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A  
GUIDE TO THE CEREMONIES

by

A MONK OF GLENSTAL

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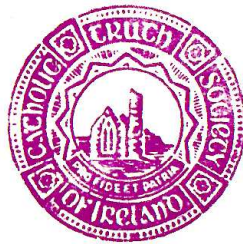
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# HOLY WEEK

## A GUIDE TO THE CEREMONIES

by

**A MONK OF GLENSTAL**



**DUBLIN :**  
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**H**OLY Week is a time of the year when we all strive to perform our religious duties with extra fervour and devotion. The Church helps us in the inspiring celebrations which she puts before us during this week. We are asked to meditate upon those events which filled the last days of Our Lord upon earth. The real aim of the Holy Week solemnities is: "to arouse and strengthen a true and profound renewal of the faithful in Christ, by means of the saving mysteries of His passion, death, resurrection and glorification—mysteries which live again and are made present in an inexpressible but real way in the great liturgical representations of these days." (Antonelli).

To worship God is one of the most deep-rooted desires in the heart of man. To pray is something which is not simply a duty, but a *need*. The Holy Week ceremonies fulfil in a most excellent way this vital need in our lives. The Church, our Mother, provides us with every possible aid and help, so that we may offer fruitful prayers to God. The worship which ascends to heaven during this week is the prayer of *the whole Church*, in union with Christ our Head. We all have our part to play, and under the guidance of the Church we can offer *our* share of prayer and sacrifice.

We are God's children but we often forget all that we owe to our heavenly Father. Of all the gifts we have received from God, the greatest is His Divine Son. Holy Week reminds us that God sent his Beloved Son into the world to redeem mankind; it is a time set apart for returning thanks to God for his goodness towards us. Jesus is the centre of the Holy Week solemnities. On Palm Sunday, the procession is in honour of Christ the King, while the recital of the Passion account from the Gospel of St. Matthew serves to recall the details of his approaching passion and death.

On Holy Thursday we recall the moving scene at the Last Supper, when Christ washed his disciples' feet and instituted the sacraments of the Eucharist and Holy Orders. The lessons of divine and brotherly love which we draw from the Holy Thursday celebrations should remain with us throughout the whole year.

On Good Friday the Church puts before us the passion and death of our Saviour. The passion *really* happened;

Christ offered himself on the first Good Friday as a victim to wipe out the guilt of our sins. It was through *love* that he suffered and this sacrifice which he made was to be our sacrifice too. We were meant to have a share in it. The Christian can no longer look upon the figure of Christ on the Cross and say: "This has nothing to do with me." The shadow of the Cross hangs over each one of us; but it is not a shadow which frightens or deters. It is a shadow which enshrouds us as a mantle, a cloak which envelops us and draws us under its protecting power.

The Cross is our banner; we can march through life with courage and faith when we walk in its path. It will bring suffering to us, just as it brought suffering to Christ; it will mean sacrifice and patience and endurance, but in the end we shall triumph, just as Christ did on the first Easter Day. The man who has failed to understand the Christian mystery of the Cross is one who has missed all that life really holds of true and lasting value.

On Holy Saturday Night we commemorate the glorious Resurrection of Christ, by which hope and peace and light were brought into the world. Christ rose from the dead in order that we might one day be raised along with him. The message of Easter is that of the Christian longing for the day when this earthly life will pass away, and we shall see God face to face as He is. Already in this life, through Grace and the sacraments, we can anticipate this future glory in heaven. That is why at Easter, the Church reminds us of our Baptism, for at Baptism we receive the seed of divine life into our souls. This seed is meant to grow and develop, until we become as "other Christs," until each one of us can say: "I live now, not I, but Christ liveth in me."

"O God, my whole soul longs for thee, as a deer for running water; my whole soul thirsts for God, the strong, the living God." (Psalm 41). God alone can satisfy that spiritual thirst which is set deep in the soul of each one of us. We seek to slake our thirst at other fountains—only to come away dissatisfied and disillusioned. There is only one fount of living water, and the Church holds the key to it. In her sacraments and in her public worship, the Church unlocks

for us the mighty torrents of spiritual nourishment which we all need. During Holy Week the Church opens these gates wider than at any other time of the year. To each one of us she says: "Taste and see, for the Lord is sweet." This is the invitation which she issues to us every Holy Week. Those who accept it with love and devotion will not go away unrefreshed.

## Palm Sunday

### I. REFLECTIONS :

#### CHRIST OUR KING

What is the meaning of the procession which takes place in every Church on Palm Sunday? Why do we carry palm branches in our hands? The answer to both these questions lies in the Church's wish to give honour to Christ our King. The procession is a triumphant march, with the people carrying palms as signs of victory. We are, of course, re-living the triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem on the first Palm Sunday. But our procession goes even beyond this: it celebrates *our* victory, or rather, the victory which Christ won for us, and in which we are now able to join.

It was as a King, riding upon a donkey, that Jesus took possession of the city of Jerusalem. It was as a King that he was accused before Pilate, and it was with a Crown of Thorns that his head was adorned as he hung in agony upon the Cross. Yes, it was as a King that Jesus gave his life for us. But not as any earthly king. His kingdom was not of this world. The Kingdom which He won for us was heaven, the eternal Jerusalem. And we are his subjects, who come now to proclaim the greatness of our King. We come to give public witness to the glorious act of our redemption. We come to show all men that our King is the greatest king of all, the King of Kings.

We must strive to stir up a holy enthusiasm in our hearts during the procession. It must not be an empty rite, leaving us cold and unmoved. Let us try to enter into the true spirit of the procession by raising up prayers of honour and praise to Christ our King. "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. King of Israel: Hosanna in the highest!"

### II THE CEREMONY :

#### 1. THE BLESSING OF PALMS AND PROCESSION

In the new Rite of Holy Week the blessing of the palms has been reduced to a single brief prayer. The emphasis is now laid on the actual procession rather than on the palms used in it. The priest, vested in a red cope (or in alb and stole),

first blesses the palms, which may be placed on a table in the sanctuary and later distributed, or, as would be more practical in large congregations, they may be procured beforehand by the people and held up for the blessing.

First there is sung or recited the very words by which the Jews saluted Christ on the first Palm Sunday: *Hosanna to the Son of David, blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. O King of Israel! Hosanna in the highest.*

The celebrant then sings this prayer :

*Bless, Lord we pray You, these branches of Palm, and grant that what your people express outwardly to-day in your honour, they may perfect spiritually with all devotion by gaining victory over the enemy and by loving with all their hearts the work of mercy.*

The priest now sprinkles the branches with holy water (he may do this while walking down the aisle if the people already hold their palms). Next he incenses them three times. If the palms are to be distributed, this is done now. Afterwards a gospel is read by the deacon (or celebrant) from St. Matthew, chapter 21, vv. 1-9, in which is described the triumphant entry which Jesus made into Jerusalem on the first Palm Sunday :

"At that time, when Jesus drew near to Jerusalem, and came to Bethphage, on the Mount of Olives, then He sent two disciples, saying to them : "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find an ass tied, and a colt with her ; loose them and bring them to me. And if anyone say anything to you, you shall say that the Lord has need of them, and immediately he will send them. Now this was done that what was spoken through the prophet might be fulfilled, Tell the daughter of Sion : Behold, thy king comes to thee, meek and seated upon an ass, and upon a colt, the foal of a beast of burden. So the disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them. And they brought the ass and the colt, laid their cloaks upon them and made him sit thereon. And most of the crowd spread their cloaks upon the road, while others were cutting branches from the trees, and strewing them on the road. And the crowds that went before him, and those that followed, kept crying out, saying, Hosanna to

the Son of David! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!"

