

# Dear Padre,

**How do the three sacred oils differ, and how do I dispose of them properly as a sacristan?**

Jesus Christ was anointed priest, prophet, and king. *Christ* means “Anointed One.” The sacred oils assist the members of the Church, who share in Christ’s priestly, prophetic, and royal mission. Catechumens are anointed with the oil of catechumens for God’s help to resist evil, reject sin, and adhere to a lifelong profession of faith as they prepare for baptism. The infirm and elderly are anointed with the oil of the sick to fight against the physical and spiritual debilitating effects of illness through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. Chrism, the most important of the three, can only be consecrated by a bishop. It is used for baptism (along with the oil of catechumens), confirmation, the ordination of a priest or bishop, and the dedication of a church and altar.

A repository for the oils—often marked *Olea Sanctae* (“Holy Oils”)—is called an *ambry*. It is usually in a prominent church location near the baptismal font. Each year, when the oils are replaced, a priest, sacristan, or other person may absorb the old oil with cotton and burn it in a thurible or as part of the fire that begins the Easter Vigil. With special care, old oil can also be added to a large burning candle, like the sanctuary lamp. Reverence and safety are proper for whatever method of disposal is used. ●



JOHAN VAN PARYS

Fr. Byron J. Miller, CSSR / DearPadre.org

| Monday                  | Tuesday                         | Wednesday                 | Thursday   | Friday   | Saturday  | Sunday   |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|--|--|---|--|
| <b>MARCH 30</b>         | <b>MARCH 31</b>                 | <b>APRIL 1</b>            | <b>APRIL 2</b>   | <b>APRIL 3</b>   | <b>APRIL 4</b>  | <b>APRIL 5</b>   |
| Monday of Holy Week     | Tuesday of Holy Week            | Wednesday of Holy Week    | Thursday of Holy Week (Holy Thursday)  | Friday of the Passion of the Lord (Good Friday)          | Holy Saturday (Easter Vigil)  | Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord                              |
| Is 42:1-7<br>Jn 12:1-11 | Is 49:1-6<br>Jn 13:21-33, 36-38 | Is 50:4-9a<br>Mt 26:14-25 | Chrism Mass:<br>Is 61:1-3a, 6a, 8b-9<br>Rv 1:5-8<br>Lk 4:16-21<br>Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper:<br>Ex 12:1-8, 11-14<br>1 Cor 11:23-26<br>Jn 13:1-15 | Is 52:13-53:12<br>Heb 4:14-16;<br>5:7-9<br>Jn 18:1-19:42 | Gn 1:1-2:2 or 1:1, 26-31a<br>Gn 22:1-18 or 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18<br>Ex 14:15-15:1<br>Is 54:5-14<br>Is 55:1-11<br>Bar 3:9-15, 32-4:4<br>Ez 36:16-17a, 18-28<br>Rom 6:3-11<br>Mt 28:1-10 | Acts 10:34a, 37-43<br>Col 3:1-4 or 1 Cor 5:6b-8<br>Jn 20:1-9 or Mt 28:1-10 |

## A WORD FROM POPE LEO XIV

Dear brothers and sisters, we too are invited to “prepare the Passover” of the Lord. Not only the liturgical one: that of our life too. Every gesture of willingness, every gratuitous act, every forgiveness given in advance, every effort patiently accepted, is a way to prepare a place where God can dwell. What does it mean for me today to “prepare”?

GENERAL AUDIENCE,  
ROME, AUGUST 6, 2025

## Do you have a question for the Padre?

Go to [DearPadre.org](http://DearPadre.org) to send your question and to learn more about *Dear Padre*.

