

PALM SUNDAY

APRIL 13, 2025



Holy Week is the most important week in our faith, spanning the final eight days of Jesus' life, from Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday. It is astounding how much insight and inspiration are available. Here's a sample:

- Palm Sunday: Jesus triumphantly enters Jerusalem.
- Monday of Holy Week: Jesus clears out the temple with a whip.
- Tuesday of Holy Week: Jesus is anointed with oil at Bethany and preaches on the Mount of Olives.
- Spy Wednesday: Jesus is betrayed by Judas.
- Holy Thursday: Jesus celebrates the Last Supper, prays in the Garden of Gethsemane, and is arrested.
- Good Friday: Jesus is sentenced to death, scourged, beaten, crucified and dies on the cross.
- Holy Saturday: Jesus is buried in the tomb and descends into hell.
- Easter Sunday: Jesus rises from the dead.

We are all trying to make sense of life. One way is to look at each day in the context of Holy Week.

What defines our days? Good Friday is an easy one as it's a day of suffering and sacrifice. Holy Saturday is a day of darkness, doubt, anxiety, confusion and a day where faith is tested. And Easter Sunday? It's a day of new beginnings.

These great moments in the life of the Church and the life of Jesus provide powerful lenses through which we can see our lives in a new way, expanding our understanding of ourselves and others.

MASS INTENTIONS

5 p.m.: Kathleen Maher, The Dorner Family, Michael Wood and Craig Babcock

10 a.m.: Frances Hernandez, Jessica Lancellotti, Julia Torrents and Michael Wood

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER SCHEDULE

Reconciliation Monday: Confessions will be heard from 2-4 p.m. and 6-9 p.m. this Monday, April 14, at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church in Middletown, NOT at St. Paul's.

Holy Thursday: The service will begin at 7 p.m. April 17 and will include foot washing. There are signup sheets on the bulletin board.

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament follows in the hall and continues until 11 p.m.

Good Friday: The Commemoration of the Lord's Passion will begin at 3 p.m.

April 18 and include the opportunity to receive Holy Communion as well as Veneration of the Cross. There will be no Stations of the Cross nor evening service.

Blessing of Easter Food: In the tradition of many Eastern European nations, Deacon Carl will bless baskets of Easter food at noon on Holy Saturday, April 19, in Deacon John Hall.

Easter Vigil: The Vigil Mass will begin at 8 p.m. on Saturday, April 19.

Easter Sunday: Mass will be celebrated at 10 a.m. on April 20.



"True reverence for the Lord's passion means fixing the eyes of our heart on Jesus crucified and recognizing in him our own humanity."

— Pope St. Leo the Great

TREASURER'S REPORT

Regular Sunday Collection

March 31- April 6: \$ 7,792.34

Envelopes: \$ 3,116.00 – Online: \$ 4,676.34

LAST WEEK'S MASS ATTENDANCE

5 p.m. – 87

10 a.m. – 179

CARDINAL'S 2025 APPEAL

There are so many reasons why the Appeal is important. Your support helps countless people and sustains ministries throughout our parishes.

Our parish goal is **\$50,600**, the same as in 2024, of which **\$34,190** has been received/pledged from 84 families as of April 8.

Please prayerfully consider your gift, which you can also make online at www.cardinalsappeal.org.

Thank you.

31 WEEKS LATER ...

Ironically, it was a group of 12 women who journeyed together for 31 weeks during the course of a year and a half, in search of a closer connection with God.

That's quite a commitment - but perhaps "investment" is the better word. Once the decision was made, they delved into the process without looking back.

Jacqueline Syrup Bergan and Sister Marie Schwan wrote the Take and Receive Series based on the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius for use in a parish setting. Each of their five books – "Love," "Birth," "Forgiveness," "Surrender" and "Freedom" – inspire about six weeks of daily prayer experiences.

Parishioner Pat Davies, who is also a spiritual director and retreat facilitator, led this weekly faith-sharing group, which was open to all parishioners. It began with "Love."

"You can't go to a deeper level without connecting with God's unconditional love," says Pat. "Ultimately, that is where freedom is found."

Because of this investment of time, the women have grown closer to God and to one another. Individually they spent about a half-hour daily reading scriptural passages, commentary and a suggested approach to the day's prayer. On Saturday mornings, they met.

"There were guidelines," Pat says, the most important of which was no cross-talk. "This was not a discussion group; it was a faith-sharing group. ... offering a sacred and safe place for the women to say how they felt and share what was going on. They shared *everything*."

And that authenticity and vulnerability revealed



unique perspectives about faith – and built a community along the way.

"St. Paul said, 'Pray without ceasing.' That never made sense to me," says one participant. "Now I understand that it's not about repeating prayers but being in a prayerful state and aware of God's presence. I tune into that presence more quickly and am confident that God is there and I am being heard."

"Because we have shared so much in a safe space during this journey of 31 sessions, we feel like a spiritual sisters," says another. "We've seen a transformation in each member – a deepened understanding of God's love for each of us has enabled us to put greater trust in God. We move forward seeking to discern and follow God's plan for us, understanding now that surrendering to his will is the way to joy and peace no matter what lies ahead."

"Life is challenging. Now I know how to get in touch with that wellspring and find peace in the middle of the chaos."

IN THE LOOP



The church will be decorated for Easter on **Saturday, April 19**, beginning at 11 a.m.

Volunteers can just show up at that time, but it would be helpful to email Anne Savistano at anya1321@gmail.com beforehand so she has an idea of how many helping hands there will be.



The next **Game Night** will begin at 7 p.m. on **Friday, April 25**. Don't forget your snacks and a favorite game to share.



The **Third Listening Session** will take place after Mass on **Sunday, April 27**. The focus will be to prioritize suggestions from the prior two sessions, which will help shape the face of our church moving forward. More details will be forthcoming, and everyone is welcome regardless of prior attendance

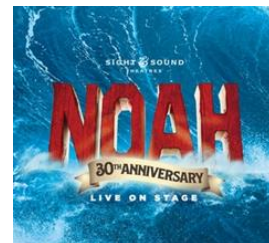
TAKE THE BUS TO THE ARK

The National Shrine of Our Lady of Mount Carmel is sponsoring a mid-week, two-day bus trip from **April 23-25** to Lancaster, PA. – and there's still room on the bus.

Along with a tour of the Amish Country, the highlight is preferred seating at the live performance of "Noah" at the Sight & Sound Theater. Returning for one season only, this landmark production takes the audience on board one of the world's best-known voyages as live animals fill the stage and aisles.

The cost is \$589 per person, double occupancy (\$728 single), and includes transportation, hotel, two meals daily, taxes, meal gratuities and show tickets.

Call Carol Bezak, the Shrine director, for reservations at 845-343-1879, Ext. 22.



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