The Sunday of the Passion:

Palm Sunday

March 29, 2026 at 10 o'clock in the morning

The Liturgy begins in the Courtyard

St Peter's Church in Essex Fells
A PARISH OF THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF NEWARK
271 Roseland Avenue, Essex Fells, NJ 07021
973.226.6500 • stpetersef.org

Welcome to St. Peter's Church

We are glad you are here, and we invite you to enter fully into worship today. No matter where you are on your spiritual journey, you are welcome here. We are a church rooted in Christian tradition, and open to new ideas, committed to service in community and world as part of the world-wide Anglican Communion and the Episcopal Diocese of Newark. The work of worship is shared by all, and we invite you to participate in the spoken and sung responses and hymns as you are able. Help us to make this a place where God's grace is freely shared by everyone.

All are welcome to make a gift and offering in thanksgiving to God for the many blessings we have received. To take advantage of our electronic giving options, please follow the QR code with your capable electronic device.

Reflections

Today is the first day of Holy Week, the most solemn time of the Church Year. During this period, Christians throughout the world strive to "walk the road that Jesus trod" from his arrival in Jerusalem, his last meal with his friends, his trial, his crucifixion, death, burial, and resurrection. In particular, liturgical focus is centered on the *Triduum* (the three sacred days): Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Great Vigil on Saturday.

Today's liturgy is dramatic in predictable and unpredictable ways. We follow the usual sequence, beginning with a procession into the church with hymns and songs of praise, witnessing publicly to our faith through the ritual commemoration of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. The service soon takes a dramatic turn as we switch from praise to condemnation. As we act out the terrible drama of Jesus' abandonment, torture and death, we are cast in a role: We are among those who contribute to his condemnation. And because we are implicated, the drama has the power impact each of us differently, unpredictably, year by year, as our lives are in constant transition. None of us is quite the same person as we were last year, while the sufferings and horrors of the world around us bear new faces.

The Vestry of St. Peter's Episcopal Church

Jim Irwin and Barbara Gargiulo, *Wardens;*

Christine Albano, Erika Grothues, Sarah Latson, Karen Mosher, *Vestry Members*

The Staff of St. Peter's Episcopal Church

The Rev. Nathaniel K.M. Darville, *Rector (darville@stpetersef.org)*

The Rev. Virginia Jenkins Whatley, *Deacon (whatley@stpetersef.org)*

Mark A. Trautman, *Director of Music and Administrator (trautman@stpetersef.org)*

Lindsay Thompson, *Director of Sunday School (thompson@stpetersef.org)*

Chris Shearin, *Sexton (shearin@stpetersef.org)*

DJ Elmore, *Bookkeeper (bookkeeper.stpeters@gmail.com)*

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The Liturgy of the Palms

The congregation is invited to gather in the Courtyard, so that all who are able may go into the church in procession. Palm branches are distributed to all after the blessing over the branches.

Presider Beloved in Christ, for these forty days we have journeyed with Jesus from the wilderness up to the gates of Jerusalem. As we join with all the faithful and celebrate his entry in both triumph and humility, let us welcome him with cries of "Hosanna," and may his praise be on our lips even as we walk with him toward the cross and the grave, confident in God's power to save.

After a period of silence, the Presider says

Presider Let us pray. Assist us mercifully with your help, O Lord God of our salvation, that we may enter with joy upon the contemplation of those mighty acts, whereby you have given us life and immortality; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

People **Amen.**

Gospel Lesson *Matthew 21:1-11*

Deacon A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew. When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, just say this, 'The Lord needs them.' And he will send them immediately." This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet, saying, "Tell the daughter of Zion, Look, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey." The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!" When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, "Who is this?" The crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee."

Blessing Over the Palms

Presider God be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Presider Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

Presider It is right to praise you, Almighty God, for the acts of love by which you have redeemed us through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. On this day he entered the holy city of Jerusalem in triumph, and was proclaimed as King of kings by those who spread their garments and branches of palm along his way. Let these branches be for us signs of his victory, and grant that we who bear them in his name may ever hail him as our King, and follow him in the way that leads to eternal life; who lives and reigns in glory with you and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever.

People **Amen.**

Presider Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

People **Hosanna in the highest.**

The Procession

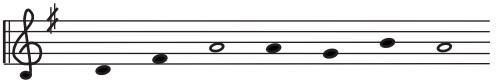
Deacon I was glad when they said unto me.