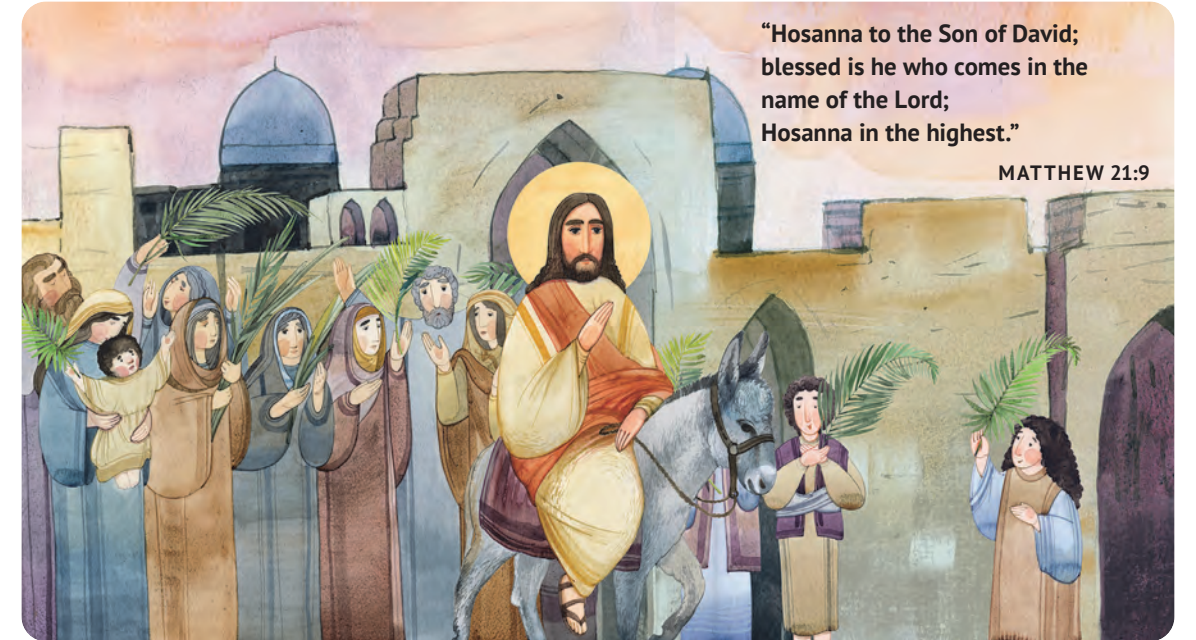
# Our Parish COMMUNITY

March 29, 2026

**Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord (A)**

Matthew 21:1-11 / Isaiah 50:4-7 / Philippians 2:6-11

Matthew 26:14-27:66 or 27:11-54



“Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest.”

MATTHEW 21:9

## From Jubilation to Desolation

FR. THOMAS M. SANTA, CSSR

The adoring crowds, chanting “Hosanna to the Son of David” (Matthew 21:9), capture our attention on this Palm Sunday. We hear the crowds, and we rejoice with them. Sometimes, we forget that not everyone in the crowd is joyful. Some are challenged; some are threatened. For them, Jesus is not Good News; he is not the long-awaited one—he is something entirely different, and he must be silenced.

Our Sunday celebration begins with jubilant crowds and ends with a most cruel death. Those who were once joyful are now silent and dispersed. It appears that the authorities have once again triumphed. Hope is dashed. The promise remains unfulfilled.

Spiritually sit with desolation in the week that comes. Do not jump ahead to the triumphant end of the story. It is true that we are an Easter people, but we must also pay attention to the details of how evil often attempts to silence the good. It is important, as people of faith, to remind ourselves that even when all things seem to be lost, the Father has the last word. His will is accomplished. He is the Creator and the author of the story. We should always prepare ourselves to be surprised. To embrace light instead of darkness. And, even when there is death all around us, to know that there will be life—life in abundance for all. ●

## Reflect

**How am I at keeping in mind the resurrection when my world feels like Good Friday?**



The  
**Catholic Church**  
in Pocahontas County  
West Virginia

OUR MISSION  
If anyone  
wishes to be first,  
he shall be  
the last of all  
and the servant of all.  
(Mark 9:35, NAB-RE)

ST. JOHN NEUMANN PARISH & CHURCH OFFICE, 714 Tenth Avenue, Marlinton WV 24954  
ST. MARK THE EVANGELIST MISSION, 92 Catholic Church Road, Rts 250 & 92, Bartow WV 24920  
ST. BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX CHAPEL, 6332 Snowshoe Drive, Snowshoe WV 26209  
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Patty Bryant  
Margaret Bryant  
Ann Burke  
Danielle Cade  
Rusty Cane  
Dick Connor  
Matt Madruga  
Cynthia Olson  
Quinn Riffle  
Tristan Sizemore

EUCHARIST THIS WEEK

Monday Chrism 4:00 p.m. Charleston  
Holy Thursday 6:00 p.m. St. John  
Good Friday 6:00 p.m. St. Mark  
Holy Saturday 8:00 p.m. St. John  
Easter Sunday 8:00 a.m. St. Bernard  
11:30 a.m. St. Mark



St. John Neumann Church is open for private prayer every day during daylight.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is offered before each Eucharist or by appointment, and at St. Bernard on Saturdays 4:30-5:00 p.m.

The Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is available any time upon request.



Please call the Church office (304-799-6778) if you know of a parishioner who is sick, in the hospital or nursing home, homebound, deployed, or in prison.

To report an incidence of suspected child sexual abuse, please contact your local law enforcement agency, or you may confidentially contact WV Child Protective Services at 800-352-6513.

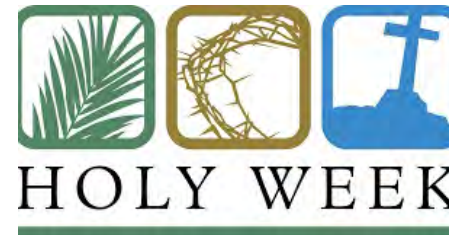
To report suspected cases of sexual abuse by personnel of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston to the Diocese, please contact the Diocese at 888-434-6237 or 304-233-0880.

