

### **Palm Sunday**

*This Sunday before Easter, the last Sunday in Lent and the beginning of Holy Week, commemorates Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem with a blessing of palms and a procession in which the whole congregation carries palms. The day is also marked by reading the story of Jesus' Passion (this word used to describe Jesus' death comes from 'suffering', which is an old meaning of passion). Some of the Palm Sunday palms are kept and used to make the Ash Wednesday ashes for the next year.*

### **Maundy Thursday**

*The Thursday in Holy Week commemorates the Last Supper. The name comes from the Latin word 'Maundatum' for 'commandment' as Jesus said, "I give you a new commandment; that you love one another."*

*At the Cathedral there is an opportunity for persons to wash others' feet who desire to during this service. This is following the example of Jesus washing the feet of His disciples.*

*At the conclusion of this service, the altar is stripped of any ornamentation and the cross is veiled to mark the solemnity of the occasion.*

### **Good Friday**

*The Friday in Holy Week is a time for remembering Jesus death. There is a Good Friday service at noon remembering that Jesus hung on the cross from noon until 3 P.M. This is the second day of special observance for which fasting is recommended. One should use discretion in decided how best to observe this day.*

*There is no celebration of Communion after Maundy Thursday until the Easter Vigil Saturday night.*

### **The Easter Vigil**

*This service is observed at sundown on Holy Saturday. This was the traditional time of baptism in the early centuries of Christianity. This service begins in darkness and a new fire is lit, from which the Pascal Candle is lit. It signifies the light of Christ coming into the world anew at the resurrection. This service ends the season of Lent and begins the joy of the Easter Season.*

# *Keeping a Holy Lent*



## *What is Lent?*

*The fast of Lent is the forty day season of preparation leading to Easter. For centuries the Church has observed Lent as a special time of self examination and penitence. Lent is also, from the Church's earliest years, a time of preparation for baptism and a time of reaffirmation for those already baptized.*

*Throughout the Lenten Season, the worship services at St John's takes the simpler and penitential tone of the season. The word "Alleluia" is not used in the words of the liturgy or hymns. Such practices help us to mark this as a season of renewal in the church year.*

## *Observing Lent*

*The custom is to mark the season of Lent by giving up some things and taking on others. Both practices can serve to mark the season as a holy time of preparation.*

*Some examples of things people give up for Lent include sweets, meat for all or some meals, or some other luxury. In most cases, giving up something for Lent can be made more meaningful by using the money or time for another purpose. For example, meal times on fast days could be spent in prayer. Another example is that if you give up meat during Lent, the extra money that would go to meat dishes can be given to groups who help in feeding the poor.*

*Some things added during Lent are daily Bible reading, fasting on Fridays, times of prayer, or a book or course in spirituality.*

*Note that the season of Lent is forty days plus the six Sundays. This is because Sundays are "Little Easters" or celebrations of Jesus' resurrection and are always an appropriate day to lessen the restrictions of Lent.*

*Lent is also an especially appropriate time for the sacrament of Reconciliation. While confession to a priest is not required to receive God's forgiveness, it can be a meaningful rite of reconciliation to God.*

## *Special Days and Services*

### **Shrove Tuesday**

*Though actually the day before Lent begins, this day is named for the 'shriving' or confessing that was traditional on this day. It is also known as Mardi Gras, or 'Fat Tuesday,' because it was a time for eating the things from which one would abstain during Lent. Pancake suppers are traditional, as they were a way of using up some of the ingredients not used during Lent.*

### **Ash Wednesday**

*The first day of Lent is marked with a special liturgy. The theme for the day, though not for all of Lent, is that we stand as sinners condemned to die but for God's grace. This is symbolized by the imposition of ashes on the forehead, with the words, "You are dust and to dust you shall return". In the Old and New Testaments, ashes were a sign of penitence and mourning.*

*Ash Wednesday is one of two days of special observance (the other being Good Friday) for which fasting is recommended. While fasting usually refers to going without food for the entire day, this practice is not practical for all persons, such as diabetics. Use your own discretion in determining how you can best observe a holy fast.*

### **Stations of the Cross**

*The Stations commemorate 14 incidents in the Gospel accounts of Jesus' death from his trial to being placed in the tomb. They are used for the service called the Way of the Cross, which visits each station in turn with a brief reading, response, collect, and sometimes a meditation. This is particularly appropriate for Good Friday and other Fridays in Lent. A lovely set of Stations is being installed in the new Memorial Garden on St John's campus.*

### **Refreshment Sunday**

*The fourth Sunday of Lent has long been observed as a day for completely relaxing the disciplines of Lent. It is also known as Mothering Sunday as this was the first Mothers Day and a traditional time for remembering your mother.*