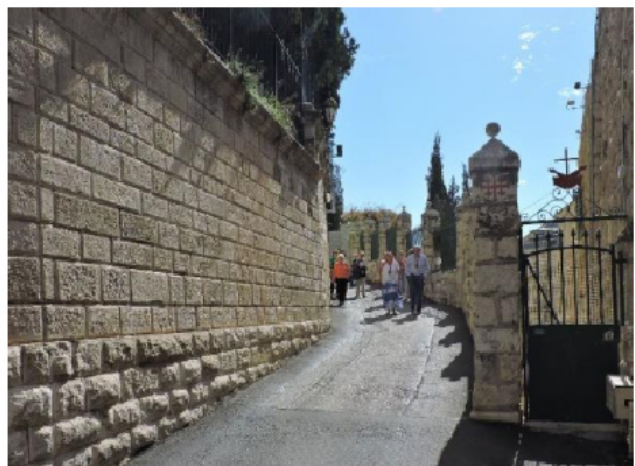




As we begin Holy Week, you might like to build up a small shrine using symbols. Those of you who have been on the Holy Pilgrimage with Fr Gerry O'Shaughnessy SDB and myself, might like to get out your memory box with the symbols in and use these each day. We will also suggest a symbol for each day that you might like to use.

PALM SUNDAY

SYMBOL: A palm leaf, a branch or sprig of pussy willow OR one of your own garments – lay it down and then put other symbols on top of it. You may wish to tie some greenery to your front door, a tradition suggested by the Missionaries of the Holy Spirit for Palm Sunday during the first lockdown, to symbolize that even if we are isolated, we are not separated – we are the Church.



Palm Sunday Walk from the Mount of Olives – down to Gethsemane over the Kedron valley and into the city of Jerusalem.

Read the GOSPEL: Mt.21:1-11

PONDER: Today we begin the most sacred journey of our Christian year: we walk with Jesus into Jerusalem and we see the acclaim and hear those cries of 'Hosanna!'

Thank God for those good times in your life; praise the Lord for all those wonderful and loving people who do encourage you and walk with you. Listen to their words of wisdom and care-it's balm for the soul and, in these days of uncertainty and pain, we need memories of joy-hosanna!

Fr Gerard O'Shaughnessy SDB

PRAY I thank God for my good times, for: (list them)

I thank God for the people who have walked with me: (list them)

THEN SAY

Hosanna! Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest! Lord and master of us all, send us to proclaim the coming of your kingdom; By your grace prepare us to offer our lives in your service to your glory....

Hosanna! Come Lord to save us, Listen to our cry.

Lord and Healer, come into our lives, bring your healing power of body and mind to us in these days of isolation; sickness; death - because of the corona virus.

Hosanna! Come Lord to save us, Listen to our cry.

Lord of the city, enter into the economic centre of our lives; be with those who cannot go to work at this time – who are anxious and afraid Turn the tables on our corporate commerce - the busy stock markets, the exchanges, banks and finance houses, when it does not give you glory Hosanna! Come Lord to save us, Listen to our cry

Lord of the city, come among the homeless, the dispossessed, the unemployed, the bereaved, those who are in despair - all who are suffering and give new hope to all who have no power to raise their voice to give you glory.

Hosanna! Come Lord to save us, Listen to our cry.

Lord Jesus Christ, exalted in lowliness among us, lead your people into peace, towards the vision of a city where you are the source of life and truth and wholeness so that we may give you glory....

Hosanna! Come Lord to save us, Listen to our cry.

God, you sent your Son to be the Saviour of the world, Strengthen us by Your Spirit within our hearts to do your will, now and in the days to come; To you be glory for ever and ever.

