

The Triduum

The term Triduum might not sound familiar to you; however you may be very familiar with it. The Triduum is the three day commemoration of the passion, death and resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ – Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Resurrection day (Easter)

Maundy Thursday, April 2

The evening Holy Eucharist on Maundy Thursday begins the Triduum. The theme of this Eucharist is thanksgiving for the gift of the Holy Eucharist and the demonstration of Christ's love in the washing of the disciples' feet. It is a festive occasion for which the church dons her best apparel, using white vestments. The festive spirit is overshadowed by the approaching passion, which dominates at the end.

The word "Maundy" is derived from the Latin *mandatum* (commandment) from the closing words of the Gospel accounts of the Eucharist: "*mandatum novum do vobis*"—"a new commandment I give you". It gives its name to the ceremony of the washing of the feet, which is known as the *Mandatum*.

The Priest will wash the feet of those wishing to participate in this humbling and powerfully symbolic act of servant hood. If you wish to participate, you may consider wearing easily removable footwear. The clergy will wash one or both feet, respecting your preference.

This solemn liturgy continues with the Celebration of the Holy Eucharist followed by the Blessed Sacrament carried in procession and placed on the Altar of Repose. Members of the congregation are invited to pray before the sacrament following the service.

The Liturgy concludes with the stripping and washing of the altar, during the reading of Psalm 22. After the reading of the psalm, the Church is darkened and the congregation leaves in silence.

A vigil will take place until midnight, in response to Our Lords encouragement to "watch and pray."

Good Friday, April 3

Today the church, in penitence and adoration, celebrates the triumph of Christ's saving death.

The Good Friday Liturgy is in four parts:

1. The Liturgy of word, in which God speaks to us through the scriptures.
2. The solemn collects and intercessions in which the Church prays for the whole human race for which Christ died.
3. The solemn veneration of Christ crucified in which devotion is centered on the cross, the symbol of Christ's redeeming love.
4. The Holy Communion, where as the beloved of Christ we are taken, blessed, broken and given to the church and the world

The Great Easter Vigil / The Resurrection day, April 4

The Triduum concludes with the celebration of the Easter Vigil.

It is called a Vigil because in early times the Church kept an all-night watch, meditating on the Scriptures and praying until dawn when Christ's resurrection was acclaimed.

The Easter Candle is an important symbol in this service, and throughout Eastertide is a constant reminder of the risen Christ, the Light of the World.

Together with the Liturgical ministers, the Priest, after introductory remarks, light the fire in silence and then blesses it.

Notice that it is the fire, which depicts the life of Christ, not the candle, which will be the vehicle of the fire. In the modern Eastern Orthodox Church, there is no Easter candle and the fire is the focal point of the Vigil. In Jerusalem it is blessed in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in the morning so that it can be distributed to the other churches by evening.

The lighted candle, however, representing the light of Christ, when marked with the signs, is magnificent in symbolism.

The White Candle:	The Humanity of Christ.
Alpha and Omega:	The Divinity of Christ.
The Cross:	The Death of Christ
The Five Marks (nails):	The Wounds of Christ
The Date:	“Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever.”
The Lighted Candle:	The Sacrifice of Christ.

The Priest or Deacon takes the candle, lifts it high and proclaims, “Christ our Light.” The congregation replies, “Thanks be to God”—loudly and joyfully for it is the first greeting to the Risen Christ. The Candle is then carried in procession though the Church and the same versicle and response are repeated a second and third time. The candles of congregation are lighted. The Paschal Candle is then placed in a prominent position for it to be the focus of the Vigil and the Resurrection Day.

Finally, the Easter proclamation, the *Exultet* is proclaimed, the congregation standing with lighted candles

In Summary the Liturgy is comprised of:

The Service of Light during which fire is blessed and the Easter Candle is lit to represent the risen Christ.

The Liturgy of the Word in which, through readings from the Scriptures, the Church meditates on God’s mighty acts in history.

The Liturgy of the Holy Eucharist .In baptism the fruit of Christ’s redeeming death and resurrection is brought to us. The congregation is exhorted by the Priest to renew the solemn promises and vows of Baptism. The Priest Asperges the people with Holy water. The Liturgy continues with the great Easter Acclamation, followed by the ministry of the word and concluding with the Great Thanksgiving and Holy Communion.

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