



St. John's Parish
Roman Catholic Church

office@stjohnskitchener.ca

519 745 7855

85 Strange St., Kitchener

LET US JOURNEY TOWARD EASTER

PALM SUNDAY OF THE LORD'S PASSION - APRIL 13, 2025

On Calvary, two ways of thinking collided. In the Gospel, the words of the crucified Jesus are in sharp contrast with the words of those who crucified him. The latter keep saying: "Save yourself". The leaders of the people said: "Let him save himself, if he is the Christ of God, his Chosen One" (Lk 23:35). The soldiers said the same thing: "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself" (v. 37). Finally, one of the criminals, echoing their words, said to him: "Are you not the Christ? Save yourself" (v. 39). Save yourself. Take care of yourself. Think of yourself. Not of others, but only of your own well-being, your own success, your own interests: your possessions, your power, your image. Save yourself. This is the constant refrain of the world that crucified the Lord. Let us think about it.

Against this self-centred mindset is God's way of thinking. The mantra "save yourself" collides with the words of the Saviour who offers his self. Like his adversaries, Jesus speaks three times in today's Gospel (cf. vv. 34.43.46). Yet he did not claim anything for himself; indeed, he did not even defend or justify himself. He prayed to the Father and offered mercy to the good thief. One of his words, in particular, marked the difference with regard to the mantra "save yourself". He said: "Father, forgive them" (v. 34).

Let us reflect on the Lord's words. When did he say them? At a very specific moment: while he was being crucified, as he felt the nails piercing his wrists and feet. Let us try to imagine the excruciating pain he suffered. At that moment, amid the most searing physical pain of his Passion, Christ asked forgiveness for those who were piercing him. At times like that, we would scream out and give vent to all our anger and suffering. But Jesus said: Father, forgive them.

Unlike the other martyrs about whom the Bible speaks (cf. 2 Mac 7:18-19), Jesus did not rebuke his executioners or threaten punishments in the name of God; rather, he prayed for the evildoers. Fastened to the gibbet of humiliation, his attitude of giving became that of forgiving.

Brothers and sisters, God does the same thing with us. When we cause suffering by our actions, God suffers yet has only one desire: to forgive us. In order to appreciate this, let us gaze upon the crucified Lord. It is from his painful wounds, from the streams of blood caused by the nails of our sinfulness that forgiveness gushes forth. Let us look to Jesus on the cross and realize that greater words were never spoken: Father, forgive. Let us look to Jesus on the cross and realize that we have never been looked upon with a more gentle and compassionate gaze. Let us look to Jesus on the cross and understand that we have never received a more loving embrace. Let us look to the crucified Lord and say: "Thank you, Jesus: you love me and always forgive me, even at those times when I find it hard to love and forgive myself".

In the course of this week, let us cling to the certainty that God can forgive every sin. He forgives everyone. He can bridge every distance, and turn all mourning into dancing (cf. Ps 30:12). The certainty that with Jesus there is always a place for everyone. That with Christ things are never over. That with him, it is never too late. With God, we can always come back to life. Take courage! Let us journey toward Easter with his forgiveness. For Christ constantly intercedes for us before the Father (cf. Heb 7:25). Gazing upon our violent and tormented world, he never tires of repeating: Father, forgive them for they know not what they do. Let us now do the same, in silence, in our hearts, and repeat: Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.

WE MOVE INTO HOLY WEEK NEXT WEEK, recalling the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ – his ultimate act of love for us, drawing us into communion with the Father, whose love fills us with their Holy Spirit and, in the end, saves us! The week begins with the **Blessing and distribution of Palms** and solemn proclamation of the **Passion of Jesus Christ** during Sunday Masses throughout the Diocese. On Monday, the Priests who serve in the Diocese, gather with the Bishops to celebrate the **Mass of Chrism** at the Cathedral Basilica of Christ the King. Sacred oils are blessed and the Oil of Chrism is consecrated for use in the Sacraments of Initiation at the Easter Vigil, and for sacramental celebrations in our parishes throughout the coming year. On **Holy Thursday**, we gather to remember **The Last Supper** and to recall that Jesus washed the feet of his disciples – a true servant-leader. This act of humility gives us an example of service to follow in our own ministry. On **Good Friday**, services celebrated throughout the Diocese will welcome the faithful who gather to remember Jesus' horrific death and to **adore the Cross of Christ** – the sign of our salvation. There we leave our burdens, sins and sorrows, so that Jesus might heal and save us. On Friday evening, we will walk the **Way of the Cross** remembering his saving acts of love for us. On **Holy Saturday**, we gather to celebrate the **Easter Vigil**. Easter fires will be lit as the sun goes down, the Easter candle will be lit and, in the **Light of Christ** we will listen to the **Word of God** from the Old and New Testaments of the Bible that point to the promises we celebrate in the Resurrection of Christ. At this time, the hundreds of Elect, who have been preparing for the **Sacraments of Initiation** – Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist – will come forward to begin the final steps of that sacred journey. Our profession of faith will support theirs! Their excitement and joy in claiming Christ and being claimed by Him will support ours. The newly baptized will join us for the first time at the **Table of the Eucharist**.