Today, we read the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ: Matthew 26:14 – 27:66

Monday of Holy Week



L: Jesus being taken to the House of Caiaphas (Church of St Peter in Gallicantu) R: Pilgrims approaching the Holy Sepulchre

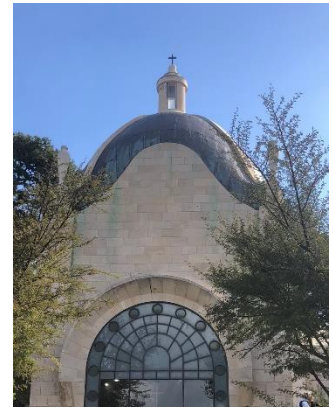
Symbol – a teardrop ... draw one or place a tiny drop of water in a very small glass container.

PONDER:

As we think of the Teardrop Chapel, we remember how Jesus looked on the great city and wept. In the height of this international crisis, Jesus still cries with us for the sick and those who care for them; he cries with the lonely and the unloved.

The compassion of Jesus knows no end: today bask in the reality of God's love in your life-and spare a thought for those crying themselves today.

Fr Gerard OShaughnessy SDB



The Teardrop Chapel, Jerusalem

PRAY

Lord Jesus Christ, today I/We share your tears for..... (make your list)

THEN SAY:

Lord, turn tears to love and love to work.

Turn work to justice and all that makes for peace.

Thank you for your overwhelming love –

which is unconditional, without measure and without end



1L: Mount of Olives, Dominus Flevit church R: Walls of Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives

Tuesday of Holy Week

Read the **GOSPEL** - Luke 10:38-42 (Jesus at Bethany)

Symbol – a hand (draw round your own and cut it out...)



The Church at Bethany

PONDER:

Today, thank God for those Bethanys in your life: those places where you fit right in and feel 'at home' Thank God for those families and friends who open their homes and hearts to you. Friendship meant so much to Jesus and we need that support in our lives too. Today could you offer that strength of Bethany friendship to those in your lives?

Fr Gerard O'Shaughnessy SDB

PRAY – Lord Jesus Christ, today I/We thank you for ... list)

and offer the strength of Bethany friendship to ... (list)

THEN SAY:

Lord of earth and sky, I welcome you, just as Martha and Mary did - into the house of my heart and into the home of my thoughts. Like Martha often, I'm distracted – with cooking, washing, dusting, putting things in order ...

Today, like Mary, I choose to slow down, to sit at your feet and offer you my ministry of listening. Save me from feeling guilty about the kitchens of the world: the hot spots, the action areas and help me to identify with your compassion and your presence- there as everywhere.

Welcomed and welcoming Christ, may we all come together in your presence and eat at your table, the meal you have prepared for us. Amen

Source of prayer unknown

Wednesday of Holy Week

READ THE GOSPEL : Matthew 26:14- 25

Symbol: a few silver coins – a reminder of the 30 pieces of silver



L: Temple Mount R: Fountain in the Old City

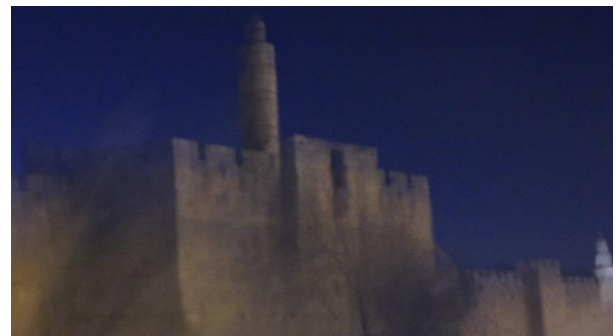
The disciples ask – where do you want us to celebrate the Passover? 'Follow the man with the water jar ... ' Little do they know how significant this Passover is to be – for Jesus and for them ...

During the meal, Jesus announces, 'one of you is about to betray me ...' (in the Greek the translation is 'hand me over'). None of the disciples points at any of the others, or indeed at anyone else; rather, they ask 'Is it I, Lord?' – they all realise that they could be the betrayer ... and in fact, later on they all do 'run away'. It is one of the twelve – one who dipped into the same dish – a sign of friendship and solidarity.

Judas asks: 'Not I, Rabbi, surely?