People **We will go into the house of the Lord.**

The Procession into the nave begins. Please follow the crucifer into the church. All join in singing this Psalm refrain as the procession continues

Psalm 118 *Confitemini Domino*

Please sing the refrain as indicated; the Choir sings the verses



19 *Open for me the gates of righteousness; **
I will enter them;
I will offer thanks to the Lord. **Refrain**

20 *"This is the gate of the Lord; **
he who is righteous may enter." **Refrain**

21 *I will give thanks to you, for you answered me **
and have become my salvation. **Refrain**

22 *The same stone which the builders rejected **
has become the chief cornerstone. **Refrain**

23 *This is the LORD's doing, **
and it is marvelous in our eyes. **Refrain**

24 *On this day the Lord has acted; **
we will rejoice and be glad in it. **Refrain**

25 *Hosannah, Lord, hosannah! **
LORD, send us now success. **Refrain**

26 *Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD; **
we bless you from the house of the LORD. **Refrain**

27 *God is the LORD; he has shined upon us; **
form a procession with branches
up to the horns of the altar. **Refrain**

28 *"You are my God, and I will thank you; **
you are my God, and I will exalt you." **Refrain**

29 *Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; **
his mercy endures for ever. **Refrain**

Please remain standing as the Procession continues, and join in singing the following hymn

HYMN *The Hymnal 1982, 154*

Text: Theodulph of Orleans, ca. 820; tr. John Mason Neale, alt.
Tune: Melchior Tescher, 1615, alt.

Refrain All glory, laud, and honor
To thee, Redeemer, King!
To whom the lips of children
Made sweet hosannas ring.

1 Thou art the King of Israel,
Thou David's Royal Son,
Who in the Lord's Name comest,
The King and Blessed One. **Refrain**

2 The company of angels
is praising thee on high;
And we with all creation
In chorus make reply. **Refrain**

3 The people of the Hebrews
With palms before thee went;
And we with all creation
In chorus make reply. **Refrain**

4 To thee before thy passion
They sang their hymns of praise;
To thee, now high exalted,
Our melody we raise. **Refrain**

5 Thou didst accept their praises;
Accept the prayers we bring,
Who in all good delightest,
Thou good and gracious King. **Refrain**

COLLECT OF THE DAY

Presider God be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Presider Let us pray. Almighty and everliving God, in your tender love for the human race you sent your Son our Savior Jesus Christ to take upon him our nature, and to suffer death upon the cross, giving us the example of his great humility: Mercifully grant that we may walk in the way of his suffering, and also share in his resurrection; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

People **Amen.**

Please be seated

THE LESSONS

LESSON *Isaiah 50:4-9a*

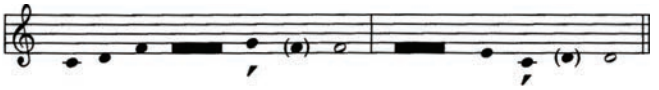
Reader A reading from the Book of Isaiah. The Lord GOD has given me the tongue of a teacher, that I may know how to sustain the weary with a word. Morning by morning he wakens—wakens my ear to listen as those who are taught. The Lord GOD has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, I did not turn backward. I gave my back to those who struck me, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard; I did not hide my face from insult and spitting. The Lord GOD helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame; he who vindicates me is near. Who will contend with me? Let us stand up together. Who are my adversaries? Let them confront me. It is the Lord GOD who helps me; who will declare me guilty?

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Please stand and sing

A Song of Christ's Humility *Tone II*



Cantor Though in the form of God, *

ALL Christ Jesus did not cling to equali /ty ***with*** God,

2 But emptied himself, taking the form of a ***ser***vant, *
and was born in / hu***man*** likeness.

3 Being found in human form, he humbled him***self***
and became obedient to death,
even death / on ***a*** cross.

4 Therefore, God has highly e***xalted*** him *
and given him the name above / eve***ry*** name,

5 That at the name of Jesus, every knee shall ***bow***, *
in heaven and on earth and un / der ***the*** earth.

6 And every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is ***Lord***,*
to the glory of / God ***the*** Father. *—Philippians 2:6-11*

The Passion Gospel Matthew 27:11-54

The customary responses before and after the Gospel are omitted. You are invited to participate by joining in the parts printed in bold.

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

Please be seated

Evangelist Now Jesus stood before the governor; and the governor asked him,

Pilate Are you the King of the Jews?

Evangelist Jesus said,

Jesus You say so.

Evangelist But when Jesus was accused by the chief priests and elders, he did not answer. Then Pilate said to him,

Pilate Do you not hear how many accusations they make against you?