The procession now takes place. The celebrant, holding his palm in his right hand, faces the people and says (or sings): *Procedamus in pace*, to which all reply: *In nomine Christi. Amen.* ('Let us proceed in peace—In the name of Christ. Amen.') The procession should, if possible, go outside the church and be a long one. It is led by the thurifer, then come the cross-bearer and acolytes, followed by the clergy and the celebrant, after whom all the people come carrying palms. During the procession the choir sings several antiphons, but it is greatly to be desired that the faithful join in the singing. Hence hymns in English are permitted.

For over a thousand years the hymn '*Gloria Laus*' has been sung at the ceremonies of Palm Sunday. If at all possible the people should join in singing the refrain: *Gloria laus et honor tibi sit, Rex Christe Redemptor: cui puerile decus prompsit Hosanna pium.* ('All glory, praise and honour, to Thee, O Christ, Redeemer, King: to whom the lips of children, made sweet hosannas ring.')

Our attitude during the procession should be one of reverence and recollection. We are the soldiers of Christ, come to give public honour to our King. We are taking part in the solemn celebration of those great events which alone give meaning to our lives: the Redemption of mankind from the powers of evil and the freeing of all men from the slavery of sin. If we cannot join in the procession then we should give ourselves up to private prayer. The following is a prayer to Christ the King, to which a plenary indulgence (once a day on the usual conditions) is attached. It would be very suitable for private recitation to-day:

"O Christ Jesus, I acknowledge Thee as Universal King. All that has been made has been created for Thee. Exercise over me all Thy rights. I renew my baptismal promises by renouncing Satan, his works and pomps, and I promise to live as a good Christian. And especially I pledge myself to promote the triumph of the rights of God and Thy Church, so far as in me lies. Divine Heart of Jesus, I offer Thee my poor actions, that all hearts may come to avow Thy sacred Kingship, and that the reign of thy peace may be confirmed in all the world. Amen." (S. Paen. Ap., 21 Feb. 1923).

On returning to the church, the priest goes up the altar steps and facing the people says this prayer:

"Lord Jesus Christ, our King and our Redeemer, bearing these palms we have sung your solemn praises; grant in your mercy that wherever these palms are brought, there the grade of your blessing may be poured out, every wickedness and deceit of the evil one may be set at nought, and the protection of your righthand rest on those whom You have redeemed."

It is a pious custom to bring home the blessed palm and attach it to a crucifix or to the walls as a souvenir of the Easter ceremonies, and as a sacramental to protect us against the devil, as the foregoing prayer suggests.

## 2. THE MASS

The priest now lays aside his red cope and puts on a violet chasuble for the Mass. The shadow of the Passion begins to fall upon our rejoicing. As Jesus entered the city of Jerusalem on the first Palm Sunday he looked into the hearts of the crowd gathered in the streets. And there he saw the treachery which would be brought to light later in the week. Well could Jesus have said: "These people do me honour with their lips, but their hearts are far from me."

The *Introit* now read by the priest (the usual prayers of preparation at the foot of the altar are omitted) places the words of Psalm 21 on the lips of Christ: "Lord be not far from me; O my help, hasten to aid me. Save me from the lion's mouth; from the horns of the wild bulls my wretched life. My God, my God, why have you forsaken me: far from me my deliverance, because of my sins."

The cry which Christ made in the hour of his agony in Gethesmane is a vivid reminder to us that our Redeemer was Man as well as God. He was subject to suffering of mind and body as we are, with this difference that being the Perfect Man, His nature was more sensitive to mental or physical pain than any other human being. We must never doubt or underestimate the bitter sufferings which Jesus had to endure for our sakes.

The priest now reads the principal prayer of the Mass: "Almighty and everlasting God, who willed that our Saviour should take on Him our flesh and suffer death on the

cross so that all mankind should follow the example of his humility; mercifully grant that we may both learn the lesson of his patience and be made partakers of his resurrection. Amen."

A special feature of to-day's Mass is the solemn chanting of the Gospel narrative of the Passion according to St. Matthew. This is done by three deacons to an old and very touching melody. At Low Mass the priest reads the Gospel in the ordinary way. Let us read the Gospel with attention and devotion. Palms are not held during the Passion.

### Gethsemane

"At that time Jesus came with his disciples to a country place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, Sit down here, while I go over yonder and pray. And he took with him Peter and the sons of Zebedee, and he began to be saddened and exceedingly troubled. Then he said to them, My soul is sad, even unto death. Wait here and watch with me. And going forward a little he fell prostrate and prayed, saying, Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass away from me; yet not as I will, but as thou willest. Then he came to his disciples and found them sleeping. And he said to Peter, Could you not, then, watch one hour with me? Watch and pray, that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. Again a second time he went away and prayed, saying, My Father, if this cup cannot pass away unless I drink it, thy will be done. And he came again and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. And leaving them he went back again, and prayed a third time, saying the same words over. Then he came to his disciples, and said to them, Sleep on now, and take your rest! Behold, the hour is at hand when the Son of Man will be betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us go. Behold, he who betrays me is at hand.

### Jesus is Arrested

And while he was yet speaking, behold Judas, one of the Twelve, came and with him a great crowd with swords and

clubs, from the chief priests and elders of the people. Now his betrayer had given them a sign, saying. Whomever I kiss, that is he; lay hold of him. And he went straight up to Jesus and said, Hail, Rabbi! and kissed him. And Jesus said to him, Friend, for what purpose hast thou come? Then they came forward and set hands on Jesus and took him. And behold, one of those who were with Jesus reached out his hand, drew his sword, and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear. Then Jesus said to him, Put back thy sword into its place; for all those who take the sword shall perish by the sword. Or dost thou suppose that I cannot entreat my Father, and He will even now furnish me with more than twelve legions of angels? How then are the scriptures to be fulfilled, that thus it must take place? In that hour Jesus said to the crowds, As against a robber you have come out, with swords and clubs, to seize me. Now all this was done that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples left him and fled.

