ointments. On the sabbath they rested according to the commandment" (Luke 23:56).
- At the tomb, the guards that had been stationed there kept watch over the place to make sure that the disciples did not steal Jesus' body.

And

- Jesus did not descend into hell to deliver the damned, nor to destroy the hell of damnation, but to free the just who had gone before him.

Drawn From:

<https://www.ncregister.com/blog/10-things-you-need-to-know-about-holy-thursday>
<https://www.ncregister.com/blog/9-things-you-need-to-know-about-good-friday-i88cjgna>
<https://www.ncregister.com/blog/12-things-you-need-to-know-about-holy-saturday>

8 April - Easter Vigil

Liturgical Resources

The Easter Vigil is held on Holy Saturday evening, after dark, to anticipate the great feast of the following day. “Vigil” comes from the Latin word *vigilia*, meaning “wakefulness” – the faithful stay awake, praying. “For the resurrection of Christ is the foundation of our faith and hope, and through Baptism and Confirmation we are inserted into the Paschal Mystery of Christ, dying, buried, and raised with him, and with him we shall also reign.”

Suggestions for Mass

The four parts of the Easter Vigil are the:

- **Service of Light:** the lighting of the Paschal candle and dispelling the darkness
- **Liturgy of the Word:** reading of scripture telling salvation history
- **Liturgy of Baptism:** while some adults or children may be baptized during the Easter Vigil, everyone renews their baptismal vows and is sprinkled with holy water
- **Liturgy of the Eucharist:** commemorates the sacrifice of Our Lord and giving a foretaste of the eternal Easter (heaven!)



Drawn From:

<https://www.ncregister.com/blog/12-things-you-need-to-know-about-holy-saturday>

Detail from

"The Resurrection of Christ" by Annibale Carracci,
late 1500s, public domain

9 April - Easter Day of the Lord's Resurrection

Liturgical Resources



“Christ is risen, alleluia!” This is the ancient Christian greeting on this day of great joy and happiness for all. ‘Easter is not simply one feast among others, but the “Feast of feasts”.’” (CCC 1169)

"The Resurrection of Jesus Christ"
by Paolo Veronese,
1570, public domain

14 April – 10th Anniversary of the
Episcopal Ordination of
Most Rev. Brendan Leahy, 2013

16 April – Divine Mercy Sunday

Liturgical Resources

Today is Divine Mercy Sunday, which was instituted by Pope St. John Paul II in 2000 at the request of Jesus to St. Faustina. It always takes place on the Second Sunday of Easter. The Divine Mercy Novena begun on Good Friday ends today.

Suggestions for Mass

It is encouraged to display the Divine Mercy image somewhere in the Church today. Perhaps near the front, so that all can see it and venerate it. Consider decorating the stand on which it is displayed with flowers, candles, etc.

Priests are also encouraged to preach on the theme of God's great mercy and love for all on this day.

Suggestions for the Bulletin

Today, a plenary indulgence may be gained by the faithful who go to confession within 2 weeks' time, receive Communion, and pray for the Pope's intentions.

Additionally, the faithful must:

- “in any church or chapel, in a spirit that is completely detached from the affection for a sin, even a venial sin, take part in the prayers and devotions held in honour of Divine Mercy
- **or**, in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament exposed or reserved in the tabernacle, recite the Our Father and the Creed, adding a devout prayer to the merciful Lord Jesus (e.g. ‘Merciful Jesus, I trust in you!’).”

From: <https://www.ncregister.com/blog/how-to-get-a-plenary-indulgence-on-divine-mercy-sunday>



18 April – 41st Anniversary of the Episcopal Ordination of Most Rev. Donal Murray, 1982

21 April – St. Anselm

Liturgical Resources

St. Anselm, a bishop and Doctor of the Church, lived from 1033-1109. He taught theology at Bec and later served as the Archbishop of Canterbury. His motto, *fides quaerens intellectum* (faith seeking understanding), is very well known. Born in Lombardy, Anselm left ran away from home at the age of 15. He joined the Benedictine Abbey at Bec and was educated there, later becoming the Abbot. As the Archbishop of Canterbury, he frequently come into conflict with the King – and was exiled twice. Anselm has ties to Ireland: he referred to himself as the “Archbishop of Canterbury and primate of Great Britain and Ireland” in a writing from 1101. Interestingly, he was never officially canonised but was declared a Doctor of the Church in 1720 by Pope Clement XI.

Quotes from the Saints

“Come now, insignificant man, fly for a moment from your affairs, escape for a little while from the tumult of your thoughts. Put aside now your weighty cares and leave your wearisome toils. Abandon yourself for a little to God and rest for a little in Him.”

“God is a being than which nothing greater can be conceived.”

“Teach me to seek You, and reveal Yourself to me as I seek, because I can neither seek You if You do not teach me how, nor find You unless You reveal Yourself.”

Drawn From:

<https://www.catholicireland.net/saintoftheday/st-anselm-1033-1109/>

23 April – Third Sunday of Easter

Liturgical Resources

Today's Gospel shows us the model of the Mass. Jesus encounters two of his disciples, who do not recognize him in their sadness. He "offers his own interpretation of his crucifixion and resurrection, citing Jewish Scripture. In that encounter we find the model for our Liturgy of the Word—what we do each time we gather as a community for the Eucharist. We reflect upon our life experiences and interpret them in light of Scripture. We gather together to break open the Word of God." Then, the disciples invite Jesus to stay with them and they eat a meal together: "in the breaking of the bread, the disciples' eyes are opened; they recognize the stranger as Jesus. In the Eucharist too we share in the breaking of the bread and discover Jesus in our midst."

