



Religious Education Office

April 1, 2017



Special Spring Edition



Dear RE Families,

This week we gather to close our Religious Ed classes for this school year. It was a quick year but a good one, overall. We have many reasons to be thankful for all that the year has brought us – relatively good weather (only had to cancel 1 class!), wonderfully dedicated families, and hard work and commitment from some of the best catechists and classroom aides in our diocese. I am truly grateful for all that God has given us this year.

You may have noticed that RE closes a little early this year, and there is a reason for that. We are headed into the most holy part of our Church year – Holy Week and Easter. I wanted to be sure that families were free to attend special services together and I needed to not add to increased parking lot crowding and confusion as our numbers pick up for the holy days. Just because our formal year has ended, please remember that we do not take a break from living what we've learned and sharing it with others. Below you will see an explanation for all of our Holy Week and Eastertide liturgical celebrations. It is our hope that having a better or renewed understanding of what we celebrate or commemorate and why will encourage you to join us as we gather as a parish family to mark our highest holy days. Please note that I also list service dates and times for each day.

Holy Week at St. Margaret's

Palm Sunday – Regular Sunday Mass times: Saturday @ 5:30 pm, Sunday @ 8:30 and 10:30 am

Our Palm Sunday celebration begins with the practice of palm fronds being blessed. A short Gospel account of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem is proclaimed, followed by a joyful procession into church to begin Mass. The Gospel reading for that day (this year) is St. Matthew's account of Jesus' Passion and Death. We begin this liturgy joyfully proclaiming Jesus as King with a royal procession, but finish turned toward Triduum, when we commemorate his Last Supper, Death, and finally – the glory of His Resurrection on Easter Sunday morning.

Holy Thursday – Mass of the Lord's Supper begins at 7:00pm. Night Watch until 11:00 pm

At sundown on Holy Thursday the Triduum begins. On this evening we celebrate the institution of two sacraments, the most important being Jesus' gift of the Eucharist – the gift of himself. As Jesus gives this gift to the apostles we are reminded of the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. The other sacrament instituted that evening was the priesthood, which is symbolized through the washing of the feet. This is commemorated in our parish when Msgr. washes the feet of 12 representatives from all aspects of parish life. Through this action we are reminded of the Great Commission – to love and serve one another. At the end of Mass the tabernacle is emptied and the doors left open, the sanctuary light extinguished. Any Eucharist left from Mass is solemnly processed out of church and held in reserve. Some parishes hold Night Watch (Eucharistic Adoration) to commemorate Jesus asking the apostles to stay awake and pray for him before his passion and death the next day.

Good Friday – Stations of the Cross at 12 Noon; Celebration of the Lord's Passion at 5:30 pm

This is the second day of Triduum. It is a day of fasting as we commemorate the silence. There is never a Eucharistic Liturgy (Mass) celebrated this day, but the Passion of Jesus is commemorated in various ways throughout the Church. Some parishes hold the reading of the Passion and Veneration of the Cross and offer the Eucharist that has been kept in reserve. Some parishes commemorate by having the Living Stations of the Cross. The entire Church waits and prays in silence as we prepare for and await Easter Sunday Morning.

Holy Saturday – Easter Vigil – Vigil begins in front of church at 8:00 pm with the blessing of the new fire.

This most holy night is filled with rich symbolism for our faith. It is also the evening that any new members – those who have been in the RCIA process of our Catholic Church - are brought into full communion with the Church. They are baptized, confirmed, and receive the Eucharist for the first time, depending on their circumstances. It is a joyous occasion as we welcome our newest members! The new Easter Fire is lit, Paschal Candle lit and processed, and everyone in the darkened church has their candle lit, bringing that new light forth. We hear our Church's history through readings of the Old Testament and again hear the Alleluia for the first time. We

happily await the Resurrection of Jesus the next morning!

Easter Sunday – Sunday Mass times are 8:30 and 10:30 and 12:15 pm.

We gather to joyfully shout our Alleluias again! From sundown on Holy Saturday at the Easter Vigil, and for the next six Sundays until Pentecost, also known as the birthday of the Church. We renew our baptismal promises, we are sprinkled with the water of New Life, and we celebrate the Eucharist as a gathered faith community.

Pentecost Sunday – Regular Sunday Mass schedule.

On Pentecost Sunday we commemorate Jesus appearing to the Apostles who have once again gathered with Mary in the Upper Room. With a mighty wind and tongues of fire the Holy Spirit descends upon them and they are filled with that grace. They burst from the room and spend the rest of their lives going to the ends of the known world, spreading the Good News and teachings of Jesus. We call this the Birthday of the Church because this is the start of who we are today as Church.

SACRAMENT REGISTRATION FOR 2017 – 18

If your child will be eligible to enroll in and prepare for the sacraments of Reconciliation, First Eucharist, or Confirmation, you will receive registration forms and information in May via mail. These forms and fees must be returned, along with copies of baptismal certificates, no later than July 1, 2017.

Important Dates to Remember

April

8	Saturday	Easter Egg Hunt & Activity Day (rescheduled)	10:00 am on Church grounds & in Gathering Space
23	Sunday	VBS 2017 Registration Opens !	
26	Wednesday	Rehearsal for April 30 First Eucharist	6:00 pm in church
30	Sunday	First Eucharist Day #1! Children must report to Social Room by 12 Noon	12:30 Mass

May

3	Wednesday	Rehearsal for May 7 First Eucharist	6:00 pm in church
7	Sunday	First Eucharist Day #2! Children must report to Social Room by 12 Noon	12:30 Mass

RE Registration for all NEW families begin (so if you are a current RE family, your forms need to already be here to get your preferred day!)

July

31 through August 4 Vacation Bible School Week at St. Margaret's!

RE Class schedules should be posted by around July 1. Sacrament formation schedules will be posted by August 1.

SUMMER OFFICE HOURS

From Memorial Day Weekend until Labor Day Weekend – Parish Office Hours are Monday – Thursday 9 to 4, Fridays – 9 to Noon.

I, along with Msgr. Hopkins, Sr. Catherine, Lois, and Tina, wish you all a most meaningful Holy Week, the happiest of Easters, and a restful, relaxing summer. We all look forward to seeing you at Mass throughout the summer, as we continue to pray for our world, our Church, and for each other. Thanks to all of you who participated in any of our new Family Activities and we hope to bring you more next year. Stay tuned for news on VBS, Jr. High Youth Ministry, and of course, the upcoming RE year. Please stay in touch and keep us in your prayers, as I hope that you know we always remember you and your families in ours.

Mrs. Romano