### Jesus at the Palace of the High Priest

Now those who had taken Jesus led him away to Caiphas the high priest, where the Scribes and the elders had gathered together. But Peter was following him at a distance, even to the courtyard of the high priest, and he went in and sat with the attendants to see the end. Now the chief priests and all the Sanhedrin were seeking false witness against Jesus, that they might put him to death, but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. But last of all two false witnesses came forward, and said, This man said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to rebuild it after three days. Then the high priest, standing up, said to him, Dost thou make no answer to the things that these men prefer against thee? But Jesus kept silence. And the high priest said to him, I adjure thee by the living God that thou tell us whether thou art the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus said to him, Thou hast said it. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power and coming upon the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest tore his garments, saying, He has blasphemed;

what further need have we of witnesses? Behold now you have heard the blasphemy. What do you think? And they answered and said, He is liable to death. Then they spat in his face and buffeted him; while others struck his face with the palms of their hands, saying, Prophecy to us, O Christ! who is it that struck thee?

### The Denial of Peter

Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard; and a maidservant came up to him and said, Thou also wast with Jesus the Galilean. But he denied it before them all, saying, I do not know what thou art saying. And when he had gone out to the gateway, another maid saw him, and said to those who were there, This man also was with Jesus of Nazareth. And again he denied it with an oath, I do not know the man! And after a little while the bystanders came up and said to Peter, Surely thou also art one of them, for even thy speech betrays thee. Then he began to curse and to swear that he did not know the man. And at that moment a cock crowed. And Peter remembered the word that Jesus had said, Before a cock crows, thou wilt deny me three times. And he went out and wept bitterly. Now when morning came all the chief priests and the elders of the people took counsel together against Jesus in order to put him to death. And they bound him and led him away and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the procurator.

### The Despair of Judas

Then Judas, who betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders, saying, I have sinned in betraying innocent blood. But they said, What is that to us? See to it thyself. And he flung the pieces into the temple, and withdrew; and went away and hanged himself with a halter. And the chief priests took the pieces of silver, and said, It is not lawful to put them into the treasury seeing that it is the price of blood. And after they had consulted together, they bought with them the potter's field, a burial place for strangers. For this reason that field has been

called even to this day, Haceldama, that is, the Field of Blood. Then what was spoken through Jeremias the prophet was fulfilled, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him who was priced, upon whom the children of Israel set a price; and they gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord directed me.

### Jesus Before Pilate

Now Jesus stood before the procurator; and the procurator asked him, saying, Art thou the king of the Jews? Jesus said to him, Thou sayest it. And when he was accused by the chief priests and the elders, he made no answer. Then Pilate said to him, Dost thou not hear how many things they prefer against thee? But he did not answer him a single word so that the procurator wondered exceedingly. Now at festival time the procurator used to release to the crowd a prisoner, whomever they would. Now he had at this time a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. Therefore, when they had gathered together, Pilate said, Whom do you wish that I release to you; Barabbas, or Jesus who is called the Christ? For he knew that they had delivered him up out of envy. Now, as he was sitting on the judgment-seat, his wife sent to him, saying, Have nothing to do with that just man, for I have suffered many things in a dream to-day because of him. But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to destroy Jesus. But the procurator addressed them, and said to them, Which of the two do you wish that I release to you? And they said, Barabbas. Pilate said to them, What then am I to do with Jesus who is called Christ? They all said, Let him be crucified! The procurator said to them, Why, what evil has he done? But they kept crying out the more, saying, Let him be crucified! Now Pilate, seeing that he was doing no good, but rather that a riot was breaking out, took water and washed his hands in sight of the crowd, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just man; see to it yourselves. And all the people answered and said, His blood be on us and on our children. Then he released to them Barabbas; but Jesus he scourged and delivered to them to be crucified. Then the



soldiers of the procurator took Jesus into the praetorium, and gathered together about him the whole cohort. And they stripped him and put on him a scarlet cloak; and plaiting a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed into his right hand; and bending the knee before him they mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! And they spat on him, and took the reed and kept striking him on the head. And when they had mocked him, they took the cloak off him and put his own garments on him, and led him away to crucify him.

### **The Way of the Cross and the Crucifixion**

Now as they went out, they found a man of Cyrene named Simon; him they forced to take up His cross. And they came to the place called Golgotha, that is, the Place of the Skull. And they gave Him wine to drink mixed with gall; but when he had tasted it, he would not drink. And after they had crucified him, they divided his garments, casting lots, to fulfil what was spoken through the prophet. They divided my garments among them, and upon my vesture they cast lots. And sitting down they kept watch over him, And they put above his head the charge against him, written: This is Jesus, the King of the Jews. Then two robbers were crucified with him, one on his right hand and one on his left. Now the passers-by were jeering at him, shaking their heads, and saying, Thou who destroyest the temple, and in three days buildest it up again, save thyself! In like manner, the chief priests with the scribes and the elders, mocking, said, He saved others, Himself he cannot save! If he is the King of Israel, let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let Him deliver him now, if He wants him; for he said, I am the Son of God. And the robbers also, who were crucified with him, reproached him in the same way. Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour.

### **The Death of Christ**

But about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice saying, Eli, Eli, lamma sabacthani, that is, My God, my God,

why hast Thou forsaken me? And some of the bystanders on hearing this said, This man is calling Elias. And immediately one of them ran out, and taking a sponge, soaked it in common wine, put it on a reed and offered it to him to drink. But the rest said, Wait, let us see whether Elias is coming to save him. But Jesus again cried out with a loud voice, and gave up his spirit.

*(Here all kneel and pause for a few moments)*

And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were rent, and the tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep arose; and coming forth out of the tombs after the resurrection, they came into the holy city, and appeared to many. Now when the centurion, and those who were with him keeping guard over Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that were happening, they were very much afraid, and they said, Truly he was the Son of God. And many women were there, looking on from a distance, who had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to him. Among them were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

### **The Burial of Jesus**

Now when it was evening, there came a certain rich man of Arimathea, Joseph by name, who was himself a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered the body to be given up. And Joseph taking the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock. Then he rolled a large stone to the entrance of the tomb, and departed."

The Mass then continues as usual, except that the last Gospel is omitted.

## I. REFLECTIONS :

### THE MEANING OF THE EUCHARIST

(i) The Eucharist is the Memorial of the Passion and Death of Our Saviour. Jesus wished that we would have some visible means of remembering his Sacrifice. And so, during the last Supper, he instituted this "wonderful sacrament of his body and blood" which is renewed daily upon our altars at Mass. This was the great legacy which he left to all Christians, whereby they might recall his Passion and Death. This gift of his own Body and Blood was given to us in memory of all that he suffered for us. "So it is the Lord's death you are heralding whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, until he comes" (1 Cor. ix. 26) By means of the Eucharist we enter into communion with our Saviour. Holy Communion means entering into union with Jesus. It means that the Graces which Our Lord won for all men upon Calvary are applied to our needs here and now. And to-day, Holy Thursday, we commemorate the institution of this great sacrament. Thus we should approach the Holy Table with great devotion and recollect that we are about to enter into Communion with our God.