To report suspected cases of sexual misconduct or sexual abuse by a bishop or eparch, please contact [ReportBishopAbuse.org](http://ReportBishopAbuse.org) or call 800-276-1562.

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE PASSAGE  
"He humbled himself."  
(Philippians 2:8, NAB-RE)

ANNOUNCEMENTS & NOTES

- **Good Friday collection** is for the Church's ministry and outreach in the Holy Land, as well as upkeep of the Christian sites maintained by the Catholic Church. It is particularly important with the wars in the Middle East that are affecting the people living there, including Christians. Please be generous as we help maintain a Christian presence in the lands where Jesus lived.



|                          | LAST WEEKEND      |                   |
|--------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
|                          | <u>attendance</u> | <u>collection</u> |
| St. John Neumann         | 40                | \$867.00          |
| Fund for the Poor        |                   | \$325.00          |
| St. Mark the Evangelist  | 14                | \$117.50          |
| Fund for the Poor        |                   | \$39.00           |
| St. Bernard of Clairvaux | 23                | \$670.00          |
| Fund for the Poor        |                   | \$124.00          |
| <i>total</i>             | 77                | \$2,142.50        |

- **Reminder:** Check the holy week schedule, and remember that Good Friday is a day of fast (only one full meal for those 18 to 59 years old) and abstinence (no meat for those 14 and older, but fish, seafood, eggs, dairy and of course all fruits and vegetables are allowed).
- **How do we count 40 days of Lent?** Add every day from Ash Wednesday up to Easter Sunday, including Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday, and excluding all Sundays, even though the Easter Triduum begins with the Holy Thursday liturgy!
- This season's final **Community Lenten Prayer Service** is this Wednesday at noon at Marlinton United Methodist Church. The topic this week is "Christus Victor: Jesus Gives You the Victory" (Colossians 2:6-15 & Matthew 28:1-20) presented by Rev. Dave Lee, former pastor of Marlinton Presbyterian Church.



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PALM SUNDAY - YEAR A

Processional Gospel (Matthew 21:1-11)

When Jesus and the disciples drew near Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find an ass tethered, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them here to me. And if anyone should say anything to you, reply, 'The master has need of them.' Then he will send them at once." This happened so that what had been spoken through the prophet might be fulfilled: Say to daughter Zion, "Behold, your king comes to you, meek and riding on an ass, and on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden." The disciples went and did as Jesus had ordered them. They brought the ass and the colt and laid their cloaks over them, and he sat upon them. The very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and strewed them on the road. The crowds preceding him and those following kept crying out and saying: "Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord; hosanna in the highest." And when he entered Jerusalem the whole city was shaken and asked, "Who is this?" And the crowds replied, "This is Jesus the prophet, from Nazareth in Galilee."

First Reading (Isaiah 50:4-7)

The Lord GOD has given me a well-trained tongue, that I might know how to speak to the weary a word that will rouse them. Morning after morning he opens my ear that I may hear; and I have not rebelled, have not turned back. I gave my back to those who beat me, my cheeks to those who plucked my beard; my face I did not shield from buffets and spitting. The Lord GOD is my help, therefore I am not disgraced; I have set my face like flint, knowing that I shall not be put to shame.

Responsorial Psalm

(Psalm 22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24)

*Response:* My God, my God,  
why have you abandoned me?

All who see me scoff at me;  
they mock me with parted lips, they wag their heads:  
"He relied on the LORD; let him deliver him,  
let him rescue him, if he loves him."

Indeed, many dogs surround me,  
a pack of evildoers closes in upon me;  
They have pierced my hands and my feet;  
I can count all my bones.

They divide my garments among them,  
and for my vesture they cast lots.  
But you, O LORD, be not far from me;  
O my help, hasten to aid me.

I will proclaim your name to my brethren;  
in the midst of the assembly I will praise you:  
"You who fear the LORD, praise him;  
all you descendants of Jacob, give glory to him;  
revere him, all you descendants of Israel!"

Second Reading (Philippians 2:6-11)

Christ Jesus, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Because of this, God greatly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

### Gospel Acclamation (Philippians 2:8-9)

Christ became obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Because of this, God greatly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name.

### Gospel - The Passion of the Lord

(Matthew 26:14-27:66)

### Reflection (2020, Year A)

On Palm Sunday, Jesus is hailed by the people. By Good Friday, he is crucified by the people, maybe even by some of the same people. Good fortune turns to bad fortune, so quickly. Think of our own lives these past months. Everything seemed to be good, then all of a sudden, the *Corona Virus* that had been ravaging other parts of the world, came on our shores. Our Palm Sunday turned into our Good Friday. We can feel as weary as our Lord Jesus felt. But the story doesn't end on Good Friday. Jesus rose on Easter morning.