Jesus replies: 'They are your words'.

Judas goes out into the night ...



PONDER

As we prepare to break bread with Jesus, we realise that we have been stumbling blocks for others: we can stand in their way and hurt them by what we do or say. On this Wednesday of Holy Week, we see Judas in that ultimate act of betrayal and today we apologise unreservedly for the hurt and disdain we have shown. We also recognise that we have been victims of betrayal and, hard though it is, today is a challenge to forgive them.

Fr Gerard O'Shaughnessy SDB

PRAY – I pray for whom I have hurt or disdained.

From my heart, I forgive who I feel has, sometimes, betrayed me.

THEN SAY:

Lord, despite it all, you continue to be faithful to me and to all people, no matter how much we have hurt You. To my unfaithfulness, You respond with faithfulness. Give me the grace of faithfulness and fidelity. No matter where I find myself in life, help me to remain faithful to, Lord, at all times, no matter how hard and painful the situation. Lord, I choose to strive to remain faithful to you as you are always faithful to me. Amen

Maundy Thursday



The Upper Room

Symbol – a small towel/flannel

On this night we commemorate the supper Jesus shared with his disciples before his crucifixion, when Jesus washed the disciples' feet (John 13:1 –17) and instituted the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper (Matthew 26:26 –29)

Read the Gospel : John 13:1-17: and reflect

When Jesus gathered His disciples for the Last Supper; They were having trouble over who was the greatest. This was no new issue for them, “And an argument arose among them as to who was the greatest.” Whenever there is trouble over who is the greatest, there is trouble over who is the least.

That is the crux of the matter for most of us. Most of us know we will never be the greatest just don't let us be the least!

Gathered at the Passover Feast the disciples were keenly aware that someone needed to wash the other's feet. The problem was that the only people who washed feet were the least. So there they sat, feet caked with dirt, No one wanted to be considered the least. Then Jesus took a towel and a basin and so re-defined greatness. As the cross is the sign of submission; So the towel is the sign of service. Day after day, we too, must take up the basin and the towel. In any ordinary place, on an ordinary day, Jesus' example can live again when one will kneel and one will yield....

(source not known)

The Last Supper



Last Supper by Bohdan Piasecki

Read the Gospel: Mk.14:12-24

Symbol – a wine goblet/glass and a piece of bread

PONDER

The Last Supper - Jesus joins with his special friends in a meal to celebrate their friendship. All of us love to receive gifts and tonight Jesus gives us the ultimate gift: the gift of himself. In bread broken and the cup of blessing shared, we once again enter this relationship of total generosity and giving. Eucharist is challenge to each of us to be more giving and caring, especially in these uncertain times. Our Christian life is a call to "do this in memory" of Jesus in what we do and say.

PRAY For those who have been generous to you (list them....)

For those who need your care (list them)

THEN SAY:

Jesus, you took bread, blessed it, broke it and gave it to your friends saying:

‘Take this all of you and eat it. This is my body which is given for you for life and health and happiness. This is my body, my blood, life pumping around my body for you.

This meal is my day’s work for you. “

This meal is a reminder that you were taken from heaven, blessed with a family and friends, broken on the cross and given to us so that we too, will be taken, blessed, broken like bread and given for others - for life, for love. Your last meal, your sacrifice of self for us, was always about love, never duty or obligation – Love – unconditional love.

Prayers of Intercession:

On this holy night we dine together as the body of Christ, and at the table commit ourselves to love and serve one another. On this holy night, then, let us pray for the church and all humankind.

God our provider, you feed us with the bread of life and lift for us the cup of salvation, on this night Jesus gave us this holy feast: may all who gather at your table receive a foretaste of the eternal banquet. God of love: grant our prayer.

Servant God, on this night Jesus washed his disciples’ feet: may we follow His example of love and service. God of love: grant our prayer.

God of compassion, on this night Jesus prayed for those who would believe through the message of the disciples: may those who gathered on this day to renew their ordination vows so live what they proclaim that all may come to know your saving love. God of love: grant our prayer.