(ii) The Eucharist is also the Sacrament of Divine Love. It is the bond of union between God, who created us, and man, a mere creature. "God so loved us that He sent His beloved Son into the world to redeem us." The Eucharist is the revelation of God's Infinite Love for mankind. Owing to our weak nature we are liable to forget all that God has done for us. We are ungrateful. But God never forgets; God never forsakes us. And the proof of His loving care is the Sacrament of Divine Love, the Eucharist. We have been created to know, love and serve God; that is the real end of each one of us, which we shall only fulfil completely in heaven. But even here on earth we are able to begin knowing, loving and serving God. The most fruitful source for perfecting ourselves in our life's most important task is the Mass and Holy Communion. Each Holy Communion should bring us closer to God and increase our fervour of love for Him. Let us pray that to-day we may all obtain an increase in the love of God and that we may learn to value the Sacrament of his Love which he has left to us in memory of his Passion and Death.

## II. THE CEREMONY :

### 1. THE EVENING MASS OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Mass takes place in the evening, since that was the hour at which Christ ate the Last Supper with his disciples. The priest, in white vestments, begins Mass. Let us say the *Introit* of this great day :

"It becomes us, however, to glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ : in whom is our salvation, life and resurrection : by whom we are saved and delivered. May God have pity on us and bless us ; may He let his face shine upon us ; may he have pity on us."

At the *Gloria in excelsis* the church bells are rung, and if the Mass is sung, the organ is played. From this moment until Easter Eve, the organ is silent and no bells are rung in the church.

The Epistle gives us St. Paul's account of the institution of the Eucharist :—

"Brethren : When you meet together, then, it is no longer possible to eat the Lord's Supper. For at the meal each one takes first his own supper, and one is hungry, and another drinks over much. Have you not houses for your eating and drinking ? Or do you despise the church of God and put to shame the needy ? What am I to say to you ? Am I to commend you ? In this I do not commend you. For I myself have received from the Lord (what I also delivered to you), that the Lord Jesus, on the night in which he was betrayed, took bread, and giving thanks broke, and said, This is my body which shall be given up for you ; do this in remembrance of me. In like manner also the cup, after he had supped, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood ; do this as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as you shall eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord, until he comes. Therefore, whoever eats this bread or drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily, will be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. Let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of the cup ; for he who eats and drinks unworthily, without distinguishing the Lord's body, eats and drinks judgement to himself. This is why many among you are infirm and weak, and many sleep. But if we judged

ourselves, we should not thus be judged. But when we are judged, we are being chastised by the Lord that we may not be condemned with this world." (I Cor. xi. 20-32).

The Gospel describes the incident at the Last Supper, when Jesus washed the feet of his disciples:

"Before the feast of the Passover, Jesus, knowing that the hour had come for him to pass out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, loved them to the end. And during the supper, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, to betray him, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come forth from God and was going to God, rose from the supper and laid aside his garments, and taking a towel girded himself. Then he poured water into the basin and began to wash the feet of the disciples, and to dry them with the towel with which he was girded. He came, then, to Simon Peter. And Peter said to him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Jesus answered and said to him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter said to him, Thou shalt never wash my feet! Jesus answered him, If I do not wash thee, thou shalt have no part with me. Simon Peter said to him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head! Jesus said to him, He who has bathed needs only to wash, and he is clean all over. And you are clean, but not all. For he knew who it was that would betray him. This is why he said, You are not all clean. Now after he had washed, their feet and put on his garments, when he had reclined again he said to them, Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Master and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. If, therefore, I, the Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash the feet of one another. For I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so you also should do." (John xiii. 1-15).

Where it is expedient the celebrant then proceeds to wash the feet of twelve men in memory of Christ's action. During this ceremony the antiphon: *Ubi caritas et amor* is sung. It is a beautiful prayer for fraternal charity and for union among all men. It is a reminder to us that the Eucharist is most especially the sacrament of love and unity. We must, therefore, banish from our hearts any hatred or ill-will to another

before we presume to approach the holy table. The antiphon *Ubi caritas* is given here:

"Where charity and love are, there is God. The love of Christ has gathered us together in one. Let us rejoice in him and be glad. Let us fear and love the living God. And let us love one another with sincere heart.

"Where charity and love are, there is God. When, therefore, we are assembled together, let us take heed, that we be not divided in mind. Let malignant quarrels and contentions cease. And let Christ our God dwell in the midst of us."

"Where charity and love are, there is God. Let us also with the blessed see your face in glory, O Christ our God. There to possess an immense and happy joy for infinite ages and ages. Amen."

When this hymn has been sung, the priest says the following prayer:

"Help us, Lord, we implore you, in this performance of our ministry, and since you were pleased to wash your disciples' feet, despise not this work of our hands which you commanded us to imitate; so that as here we wash away outward stains, so inwardly the sins of all may be blotted out by you. Amen."

The Mass then continues. We should follow the prayers of the Mass and prepare ourselves well to receive Holy Communion. By way of thanksgiving after Holy Communion let us say this prayer:

"Strengthened by this life-giving food, we pray you, Lord our God, that what we seek in this time of our mortality we may attain by the gift of your immortality. Amen."

## 2. THE SOLEMN PROCESSION TO THE ALTAR OF REPOSE

The celebrant has consecrated at to-day's Mass all the Hosts which will be used for Holy Communion to-morrow. The Blessed Sacrament is now carried in solemn procession to the altar of repose, where it will remain until to-morrow. During the procession the hymn *Pange lingua* is sung. We should bow down in adoration as the procession passes by. After the ceremony we should pay a visit to the altar of repose. We should spend some time in company with our Divine Lord, for this is the night when we commemorate the Agony

in the Garden. We should banish all worldly thoughts from our minds this night and meditate upon the great mystery of Jesus' love for each one of us.

### 3. THE STRIPPING OF THE ALTARS

Taking off the white vestments, the celebrant and deacon now put on violet stoles. Coming before the high altar, the celebrant recites aloud the antiphon *Dividunt sibi* and the first part of Psalm 21: "*They divide my garments among them, and for my vesture they cast lots. My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?*"

While the choir continues the recitation of Psalm 21, the celebrant and ministers strip all the altars of the church, except of course, the altar of repose. What is the meaning of this ceremony? The altars are bare now as a sign of the Church's mourning. But there is a practical reason too: the altars are bare because the Eucharist will not be celebrated until Easter Saturday Night. There will be no Mass to-morrow or Saturday.

## Good Friday

### I. REFLECTIONS:

#### THE REAL MEANING OF CALVARY

(i) Our thoughts should naturally turn towards Calvary on this, the anniversary of Christ's bitter Passion and Death. The Hill of Calvary! Why was it necessary? First of all because man had sinned. The first lesson we should learn from contemplating Jesus as he hangs upon the Cross is *the wickedness of sin*. Sin is the one great evil in the world. God's hatred for sin was so great that he did not spare His Divine Son, but allowed him to be delivered up in order to teach men the enormity of sin. We know that God could have redeemed the world by many other ways, but he chose Calvary as the best means of showing men how much he detested sin. Thus our thoughts to-day should be ones of sorrow for our own personal sins and for the sins of the whole world. And we should resolve to take every step possible to avoid sinning in the future. Sin is the death of the soul. Jesus died in order to give us life. He offers us everlasting Life by means of his Passion and Death. In order to benefit by the Sacrifice of Christ we must renounce sin and do good. That is what Jesus asks of each one of us to-day.