### Reflection (2021, Year B)

Jesus gave himself for us, that we might be saved. St. Paul says "he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave." Each of us is also called to give of ourselves for others. If you are a parent, you give of yourself for your children. If you are a teacher, you give of yourself for your students. If you are a medical worker, you give of yourself for your patients. The ultimate giving of ourselves is for those we don't know, or for those who cannot repay us, or for those who have hurt us. Jesus is our example, and we are his followers.

### Reflection (2022, Year C)

At the beginning of the first Gospel in today's liturgy, we heard the words "Jesus proceeded on his journey up to Jerusalem." Certainly, Jesus was traveling to Jerusalem on this day, but the significance of that journey was to fulfill his mission. "Going to Jerusalem" means going to do what one is meant to do. Likewise for each of us, there is a "going to Jerusalem" in our lives, which is our mission, our vocation in life from God.

### Reflection (2023, Year A)

On Palm Sunday, Jesus is welcomed and cheered as he enters Jerusalem. By the end of the week, he is crucified. Many were his friends, but then they denied and betrayed him.

Many of us have the same experience in life: cheered today, crucified tomorrow, friended today, betrayed tomorrow. And even ourselves, often we do what is convenient, rather than what is right.

But the story does not end there, because there is Easter, and resurrection.

### Reflection (2024, Year B)

There are takers, and there are givers. You know them. Most of us like people who are givers – they are generous, and generally kind and compassionate. We generally don't like people who are takers – they are selfish, and generally mean and judgmental. What is interesting is that many of the takers are excellent at identifying the takers, but don't even notice that they are takers themselves.

Palm Sunday is the entrance of the ultimate giver into Jerusalem. That is why he is loved by so many people, but also hated by those who are convicted by his generosity. During Holy Week and the Easter season, we celebrate everything we receive because of the suffering, death, resurrection, and ascension of our Lord.

### Reflection (2025, Year C)

There is so much strife today in our world, in our country, and in our Church. So many feel that what they think, what they do, and what they want is most important. And that leaves so many others poor and voiceless. The message from Isaiah is different: "The Lord GOD has given me a well-trained tongue, that I might know how to speak to the weary a word that will rouse them." We are called to help the poor, speak for the voiceless, and encourage those who are weary.

### Reflection (2026, Year A)

Humility – so lacking in our world. True humility is accepting who we are, our strengths and our weaknesses. True humility is accepting and caring for others, and willing to be of service to them.

We have so many examples of true humility in the readings today: bearing with the hardships Isaiah describes, willing to cry out to God in our need as in the Psalm, imitating the humble Christ described by St. Paul, and of course the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus in the Gospel, while forgiving us and saving us.

We can join together, in humility, for the good of others, and for the good of our own souls.

**Gospel - The Passion of the Lord**

(long form: Matthew 26:14 - 27:66)

N - narrator    V - voice    *C - crowd*    + - Christ

N The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

One of the Twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said,

V "What are you willing to give me if I hand him over to you?"

N They paid him thirty pieces of silver, and from that time on he looked for an opportunity to hand him over. On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the disciples approached Jesus and said,

V "Where do you want us to prepare for you to eat the Passover?"

N He said,

+ "Go into the city to a certain man and tell him, 'The teacher says, "My appointed time draws near; in your house I shall celebrate the Passover with my disciples."'"

N The disciples then did as Jesus had ordered, and prepared the Passover. When it was evening, he reclined at table with the Twelve. And while they were eating, he said,

+ "Amen, I say to you, one of you will betray me."

N Deeply distressed at this, they began to say to him one after another,

V "Surely it is not I, Lord?"

N He said in reply,

+ "He who has dipped his hand into the dish with me is the one who will betray me. The Son of Man indeed goes, as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed. It would be better for that man if he had never been born."

N Then Judas, his betrayer, said in reply,

V "Surely it is not I, Rabbi?"

N He answered,

+ "You have said so."

N While they were eating, Jesus took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and giving it to his disciples said,

+ "Take and eat; this is my body."

N Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying,

+ "Drink from it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which will be shed on behalf of many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, from now on I shall not drink this fruit of the vine until the day when I drink it with you new in the kingdom of my Father."

N Then, after singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. Then Jesus said to them,

+ "This night all of you will have your faith in me shaken, for it is written: I will strike the shepherd, and the

sheep of the flock will be dispersed; but after I have been raised up, I shall go before you to Galilee."

N Peter said to him in reply,

V "Though all may have their faith in you shaken, mine will never be."

N Jesus said to him,

+ "Amen, I say to you, this very night before the cock crows, you will deny me three times."

