

March 27, 2009

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Next weekend we will celebrate **Palm/Passion Sunday** and the beginning of the week we call Holy... The sacred nature of that week is something seen only through eyes of faith. Only those who believe in Christ can see through the baskets of candy and the bunnies and chicks to the gift of the Risen Jesus who shares with us the life that is his in the Resurrection. How will this week be holy for each of us, and for all of us as a parish? Holy Week might be the time when some of us finally begin to take Lent seriously! Although the season of Lenten grace is almost behind us, it is never too late to begin to pray, fast and reach out to the poor in preparation for Easter. The lesser failure is to have ignored Lent thus far; the greater failure would be to pass up these last days of opportunity.

In addition to *Living Faith* and the *Little Black Books* we distributed for Lenten prayer, I invite you to visit my blog. If you click on the ashen Cross at the top of the side bar, you'll find all of my Lenten posts gathered in one place. My blog is at [www.ConcordPastor.blogspot.com](http://www.ConcordPastor.blogspot.com)

The Church celebrates the most important and beautiful liturgies of the whole year on Thursday, Friday and Saturday of Holy Week.

**On Thursday**, the **Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper** with the Washing of Feet and procession with the Eucharist will be celebrated on Thursday night at **7:30 p.m.** All those present will be invited to have their feet washed and to wash the feet of another person, just as Jesus instructed us at the Last Supper. While 50 or 60 people generally participate in this, it is an option and many share in this simply by praying and witnessing this sign of service.

**On Friday** evening at **7:30 p.m.** we will have the **Celebration of the Lord's Passion**. This liturgy includes the proclamation of the Passion from the gospel of John, the annual Solemn Prayers of the Faithful; the procession with and Veneration of the Cross, and Holy Communion. At **3:00** on **Good Friday afternoon** we will have a **children's service** which is a simplified version of the evening liturgy, although Holy Communion will not be distributed.

**On Saturday** night at **8:00 p.m.** the **Easter Vigil** will begin outdoors with the lighting of the New Fire. This is followed by the procession with the Easter Candle and the candlelit proclamation of the Easter Exsultet. A series of vigil readings and sung responses will trace our salvation history right up to the gospel account of the Resurrection. After the homily we will celebrate the sacraments of Christian initiation for Rachel, Sarah, Liz, Mark, Geoff and Mike, as well as the renewal our own baptismal promise and the celebration of the first Eucharist of Easter 2009.

Of all the things that truly mark us as Catholic, these three liturgies are at the top of the list. As I have written before, it is unfortunate that many Catholics live their whole lives without every participating in these great annual celebrations. Please plan on joining us for all three – and if that seems too daunting, come to at least one!

**On Easter Sunday** Mass will be celebrated as usual at **7:30, 9:30 and 11:30 a.m.** At the 9:30 Mass on Easter Sunday we will baptize two young girls, Olivia and Emma. On Easter Sunday night, **Evening Prayer** will be celebrated at **7:00 p.m.** followed by a short **concert of Easter music** - a perfect way to complete the prayer of Holy Week.

Sincerely,  
Fr. Fleming