(ii) But there is another lesson we must learn from contemplating Our Saviour upon the Cross: *God's great love for mankind*. It was this Divine Love which led Jesus to suffer so much for us. This Love was to be sealed in his Blood. "No greater love can a man have than that he lay down his life for his friends." We are the friends of God thanks to the suffering of Jesus Christ. Our Redemption has been won through Love, but it is a Love which demands a response. The world has been saved through the Passion and Death of Our Lord, but there is something left over for us to do. We have got to associate ourselves with the actions of Christ; we have got to prove that we are his friends; we have to bear our own cross. The mystery of Calvary is not that of an event which took place some two thousand years ago and is now over and forgotten. It is a living reality, which affects each one of us here and now. Jesus asks us the very question he put three times to St. Peter: "Lovest thou me?" As we go to kiss the cross this afternoon let us hear Jesus putting this very question to us: "Lovest thou me?"

Our whole destiny depends upon our reply, and our reply will depend upon how seriously we have been taking our responsibility as Christians. This is the one thing necessary; we shall be judged on the last day on one point alone: the degree of *our love*. Let us, at least, be true to Jesus for this one day each year, and let us ask Him to increase our love.

(iii) Our thoughts should likewise turn to Our Lady as she stood beneath the Cross on Calvary. She is the Mother of Sorrows; she suffered along with her Son. It was now that Simeon's prophecy came true: "And a sword shall pierce thy own heart." We shall never fathom the extent of Mary's suffering. She suffered in silence. The measure of her sorrow was that of her love for her Son, and God alone can assess that.

## II. THE CEREMONY:

### 1. THE LESSONS

The hour at which Christ died—three o'clock in the afternoon—is the time for this ceremony. The priest and ministers, in alb and black stole, come before the high altar and prostrate themselves on the ground. This striking gesture reminds us of the Mysteries about to be commemorated. Calvary was a glorious Sacrifice on the part of Christ, but it was a most terrible sacrilege on the part of the Jews.

After a few minutes silent prayer, all rise up, and the celebrant says the following prayer at the altar steps:

"O God, who by the Passion of Christ your Son, our Lord, have banished the inheritance of death due to original sin which had fallen on all posterity; grant, that being made like to him, as of necessity we bear the likeness of our human nature, so by being made holy we may manifest the likeness of heavenly grace. Amen."

There now follows the reading of two lessons taken from the Old Testament. The first lesson is from the Prophet Osee. Let us read one striking passage: "Come, let us return to the Lord, for he has struck and he will cure us. He will revive us after two days; and on the third day he will raise us up and we shall live in his sight."

After the reading of the two lessons, the Gospel of the Passion is solemnly sung by three deacons, as on Palm Sunday.

To-day the Gospel is taken from St. John. (*For those who have no missals, we suggest that they re-read the Passion which we have already given on p. 10 from the Gospel of St. Matthew*).

### 2. THE SOLEMN COLLECTS

The celebrant now sings (or recites) the Solemn Collects. These are special prayers said for nine different intentions. These Solemn Collects formed part of every Mass in the early centuries of the Church. The priest first calls on the people to pray for some particular intention; then all kneel to pray for a moment in silence; finally the priest, *collecting*, as it were, our prayers, offers them on our behalf to God. The nine intentions for which we pray are: For the whole Church; for the Pope; for all orders and ranks of the faithful; for the rulers of States; for converts under instruction; for the needs of the faithful; for the unity of the Church; for the conversion of the Jews; for the conversion of pagans.

### 3. THE SOLEMN ADORATION OF THE CROSS

The Crucifix, veiled in purple, is now solemnly carried through the church by the deacon. The priest comes forward to receive it before the altar. He unveils the top of the cross and holds it up before the people and then says: "*Behold the wood of the Cross, on which hung the Saviour of the world,*" to which the whole congregation answer: "*Come let us adore.*" All kneel and venerate the cross for a little time, in silence. The priest then unveils the right arm of the cross, says the same verse and the people give the same response. Finally, the priest moves to the middle of the altar and unveils the cross completely, using the same words as above. Two servers now come forward and receive the cross from the priest. Standing facing the people they hold the cross under the arms, upright.

There now follows the solemn veneration of the cross, first by the clergy and then by the faithful. As we go up to kiss the cross, let us remember that there is *only one genuflection*, which is made when we reach the cross. During this ceremony the choir sings the Reproaches, which are words of reproach made to the Jewish people by God. They might very well be addressed to us: "*My people, what have*

*I done to you ? or in what have I grieved you ? Answer me . . .*  
 What more ought I to do for you, that I have not done ? I planted you, indeed, my most beautiful vineyard : and you have become exceedingly bitter to me : for in my thirst you gave me vinegar to drink : and with a spear you have pierced the side of your Saviour . . . I fed you with manna in the desert : and you have beaten me with blows and scourges . . . I have exalted you with great power : and you have hanged me on the gibbet of the cross."

When the faithful have finished venerating the cross, it is placed on the high altar.

#### 4. THE COMMUNION

The priest now puts on violet vestments and goes to the altar of repose to bring the Blessed Sacrament to the high altar for Holy Communion. As he returns the following antiphons are sung (or recited) :

"We adore thee, O Christ, and bless thee, because by thy cross thou hast redeemed the world."

"Through the wood of a tree we became slaves, and by thy holy cross we were set free ; the fruit of a tree betrayed us, the Son of God redeemed us."

"Saviour of the world, save us : by thy Cross and Blood thou hast redeemed us ; aid us now, our God, we pray thee."

The priest now begins the Communion rite, at which he and all the faithful will receive from the ciborium which was kept at the altar of repose. No Mass is celebrated to-day. The priest now recites the *Pater noster* (' Our Father ') in Latin. We should join in this prayer aloud, making a pause at the asterisk :

**PATER NOSTER QUI ES IN CAELIS\***  
**SANCTIFICETUR NOMEN TUUM\***  
**ADVENIAT REGNUM TUUM\***  
**FIAT VOLUNTAS TUA SICUT IN CAELO ET IN TERRA\***  
**PANEM NOSTRUM QUOTIDIANUM DO NOBIS HODIE\***  
**ET DIMITTE NOBIS DEBITA NOSTRA \***  
**SICUT ET NOS DIMITTIMUS DEBITORIBUS NOSTRIS\***  
**ET NE NOS INDUCAS IN TENTATIONEM\***  
**SED LIBERA NOS A MALO\***  
**AMEN.**

Holy Communion is then distributed. By way of thanksgiving let us say these three prayers with the priest :

"We entreat you, Lord, that your people who have devoutly commemorated the passion and death of your Son may receive your abundant blessing, pardon and consolation, may increase in holy faith and have their eternal redemption secured."

