

EASTER WEEK AT HOME

Holy Week is the time from Palm Sunday through Easter Sunday. Also included within Holy Week are Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday. Holy Week, also referred to as Passion Week is so named because of the passion with which Jesus willingly went to the cross in order to pay for the sins of His people. Holy Week is described in Matthew chapters 21-27, Mark chapters 11-15, Luke chapters 19-23 and John chapters 12-19. Holy Week begins with the triumphal entry on Palm Sunday on the back of a colt as prophesied in Zechariah 9:9. It is also referred to as Passion Week because in that time, Jesus Christ truly revealed His passion for us in the suffering He willingly went through on our behalf. As Christians, we are called during Holy Week to be passionate in our worship of Jesus and in our proclamation of the Gospel. As Jesus suffered for us, so should we be willing to suffer for the cause of following Him and proclaiming the message of His death and resurrection. Interested in learning more about Holy Week? Here are six things you may not know about the week leading up to Jesus' crucifixion.

Palm Sunday marks the start of Holy Week. It reminds Christians of the journey Jesus made into Jerusalem, on a donkey, to celebrate the Jewish festival of the Passover (Pesach). Jesus chose a donkey to show that He had come in peace. Many people welcomed Jesus by shouting, waving palm branches and throwing branches down in the path of the donkey. They hoped Jesus was the Savior who the Bible had promised. Palm Sunday is both a happy and sad day. Christians are happy because they are singing praises to Jesus but also sad because they know Jesus died less than a week after His arrival in Jerusalem. In churches on Palm Sunday, Christians are given small palm crosses made from palm leaves. Left over palm crosses often are kept for the following year, when they are burnt for Ash Wednesday.

The first recording of Holy Week observances was made by Egeria, a Gallic woman who made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land from 381-384. In account of her travels she wrote for a group of women back in Spain, Egeria describes the Palm Sunday she observed in Jerusalem: "...all the children who are gathered at the top of the Mount of Olives, including those who are not yet able to walk because they are too young and therefore are carried on their parents' shoulders, all of them bear branches, some carrying palms, others olive branches. And the bishop is led in the same manner as the Lord once was led." Historical details it contains set the journey in the early 380s, making it the earliest of its kind. It survives in fragmentary form in a letter copy – lacking a title, date and attribution.

In Christianity, Holy Monday is the last Monday prior to Easter Sunday. It is the second day of Holy Week after Palm Sunday. Some denominations celebrate Holy Monday and some do not. The Eastern Orthodox Church observes the day, typically marking it with Bible readings and certain hymns. According to tradition, Holy Monday is the day on which Jesus cleansed the temple, was praised by local children, and cursed the fig tree (Matthew 21:12-22). Scripture tells us, "Jesus entered the temple courts and drove out all who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves. 'It is written,' He said to them, 'My house will be called a house of prayer, but you are making it 'a den of robbers.'" (Matthew 21:12-13).

Holy Tuesday is the last Tuesday prior to Easter Sunday; it is the third day of Holy Week after Palm Sunday and Holy Monday. Depending on the denomination, this day may or may not be celebrated at all. Similar to Holy Monday, those that do observe Holy Tuesday, such as Eastern Orthodox churches, typically mark it with readings of particular passages of Scripture and the singing of relevant hymns. According to common interpretation in the Bible, Holy Tuesday is when Jesus was issued various challenges by the Pharisees

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and Sadducees over subjects such as marriage in heaven, paying taxes to Caesar and the source of His authority. By the same interpretation, this is the day Jesus commented on the widow's donation (Mark 12; Luke 21) and was approached by a number of God-fearing Greeks (John 12:20-36). Tuesday would also be the day Jesus spoke to His eight 'woes' against the Pharisees (Matthew 23:13-26).

Have you ever heard of "Spy Wednesday"? If you haven't, you're not alone. An archaic and infrequently used name for the Wednesday before Easter is Spy Wednesday, named for the day on which Judas betrayed Jesus to the Sanhedrin. Because Judas thought to be sneaky, his actions conjured up the image of a spy. The synoptic gospels all include an account of the betrayal – Matthew 26:12-14, Mark 14:10-12 and Luke 22:3-6. This is how the Gospel of Luke recounts these events: "Then Satan entered into Judas called Iscariot, who was one of the twelve; he went away and conferred with the chief priests and officers of the temple police about how he might betray him to them. They were greatly pleased and agreed to give him money. So he consented and begin to look for an opportunity to betray him to them when no crowd was present" (Luke 22:3-6).