Evangelist But Jesus gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed. Now at the festival the governor was accustomed to release a prisoner for the crowd, anyone whom they wanted.

At that time they had a notorious prisoner, called Jesus Barabbas. So after they had gathered, Pilate said to them,

Pilate Whom do you want me to release for you, Jesus Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?

Evangelist For Pilate realized that it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over. While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him,

Pilate's wife Have nothing to do with that innocent man, for today I have suffered a great deal because of a dream about him.

Evangelist Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus killed. The governor again said to them,

Pilate Which of the two do you want me to release for you?

Evangelist And they said,

Crowd **Barabbas.**

Evangelist Pilate said to them,

Pilate Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?

Evangelist All of them said,

Crowd **Let him be crucified!**

Evangelist Then he asked,

Pilate Why, what evil has he done?

Evangelist But they shouted all the more.

Crowd **Let him be crucified!**

Evangelist So when Pilate saw that he could do nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying,

Pilate I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves.

Evangelist Then the people as a whole answered,

Crowd **His blood be on us and on our children!**

Evangelist So Pilate released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified. Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole cohort around him.

They stripped Jesus and put a scarlet robe on him, and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying,

Soldiers Hail, King of the Jews!

Evangelist They spat on him, and took the reed and struck him on the head. After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him. As they went out, they came upon a man from Cyrene named Simon; they compelled this man to carry his cross.

Please stand

Evangelist And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), they offered Jesus wine to drink, mixed with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. And when the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots; then they sat down there and kept watch over him. Over his head they put the charge against him, which read,

Soldiers This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.

Evangelist Then two bandits were crucified with Jesus, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying,

Crowd **You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.**

Evangelist In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking him, saying,

Crowd **He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he wants to; for he said, "I am God's Son."**

Evangelist The bandits who were crucified with Jesus also taunted him in the same way. From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice,

Jesus Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?

Evangelist That is,

Jesus My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Evangelist When some of the bystanders heard it, they said,

Crowd **This man is calling for Elijah.**

Evangelist At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. But the others said,

Crowd **Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him.**

Evangelist Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last.

Silence

Evangelist At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. The tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. After his resurrection they came out of the tombs and entered the holy city and appeared to many. Now when the centurion and those with him, who were keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were terrified and said,

Centurion Truly this man was God's Son!

Please be seated

Silent Reflection

Please stand

Prayers of the People

Leader Let us pray to the Father through the Son who suffered on the cross for the world's redemption, and say: By the Savior's cross and passion,

People **Lord, save us and help us.**

Leader Fill with your Spirit Christ's broken body, the Church. Give to Christians everywhere a deep longing to take up the cross and to understand its mysterious glory. By the Savior's cross and passion,

People **Lord, save us and help us.**

Leader Bless those who lead the Church's worship at this solemn time, especially Sean our Presiding Bishop, Carlye our Bishop, and all the leadership of our churches. In the preaching of the word and the celebration of the sacraments draw your people close to you. By the Savior's cross and passion,

People **Lord, save us and help us.**

Leader Strengthen those who are preparing for baptism, together with their teachers, sponsors and families, especially ____. Teach them what it means to die and rise with Christ and prepare them to receive the breath of his Spirit. By the Savior's cross and passion,

People **Lord, save us and help us.**

Leader Look in your mercy upon the world you loved so much that you sent your Son to suffer and to die. Be present with all those whose lives are torn by war and violence throughout the world. By the Savior's cross and passion,

People **Lord, save us and help us.**

Leader Bring healing by the wounds of Christ to all who are weighed down by pain and injustice, especially ____. Help the lonely and the betrayed, the suffering and the dying, to find strength in the companionship of Jesus, and in his passion to know their salvation. By the Savior's cross and passion,

People **Lord, save us and help us.**

Leader We thank you for all the blessings of this life, for those celebrating birthdays and anniversaries this week, especially ____, for all the good things we have been given, and for the joy of celebrating the most holy mysteries of the suffering, death and resurrection of your Son. By the Savior's cross and passion,

People **Lord, save us and help us.**

Leader Welcome into paradise all who have left this world in your love, especially ____. According to your promises, bring them with all your saints to share in the benefits of Christ's death and resurrection. By the Savior's cross and passion,

People **Lord, save us and help us.**

Presider Almighty God, whose beloved Son willingly endured the agony and shame of the cross for our redemption: Give us courage to take up our cross and follow him; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

People **Amen.**

The Peace

Presider The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

The Holy Communion

Anthem — *William Byrd* *1540-1623*

Ave verum corpus, natum de Maria Virgine:
Vere passum, immolatum in cruce pro homine:
Cuius latus perforatum, unda fluxit sanguine:
Esto nobis prægustatum in mortis examine.
O dulcis, O pie, O Jesu fili Mariæ:
Miserere nobis. Amen.