N Peter said to him,

V "Even though I should have to die with you, I will not deny you."

N And all the disciples spoke likewise. Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples,

+ "Sit here while I go over there and pray."

N He took along Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to feel sorrow and distress.

Then he said to them,

+ "My soul is sorrowful even to death.

Remain here and keep watch with me."

N He advanced a little and fell prostrate in prayer, saying,

+ "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet, not as I will, but as you will."

N When he returned to his disciples he found them asleep. He said to Peter,

+ "So you could not keep watch with me for one hour? Watch and pray that you may not undergo the test. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

N Withdrawing a second time, he prayed again,

+ "My Father, if it is not possible that this cup pass without my drinking it, your will be done!"

N Then he returned once more and found them asleep, for they could not keep their eyes open. He left them and withdrew again and prayed a third time, saying the same thing again. Then he returned to his disciples and said to them,

+ "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Behold, the hour is at hand when the Son of Man is to be handed over to sinners. Get up, let us go. Look, my betrayer is at hand."

N While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, arrived, accompanied by a large crowd, with swords and clubs, who had come from the chief priests and the elders of the people. His betrayer had arranged a sign with them, saying,

V "The man I shall kiss is the one; arrest him."

N Immediately he went over to Jesus and said,

V "Hail, Rabbi!"

N and he kissed him. Jesus answered him,

+ "Friend, do what you have come for."

N Then stepping forward they laid hands on Jesus and arrested him. And behold, one of those who accompanied Jesus put his hand to his sword, drew it, and struck the high priest's servant, cutting off his ear. Then Jesus said to him,

+ "Put your sword back into its sheath, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. Do you think that I cannot call upon my Father and he will not provide me at this moment with more than twelve legions of angels? But then how would the Scriptures be fulfilled which say that it must come to pass in this way?"

N At that hour Jesus said to the crowds,

+ "Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs to seize me? Day after day I sat teaching in the temple area, yet you did not arrest me. But all this has come to pass that the writings of the prophets may be fulfilled."

N Then all the disciples left him and fled. Those who had arrested Jesus led him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled. Peter was following him at a distance as far as the high priest's courtyard, and going inside he sat down with the servants to see the outcome. The chief priests and the entire Sanhedrin kept trying to obtain false testimony against Jesus in order to put him to death, but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. Finally two came forward who stated,

**C "This man said, 'I can destroy the temple of God and within three days rebuild it.'"**

N The high priest rose and addressed him,

V "Have you no answer? What are these men testifying against you?"

N But Jesus was silent. Then the high priest said to him,

V "I order you to tell us under oath before the living God whether you are the Christ, the Son of God."

N Jesus said to him in reply,

+ "You have said so. But I tell you: From now on you will see 'the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power' and 'coming on the clouds of heaven.'"

N Then the high priest tore his robes and said,

V "He has blasphemed! What further need have we of witnesses? You have now heard the blasphemy; what is your opinion?"

N They said in reply,

**C "He deserves to die!"**

N Then they spat in his face and struck him, while some slapped him, saying,

**C "Prophecy for us, Christ: who is it that struck you?"**

N Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. One of the maids came over to him and said,

**C "You too were with Jesus the Galilean."**

N But he denied it in front of everyone, saying,

V "I do not know what you are talking about!"

N As he went out to the gate, another girl saw him and said to those who were there,

**C "This man was with Jesus the Nazorean."**

N Again he denied it with an oath,

V "I do not know the man!"

N A little later the bystanders came over and said to Peter,

**C "Surely you too are one of them; even your speech gives you away."**

N At that he began to curse and to swear,

V "I do not know the man."

N And immediately a cock crowed. Then Peter remembered the word that Jesus had spoken: "Before the cock crows you will deny me three times." He went out and began to weep bitterly. When it was morning, all the chief priests and the elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death. They bound him, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate, the governor. Then Judas, his betrayer, seeing that Jesus had been condemned, deeply regretted what he had done. He returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying,

V "I have sinned in betraying innocent blood."

N They said,

**C "What is that to us? Look to it yourself."**

N Flinging the money into the temple, he departed and went off and hanged himself. The chief priests gathered up the money, but said,

**C "It is not lawful to deposit this in the temple treasury, for it is the price of blood."**

N After consultation, they used it to buy the potter's field as a burial place for foreigners. That is why that field even today is called the Field of Blood. Then was fulfilled what had been said through Jeremiah the prophet, and they took the thirty pieces of silver, the value of a man with a price on his head, a price set by some of the Israelites, and they paid it out for the potter's field just as the Lord had commanded me. Now Jesus stood before the governor, and he questioned him,

V "Are you the king of the Jews?"

N Jesus said,

+ "You say so."

N And when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he made no answer. Then Pilate said to him,

V "Do you not hear how many things they are testifying against you?"

