

Seaford Parish Newsletter

Thursday & Friday 14th,15th April

Holy Family
St. Joachim's
St. Anne's

Frankston North
Carrum Downs
Seaford



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EASTER TRIDUUM

Triduum Reflections *Holy Thursday*



A Reflection for Holy Thursday

God's Love: Undeserved, Unconditional, and Unifying

By: **Krisanne Vaillancourt Murphy**

Abundant in symbolism and sacred tradition, Holy Thursday celebrates the institution of the Eucharist as Jesus' body and blood. It is on this day that the Chrism oil used in the sacraments of baptism, confirmation, and anointing of the sick is blessed. It also marks the end of Lent's almsgiving, fasting, and prayer, and the beginning of the Easter Triduum, when we contemplate Jesus' dying and rising for our sins and God's plan of redemption for the world.

Indeed, Holy Thursday is one of our holiest days. Yet on this day, I feel most drawn to ponder God's gift of undeserved, unconditional, and unifying love.

During the Last Supper, Jesus demonstrates this love. The Gospel says he rises from the table, takes a towel, and ties it around his waist (*Jn 13:4*). He then begins to wash the feet of his disciples, one by one. We know that Jesus humbled himself to share in our humanity, but in the washing of the feet — a task typically reserved for slaves — Jesus acts more intimate and self-humbling than ever before; an act far more significant than a simple show of kindness.

Contemplating the foot washing scene is not complete without also considering its backdrop. Jesus knows Judas will betray him and that, in the coming hours, each one of his closest friends will fail him. And so, Jesus is not surprised when Peter first refuses to have his feet washed. Peter is bewildered, unprepared to receive this generous act of love.

Our parish respectfully acknowledges the Bunurong people, who are the custodians of the Boon Wurrung land on which we worship. We acknowledge and pay respect to the Elders; past, present and future.

The disciples feel unworthy of Jesus unconditional love, but it is not theirs to deserve. Despite their shortfalls and inadequacies, Jesus freely gives them the gift of his love.

It is at this supper, in the presence of his closest companions, that Jesus offers himself as the Passover sacrifice. "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me... This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me" (1 Cor 11:24-25). Jesus gives his greatest gift in the sacrament of the Eucharist, a gift that makes us sharers in his body and blood, unified to form one single body.

The grace of Holy Thursday is knowing that God embraces us despite our weaknesses and imperfections. This is a lesson I need to learn in a personal way, but the reminder is a constant consolation in this work to end the death penalty. God meets our frailty with love, without judgement or exclusion. God's love is given to us without distinction. "I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do (Jn 13:15)."

On this first day of the Triduum, we recognize God's unfailing gift of undeserved, unconditional, and unifying love for us. This love has the power to embolden every human heart and calls us to do the same. Let us ask for the grace to respond to God's call to love one another accordingly.

Good Friday Reflection

By Laura Kazlas



How difficult it is to even begin to think about the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ. Words sometimes fail us. If someone who was not a Christian asked us to explain what Christ's suffering and death on the cross meant to us, it would be difficult to put it into words. Our emotions well up to the surface and get in the way. We can't hardly talk about it. The right words just won't come.

Many people withdraw inside of themselves, shutting out the world around them during Good Friday services, when the gospel account of Christ's passion is read. Many of us who attend Good Friday services in the afternoon, watch the procession of people who venerate the cross in silence. One by one, each person makes a profound statement of their love for Jesus in their own unique way. Words are not needed. Their emotions show on their faces and in their body language. Words may fail us when we contemplate Christ's death, but our hearts do not. The heart has a language all it's own, but love is the most difficult of all emotions, to fully express.

Saint Peter had a hard time handling his emotions when the soldiers came for Jesus. He immediately defended him with his sword and cut off the ear of the high priest's slave. Sometimes we act before we think too, when our emotions are out of hand. But, Jesus calmed the situation down, by telling Peter to put away his sword, because he needed to do what his Father wanted.

