

But he was pierced for our offenses,
 crushed for our sins;
 upon him was the chastisement
 that makes us whole,
 by his stripes we were healed.
 Isaiah 52

Holy Week, the Triduum: April 9-11, 2009

[Praying Lent 2009](#) | [Read with Us this Lent: *Radical Compassion*](#)
[Preparing for Holy Thursday](#) | [Preparing for Good Friday](#) | [Preparing for Easter Vigil](#)
[2009 Lent Message of Pope Benedict XVI](#) | [Lenten Audio Conversations](#)
[PDF of this Page](#)

The Holy Week Triduum

On **Holy Thursday** we hear a reading from the **Book of Exodus** which describes the Passover celebration. Paul, in his **First Letter to the Corinthians**, gives us the earliest account we have of the Last Supper - probably written relatively soon after the event. Then, we have the unique view of the Last Supper from **John's Gospel**. Instead of the traditional narrative, we see Jesus washing his disciples' feet. On this Thursday night, in the only liturgy allowed in a church on this day - so that as many people as possible might participate - we act out the foot washing that Jesus gave us as an example, in fact, as a mandate. For a complete description of the Holy Thursday Celebration of the Lord's Supper, visit:

<http://onlineministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/Lent/prepare-holythursday.html>

Out of profound respect for this day on which our salvation was won, there is no Eucharist on **Good Friday**. The liturgy begins with a Liturgy of the Word. **Isaiah 52-53** contains the last of the Suffering Servant songs. With the eyes of faith, it describes what Jesus became. The **Letter to the Hebrews** proclaims the good news of this day. The gospel is the **Passion** from **John's Gospel**. For a description of the whole Good Friday liturgy, as well as a reflection on the Passion, visit:

<http://onlineministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/Lent/prepare-goodfriday.html>

There is no liturgy at all on **Holy Saturday**. We spend this day in "the in between place" - between the remembering the death of our Lord and celebrating his Resurrection. The **Easter Vigil Liturgy**, which is celebrated after sunset, is a full celebration of our Lord's resurrection. The Liturgy of the Word has a series of eleven readings to choose from. The idea is that we remain in vigil this night, reviewing the story of our salvation - from the story of Creation, to the great story of the Exodus from slavery in Egypt, through a number of the prophets, culminating in **Paul's Letter to the Romans** - "Are you not aware that we who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into his death?" The readings begin in the dark, and are then read by the light of the Easter Candle. Then the lights come on, bells are rung as we sing the Gloria. The gospel story of the Resurrection is then proclaimed in the full light, with Easter joy. For a detailed look at the Easter Vigil, visit:

<http://onlineministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/Lent/prepare-eastervigil.html>

Daily Prayer This Week

Even if our work or circumstances require us to be quite busy and involved in many secular things on these three days, we can stay focused in the background of our inner consciousness. We do this by remembering that the drama we recall in the great Liturgies we celebrate these days is all about helping us remember that this overwhelming love is **for us**. The central mystery of our salvation is that, in Jesus, God entered our world completely, experiencing all that we experience, and suffering temptation, loss, grief, humiliation and even an unjust death on a cross.

Holy Thursday is a day to wake up and ask for the grace to grow in some sense of the gift of the Eucharist for us. Even if we can't join in a celebration of the wonderful "Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper," we can take moments throughout this day to remember

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

how he loved us by giving himself to us in the Bread that gives life and the Cup that is poured out for us. To show how the Eucharist is the memorial of how he was taken, blessed, broken and given for us, Jesus washes his disciples' feet. And he tells us that this is a mandate, a mission for us - to follow his example and to wash each others' feet, i.e., to allow ourselves to be taken, blessed, broken and given in love for others. We could reflect today on how I resist his washing my feet - how I resist his intimate love for me. And, we can reflect upon our mission gratefully. For those of us who will celebrate tonight, let this be a day of reflective preparation to enter into this Eucharist and come away with a renewed sense of the meaning of love. "Where there is love, God is present."

On **Good Friday** we can spend the day with an inner quiet. We can practice this as a day of fast to heighten our awareness of the sacrifice of Jesus. If we are unable to attend a celebration of "Our Lord's Passion," we can surely enter into it in many ways. We can place a crucifix in a central place in our home. We can download an image of the crucifixion from the web. We can read the [Passion](#) in John's Gospel or pray with the [Stations of the Cross](#). We can pause -

sometime between 12 noon and 3 pm and simply say "thank you." If we are able to celebrate with others, we can let our veneration of the cross be full of intimacy and personal gratitude - beyond where words can take us - for God's mercy and love.

Holy Saturday is a solemn day to ask for the grace to imagine Jesus lying in the tomb, in death. It is from this death - the same death we will all experience - that Jesus is raised. We can not feel the deepest joy of Easter without spending some reflecting on this good news. We can pause in background moments to give thanks for the gift of mercy and life we have been given. The Easter Vigil liturgy is the fullest celebration of the Resurrection and a renewal of our sense of Baptism. If we are unable to celebrate the Vigil, we might go to bed this night, thanking God for what the dawn brings: our opportunity to celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus, who draws us to the fullness of life with him.

[Send us an e-mail](#)

[Creighton U Online Ministries](#) | [Weekly Guide for Daily Prayer](#) | [Tell a Friend about these Weekly Guides](#)
[Visit the Daily Reflections Each Day This Week](#)