



April 1, 2026

Dear Parents,

Happy April!

Holy Week Peace. The Easter Triduum spans from the evening of Holy Thursday through the evening of Easter Sunday and represents the most sacred days of the Catholic Church's liturgical year. Together, these days draw us into the heart of our faith, the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Holy Thursday opens the Triduum with the Mass of the Lord's Supper, which focuses on the Institution of the Eucharist and the priesthood. During this liturgy, twelve people have their feet washed, commemorating Jesus' humble act of service to his disciples and his command to love one another as he has loved us. During the singing of the Gloria, bells ring joyfully throughout the church, and then fall silent until the Easter Vigil, marking the Church's entrance in the sacred time of the agony in the garden through the burial until Sunday morning.

Good Friday, the Passion of the Lord, is a day of fasting, abstinence, and intense prayer that commemorates the crucifixion and death of Jesus. It is the only day of the year when Mass is not celebrated. Instead, the Church gathers for a solemn liturgy consisting of the Liturgy of the Word, the veneration of the Cross, and the reception of Holy Communion. The starkness of the day invites the faithful to pause and reflect deeply on Christ's immense sacrifice.

Good Friday is especially difficult to contemplate, knowing that Jesus would have willingly died for each of us, even if we were the only one in need of redemption. Yet this truth deepens our gratitude and awe. Without the suffering and sacrifice of Good Friday, there could be no joy of Easter Sunday. The Resurrection cannot be separated from the Cross.

Holy Saturday is a day marked by quiet anticipation as the Church waits in hope. That evening, the Easter Vigil, often called the "mother of all liturgies," begins in darkness with the blessing of the new fire and the lighting of the Paschal Candle, symbolizing Christ as the Light of the world. As the Gloria is sung, bells ring once again and the church is filled with light, proclaiming the Resurrection. Throughout the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, approximately 1,200 catechumens will be fully initiated into the Catholic Church, a powerful sign of new life and renewal.



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