

Easter Triduum **Holy Thursday- Good Friday-Holy Saturday**

The Easter Triduum can be understood as **One long Mass**, that begins on Holy Thursday and ends on Holy Saturday. You will observe the Priest begins on Holy Thursday with the normal greetings, "*In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; the Lord be with you*" and the faithful responds, "*and with your Spirit.*" There is no dismissal at the end of this Thursday Mass. The priest and the Faithful leave the Church in Silence. Pilgrims may be asked to adore the Blessed Sacrament for one hour at the end, before going home.

This Mass continues into Good Friday. There is no greeting of the people. This was already done at the beginning of the Mass on Holy Thursday. The celebration on Good Friday is not a Mass. It is a continuation of the Holy Thursday Mass, that takes the form of a prayer service to remember the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ. On Good Friday, the Priest and his altar servers walk into the Church and the priest prostrates himself in front of the Altar. This Good Friday service also ends in silence as pilgrims go home to meditate on the saving passion of Jesus Christ. The priest does not say, "*Go forth the Mass is ended...*"

The Good Friday Service continues into the evening of Holy Saturday. Again, the priest does not begin in the usual way, "*In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*" Do remember that this was already done at the beginning of the Mass on Holy Thursday, when the Lord's last Supper was celebrated. Holy Saturday is the final part of the Liturgical celebration called the Easter Triduum. This profound celebration of joy concludes the Mass that began on Holy Thursday. The priest and the Altar servers and all the faithful walk into the dark Church with Candles. The entire church is at the tomb, waiting for the resurrection.

This is the night of the resurrection. As we await this moment of great joy, we listen to the Israel's history through seven readings from the Old Testament. This is a special night for we recall the resurrection of Jesus Christ - A night that dispels/removes all darkness from our life; the night when the heavens wed the earth; a night of true joy and love; a night when the Church re-sings the Gloria with exuberant joy: This is the night when adults are baptized into the church! It is only this Holy Saturday Mass that ends with the normal blessing and dismissal - "*The Lord be with you;*" "*And with your Spirit*"; "*Go Forth the Mass is ended., alleluia, alleluia.*" Then God's faithful holy people now respond, "Thanks be to God, Alleluia, Alleluia. We now conclude the Mass which began on Holy Thursday. May you have a blessed and graced experience of Easter - Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday; of Course, Easter Sunday try your best to be at Mass. I am praying for you. May the peace of Christ dwell in your heart and your entire being!

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