You may notice a lot of purple around parishes and religious iconography during Lent and carried through until Good Friday where the church color turns to black. The reason is because the color purple represents penance in the Catholic Church, as prior to Christ's crucifixion. He was forced to wear a crown of thorns and a purple cloak as the people mocked Him. It is the color of royalty to welcome the coming of a King. It also evokes pain and suffering. It is also sometimes used to symbolize both the impending birth of Jesus yet also foreshadowing His death. Purple is still used during Lent to remind Catholics that many continue to mock God, Jesus and the Church today.

Holy Week is a very sacred time of the year, for it is now that we will commemorate and remember the last week of Jesus' life on this earth. The greatest focus of the week is the Passion (suffering) and the Resurrection of Jesus Christ and the events that led up to it. Those that engage themselves wholeheartedly in living the entire paschal cycle discover that it can change them forever. During these days, we suffer with Christ so that we might rise with Him at His glorious Resurrection. Holy Week is a time to clear our schedules of unnecessary activities. Our minds and hearts should be fixed on Jesus and what He did for us.

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Holy Monday

Monday in Holy Week (Collect from Book of Common Prayer)

Almighty God, whose dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain, and entered not into glory before he was crucified: Mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Monday - Holy Week Prayers

[Matthew 21:10-17](#); [John 12:1-8](#)

Lord God,
Six days before his death, your son sat with Lazarus,
Whom he had raised from the dead,
And ate dinner with his friends.
Once again, your gospel tells us, Martha served,
And Mary knelt at Jesus' feet
To anoint them with costly perfume.
The disciple who was about to betray him
Said that it was a waste.
He didn't care about the poor, really –
He just wanted to fill his own pockets
And make Mary feel ashamed.

Lord God,
Often we cannot discern what is best:
When to pour out costly perfume for your sake,
Even if the world thinks it a waste.
When to be busy serving,
Or when to rest at your Son's feet and learn.
Give us ears to hear you and eyes to see.
For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ.
Amen.

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HOLY TUESDAY

Tuesday in Holy Week (Collect from Book of Common Prayer)

O God, by the passion of your blessed Son you made an instrument of shameful death to be for us the means of life: Grant us so to glory in the cross of Christ, that we may gladly suffer shame and loss for the sake of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Tuesday - Holy Week Prayer

[Matthew 26:36-46](#); [Hebrews 5:7-9](#)

Lord God,
The message of the cross is difficult to take.
How can death give way to life? How can weakness be strength?
Yet your word says that Jesus, being God,
Took on human flesh
And suffered the worst kind of death.
How can this be?
This message is indeed difficult to take.
But your foolishness is wiser than our wisdom.
Your weakness is greater than our strength.
Help us to know that none of us can boast before you.
It is only in Christ Jesus that we can boast.
In his name, we ask you to help our unbelief.
That we may love you, and walk in the way Jesus taught us.
In his name,
Amen.

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HOLY WEDNESDAY

Wednesday in Holy Week (Collect from Book of Common Prayer)

Lord God, whose blessed Son our Savior gave his body to be whipped and his face to be spit upon: Give us grace to accept joyfully the sufferings of the present time, confident of the glory that shall be revealed; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Lord God, whose blessed Son our Savior gave his body to be whipped and his face to be spit upon: Give us grace to accept joyfully the sufferings of the present time, confident of the glory that shall be revealed; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Wednesday - Holy Week Prayer

[Matthew 26:27-56](#); [1 Corinthians 1:18](#)

Lord God,
We tremble to think
That it was one of Jesus' own friends who betrayed him.
One who sat by him, who broke bread with him.
Give us strength, we pray,
To walk faithfully with Jesus,
Even when the road we walk is rocky
Even when the message of the cross seems like foolishness
And even when we feel betrayed.
You, Lord, are always faithful.
We stumble, we become lost,
But you are steady and sure.
Give us the grace to endure our troubles,
And reveal to us the glory of your kingdom,
Through your son, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

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MAUNDY THURSDAY

Maundy Thursday (Collect from Book of Common Prayer)

Almighty Father, whose dear Son, on the night before he suffered, instituted the Sacrament of his Body and Blood: Mercifully grant that we may receive it thankfully in remembrance of Jesus Christ our Lord, who in these holy mysteries gives us a pledge of eternal life; and who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Thursday (Maundy Thursday) - Holy Week Prayer