[Hail true Body, born of Mary the Virgin:
Who has truly suffered, torn on the cross for all:
Whose side was pierced, from which blood flowed:
Be for us a foretaste of the eternal
Now and in the hour of our death.
O sweet, O holy, O Jesus, Son of Mary:
Have mercy on us. Amen.]

—Innocent III, 13th century

At the presentation, please stand and sing

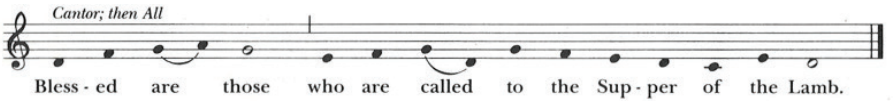
Hymn 168 *(stanzas 1,2,3) Hymnal 1982* — herzlich tut mich erlangen

The Great Thanksgiving — *Eucharistic Prayer A, BCP, page 361*

Sanctus — *Hymnal 1982, S 124*

Lord's Prayer — *BCP, page 364*

Breaking of the Bread — *Martens*



Cantor *Praise the Lord, all you nations;*
laud him all you peoples.
For his loving kindness toward us is great,
and the faithfulness of the Lord endures for ever. *REFRAIN*

Invitation

Presider The gifts of God for the People of God.

All baptized Christians are welcome to receive the Bread and Cup to be in communion with God and each other. You may receive only the bread by placing your hands together flat in front of you (Gluten-free wafers are available upon request). Afterwards you may drink wine from the chalice. If you would rather have the bread intincted (dipped) in the wine, you may hand the bread to the

person administering the chalice and they will intinct and hand it back to you. If you (or your child) would rather not receive the Sacrament, you may come to the altar rail during Communion and cross your arms on your chest for a blessing.

ANTHEM *J.H. Maunder*
1858-1920

O was there ever loneliness like His!
From the drear garden of His agony,
The sinless One was led.
His followers all forsook their Lord and fled;
No gentle tone, no kindly glance was there,
But mocking faces, and harsh words of hate,
The cruel soldiers, the unpitying crowd.
Despised of men, rejected and forsaken!

Ye who sin, and ye who sorrow,
Ye who in temptation fall;
See, O see your blest Redeemer,
Standing in the judgment hall.
See Him beaten and derided,
See His flesh by scourges torn;
Turn to Him, remembering ever,
'Twas for you the stripes were borne.

Standing 'mid the mocking soldiers,
In the purple robe of scorn;
See His gaze of gentle pity,
From beneath the piercing thorn.
Turn to Him ye heavy-laden,
Ye who toil, and ye who mourn;
Lo! He looks in love upon you,
'Twas for you the pain was borne.

—Shapcott Wensley

POSTCOMMUNION PRAYER *Please stand and say together*

Lord Jesus Christ,
you set your example before us
as one who came
not to be served but to serve:
Give us the courage to be your faithful disciples,
following your way even to the cross,
and proclaiming you as Savior and King. Amen.

Prayer over the People & Dismissal

Presider Bow down before the Lord.

Please kneel

Presider Almighty God, we pray you graciously to behold this your family, for whom our Savior Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed, and given into the hands of sinners, and to suffer death upon the cross; who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

People **Amen.**

Deacon Let us bless the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Please stand

Silent Procession

Please leave quietly after the Procession departs the Nave

This Week's Parish Notices

Stewardship 2026—*Gifts From Our Souls*

Our annual stewardship drive, *Gifts from Our Souls*, continues. Throughout the Gospels, Jesus tells us whatever we value most will be the focus of our deepest affections. As we prayerfully consider how much we want to give, let's ask ourselves the question, "What do we love about St. Peter's, and how can help these good things grow?"

Thanks to our Choirs

Thank you to our St. Peter's Choir, the Church of the Holy Innocents Choir, our section leaders Taryn Spoto, Giulia Utz, Michale Barretti, Kevin Johnson, and directors Dr. Laura Greenwald and Mark Trautman for a beautifully sung Lenten Vespers last Sunday.

