

## A Holy Week Bidding

What are you doing on April 17, 18, and 19? Have you thought about spending these three days at Holy Family? "Why?" you might ask! Because these three days are part of the holiest week of the Church Year!

Holy Week begins on Sunday, April 13 with the celebration of Passion-Palm Sunday and continues through the Great Vigil of Easter on Saturday evening.

Busy schedules can make it difficult to really immerse ourselves in each of the different services in Holy Week. For most of us, we might carve out Palm Sunday and Good Friday and, for others maybe Maundy Thursday and the Vigil. But *every service?* Probably not!

But I wonder if you have ever thought about the spiritual value of Holy Week. Easter Sunday is the holiest day of the year *par excellence!* Everything we do as Christians flows out of this great moment of Jesus' resurrection. When God brought forth life out of death. And Holy Week, beginning with Palm Sunday, is the great prelude to the resurrection.

The week begins with the waving of palms and shouts of Hosannah! and ends in grief and sadness as we wait at the tomb, in an empty, gutted sanctuary – hoping against all hope that somehow, some way, some moment, the promise of new life will come bursting forth to animate and enliven us in ways beyond our imagination.

So, here is my invitation. Consider making Holy Week a priority in your schedule. Do your best to come to each service and journey from Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem, through the celebration of the Last Supper and the washing of feet, to the passion and death at the foot of the cross. Then, bring your sorrow and regrets, your waiting and wondering, and your hopes for new life to rise in you as you enter the darkness of the Easter Vigil and rejoice at the dawn of Easter Sunday!

I will make this promise. If you make this journey, observing and participating in these powerful experiences, you will be changed! You will rejoice at the in-breaking of new life in ways that will surprise you and renew you. This is God's invitation to all of us. I hope you will accept it!

- Father Frank