

**Saturday, April 15, 2017**

**Year A**

## **Holy Saturday**

**HOLY SATURDAY** is the Saturday of Holy Week.

Holy Saturday begins at the Good Friday sunset, and continues until sunset on that Saturday. It helps us remember that the body of Jesus lay in the tomb, and that he rested, and so we rest in him (even from Church duties).

**ORIGINALLY** it was kept as a quiet day of prayer and fasting. By the late fourth century it had become a day when those wishing to join the church made a public profession of faith, so that they could be received into the Church during the Easter Vigil.

In this same time period, no amusements or games were allowed so that Christians could be free from worldly activities. Pardons were granted to those in prison, and court issues were often dismissed in honour of Christ's passion.

In the Middle Ages all secular business for forbidden, so that time could be spent in prayer and preparation for Easter. In the year 1642 Pope Urban VIII removed this rule from Church life.

**IN CHURCHES AND CHAPELS** church sanctuary remains stripped bare, as all removable items were taken away after the activities of Holy Thursday.

**MASS** is not celebrated today. Only with the permission of the Vatican or the local Bishop, and for an extremely grave reason, could this happen.

**FUNERALS** without Mass may be celebrated, taking the form of a prayer service and Holy Communion could not be received.

**HOLY COMMUNION** may be given today, but only to those approaching death. This Communion is called *Viaticum* = the Communion for those about to die.



**OTHER SACRAMENTS** such as Baptism and Anointing of the Sick may be received today because they are helpful in ensuring salvation for the dying.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession / Penance) is usually made available today.

**THE DATE OF HOLY SATURDAY** changes each year in Western Christianity. It is the day before Easter Sunday, and Easter falls on the first Sunday following the first full moon of spring.

**TODAY** is a day of fasting. We continue the fasting we began on Good Friday.

Fasting binds those between the ages of 18 and 59 years. We reduce the amount and richness of our food

and drink.

**BLESSING OF EASTER BASKETS** is one of the most enduring and beloved traditions, especially for those of Polish backgrounds.

Some of these foods include:

- Leavened Bread – Jesus, the bread of life.
- Butter – the goodness of God.
- Eggs – our new life through Christ's Resurrection.
- Horseradish – the bitter passion of Jesus.
- Salt & Pepper – we are the salt of the earth.
- Sausage, ham or other meat – the generosity of God.
- Pastries – the sweetness of God's love.
- Wine – the richness and blessings of life.
- Lamb mould of butter, sugar or cake – Jesus as the Lamb of God.

**A PRAYER FOR HOLY SATURDAY:** Lord of all creation, your son Jesus is out of sight but not out of mind. As we rest and wait with him, may we be made strong to carry on with our faithful duties, so that when he returns to us, we will fully embrace the glory he shares with us. We make this prayer, joined with him in all goodness and light. Amen.

Bishop of the Diocese  
of St. Catharines  
Most Reverend Gerard Bergie, D.D.

Pastor  
Father Brian Bevan

Sunday Masses  
Saturday 5:00 p.m.  
Sunday 9:00 and 11:00 a.m.

Weekday Masses  
Mon, Tues, Thurs & Fri @ 9:00 a.m.  
Wed @ 6:30 pm

Exposition and Benediction  
1st Friday @ 8:00 am  
3rd and 4th Wednesdays @ 7:00 pm

Reconciliation/Confessions  
Wed 5:30 - 6:15 p.m.  
Fri 8:15 - 8:45 a.m.  
Fri 5:30 - 6:15 p.m.  
Sat 4:00 - 4:30 p.m.  
Or by request

Baptism  
Sunday by appointment

Marriage  
Contact Fr. Brian Bevan

Sacrament of the Sick  
Communion for the Sick and Shut-ins  
Please call the office.

Secretary  
Sandy Johnson  
Office hours: Tuesday and Thursday  
9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

St Martin School  
Phone 905-957-3032

Cemetery  
Ron Roscovich at 905-386-0648

Diocesan Website  
www.saintcd.com

Diocese of St. Catharines

# **St. Martin of Tours Catholic Church**



166 West Street, P.O. Box 74  
Smithville, Ontario L0R 2A0  
Telephone: 289-956-0221  
Fax: 289-956-0109  
Email: [st.martins@cogeco.ca](mailto:st.martins@cogeco.ca)  
[www.stmartinsparish.net](http://www.stmartinsparish.net)

**HOLY THURSDAY**  
**April 13, 2017**

**GOOD FRIDAY**  
**April 14, 2017**

**HOLY SATURDAY**  
**April 15, 2017**

*Thursday, April 13, 2017*

## *Holy Thursday*

**LENT ENDS** at sundown on Holy Thursday.

**THE OLDEST & STILL OFFICIAL NAME** for today is *Thursday of the Lord's supper*.

Originally, Holy Thursday was the day that sinners were forgiven, so that they could prepare for the paschal activities and the day on which the oils for use in sacraments (baptism, confirmation, holy orders & anointing the sick) were blessed.



**SANHEDRIN**, the word *Sanhedrin* comes from a Greek word that means *sitting together*. The term was used in the Gospels for the supreme council of the Jews which first appeared some 200 years before Christ.

As best scholars can tell, at the time of Christ this council had 71 members from three classes: The elders, the present and former high priests, and the scribes.

In effect, the Sanhedrin was the “supreme court” of the Jewish people, with competence in both religious and secular matters. It had the power of arrest and its own police.

After the Temple was destroyed in 70 A.D., the Sanhedrin moved from place to place in Israel, and finally went out of existence.