We think we know the story about the passion and death of Jesus Christ on the cross really well, because we've heard it for many years. However, what we notice about the passion of Jesus Christ is a little different every year. For an example, after the soldiers arrested Jesus, Peter stood with the slaves and guards warming himself by a fire, because it was cold. Have you ever thought about it being cold or a little cool during the day when Jesus was crucified? All of the movies we've watched about the passion of Jesus show him sweating a lot, but it may not have been very warm. The cold is something we may not have even considered, when Jesus laying dying on the cross, without wearing any clothes to keep him warm. Criminals were also often crucified completely naked, in order to humiliate them further when they were dying. Every single shred of human decency was taken away from Jesus in the last moments of his life.

And yet, the Jews that brought Jesus to Caiaphas would not even enter the praetorium, for fear of defiling themselves so they wouldn't be able to eat the Passover meal. What's wrong with this picture? If we think life isn't fair for us sometimes, then we should remember it wasn't fair for Jesus Christ either.

The Jews even had to find someone else to do their dirty work for them, because they could not execute Jesus themselves. Pilate didn't want to go along with it though. We need to give him a little credit for that. Pilate wasn't even a Jew, but he recognized that Jesus was not an ordinary person. Did you notice Pilate's reaction after the Jews told him that Jesus was guilty because he made himself out to be the Son of God. The scriptures said, "Now when Pilate heard this statement, he became even more *afraid*."

Jesus had compassion on Pilate's plight. He was caught in the middle of a very difficult situation that he didn't want to be a part of. Jesus understood this, and did not condemn the man, who would sentence him to be crucified. Jesus told Pilate, "You would have no power over me if it had not been given to you from above. For this reason the one who handed me over to you has the greater sin." Jesus even eased the guilt of his executioner.

When Jesus was crucified, Pilate had a sign made, written in three different languages stating that Jesus was the King of the Jews, and he would not remove it, even after the chief priests went to him and asked him to remove it. He said, "What I have written, I have written." Even Pilate recognized Jesus was no ordinary man. He didn't want anything to do with his death, and he wanted everyone to know that the Jewish people were the ones who were guilty of killing him.

Thankfully, the gospel account of Jesus's death on the cross today is not as detailed as the readings we had on Palm Sunday. It is still very difficult to read them, but it is also very difficult just to think about Mary's suffering as she stood beneath the cross, watching her son die. The pain must have felt like a knife cutting into her heart, just like Simeon had predicted the day Mary and Joseph presented baby Jesus in the temple. How could she have stood the pain, standing by helplessly, while her son suffered such a horrible death, watching his life slowly slipping away and there was nothing she could do?

There was nothing Jesus could do to ease her pain while she watched him die, but give her to John. He gave his mother to John, to love her, and take care of her for him, after he was gone. They needed each other. They would need each other to get through the days ahead of them. Mary needed John, but John also needed Mary.

We need Mary too, in our own moments of weakness. When we suffer over our own families. When life gets to be too much. Too difficult. Too hard to handle by ourselves. We are not always as strong as her. We are weaker than Mary. When our own faith falters and we are not so sure about our own lives anymore, we should try to remember what Jesus said in the last moments of his life on earth, to “Behold, your mother”.

Mary is our mother now. She guides us back to her son.

Everything we need to know about life, is found in the death of Jesus Christ on the cross.



ST ANNE'S PARISH
84 Austin Road, Seaford, Victoria, 3198



2022 HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

Tuesday, 12 April	6pm	Mass at the Church
Wednesday, 13 April	9.30am 10.00am - 10.30 am 6.30 pm – 7 pm	Mass at Holy Family Church Individual Reconciliation Penitential Service followed by Individual Reconciliation at the Church
		The Three Sacred Days (Triduum)
Thursday, 14 April	7.30 pm	<i>Holy Thursday</i> Mass of the Lord's Supper <i>(Followed by silent Adoration up to 10pm)</i>
Friday, 15 April	10.30 am 11.30 am – 12.30 pm 3.00 pm	<i>Good Friday</i> The Way of the Cross at St. Anne's School ground Individual Reconciliation Commemoration of the Lord's Passion
Saturday, 16 April	7.30 pm	<i>Holy Saturday</i> The Easter Vigil with RCIA Sacraments
Sunday, 17 April	8.30 am & 10.00 am	<i>Easter Sunday</i> Easter Masses