Suggestions for Families

Use your family meal as a time to encounter Jesus and one another! Try to intentionally make a meal today or this week a special time to open up with each other, share your experiences, and think of what Jesus teaches and tells each of us. Be sure to include family prayer (long or short!) after your meal!



**"Supper at Emmaus"
by Caravaggio,
1601, public
domain**

Drawn From:

<https://www.loyolapress.com/catholic-resources/liturgical-year/sunday-connection/third-sunday-of-easter-cycle-a-sunday-connection/>

25 April – St. Mark, Evangelist

Liturgical Resources

The author of the second Gospel, St. Mark the Evangelist founded the Church in Alexandria. St. Mark is traditionally identified as the young man described in Mark 14:51. The historian Eusebius writes that Mark was the “interpreter of Peter” and recorded the teachings and miracles of Christ as Peter had told them.

The Divine Liturgy of St. Mark is the main liturgy of the Orthodox Church of Alexandria, where St. Mark died.

St. Mark is often depicted as a winged lion, partially because he describes St. John the Baptist's voice as a roaring lion, and partially because the lion is one of four creatures described in the book of Revelations. Each Gospel writer is symbolized by one of the four.

Famous Connections

St. Mark's body was brought to Venice in the 9th century, and is buried inside the Basilica di San Marco. The magnificent structure (see below) was built between 829-836 AD.



Drawn From:

<https://www.catholicireland.net/saintoftheday/st-mark-1st-century/>

28 April – St. Peter Chanel

Liturgical Resources

St. Peter Chanel is the first martyr of Oceania. Born in France in 1803, St. Peter Chanel joined the Marists and was sent with a band of missionaries to Oceania on December 24, 1836. He settled in Futuna Island (near Tonga) accompanied by a lay brother and an English Protestant.

Initially well-received by the king, Niuliki, St. Peter Chanel learned the local language and began preaching and teaching to the natives. The king grew suspicious, afraid that Christianity would replace him. When Niuliki's son asked to be baptized, that was the last straw. He sent a warrior to resolve the problem – the warrior faked an injury and asked St. Peter Chanel for aid. While Chanel helped him, a group stormed his house and Chanel was clubbed to death. He died in 1841, at the age of 38.

Within two years of his death, the entire island – including the warrior who killed him – converted to Catholicism.

Quotes from the Saints

The lay brother with St. Peter Chanel said of him, "Because of his labours he was often burned by the heat of the sun, and famished with hunger, and he would return home wet with perspiration and completely exhausted. Yet he always remained in good spirits, courageous and energetic...."

Suggested Prayer

Saint Peter Chanel, by your suffering and death, you converted a people. You were fearless in adventuring far from home to preach the Gospel. May your blood, spilled so long ago, continue to infuse all missionaries with courage and perseverance in their labours. Amen.

Drawn From:

<https://mycatholic.life/saints/saints-of-the-liturgical-year/april-28-saint-peter-chanel-priest-and-martyr/#:~:text=Saint%20Peter%20Chanel%2C%20by%20your,and%20perseverance%20in%20their%20labors.>

29 April – St. Catherine of Siena, Virgin and Doctor of the Church, Patron of Europe

Liturgical Resources

St. Catherine of Siena was the 23rd child of her parents. She was an “intelligent, cheerful, and intensely religious” daughter with a rebellious streak. She is said to have cut off her hair in protest of the arrangements to marry her off. At the age of 18, she entered the Dominican Third Order and in the ensuing years, a following gathered around her. Her letters and writings began addressing many public affairs – she was frequently attacked for her faith and outspokenness.

St. Catherine convinced Pope Gregory XI to return the papacy to Rome (it had been absent in Avignon for over 60 years) and she succeeded. This was perhaps her greatest achievement!

She died in 1461 and is a Doctor of the Church. She is the co-patron of Italy (along with St. Francis of Assisi).

Quotes from the Saints

“Every step of the way to heaven is heaven, because Jesus said ‘I am the way.’”

“He will provide the way and the means, such as you could never have imagined.”

“Be who God meant you to be and you will set the world on fire.”

“What is it you want to change? Your hair, your face, your body? Why? For God is in love with all those things and He might weep when they are gone!”

“Love transforms one into what one loves.”

Drawn From:

<https://www.franciscanmedia.org/saint-of-the-day/saint-catherine-of-siena/>

30 April – Fourth Sunday of Easter (Day of Prayer for Vocations)

Liturgical Resources

The Irish Bishops are launching a Year for Vocations today.

It will focus on Vocations to the Diocesan Priesthood and is centered around the theme of **“Take the Risk for Christ”!**

Bishop Cullinan said, “A key objective of this Year of Vocations is to start conversations within families, with priests and in parish communities on the beauty of the vocation of priesthood. Feedback from newly ordained priests indicates a strong correlation between their calling and encouragement received from a priest about their ministry, in other words taking the risk for Christ.”

Limerick Diocese Initiatives

Contact Sr. Mara Rose, O.P., the Vocations Director for the Limerick Diocese for more information about specific initiatives here. Her email is **vocations@limerickdiocese.org**.



**"Follow me, and
I will make you
fishers of men."**

-Matthew 4:19

**"The Calling of Saints
Peter and Andrew"
by Caravaggio,
1606, public domain**