God our companion, we pray for those unable to eat at the Lord’s Table or at any other table, for those who betray and for those betrayed, and for all innocent victims. God of love: grant our prayer.

God of hope, remember all those in need, especially those we silently hold before you now ... God of love: grant our prayer.

Holy God, you give us this meal of bread and wine in which we celebrate your great compassion; grant that we may work with you to fulfil our prayers, and to love and serve others as Christ has loved us; this we ask through Jesus Christ our Redeemer, who is alive with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Gethsemane

Symbol – a small plant or a green branches (a reminder of the Garden)



PONDER:

After their meal, Jesus and his friends go to the garden; the disciples, probably exhausted by the effects of a good night out with friends, fall fast asleep; while Jesus feels the need to pray and connect with his Father.

Tonight, across the globe, millions join Jesus in isolation and loneliness. Like Jesus they pray that this cup of pain, sorrow, hurt and mistrust be taken from them. Tonight, we pray with millions searching for a way out of their problems and join them in their isolation. Jesus helps us see a way forward: 'Father your will be done!'

PRAY: for those who feel lonely and have no one to care for them or get in touch with them.

THEN SAY

Father, like Peter I fall asleep – my eyes unwilling to stay open; while the hungry suffer, the lonely cry out in despair, the homeless grieve, the workless are discounted; the dying lose hope, cities are burnt; communities destroyed and children die before they live, and I sleep. Father forgive me, Father forgive us.

Often I sigh 'My spirit is willing, but my body is weak.' In prayer, I am distracted or think about trivial concerns. Sometimes its baggage that I am carrying rather than leaving with you. At times, I am apologising because I feel I haven't enough time for prayer because I need to be out doing. Yet Lord, you call me to be in your presence, as you did the disciples at Gethsemane. You want me to share in your life, to play my part. You told your disciples to watch and pray so that they might not fall into temptation. You say the same to me, and I catch myself whispering 'my spirit is willing, but my body is weak' Lord, give me the grace I need to watch and pray with you and with others.

In his agony in Gethsemane when all is dark and suffering closes;

This the prayer Christ prays: Father - NOT MY WILL BUT YOURS BE DONE.

In the time of pain and trouble, when fear reigns and hope is gone; May this prayer be ours, Father, NOT MY WILL BUT YOURS BE DONE

When life is full of joy and promise, remembering the Lord our God may our prayer still be Father,
NOT MY WILL BUT YOURS BE DONE

In a time of anxious waiting, when we have no power to change, In uncertainty, hear us, Father,
NOT MY WILL BUT YOURS BE DONE

From Gethsemane, from all peoples ever echoing through creation, everywhere and always, Father,
not my will but yours be done JESUS, GIVE US, BY YOUR OFFERING, GRACE TO PRAY FOR EVER,
'FATHER, NOT MY WILL BUT YOURS BE DONE.'

(Source not known – possibly Wildgoose resources)

Maundy Thursday Evening and Good Friday Morning - Arrest And Trial -

READ THE GOSPEL: Mk.14:66-72

Symbol –a few links of a chain or a padlock

PONDER

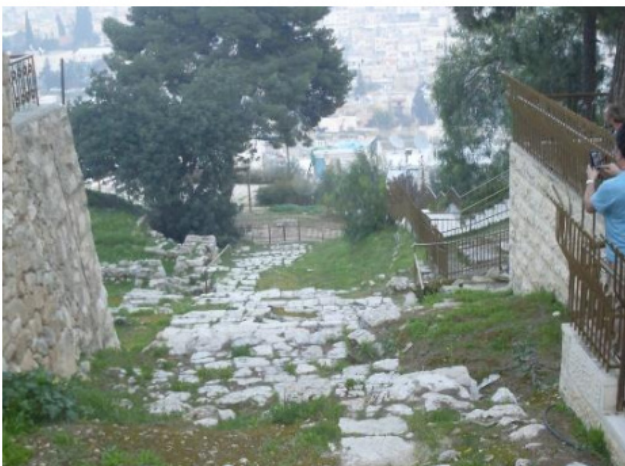
After the garden experience, Jesus faces the hurt of betrayal! Like Jesus we have been let down by those we have trusted and that hurts deeply. It is one thing to experience the hatred of people like the High Priest