N But he did not answer him one word, so that the governor was greatly amazed. Now on the occasion of the feast the governor was accustomed to release to the crowd one prisoner whom they wished. And at that time they had a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. So when they had assembled, Pilate said to them,

V "Which one do you want me to release to you, Barabbas, or Jesus called Christ?"

N For he knew that it was out of envy that they had handed him over. While he was still seated on the bench, his wife sent him a message, "Have nothing to do with that righteous man. I suffered much in a dream today because of him." The chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas but to destroy Jesus. The governor said to them in reply,

V "Which of the two do you want me to release to you?"

N They answered,

**C "Barabbas!"**

N Pilate said to them,  
V "Then what shall I do with Jesus called Christ?"  
N They all said,  
C **"Let him be crucified!"**  
N But he said,  
V "Why? What evil has he done?"  
N They only shouted the louder,  
C **"Let him be crucified!"**  
N When Pilate saw that he was not succeeding at all, but that a riot was breaking out instead, he took water and washed his hands in the sight of the crowd, saying,  
V "I am innocent of this man's blood. Look to it yourselves."  
N And the whole people said in reply,  
C **"His blood be upon us and upon our children."**  
N Then he released Barabbas to them, but after he had Jesus scourged, he handed him over to be crucified. Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus inside the praetorium and gathered the whole cohort around him. They stripped off his clothes and threw a scarlet military cloak about him. Weaving a crown out of thorns, they placed it on his head, and a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him, they mocked him, saying,  
C **"Hail, King of the Jews!"**  
N They spat upon him and took the reed and kept striking him on the head. And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the cloak, dressed him in his own clothes, and led him off to crucify him. As they were going out, they met a Cyrenian named Simon; this man they pressed into service to carry his cross. And when they came to a place called Golgotha – which means Place of the Skull – , they gave Jesus wine to drink mixed with gall. But when he had tasted it, he refused to drink. After they had crucified him, they divided his garments by casting lots; then they sat down and kept watch over him there. And they placed over his head the written charge against him: This is Jesus, the King of the Jews. Two revolutionaries were crucified with him, one on his right and the other on his left. Those passing by reviled him, shaking their heads and saying,  
C **"You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself, if you are the Son of God, and come down from the cross!"**  
N Likewise the chief priests with the scribes and elders mocked him and said,  
C **"He saved others; he cannot save himself. So he is the king of Israel! Let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now if he wants him. For he said, 'I am the Son of God.'"**  
N The revolutionaries who were crucified with him also kept abusing him in the same way. From noon onward, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And about three o'clock Jesus cried out in a loud voice,

+ "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?"  
N which means,  
+ "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"  
N Some of the bystanders who heard it said,  
C **"This one is calling for Elijah."**  
N Immediately one of them ran to get a sponge; he soaked it in wine, and putting it on a reed, gave it to him to drink. But the rest said,  
C **"Wait, let us see if Elijah comes to save him."**  
N But Jesus cried out again in a loud voice, and gave up his spirit.  
*(Here all kneel and pause for a short time.)*

N And behold, the veil of the sanctuary was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth quaked, rocks were split, tombs were opened, and the bodies of many saints who had fallen asleep were raised. And coming forth from their tombs after his resurrection, they entered the holy city and appeared to many. The centurion and the men with him who were keeping watch over Jesus feared greatly when they saw the earthquake and all that was happening, and they said,  
C **"Truly, this was the Son of God!"**  
N There were many women there, looking on from a distance, who had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to him. Among them were Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee. When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea named Joseph, who was himself a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus; then Pilate ordered it to be handed over. Taking the body, Joseph wrapped it in clean linen and laid it in his new tomb that he had hewn in the rock. Then he rolled a huge stone across the entrance to the tomb and departed. But Mary Magdalene and the other Mary remained sitting there, facing the tomb.

The next day, the one following the day of preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate and said,  
C **"Sir, we remember that this impostor while still alive said, 'After three days I will be raised up.' Give orders, then, that the grave be secured until the third day, lest his disciples come and steal him and say to the people, 'He has been raised from the dead.' This last imposture would be worse than the first."**  
N Pilate said to them,  
V "The guard is yours; go, secure it as best you can."  
N So they went and secured the tomb by fixing a seal to the stone and setting the guard.

#

**29 March 2026**  
**Palm Sunday - Year A**

*Prayer of the Faithful*

Merciful Father, in our weakness we turn to you, lifting up our needs in prayer:

- for the leaders of the Church, that they will serve humbly and live simply, we pray
- for political leaders, that they will be humble and truthful, we pray
- for peace in the Middle East, we pray
- for the healing of those who are ill, we pray
- for all of us gathered for Eucharist, that our prayer, fasting and almsgiving will prepare us to celebrate Easter, we pray
- for all those who have died, that they will be saved, we pray
- and for your other intentions

*(pause)*

for all our intentions spoken and unspoken, we pray

Almighty Father, you sent your beloved Son to save us and lead us on the right path. We ask you to hear our prayers, and strengthen us to follow your Gospel. We pray through Christ our Lord. Amen.



