

Palm/Passion Sunday • Christ the King • April 4-5, 2009

Together we have entered Holy Week, culminating in the Sacred Triduum. This is the most holy and important time of the year, the center of our year, the center of our lives. These celebrations are who we are, who we are called to be.

HOLY THURSDAY, APRIL 9 AT 7:00 P.M.

After listening to the Scriptures, we do something strange: we wash feet—an awkward position for washer and washed — and we learn about serving and being served. Jesus gave us this image of what the church is supposed to look like, feel like, and act like. Then we celebrate the Eucharist. This evening's liturgy has no ending. We stay and pray for awhile, marking this evening with vigilance and prayer.

GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 10 AT 7:00 P.M.

We gather quietly and listen to scripture. We pray at length for all the world's needs. Then there is another once-a-year event: the holy Cross is held up in our midst and we come forward one by one to do reverence with a kiss or a bow or a genuflection or a simple touch. Finally we receive Holy Communion. Our fasting and prayer and vigil continue through Saturday evening.

THE GREAT VIGIL OF EASTER, APRIL 11 AT 9:00 P.M.

Late at night, in the darkness, we gather on **this most holy of all nights, this night of nights, this night** when darkness is overcome, **this night** of endless wonder. Where else could we be on such a night, if not together! **This night** Christ overcomes death and the great bonfire of faith and light pierces through every dark place, every hidden fear; **this night** when God's creating Spirit stirs again and redeems the world from hatred, sin and strife. **This night**, we tell the great stories of our faith, from the beginning of time until now. It is on **this night** that we bring those chosen by God to the font, that they might enter his death and so rise with him to life. **This night** they are immersed into the waters of life, anointed with the Holy Chrism and clothed in the white garment of ministry. . **This night** we too touch these waters of life and renew our own baptismal promise to believe, to belong, to serve. And for the first time, **this night** we bring the newly baptized and confirmed to the Table of the Lord to offer thanksgiving and eat and drink of the Risen Christ. **This is the night** we are sent forth newly alive! Where else could we be?

EASTER SUNDAY AT 9 AND 11:15

With God, there is always more, the story is finished. The Night's Celebration of the Easter Vigil spills over in to our Sunday celebrations. The resurrection and not be contained or celebrated in one night. We now delight in the fifty days, rejoicing, feasting and giving witness. It is a time of unbridled joy, of exuberant rejoicing.

The story doesn't end here with the Passion story. Let us journey together; we need to here, we need you here. Where else could we be?