PUBLICATION OF BANNES OF ORDINATION: Reverend Deacon Moices Rafael Caballero Ruiz is scheduled to be ordained to the Priesthood at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday May 3, 2025, at the Cathedral Basilica of Christ the King, Hamilton, Ontario. If anyone knows of a serious cause why this ordination should not take place, please notify your Parish Priest. Let us all pray that Reverend Deacon Moices Rafael Caballero Ruiz will be a good and faithful servant of the Lord and His Church.

CWL Meeting Reminder: The next Catholic Women's League general meeting will be held on April 22 at 7pm in the parish hall. Hope to see you there to discuss our upcoming events and newcomers are always welcome!

ENGLISH SCHEDULE

Palm Sunday of the Passion of Lord

<u>Saturday, April 12</u>	5:00 PM
<u>Sunday, April 13</u> For All Parishioners Living & Deceased	9:00 AM
<u>Tuesday, April 15</u>	11:00 AM
<u>Wednesday, April 16</u>	11:00 AM

Paschal Triduum

<u>Holy Thursday, April 17</u> <i>Mass of the Lord's Supper</i>	6:00 PM
<u>Good Friday, April 18</u> <i>Stations of the Cross</i>	2:15 PM
<i>Liturgy of the Passion of the Lord</i>	3:00 PM
<u>Holy Saturday, April 19</u> <i>Easter Vigil</i>	8:00 PM

Easter Sunday The Resurrection of the Lord

<u>Sunday, April 20</u> For All Parishioners Living & Deceased	9:00 AM
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HORARIOS EN ESPAÑOL

Domingo de Ramos de la Pasión del Señor

<u>Sabado 12 de abril</u>	7:00 PM
<u>Domingo 13 de abril</u> Por la Comunidad Parroquial	11:00 AM & 1:00 PM
<u>Martes 15 de abril</u>	12:00 PM
<u>Miercoles 16 de abril</u>	12:00 PM

Triduo Pascual

<u>Jueves Santo 17 de abril</u> <i>Misa de la Cena del Señor</i>	9:00 PM
<u>Viernes Santo 18 de abril</u> <i>Vía Crucis</i>	6:00 PM
<i>Liturgia de la Pasión del Señor</i>	7:00 PM
<u>Sábado Santo 19 de abril</u> <i>Vía Matris</i>	9:00 AM
<i>Vigilia Pascual</i>	10:30 PM

Domingo de Pascua de la Resurrección del Señor

<u>Domingo 20 de abril</u> Por la Comunidad Parroquial	11:00 AM & 1:00 PM
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EN LA SEMANA SANTA vivimos la Pasión, Muerte y Resurrección de Jesús. Este domingo se **bendicen y distribuyen los ramos** y se proclama la Pasión de Jesús. En la **Misa Crismal** del lunes se bendicen los Oleos que se utilizan en los sacramentos. El **Jueves Santo** celebramos la **Ultima Cena** y contemplamos a **Jesús lavando los pies** de sus discípulos, dándonos ejemplo de servicio. El **Viernes Santo** nos reunimos para caminar con Jesús en el **Vía Crucis**, recordar la **Muerte del Señor** y **adorar la Cruz de Cristo**, lavando en su Sangre nuestros pecados y recibiendo el don de su salvación. En la noche del **Sábado Santo** se reenciende nuestra esperanza en la **Vigilia Pascual**. Con la bendición del fuego nuevo y del Cirio Pascual recibimos la **Luz de Cristo**, escuchamos el anuncio de la salvación en la **Palabra de Dios**, se celebran los **Sacramentos de Iniciación Cristiana** y renovamos juntos **las promesas de nuestro Bautismo**. A partir de esta celebración comienza el **Tiempo de Pascua**, la gran fiesta de **la Resurrección del Señor**.