[John 13:1-17; John 13:34-35](#)

Lord God,
You sent your Son into the world,
And before his hour had come,
He washed his disciples' feet.
You had given all things into his hands.
He had come from you, and was going to you,
And what did he do?
He knelt down on the floor,
And washed his friends' feet.
He was their teacher and their Lord,
Yet he washed their feet.
Lord God, help us learn from his example;
Help us to do as he has done for us.
The world will know we are his disciples
If we love one another.
Strengthen our hands and our wills for love
And for service.
Keep before our eyes the image of your Son,
Who, being God, became a Servant for our sake.
All glory be to him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
One God, now and forever.
Amen.

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GOOD FRIDAY

Good Friday (Liturgy from Book of Common Prayer)

Blessed be our God.

For ever and ever. Amen.

Let us pray.

Almighty God, we pray you graciously to behold this your family, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed, and given into the hands of sinners, and to suffer death upon the cross; who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Old Testament: [Isaiah 52:13--53:12](#) or [Genesis 22:1-18](#)

Psalm: [Psalm 22:1-11](#) or [Psalm 40:1-14](#) or [Psalm 69:1-23](#)

Epistle: [Hebrews 10:1-25](#)

The Passion Gospel: [John 18:1-19:37](#) or [John 19:1-37](#)

The congregation may be seated for the first part of the Passion. At the verse which mentions the arrival at Golgotha (John 19:17) all stand.

A hymn may then be sung.

The Solemn Collects

Dear People of God: Our heavenly Father sent his Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved; that all who believe in him might be delivered from the power of sin and death, and become heirs with him of everlasting life.

We pray, therefore, for people everywhere according to their needs.

Let us pray for the holy Catholic Church of Christ throughout the world;

For its unity in witness and service

For all bishops and other ministers
and the people whom they serve

For N., our Bishop, and all the people of this diocese

For all Christians in this community

That God will confirm his Church in faith, increase it in love, and preserve it in peace.

Silence

Almighty and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of your faithful people is governed and sanctified:

Receive our supplications and prayers which we offer before you for all members of your holy Church, that in their vocation and ministry they may truly and devoutly serve you; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

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Let us pray for all nations and peoples of the earth, and for those in authority among them;

For *N.*, the President of the United States
For the Congress and the Supreme Court
For the Members and Representatives of the United Nations
For all who serve the common good

That by God's help they may seek justice and truth, and live in peace and concord.

Silence

Almighty God, kindle, we pray, in every heart the true love of peace, and guide with your wisdom those who take counsel for the nations of the earth; that in tranquility your dominion may increase, until the earth is filled with the knowledge of your love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Let us pray for all who suffer and are afflicted in body or in mind;

For the hungry and the homeless, the destitute
and the oppressed
For the sick, the wounded, and the crippled
For those in loneliness, fear, and anguish
For those who face temptation, doubt, and despair
For the sorrowful and bereaved

For prisoners and captives, and those in mortal danger
That God in his mercy will comfort and relieve them, and grant them the knowledge of his love, and stir up in us the will and patience to minister to their needs.

Silence

Gracious God, the comfort of all who sorrow, the strength of all who suffer: Let the cry of those in misery and need come to you, that they may find your mercy present with them in all their afflictions; and give us, we pray, the strength to serve them for the sake of him who suffered for us, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Let us pray for all who have not received the Gospel of Christ;

For those who have never heard the word of salvation
For those who have lost their faith
For those hardened by sin or indifference
For the contemptuous and the scornful
For those who are enemies of the cross of Christ and persecutors of his disciples

For those who in the name of Christ have persecuted others
That God will open their hearts to the truth, and lead them to faith and obedience.

Silence

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Merciful God, creator of all the peoples of the earth and lover of souls: Have compassion on all who do not know you as you are revealed in your Son Jesus Christ; let your Gospel be preached with grace and power to those who have not heard it; turn the hearts of those who resist it; and bring home to your fold those who have gone astray; that there may be one flock under one shepherd, Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Let us commit ourselves to God, and pray for the grace of a holy life, that, with all who have departed this world and have died in the peace of Christ, and those whose faith is known to God alone, we may be accounted worthy to enter into the fullness of the joy of our Lord, and receive the crown of life in the day of resurrection.