"Almighty and merciful God, You have restored us by the blessed passion and death of Christ, your Son ; preserve in us the work of your mercy, so that by partaking of this sacrament we may live in unceasing devotion to your service."

"Be mindful, Lord, of your mercies, and by your everlasting protection, sanctify your servants for whom Christ, your Son, by his blood instituted this paschal sacrament. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen."

The priest and the ministers then go to the sacristy.

As we kneel in the empty church let us ponder upon some of the verses of the hymn "*Stabat Mater*" :

"At the cross her station keeping,  
 Stood the mournful Mother weeping,  
 Close to Jesus in the last.

Oh, how sad and sore distressed  
 Was that Mother highly blest  
 Of the sole-begotten One !

Christ above in torments hangs ;  
 She beneath beholds the pangs  
 Of her dying glorious Son.

O thou Mother ! fount of love !  
 Touch my spirit from above,  
 Make my heart with thine accord.

By the cross with thee to stay ;  
 There with thee to weep and pray ;  
 Is all I ask of thee to give.

Christ, when Thou shalt call me hence,  
 Be Thy Mother my defence,  
 Be Thy cross my victory."

## I REFLECTIONS :

### 1. THE RESURRECTION AND BAPTISM

“ Christ has risen from the dead, the first fruits of those who sleep ; for as death came into the world by one man so also by one man comes the resurrection from the dead.” (I Cor. xv. 20-21). To-night the Church celebrates the feast of Baptism along with the feast of Christ’s Resurrection. Why is this? Because by baptism we become members of Christ’s Mystical Body, members of his Church, and heirs to the kingdom of heaven. By our baptism we are able to share in the fruits of Christ’s Resurrection.

We have all received the sacrament of baptism, but the Church wishes that we renew our baptismal promises to-night, so that we may give a full consent to the words spoken for us by our godparents. By his Resurrection, Christ was able to triumph over death ; by our baptism we are able to triumph over Original Sin, which is the death of the soul. By his Resurrection, Christ was able to win a complete victory over Satan ; by our baptism we are able to win a victory over the devil and his angels. But there is one very important point we must remember, even though we have been baptised, we still have the roots of weakness in us, we still are capable of sinning. The Church calls upon all Christians to-night to realise the task they took upon themselves at baptism. If we are to be found worthy to enter into heaven on the last day ; if we are to rise with glorified bodies, then we must strive to imitate Christ in our lives.

The sacrament of baptism is administered by means of water. This pouring of water upon the head of the child signifies the spiritual cleansing which is effected in his soul. There are many references to water in the ceremonies of Holy Saturday Night. As we follow the prayers and readings, let us remember that we were once cleansed and purified by the waters of Baptism. And let us ask God to give us once again the innocence which was formerly ours. Let us pray that the new life which was given us at Baptism may increase and grow, like the mustard seed of the Gospel parable.

### 2. FIRE AND LIGHT

We should miss much of the meaning of to-night’s ceremony if we failed to understand the use which the Church

makes of Fire and Light. Fire is one of the most powerful of the elements. It consumes all that it touches, just like the forest fire which burns all that it meets in its path. Fire can destroy and the destruction which the spiritual Fire achieves is that of Sin. But fire also enkindles and heats ; it is a source of comfort. And so the material fire represents the Holy Ghost, which is the Spirit of Love. The Holy Ghost enkindles within our hearts the fire of Divine Love. This is a love which should always burn within us. As we watch the priest to-night blessing the fire, let us ask God to grant us an increase of his Love. And let us pray that our Love may be strong, vigorous and warm, just like the fire in to-night’s ceremony.

The Paschal Candle will be the centre of attention in the ceremony which is about to begin. The light which it sheds upon all the faithful represents the Light of Christ. By his Resurrection, Christ banished the forces of darkness ; a new day dawned for the world when he rose from the dead. We are meant to live surrounded by the light of Christ. St. John refers to Christ in the following words : “ There is one who enlightens every soul born into the world ; he was the true Light.” (*John* i. 9). As long as we have the grace of God in our souls we possess the true Light.

## II THE CEREMONY :

### 1. THE BLESSING OF THE NEW FIRE AND THE PASCHAL CANDLE

The first part of to-night’s ceremony takes place at the church door. The priest, with violet stole and cope, goes to the porch to bless the Easter Fire struck from flint. He reads the following prayer, facing the processional cross :

“ O God, through your Son, the corner stone, you have bestowed on the faithful the fire of your glory, sanctify this new fire produced from a flint for our use ; and grant that by this paschal festival we may be so inflamed with heavenly desires, that with pure minds we may come to the feast of perpetual light. Amen.”

He then sprinkles the fire with holy water ; having blessed incense in the usual manner, he incenses the new fire.

The priest then proceeds to bless the Paschal Candle. First he inscribes upon the candle a cross, then the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, and finally the date of the year saying :

“ Christ yesterday and to-day : The Beginning and the End : Alpha and Omega : His are the times and ages. To him be glory and dominion through all ages of eternity. Amen.”

Five grains of incense enclosed in large-headed nails are next fixed into the Candle, in memory of the five wounds of Christ, whom the Candle represents. The priest says the following prayer while inserting the incense :

“ By his holy and glorious wounds, may he guard and preserve us, Christ our Lord. Amen.”

He then lights the Paschal Candle from the newly blessed fire, saying :

“ May the light of Christ in glory rising again, dispel the darkness of heart and mind.”

He goes on to pray that the abundant blessing of God may descend on the lighted candle ; that the power of His Majesty be present with its light and the malice of Satan be driven out by it.

The deacon (or priest himself, if there be no ministers) puts on a white dalmatic. All the lights of the church are put out, save the Paschal Candle. The procession moves up the church, halting three times as the deacon holds aloft the Candle singing : **Lumen Christi** (‘ The Light of Christ ’). All genuflect and reply : **Deo gratias** (‘ Thanks be to God. ’) At the first halt the priest’s candle is lit from the Paschal Candle ; at the second halt the candles of the clergy and servers are lit ; and at the third halt the candles of all the people are lit.

The deacon now sings the *Exsultet* or the hymn of praise of the Paschal Candle. This is a long hymn, which develops into the form usually associated with the *Preface* which is sung at High Mass. It gathers up many of the themes used by the inspired writers of the Bible : light and darkness, night and day, freedom and slavery.

After the *Exsultet* is sung, all put out their candles. They will be lit again for the renewal of baptismal vows.