# Pontifical Good Friday Collection

Friday  
April 3  
2026



BUILDING HOPE AND A FUTURE IN THE HOLY LAND

YOUR CONTRIBUTION HELPS TO PROVIDE

288 FRIARS IN 11 COUNTRIES  
65 SANCTUARIES AND 24 PARISHES  
6 GUEST HOUSES FOR PILGRIMS  
540 UNIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIPS  
64 FRIARS PREPARING FOR THE PRIESTHOOD  
18 SCHOOLS WITH MORE THAN 10,000 STUDENTS  
28 YOUTH SERVED BY BETHLEHEM BOYS' HOME  
+1000 HOUSING UNITS FOR LOW-INCOME FAMILIES  
1,050 EMPLOYEES

AND HOPE TO OUR CHRISTIAN BROTHERS AND SISTERS  
IN THE HOLY LAND

# HOW THE PONTIFICAL GOOD FRIDAY COLLECTION IS USED



## What is the Pontifical Good Friday Collection?

### It supports the people of the Holy Land and the pilgrims that visit.

At the request of the Holy Father, the Franciscans of the Holy Land promote the Pontifical Good Friday Collection in the United States and other parts of the world. Funds are distributed at the direction of the Vatican's Congregation for the Oriental Churches. A portion of the funds are directly allocated to the educational and ecclesial projects in the Middle East. The rest of the funds collected in the United States and a number of other countries support the ministries and programs entrusted by the Holy See to the Holy Land Franciscans. The Franciscans have served in the Holy Land for 800 years.

**The Pontifical Good Friday Collection provides, Humanitarian, Liturgical, Pastoral, Archaeological, Charitable, Educational services, as well as care for the Holy Places.**

### Serving those in need in the Holy Land

- **250** friars **11** countries
- **65** sanctuaries and **23** parishes
- **6** guest houses for pilgrims
- **30** youth served by Bethlehem Boys' Home
- **63** apartments restored for families in need
- **1,020** employees in Israel and Palestine
- **17** schools with more than **10,000** students
- **509** university scholarships
- **56** Friars preparing for the priesthood
- **700** refugees aided on the island of Rhodes
- **8,000+** Syrian families aided
- **650+** families in Lebanon assisted
- Construction of a Catholic school in Cana

**Help us continue to serve!**

Commissariat of the Holy Land

1400 Quincy St. NE, Washington, DC 20017

[www.MyFranciscan.org/good-Friday](http://www.MyFranciscan.org/good-Friday)



## Memorandum

To: All Bishops

From: Most Rev. Joseph C. Bambera  
Bishop of Scranton  
Chair, Bishops' Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs

Date: 13 March 2026

**Re: Catholic preaching on Jews and Judaism during Holy Week and Easter**

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During the first hearing of the White House Religious Liberty Commission held a few weeks ago, Carrie Prejean Boller, a recent convert to Catholicism, sparked widespread controversy when she disputed that blaming Jews for Jesus' death is antisemitic, defended public figures accused of promoting antisemitic conspiracy theories, declared that Catholics do not embrace Zionism, and repeatedly pressed Jewish witnesses on Israel's actions in Gaza. There were witnesses at the hearing who rebutted Ms. Prejean Boller's assertions about Catholic teaching, but it was her claims and not the rebuttal that have circulated in the media.

In light of this recent public debate, as our clergy prepare for the liturgies of Palm Sunday and the Sacred Triduum, when the Passion narratives are proclaimed and preached throughout the Church, it is important that they strive to present clearly the Church's teaching about the Jewish people and Judaism. Because these liturgies recount the events surrounding the death of Jesus, they have long required pastoral sensitivity so that the Gospel is proclaimed faithfully and without fostering misunderstanding or prejudice.

On behalf of the Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, I would encourage you to invite the clergy of your dioceses to be attentive, especially in their preaching on Palm Sunday and during the Sacred Triduum, to the following "basics" of Catholic teaching about Jews, Judaism, and their relationship to the Holy Land. A summary is offered first, on the following page, with links to documentation from the Second Vatican Council and the Holy See's Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews. Brief commentary follows on pages 3-4.



**Summary of essential teaching:**

**1: “The Jews” didn’t kill Jesus:**

See especially paragraphs 4-6 of *Nostra aetate*, 4: [Nostra aetate](#)

**2: God’s covenant with the Jewish people has not been revoked, but continues:**

See especially paragraphs 37-39 of: ["The Gifts and the Calling of God are Irrevocable" \(Rom 11:29\)](#), as well as paragraph 6 of *Nostra aetate*, 4.