Caiaphas, but Judas was a friend! Judas begins the trail of events that will lead to pain and eventual death. Tonight let us remember those we have betrayed not only consciously, but also in the ways we have ignored or forgotten them. Perhaps we could reach out to someone we have let down and throw them the life rope of care.

Fr Gerard O'Shaughnessy SDB

PRAY – for those ignored/forgotten/left out in the cold or who have been betrayed.

THEN SAY: Lord, heal the broken hearted and bind up their wounds because you said you are always close to the broken hearted according to Psalm 34:18.



The steps to Caiaphas' House, which Jesus almost certainly climbed, and the church of St Peter in Gallicantu built over the house.

PONDER

Jesus walks up the steps... After the abruptness of his arrest and his betrayal by a friend, Jesus is manhandled and brought to the home of the High Priest. He stands at the bottom of these steps and ascended them slowly and painfully to face the first of his trials. The leaders of the people want to be rid of him but have to turn him over to the Romans to achieve their aim: to KILL him. Take time at the bottom of these steps to reflect on what Jesus has to face as he begins his journey. Fr. Gerard O'Shaughnessy. sdb "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step" Laozi

PRAY: for refugees who have no option but to embark on difficult and dangerous journeys to escape war and conflict.

THEN SAY: Lord, protect all those who have to make difficult and dangerous journeys. Give us hearts that break open when our brothers and sisters turn to us in tears. May they find a friend in me and so make me worthy of the refuge I have found in you.

PONDER

At High Priest's home, Jesus faces a trial of sorts from his own Jewish leadership; they SHOULD know him; they SHOULD appreciate his care and support. They just want to get rid of him: his prophetic message of inclusion and care for all, especially those on the margins, was not something they wanted or felt they needed. Think of yet another betrayal by Peter, arguably his closest friend, when he denies even knowing Jesus three times. How have I let my friends down by not being a voice for them. As we end this Holy Thursday think of Jesus alone in a tiny cell underground; tonight, as we end this watching, pray for those lonely and who are voiceless. Fr. Gerard O'Shaughnessy. Sdb

Speak out on behalf of the voiceless, and for the rights of all who are vulnerable. Speak out in order to judge with righteousness and to defend the needy and the poor. Proverbs 31:8-10

PRAY – by being still and being with all those who feel they are in a “cell”;

for those whose voices we never hear.

THEN SAY:

Father, teach me through Peter's humiliation, to realise I am always weaker than I think.

Give me the light and strength of your Spirit to resist temptation, to repent like Peter immediately I fall and to know that Christ whom I repeatedly deny is always looking at me ready to forgive me- seventy times seven times. (source unknown)



Peter's Denial of Christ

READ AND REFLECT - Psalm 143

Hear me, faithful Lord!

Bend to my prayer, show compassion.

Do not judge me harshly; in your sight no one is just.

My enemy hunts me down, grinding me to dust,

Caging me with the dead in lasting darkness.

My strength drains away, my heart is numb.

I remember the ancient days, I recall your wonders,
the work of your hands.

Dry as thirsty land, I reach out for you.

Answer me quickly, Lord. My strength is spent.

Do not hide from me or I will fall into the grave.

Let morning announce your love, for it is you who I trust.

Show me the right way, I offer you myself.

Rescue me from my foes, you are my only refuge Lord.