Coffee Hour—*A special time for fellowship!*

Every Sunday after the 10 am service, we gather in Upper Room to meet and greet fellow parishioners. All are welcome to attend Coffee Hour. This ministry depends on volunteers to provide light refreshments and to help with set up. Please consider being a part of this fellowship by signing up for a Sunday to host! As the host, you will provide sweet and savory goodies (store bought or homemade, whatever is most convenient for you). There are serving platters, paper goods and utensils available for use in the kitchen. Directions on setting up are provided. Use the QR code here, or contact Barbara Gargiulo at barbara.gargiulo9@gmail.com. *Thanks to Deacon Ginny for hosting today.*

Sunday School

We continue to collect donations for our Lenten service project. We are gathering shelf-stable food items for the Caldwell Food Pantry. The donation box is located in the narthex. The children will

remain in church today and Easter Day (service at 9 am). Thank you for supporting our Sunday School!—*Lindsay Thompson* (thompson@stpetersef.org).

Prayer List

St. Peter's is a community of prayer and service. Holding one another's joys, sorrows, and concerns before God in prayer is a spiritual practice at the heart of our life together as a parish family. We encourage you to pray throughout the week for these members of our parish family. We invite you to add yourself or others to the St. Peter's prayer list by submitting a request to the Parish Office.

Laurie Alcott, Joan Aliotta, Stanley Au, Amye Becker, Nancy Bivona, Kris Blake, Carl, Muriel Bowness, Kathy Calfee, Martha Capel, Adele Corcoran, Gabriel Cowell, Mark Gerardi, Arnie Hartelius, Wayne Hill, Tania Jenkins, Eddie K., Jeffrey Kamel, Katherine Kamen, Robert Kazimir, Ed Kamper, Colin Kelley, Katie King, Neal King, Lauren L., Laurieann, Sally L., Mark Lewis, Marino Family, Tom Marriott, Bill Musser, Nunno Family, Lisa & Gary Pyne, Brenda Restivo, Richardson & Dickhaus families, Craig Roper, Ruth Ann, Sarah, Kathy Stanton, Frank Zupa.

Anglican Communion—*Anglican Church of Melanesia*

Diocese of Newark— *St. James', Hackettstown and St. Andrew's, Harrington Park*

Birthdays—*Anna Torok, Emily Blake, Michael J. Kamel, and Claire Grothues*

Ministers of the Liturgy

Altar Guild	Nancy Connor, Eloise Monzillo Hiris, Karen Mosher
Ushers	Wayne Copeland
Acolytes	Kayla Felix
Reader	Nancy Connor
Eucharistic Minister	Eloise Monzillo Hiris
Cantors	Michael Barretti, Kevin Johnson
Director of Music	Mark Trautman
Presiding	The Reverend Nathaniel Darville

Palm Sunday Readers

Deacon Ginny, *Evangelist*; Father Nate, *Jesus*; Wren Alexander Darville, *Pilate*; Christine DiGiovanni, *Pilate's Wife*; Philip Johnson, *Soldier*; Nancy Connor, *Centurion*

Easter Flowers and Music

Please mark "Flowers" or "Music" in the memo line of your check, and let the Parish Office know if you are giving your gift in thanksgiving or in memory of loved ones. The names may be sent to the Parish Office (info@stpetersef.org) or placed in the alms basin. Please make sure to deliver your gift and names no later than tomorrow.

Name_____

Circle one: Flowers Music Both

In memory of/in thanksgiving for_____

St Peter's Episcopal Church

WORSHIP • WONDER • WORK • ALL IN LOVE

Holy Week & Easter 2026

Palm Sunday—March 29

8 am, Liturgy of the Palms and Holy Eucharist—*All Saints' Chapel*
10 am, Palm Procession and Choral Holy Eucharist—*Nave*
4 pm, Liturgy of the Palms and Holy Eucharist—*All Saints' Chapel*

Wednesday in Holy Week—April 1

7 pm, The Office of Tenebrae—*Nave*
Sung by the St. Peter's Parish Choir

THE TRIDUUM—The Great Three Days

Maundy Thursday—April 2

7 pm, Foot-washing and Eucharist—*Nave*

Good Friday—April 3

12 pm, Stations of the Cross—*Courtyard*
7 pm, St. John Passion, Solemn Collects and
Communion from the Reserved Sacrament—*Nave*

Holy Saturday—April 4

7 pm, The Great Vigil of Easter—*Nave*

Easter Day—April 5

Note time changes for Easter Day
9 am, Choral Holy Eucharist for Families—*Nave*
Easter Egg hunt follows the 9 am Mass
11 am, Festal Choral Holy Eucharist—*Nave*