**3: Catholics can appreciate the religious attachment that the Jewish people have to the land of Israel, but interpret the re-emergence in 1948 of a Jewish state in a historical rather than theological context:**

See section VI.1 of the [“Notes on the correct way to present Jews and Judaism in preaching and catechesis in the Roman Catholic Church”](#)

**4: The Church condemns hatred, persecution, and displays of antisemitism directed against the Jewish people “at any time and by anyone”:**

See especially paragraphs 7-8 of *Nostra aetate*, 4, as well as the whole of section 5.

The misleading statements made by media personalities about the Church’s teaching on these matters have been troubling not only to us, but to our brothers and sisters in the Jewish community. My hope—the hope of all members of the Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs—is that our clergy might use the opportunity afforded by the approaching celebrations of Holy Week and Easter, when church attendance is up, to re-emphasize these basic points of Catholic teaching in relation to the people and the land of Israel. I would be grateful if you would share this memo with them, which summarizes the essential points and includes links to the original documents for further study.

Wishing you God’s blessings as our Lenten journey continues, and a grace-filled celebration of the mystery of the Lord’s death and resurrection.

N.B. Brief commentary follows on pp. 3-4.



### **1: “The Jews” didn’t kill Jesus:**

*Nostra aetate*, the Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions promulgated at the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council, firmly rejects the charge of deicide leveled collectively for many centuries against the Jewish people. The Declaration affirms that though “the Jewish authorities and those who followed their lead pressed for the death of Christ; still, what happened in His passion cannot be charged against all the Jews, without distinction, then alive, nor against the Jews of today” (*Nostra aetate*, 4).

### **2: God’s covenant with the Jewish people has not been revoked, but continues:**

*Nostra aetate* affirms that “God holds the Jews most dear for the sake of their Fathers; He does not repent of the gifts He makes or of the calls He issues—such is the witness of the Apostle [Rom. 11:28-29]. In company with the Prophets and the same Apostle, the Church awaits that day, known to God alone, on which all peoples will address the Lord in a single voice and ‘serve him shoulder to shoulder’ [Zeph. 3:9]” (*Nostra aetate*, 4). Paragraph 6 of the same section declares that the Jewish people should not be understood or presented as rejected or cursed by God, as if this follows from Holy Scripture.

On the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of *Nostra aetate*, and building on the teaching of popes since the Second Vatican Council, the Holy See’s Commission on Religious Relations with the Jews affirmed that the Church holds in tension **both** “belief in the universal salvific significance of Jesus Christ” **and** “the equally clear statement of faith in the never-revoked covenant of God with Israel” (*The Gifts and the Calling of God Are Irrevocable*, 37).

If God’s covenant with the Jewish people has not been revoked, what, then, of God’s promises to Abraham concerning, not only descendants, but land?

### **3: Catholics can appreciate the religious attachment that the Jewish people have to the land of Israel, but interpret the re-emergence in 1948 of a Jewish state in a historical rather than theological context:**

See the following from the 1985 *Notes on the Correct Way to Present Jews and Judaism in Preaching and Catechesis in the Roman Catholic Church*, issued by the Holy See’s Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews:



“Christians are invited to understand this religious attachment which finds its roots in Biblical tradition, without however making their own any particular religious interpretation of this relationship (cf. *Declaration* of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops, November 20, 1975). The existence of the State of Israel and its political options should be envisaged not in a perspective which is in itself religious, but in their reference to the common principles of international law” (*Notes*, VI.1).

In other words, Catholics are asked to avoid the sort of theological claims made by those who believe that the re-emergence of a Jewish state in our times holds eschatological significance, but are also invited to recognize that citizens of the State of Israel have the same right to self-determination and responsibilities under international law held by citizens of other countries.

The *Notes* add that “the permanence of Israel (while so many ancient peoples have disappeared without trace) is a historic fact and a sign to be interpreted within God's design” (*Notes*, VI.1). Here the Holy See is making an implicit but important distinction between the people of Israel and the State of Israel:

Nation-states, including Christian, Muslim, and Jewish states, have arisen in and passed from history. Catholic faith affirms that what will endure, until God establishes His Kingdom in the fullness of time, is not this or that nation-state, but the Church, together with the people of Israel. Catholic faith thus holds that, like the Church, the **people of Israel** will endure, but makes no claim, as many Evangelical Christians assert, that the existence of the **State of Israel** has eschatological significance.

The Holy See therefore relates to the **people of Israel** through its Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, and to the **State of Israel**, as to any nation-state, through its Secretariat of State.

#### **4: On the Church's efforts to recognize and combat antisemitism:**

See the resource recently developed by the Bishops' Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs in partnership with the American Jewish Committee: [Translate Hate: The Catholic Edition | USCCB](#)