Silence

O God of unchangeable power and eternal light: Look favorably on your whole Church, that wonderful and sacred mystery; by the effectual working of your providence, carry out in tranquility the plan of salvation; let the whole world see and know that things which were cast down are being raised up, and things which had grown old are being made new, and that all things are being brought to their perfection by him through whom all things were made, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

The service may be concluded here with the singing of a hymn or anthem, the Lord's Prayer, and the final prayer on page 282.

If desired, a wooden cross may now be brought into the church and placed in the sight of the people.

Appropriate devotions may follow, which may include any or all of the following, or other suitable anthems. If the texts are recited rather than sung, the congregation reads the parts in italics.

Anthem 1

We glory in your cross, O Lord,
*and praise and glorify your holy resurrection;
for by virtue of your cross
joy has come to the whole world.*

May God be merciful to us and bless us,
show us the light of his countenance, and come to us.

*Let your ways be known upon earth,
your saving health among all nations.*

Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.

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*We glory in your cross, O Lord,
and praise and glorify your holy resurrection;
for by virtue of your cross
joy has come to the whole world.*

Anthem 2

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,
because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.
If we have died with him, we shall also live with him;
if we endure, we shall also reign with him.

*We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,
because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.*

Anthem 3

O Savior of the world,
who by thy cross and precious blood hast redeemed us:
Save us and help us, we humbly beseech thee, O Lord.
*The hymn "Sing, my tongue, the glorious battle," or some other hymn
extolling the glory of the cross, is then sung.*
*The service may be concluded here with the Lord's Prayer and the final
prayer below.*
*In the absence of a bishop or priest, all that precedes may be led by a
deacon or lay reader.*

*In places where Holy Communion is to be administered from
the reserved Sacrament, the following order is observed*

A Confession of Sin

The Lord's Prayer

The Communion

*The service concludes with the following prayer. No blessing or dismissal
is added.*

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, we pray you to set
your passion, cross, and death between your judgment and
our souls, now and in the hour of our death. Give mercy and
grace to the living; pardon and rest to the dead; to your holy
Church peace and concord; and to us sinners everlasting life
and glory; for with the Father and the Holy Spirit you
live and reign, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

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HOLY SATURDAY

Holy Saturday (Collect from Book of Common Prayer)

O God, Creator of heaven and earth: Grant that, as the crucified body of your dear Son was laid in the tomb and rested on this holy Sabbath, so we may await with him the coming of the third day, and rise with him to newness of life; who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Saturday (Holy Saturday) - Holy Week Prayer

[Matthew 17:1-6](#); [Lamentations 3:1-9](#), [Lamentations 3:19-24](#)

Lord God,
On the Sabbath,
Jesus rested.
He was in the grave.
He had finished his work.
To most people's eyes,
It looked as if it were all over.
He was dead and buried.
But only as a seed dies when it is planted in the earth,
Not to decay, but to spring to new life.
Teach us to take refuge in you when we are afraid
Teach us that death is not our end
Teach us to hope always in you
And in the resurrection, the making of all things
New.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord,
Amen.

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EASTER DAY

Easter Day (Collect from Book of Common Prayer)

O God, who for our redemption gave your only-begotten Son to the death of the cross, and by his glorious resurrection delivered us from the power of our enemy: Grant us so to die daily to sin, that we may evermore live with him in the joy of his resurrection; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

or this

O God, who made this most holy night to shine with the glory of the Lord's resurrection: Stir up in your Church that Spirit of adoption which is given to us in Baptism, that we, being renewed both in body and mind, may worship you in sincerity and truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

or this

Almighty God, who through your only-begotten Son Jesus Christ overcame death and opened to us the gate of everlasting life: Grant that we, who celebrate with joy the day of the Lord's resurrection, may be raised from the death of sin by your life-giving Spirit; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

Sunday - (Easter/Resurrection Sunday) - Holy Week Prayer

[Matthew 28; Revelation 5:11-14; Psalms 118:1-2; Psalms 118:14-24](#)

Lord God,
You loved this world so much,
That you gave your one and only Son,
That we might be called your children too.
Lord, help us to live in the gladness and grace
Of Easter Sunday, everyday.
Let us have hearts of thankfulness
For your sacrifice.
Let us have eyes that look upon
Your grace and rejoice in our salvation.
Help us to walk in that mighty grace

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And tell your good news to the world.
All for your glory do we pray, Lord, Amen.