## 2. THE LESSONS AND FIRST PART OF THE LITANY :

We now come to the second part of this evening’s ceremonies. First there are four long lessons taken from the Old Testament. The First lesson is taken from the *Book of Genesis* and tells of the creation of the world and of man by God. Baptism is the means by which we recover some of the privileges which were ours in the Garden of Eden. The second Lesson is from the *Book of Exodus*, and tells us of Moses, who rescued the Israelites from the captivity of Egypt. The passage through the Red Sea is an image of our Baptism, by means of which our sins are washed away. The third lesson is from the prophet *Isaias*, and tells us how Christ will save us by his protecting power. The fourth lesson is from the *Book of Deuteronomy*, and tells us that we must obey the same laws which God gave to Moses in the desert long ago.

The first part of the Litany of the Saints is now sung (or recited) :—

**KYRIE, éléison.**

*Christe, eleison.*

**Kyrie, éléison.**

**Christe, audi nos.**

*Christe, exaudi nos.*

**Pater, de coelis Deus.**

**Fili, Redemptor mundi Deus.**

**Spiritus Sancte Deus,**

**Sancta Trinitas, unus Deus,**

**Sancta Maria,**

**Sancta Dei Génitrix,**

**Sancta Virgo virginium,**

**Sancte Michael,**

**Sancte Gábríel,**

**Sancte Ráphael,**

**Omnes sancti Angeli et Archángeli**

*Orate pro nobis.*

**Omnes sancti beatórum Spiritum**

*órdines, Orate pro nobis.*

**Sancte Joánnes Baptista, Ora**

*pro nobis.*

**Sancte Joseph, Ora pro nobis.**

**Omnes sancti Patriárchae et**

**Prophétae, Orate pro nobis.**

**L**ORD have mercy.

*Christ, have mercy.*

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, hear us.

*Christ, graciously hear us.*

God the Father of heaven,

God the Son, Redeemer of the world,

God the Holy Ghost,  
Holy Trinity, one God,

Holy Mary,

Holy Mother of God,

Holy Virgin of virgins,

St. Michael,

St. Gabriel,

St. Raphael,

All ye holy Angels and Arch-angels,

All ye holy orders of blessed Spirits,

St. John the Baptist,

St. Joseph,

All ye holy Patriarchs and Prophets,

Miserere Nobis

Ora pro Nobis

Have mercy on us

Pray for us



<b>Sancte Petre,</b>	<i>Ora pro nobis</i>	St. Peter,	
<b>Sancte Paule,</b>		St. Paul,	
<b>Sancte Andréá,</b>		St. Andrew,	
<b>Sancte Joánnes,</b>		St. John,	
<b>Omnes sancti Apóstoli et Evan- gelistae, Orate pro nobis.</b>		All ye holy Apostles and Evan- gelists	
<b>Omnes sancti Discipuli Dómini, Orate pro nobis.</b>		All ye holy Disciples of our Lord,	<i>Pray for us</i>
<b>Sancte Stéphane</b>	<i>Ora pro nobis</i>	St. Stephen,	
<b>Sancte Laurénti,</b>		St. Laurence,	
<b>Sancte Vincénti,</b>		St. Vincent,	
<b>Omnes sancti Mártýres, Orate pro nobis.</b>		All ye holy Martyrs,	
<b>Sancte Silvéster,</b>	<i>Ora pro nobis</i>	St. Sylvester,	
<b>Sancte Gregóri,</b>		St. Gregory,	
<b>Sancte Augustíne,</b>		St. Augustine,	
<b>Omnes sancti Pontífices et Con- fessóres, Orate pro nobis.</b>		All ye holy Bishops and Con- fessors,	<i>Pray for us</i>
<b>Omnes sancti Doctóres, Orate pro nobis.</b>		All ye holy Doctors,	
<b>Sancte Antóni,</b>	<i>Ora pro nobis</i>	St. Anthony,	
<b>Sancte Benedicte,</b>		St. Penedict,	
<b>Sancte Dominice,</b>		St. Dominic,	
<b>Sancte Francisce,</b>		St. Francis,	
<b>Omnes sancti Sacerdótes et Lev- itae, Orate pro nobis.</b>		All ye holy Priests and Levites,	
<b>Omnes sancti Mónachi et Ere- mitae, Orate pro nobis.</b>		All ye holy Monks and Hermits,	
<b>Sancta Maria Magdaléna,</b>	<i>Ora pro nobis</i>	St. Mary Magdalene,	
<b>Sancta Agnes,</b>		St. Agnes,	
<b>Sancta Caecilia,</b>		St. Cecily,	
<b>Sancta Agatha</b>		St. Agatha	
<b>Sancta Anastásia,</b>		St. Anastasia,	
<b>Omnes sanctae Virgines et Viduae Orate pro nobis.</b>		All ye holy Virgins and Widows,	<i>Pray for us</i>
<b>Omnes Sancti et Sanctae Dei, Intercedite pro nobis.</b>		All ye holy men and women, Saints of God, <i>Intercede for us.</i>	

The Litanies are now interrupted for the blessing of the font and the baptismal water. This is only done in parish churches.

Making the sign of the Cross three times over the water the priest says :

“ Wherefore I bless you, creature of water, by the living God, by the true God, by the holy God, by that God who in the beginning separated you by his word from the dry land, and whose spirit moved over you.”

He pours some Oil of Catechumens into the water saying :

“ May this font be hallowed and made fruitful by the oil of salvation for those who are reborn from it into everlasting life. Amen.”

Then, while pouring some Chrism into the water he says :  
“ May this infusion of the chrism of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit the Comforter, be made in the name of the Holy Trinity. Amen.”

Finally he pours both oils (Oil of Catechumens and the holy Chrism) saying :

“ May this mixture of the chrism of sanctification, with the oil of unction, and of the water of baptism, be made in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.”

The newly blessed water is then carried in procession and poured into the baptismal font at the end of the church.

### 3. THE RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL VOWS AND SECOND PART OF THE LITANY

This is one of the most solemn and moving parts of this evening's celebrations. We are about to renew the promises which we made at baptism. The priest puts on a white cope and both clergy and people light their candles as he comes forward before the Paschal Candle. After incensing the Candle, the priest gives a short address to the people in English. All stand up during this part of the ceremony. All should reply aloud to the questions which the priest puts :

“ My dearest brethren, holy Mother Church, recalling in this most holy night the death and burial of our Lord Jesus Christ, rendering love for love keeps vigil ; at the same time, she celebrates His glorious Resurrection, and gladly rejoices.

“ For the Apostle teaches us that we are indeed buried together with Christ by baptism unto death ; that, as Christ is risen from the dead, so we also ought to walk in newness of life ; we know that the old man in us has been crucified with Christ, that we may serve sin no longer. Let us thus reckon that we are dead to sin, but alive unto God, in Christ Jesus our Lord.

“ Therefore, my dearest Brethren, now that the Lenten observance is over, let us renew the vows of our holy baptism by which we have of old renounced Satan and his works,

and also the world, which is the enemy of God, and promised to serve God faithfully in the holy Catholic Church.

