

Our Mother of Consolation Parish

9 East Chestnut Hill Ave – Philadelphia, PA 19118

Holy Week & Easter 2025

Dear Friends,

I write this in early January, three months without knowing what will happen in our world and church in the interim. In one sense, it does not matter, as the events of Holy Week with its culmination on Easter morn speak to us at all times and in all circumstances. It is the paschal mystery, the life and death of Jesus Christ, who has and continues to have the greatest meaning and importance for us.

This Holy Week celebrates Jesus as the Messiah who indeed kept his promises of *gathering the tribes of Israel, cleansing the Temple, defeating the enemy, and reigning as Lord of Heaven and Earth*. However, he went about this in the most unexpected of ways. His *gathering* was one of open-table fellowship where all were invited into his company, especially the poor and the sick. He went to the periphery to stand with the last, the least, the lost, and the lonely to erase all barriers and bring them into a cherished belonging. He *cleansed* the Temple, the place where people came to be holy, by replacing his very self with the Temple. It is in, through, and with Christ that we become our most authentic selves by surrendering to his infinite love. We move from a stance of having to “measure up” to the more difficult position of emptying ourselves to receive this God who does not judge, indict, or point fingers. Sorry, our God prefers to adore us, smile at us, and invite us into relationship countless times a day. Jesus *defeats* the enemy, but it was not the imagined warring tribes against Israel; it was something more dangerous and powerful: sin. By taking on the fullness of our humanity to show us how to live and how to love, he also shows us how to die, to die to self, and to the Father’s will for the world daily. This is what makes us saints. It gives us tremendous freedom from sin and liberty for others. It breaks the bonds of addiction, isolation, and separation for a spirit of giving, kinship, and belonging to one another. Finally, as Messiah, Jesus *reigns* as Lord of Heaven and Earth. Sin, a crown, cross, and even death did not have the final say, but love, obedience, and service lead to the resurrected Christ who shows us our ultimate destiny is to go back to the Father from whom we came. ALL other leaders have come and gone, but the Savior of the world still reigns and enters into our lives and world daily, helping us to be his presence daily to welcome the stranger, befriend the widow and orphan, visit the sick and imprisoned, give food and drink to those in need literally or spiritually, to live as Jesus did. We do this by accepting our baptismal call and forming the Church here on Earth. We do this daily by letting Christ gather us into his intimacy, cleansing us from what separates us from God and one another, removing all enmity, and reigning as friend and center of all. But I wonder if we need to appropriate Jesus reigning *a lot more* in our lives, church, and our world. May this season resonate in God being the center of everything and no cheap and fleeting replacements for God that we too often crave that never satisfy, namely, power, pleasure, prestige, and money. The Risen Christ’s power is infinite love, his pleasure is in delighting us, his prestige is in calling us sons and daughters, and a fidelity to relating is priceless.

May the fullness of what this most special and holiest of weeks offers be with you and all whom you love. May it propel us out of our tomb on separation, division, and isolation and give us new life that proclaims He is Risen! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

In de Sales,

John

John Fisher, OSFS



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Holy Week 2025

Passion/Palm Sunday – April 13

Most people call today Palm Sunday. It is a day for processing. The Gospels tell us that the people waved branches to welcome Jesus into Jerusalem. So today, we also wave branches. The 40 days of Lent have been a time to travel in spirit to the holy city of Jerusalem. Today, we enter the city. Before each of the Masses, we will gather for the Blessing of Palm and Procession.



Wednesday of Holy Week – April 16 ~ Tenebrae ~ 7:30 PM

The word Tenebrae is Latin for “shadows” or “darkness.” A combination of the psalms, readings, prayers, and extinguishing of candles, allows us to experience the darkness of the earth at Jesus’ death.

Holy Thursday – April 17 ~ Mass of the Lord’s Supper ~ 7:30 PM



The Paschal Triduum begins this night. It initiates the “one liturgy” of the three days. On this night, we collect the Lenten alms, money, and goods for the poor, which we have been putting aside throughout Lent. We wash feet, celebrate the Lord’s Supper, and then we keep watch with Christ. Everyone is asked to be open to having their feet washed. Adoration follows the Liturgy until 9:00 PM.

Good Friday – April 18

On this day we call “Good,” we remember the death of Jesus on the cross just outside the walls of Jerusalem. This moment will be completed the following day as the Saturday night hours change into Sunday and death turns into resurrection.



The Way of the Cross ~12:00 PM & The Celebration of the Lord’s Passion ~7:30 PM

These two opportunities, one devotional and one liturgical, help us remember the sorrowful journey that Jesus made with His cross to die on Calvary for the love of us.

Holy Saturday – April 19

Blessing of Easter Food ~ 11:00 AM

It is a custom in various cultures to bless the First food that will be eaten by the family on Easter. Those who wish to have a sampling of their family’s Easter dinner blessed are welcome to gather on the rectory porch at 11:00AM.



The Easter Vigil ~ 7:30 PM

In the midst of the early dark night, a fire begins to flicker outside the church. An Easter Candle, boldly marked with the symbols of the current year and of Christ’s divinity and glorious suffering, is lit from the new fire. Carried prominently into the midst of the people, it is heralded with joyful song: “Christ our Light.... Thanks be to God.” From this one light, the candles of hundreds of assembled believers are lit until the church is ablaze with new light. Our celebration of the Easter Vigil will begin with the lighting of the Easter fire.

Please Note: There are no confessions or 4:30 PM Mass on Holy Saturday.

EASTER SUNDAY MASSES – April 20 ~ 7:30 AM, 9:00 AM, & 11:00 AM