**30 PIECES OF SILVER**, Only Matthew gives the amount of money Judas was paid to betray Jesus – 30 pieces of silver. But Matthew’s primary interest seems to be its *symbolism* more than the exact amount.

Matthew often sees a parallel between an incident in the life of Jesus and an Old Testament passage.

The Book of Exodus, in a section setting forth various laws and regulations, stipulates that if an ox gores a slave, the owner of the ox must pay the slave owner “30 shekels of silver.” The parallel is clear. In the exchange of money between Judas and the chief priests, Matthew portrays Jesus as someone valued no more than a slave.

Thirty pieces of silver, at the time of Jesus, are estimated to have only about one-tenth of the value they had when the Book of Exodus was written many centuries earlier.

*Year A*

**WHITE COLOURED VESTMENTS** are worn today, to recall the joy and hope that Jesus offers the world. Using white colours reminds us that we are entering into the feast of the Triduum. Yet we also use this colour to remind us, as Christ teaches, that true Christian joy is to be found in the service of God and neighbour.

**HOLY WATER** is removed from the church entrance after the Mass. This ancient custom reminds us that during the Easter Triduum we make our final preparations to renew our baptismal promises at Easter. Holy or blessed water is a sign to us of our baptism.

Holy water returns after the last Mass on Easter Sunday.

**THE ALTAR IS STRIPPED** in silence, after the Mass. This is a sign of our anticipating the suffering and death of Jesus: Christ was stripped before his crucifixion. Silence reminds us that we focus our thoughts of Christ, not ourselves.

**THIS IS THE LAST MASS** before the Easter Vigil. On Good Friday there are no Masses, but there is the reading of the Lord’s Passion according to John, and the distribution of Holy Communion - which was consecrated during the Holy Thursday Mass. On Holy Saturday there are no Masses.

We wait for the Lord to rise from the dead.

**POTTER’S FIELD** is a common term for the burial ground for criminals or indigent or unidentified people.

This kind of cemetery is called a “potter’s field” because it was often situated on land heavy with clay. The clay made it difficult to grow crops, but was useful for potters ... and as a burial site.

It was a potter’s field that the chief priests bought, with the money that Judas returned to them, after he learned that Jesus was condemned. The priests determined that it was not lawful to return the money to the Temple treasury, so they used it to buy land on which to bury foreigners. (Matthew 27:3-10)

*Friday, April 14, 2017*

## *Good Friday*

**ON GOOD FRIDAY** we remember the anniversary of the death of Jesus on the cross. We know that Jesus was crucified in accordance with the orders of the Roman Governor Pontius Pilate, who did so in answer to the cries of the mob supported by some of the Jewish religious leaders.

The origin of the word *Good* in the title of this day is unknown, but is possibly a corruption of *God’s Friday*.

Today, Mass is not celebrated, but Holy Communion may be received. Not having Mass today recalls the sacrifice that Jesus offered on the cross - his life. So, by using the passion narratives and the receiving of Holy Communion, we recall that Jesus died for our sake and we have the gift of his eternal love.

The Good Friday Liturgy takes place in the afternoon or evening hours.

**TIMES HAVE CHANGED** for from the sixteenth century on, the Good Friday service took place in the morning. In the year 1955 Pope Pius XII decreed that it be held in the afternoon or evening.

**THE DATE OF GOOD FRIDAY** changes each year in Western Christianity. Good Friday is the Friday before Easter Sunday, and Easter falls on the first Sunday following the first full moon of spring.

**GOOD FRIDAY FASTING AND ABSTINENCE** are not new.

Fasting reaches back to the Church’s earliest days, when it expressed personal penance and sadness for the death of Jesus.

Abstinence was practiced in the second century, when all food and drink was avoided through the whole day.

As the centuries past, the severity of these activities grew also: the death in the year 1270 of St. Margaret of Hungary (virgin, 1270 A.D., January 26) was a direct result of a Lenten practice of her time. Prolonged fasting, going without sleep for days at a time, and of not washing herself during the entire season of Lent were popular ideas that extended past Church teaching. The



ashes received on Ash Wednesday were thought to represent the Lord’s desire that we not clean ourselves. It was not until Holy Thursday that they trimmed their hair and beards, washed themselves, and received forgiveness for their sins. St. Margaret died as a direct result of Lenten practices gone past the extreme.

Today we are asked to use good judgement, and be aware of concerns for our health.

**VENERATING THE CROSS** has been part of the traditions of today since the fourth century. Beginning in Jerusalem, it recalled that Saint Helen - who died in the year 330 - had found in Jerusalem the cross upon which Jesus had died. It had become an annual tradition to offer the cross for the faithful to kiss and venerate. By the eighth century, Rome included this idea into the liturgy.

Until recent times, the celebrant and servers approached the cross without shoes while making several genuflections along the way.

**ADAM’S BONES...** The hill upon which Jesus was crucified is known by many names, including the “Place of the Skull.”

Legend says that Adam (or at least his skull) was buried there. Stories of his burial there can be traced back to at least the third century. St. Jerome (late fourth century) also wrote about it.

The Catholic Encyclopaedia notes that “the skull of Adam, after having been confided by Noah to his son Shem, and by the latter to Melchisedech, was finally deposited at the place called, for that reason, Golgotha.”

Some artistic renderings of the crucifixion include skull and crossbones at the foot of the cross.

They are Adam’s bones.

**THERE IS NO BLESSING OR DISMISSAL** given on Good Friday at the end of the service. Perhaps this is an indication that the liturgies of the Triduum form a whole. Begun on Holy Thursday evening, they are not finished until the joyful dismissal of the Easter Vigil.

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