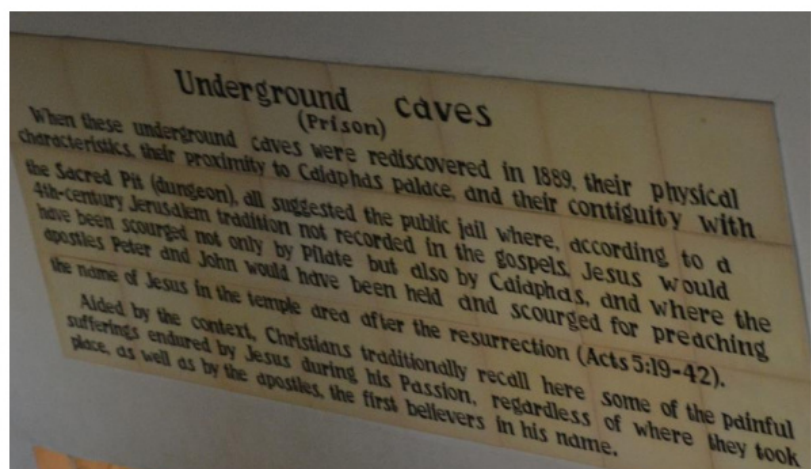
Teach me your will for you are my God.

In your great love for me,

disarm my enemies,

destroy their power,

for I belong to you.



The Cell under the House of Caiaphas where Jesus is believed to have been held and scourged

Good Friday – THE CRUCIFIXION and DEATH of JESUS

Symbol – a crucifix

READ THE GOSPEL : Jn 18:1 – 19:42



PONDER:

We have walked the ultimate pilgrimage today as we once again, in this new unique era of isolation and pain, follow that final journey of Jesus through the tiny, crowded streets of Jerusalem. Jesus meets violent hatred and abuse, but he also sees kindness and support from Simon of Cyrene, Veronica, the tearful women and the silent, loving look of a mother who should never have had to endure such pain. We witness humiliation and degradation and we see Jesus raised up before the world in total offering on the Cross of Calvary. We hear those words again:

Why have you abandoned me? ... Father forgive them! ... Into your hands I commit my Spirit.

We join with those who feel totally abandoned and who need to forgive those who have deeply wounded them. Today we commit ourselves to God and to the needs of others as we pray before the Cross of Jesus.

Fr Gerard O'Shaughnessy SDB

PRAY: For those who feel totally abandoned; those who need to forgive others;

For the needs of..... (mention them by name...)

THEN SAY:

Jesus, you accepted crucifixion. May we follow your example of obedience and commitment: Crucified Christ, your forgiveness has no limits; Immerse us in your mercy so we may forgive, as you forgive.

Crucified Christ, you stood without shame before those who ridiculed and insulted you: transform bigotry, cynicism and hatred into understanding, compassion and love.

Crucified Christ, you knew when to be silent and when to speak:

Give us courage and wisdom to know when to be still and when to respond in truth.

Crucified Christ, you suffered anguish and yet remained faithful and obedient.

Give us hearts true to your call and mission, as we struggle to live in fidelity to your word.

Crucified Christ, you commended your spirit into the hands of your Father:

teach us such trust and confidence in the goodness of God.

(author unknown)

PONDER:

In birth Jesus and his family were forced to use a borrowed stable; in death, he is buried in a borrowed grave. In this past few weeks people across the world have also been buried or cremated as they lost their lives to this evil pandemic that has caused such fear and radically transformed how we live and share our lives. Most have died and were mourned in silence; tonight as we look at the tomb of Jesus we share that global silence. We need that silence tonight and we cry tears for those, like you, Lord, who have lived and died in this silence.

Fr Gerard OShaughnessy SDB

Allow the silence to descend on you – this is your prayer ...

You may wish to pray the intercessions for Good Friday from your missal.



The hole through which one can touch the 'rock of Calvary' Steps to Calvary

Then, take time to make a spiritual communion:

My Jesus,

I believe that you are present in the Holy Sacrament of the altar.

I love you above all things

and I passionately desire to receive you into my soul.

Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally,

come spiritually into my soul

so that I may unite myself wholly to you now and forever. Amen.