“ Therefore :

- Priest : Do you renounce Satan ?  
 People : We do renounce him.  
 Priest : And all his works ?  
 People : We do renounce them.  
 Priest : And all his pomps ?  
 People : We do renounce them.  
 Priest : Do you also believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth ?  
 People : We do believe.  
 Priest : Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born and who suffered ?  
 People : We do believe.  
 Priest : Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church—the communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and life everlasting ?  
 People : We do believe.  
 Priest : Let us now with one voice pray God, as our Lord Jesus Christ taught us to pray :  
 People : Our Father, who art in heaven. . .  
 Priest : And may almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has caused us to be born again by water and the Holy Spirit, and granted us the remission of sins, Himself keep us by his grace in the same Christ Jesus our Lord unto eternal life.  
 People : Amen.

The priest now sprinkles the people with the blessed water. The litany is then resumed and the priest and ministers retire to vest for Mass.

**Propitius esto.**  
*Parce nobis, Domine.*  
**Propitius esto.**  
*Exaudi nos, Domine.*  
**Ab omni malo,**  
**Ab omni peccato,**  
**A morte perpétua,**  
**Per mysterium sanctae Incarnationis tuae,**  
**Per adventum tuum,**  
**Per nativitatem tuam.**

Be merciful,  
*Spare us, O Lord.*  
 Be merciful,  
*Graciously hear us, O Lord.*  
 From all evil,  
 From all sin,  
 From everlasting death  
 Through the mystery of Thy  
 holy incarnation,  
 Through Thy coming,  
 Through Thy nativity

Libera nos Domine

Deliver us, O Lord

**Per baptismum et sanctum jejunium tuum,**  
**Per crucem et passionem tuam,**  
**Per mortem et sepulturam tuam**  
**Per sanctam resurrectionem tuam,**  
**Per admirabilem ascensionem tuam,**  
**Per adventum Spiritus Sancti Parácliti,**  
**In die iudicii,**  
**Peccatores,**  
*Te rogamus audi nos.*  
**Ut nobis parcas,**  
**Ut Ecclesiam tuam sanctam regere et conservare digneris,**

Through Thy baptism and holy fasting  
 Through Thy cross and passion,  
 Through Thy death and burial  
 Through Thy holy resurrection  
 Through Thine admirable ascension  
 Through the coming of the Holy Ghost the Paraclete  
 In the Day of Judgment  
 We sinners  
*We beseech Thee hear us.*  
 That Thou wouldst spare us,  
 That Thou wouldst vouchsafe to govern and preserve Thy holy Church,

We beseech Thee hear us,

**Ut Domnum Apostolicum, et omnes ecclesiasticos ordines in sancta religione conservare digneris,**  
**Ut inimicos sanctae Ecclesiae humiliare digneris,**

That Thou wouldst vouchsafe to preserve our Apostolic Prelate and all orders of the Church in holy religion,  
 That Thou wouldst vouchsafe to humble the enemies of holy Church

We beseech Thee hear us,

**Ut Régibus et Principibus Christianis pacem, et veram concordiam donare digneris,**  
**Ut nos metipsos, in tuo sancto servitio confortare, et conservare digneris,**  
**Ut omnibus benefactoribus nostris sempiterna bona retribuas,**  
**Ut fructus terrae dare et conservare digneris,**

That Thou wouldst vouchsafe to give peace and true concord to Christian kings and princes,  
 That Thou wouldst vouchsafe to confirm and preserve us in Thy holy service,  
 That Thou wouldst bestow eternal blessings on all our benefactors,  
 That Thou wouldst vouchsafe to give and preserve the fruits of the earth.

**Ut omnibus fidelibus defunctis requiem aeternam donare digneris,**  
**Ut nos exaudire digneris,**

That Thou wouldst vouchsafe to grant eternal rest to all the faithful departed,  
 That Thou wouldst vouchsafe graciously to hear us.

*Te rogamus, audi nos.*  
**Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,**  
*Parce nobis, Domine.*  
**Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,**  
*Exaudi nos, Domine.*  
**Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,**  
*Miserere nobis.*  
**Christe audi nos,**  
**Christe exaudi nos.**

*We beseech Thee, hear us.*  
 Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world.  
*Spare us, O Lord.*  
 Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world,  
*Graciously hear us, O Lord.*  
 Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world,  
*Have mercy on us.*  
 Christ, hear us.  
*Christ, graciously hear us.*

Te rogamus, audi nos.

#### 4. THE MASS AND HOLY COMMUNION.

The Celebrant and ministers return to the altar at the Kyrie Eleison of the Litanies, which also serves for the Mass. There is no *Introit*. During the *Gloria in excelsis* the bells are rung and the organ plays. We should all be moved to joy and happiness at this moment, for we remember that our Saviour has risen from the dead.

The *Collect* of the Mass is then said :

“ O God, who dost irradiate this most holy night with the glory of the Lord’s Resurrection ; preserve in the new children of your family the spirit of adoption which You have given them that, renewed in body and soul, they may serve You in all purity of life.”

The *Epistle* of the Mass is taken from St. Paul to the Colossians (c. iii. 1—4) :

“ Brethren : if you have risen with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Mind the things that are above, not the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ your life shall appear, then you too will appear with him in glory.”

The first of the beautiful Easter *Alleluias* is now sung by the priest and taken up by the choir. *Alleluia* is a Hebrew word which means “ Praise the Lord.”

The Gospel is from St. Matthew (Ch. xxviii. 1-7).

“ Now late in the night of the Sabbath as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the sepulchre. And behold, there was a great earthquake ; for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and drawing near rolled back the stone, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment like snow. And for fear of him the guards were terrified, and became like dead men. But the angel spoke and said to the women, Do not be afraid ; for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for He has risen even as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord was laid. And go quickly, tell his disciples that He has risen ; and behold, He goes before you into Galilee ; there you shall see Him. Behold, I have foretold it to you.”

There is no *Creed*, *Offertory* antiphon, *Agnus* or *Kiss of Peace* in this Mass.

We ought all to receive Holy Communion this Sacred Night. The Church attaches great importance to the Paschal Communion. If possible we should make our Easter Communion now. Let us remember that it is by our Communion that we are able to enter into intimate contact with Our Divine Lord. On this Sacred Night we have many reasons for wishing to unite ourselves with Jesus : in order that we may show our gratitude for the Redemption, that we may be able to have a share in his glorious Resurrection, that we may show Jesus that we wish to put away our sins and be bathed in His Divine Holiness.

After the Communion a shortened form of *Lauds* is sung at the altar, which is incensed during the *Benedictus*, that canticle of Zachary which has a special significance on this night :

“ Blessed be the Lord the God of Israel, because He has visited and wrought redemption for his people . . . ”

And finally, with hearts full of joy and gratitude, let us say the last prayer of the Holy Week liturgy, which serves as a *Collect* for *Lauds* and *Postcommunion* of the Mass :

“ Pour out upon us, Lord, the spirit of your love, that in your loving kindness, you may make to be of one mind those whom you have fed with these Easter sacraments. Amen.”

There is no Last Gospel.

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