Holy Saturday

Symbol – something that evokes stillness e.g. a clock – waiting for the time to pass or an empty mug/container on its side; a candle that has been lit and blown out

Today we are quiet; the body of Jesus is in the silent tomb. As a world and as a Church, tentatively emerging from crisis, we are still living in a relatively quiet world, still waiting for lives stalled to begin again, still mourning those we have lost. Over the past year, the great cities of the world fell silent world as we were ordered to stay at home and save lives. It is this very self-giving and ultimate love of Jesus that saves the world. In the silence of the tomb, pray in silence for the ones you love—give thanks for the life and energy they bring you.

Fr Gerard O'Shaughnessy SDB

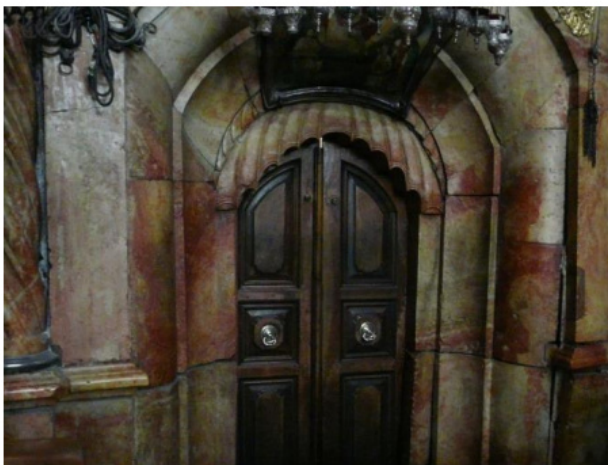
PRAY – “Be still and know that I am God.” pray in silence for the ones you love-give thanks for the life and energy they bring you.

THEN SAY: God of life and death - we wait in hope.

God of all the worlds that are – we wait in hope

God of dazzling darkness – we wait in hope, we wait in hope and awe.

(Ruth Burgess – Eggs and Ashes: Wild Goose Publications)



Church of the Holy Sepulchre: Entrance to the Tomb Candles in chapel

Holy Saturday Vigil

Symbol – If possible, a new, previously unlit candle – perhaps with 2020 written on it (sharpies are good...)

PONDER

Though most churches are open for collective worship again this year, many of us are still having to gather virtually or pray alone at home on the greatest night of our Christian year, when we celebrate the ultimate liturgy: the Easter Vigil.

In your homes tonight, use water to once again make your baptismal promises. Safely light a candle, a symbol of the joy and light of Christ's victory, vanquishing the darkness of death. As we read the story of salvation in our extended Liturgy of the Word, remember those great saints of our Church: Abraham, Moses, Isaiah, Peter, Paul and Mary of Magdala. Think of those sacred oils that we should use tonight: the oil of catechumens for strength and the sweet oil of Chrism for joy. We might not all be able to share our Easter liturgy physically in 2021, but we pray for a time when we can come together again to break bread and listen to the Word. Tonight, in this most sacred of liturgies, we bring all those working tirelessly to work for cure and life; we thank God for the doctors, nurses, paramedics, cleaners, delivery drivers, shop workers, teachers and everyone who is working for a better tomorrow-May the joy of Easter peace be theirs.

Fr Gerard O'Shaughnessy SDB

PRAY – for those caring for others and in all work that promotes and enriches life

Maybe turn off all lights in your house – and then light your candle and say -

Come liberating Christ, rise to meet us!

Hear our wounded cries in the travail of the earth;

Banish the darkness of our fears;

release us from the tomb of powerlessness

into empowered living in the light of your liberation.

(from Eggs and Ashes – Wild Goose Publications)

Christ is risen, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia

You might like to take your candle and walk around your house, going into each room, see the difference the light of Christ makes in a darkened room – then turn on the light ...

And He goes before us ...

Image of Risen Christ: Don Sebastiano Iervolino via Qumran2.net
Holy Land photos: Sr Susan Richert PVBMM

