

On Holy Week and the Paschal Triduum

His Holiness Pope John Paul II
General Audience
April 8, 1998

Reflection on the Sacred Triduum

1. In these days of Holy Week, the liturgy very forcefully underscores the opposition between light and darkness, between life and death, but it leaves us in no doubt as to the final outcome: the glory of the risen Christ. Tomorrow the solemn celebration "in Cena Domini" will lead us into the Sacred Triduum, which offers the central events of salvation history for the reflection of all believers. Together we will relive and deeply participate in the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus.

2. At tomorrow's Chrism Mass, the morning prelude of Holy Thursday, priests will gather with their own Bishop. During a significant Eucharistic celebration, which usually takes place in diocesan cathedrals, the oils for the sick and for catechumens will be blessed, and chrism will be consecrated. These rites symbolize the fullness of Christ's priesthood and that ecclesial communion which must enliven the Christian people, gathered by the Eucharistic sacrifice and strengthened in unity by the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Tomorrow evening we will celebrate with grateful hearts the institution of the Eucharist. At the Last Supper, the Lord, "having loved his own who were in the world, loved them to the end" (Jn 13:1). Precisely at the moment when Judas was preparing to betray him and night had fallen over his heart, divine mercy triumphed over hatred, life over death: "Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said: 'Take, eat; this is my body'. And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, 'Drink of it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins'" (Mt 26:26-28).

God's new and eternal Covenant with man is thus written indelibly in the blood of Christ, the meek and mild lamb, freely sacrificed to atone for the sins of the world. At the end of the celebration, the Church will invite us to remain in prolonged adoration of the Eucharist, to meditate on this extraordinary and incomparable mystery of love.

3. Good Friday is marked by the Passion account and by contemplation of the Cross, in which the Father's mercy is fully revealed. The liturgy has us pray in this way: "When we were lost and could not find the way to you, you loved us more than ever: Jesus, your Son, innocent and without sin, gave himself into our hands and was nailed to a cross" (Roman Missal, 1983 ed., Eucharistic Prayer for Masses of Reconciliation, I). So great is the emotion evoked by this mystery, that the Apostle Peter, writing to the faithful of Asia Minor, exclaimed: "You know that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your fathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot" (1 Pt 1:18-19).

Therefore, after proclaiming the Passion of the Lord, the Church puts the adoration of the Cross at the centre of the Good Friday liturgy, not as a symbol of death but as a source of authentic life. On this day, charged with spiritual emotion, the Cross of Christ is lifted up upon the world as a banner of hope for all who in faith welcome its mystery into their lives.

4. Meditating on these supernatural realities, we will enter the silence of Holy Saturday, in expectation of Christ's glorious triumph in the Resurrection. At the tomb we will be able to reflect on the tragedy of a humanity that, deprived of its Lord, is inevitably dominated by loneliness and discouragement. Turned in on himself, man feels deprived of every breath of hope in the face of suffering, the failures of life and, especially, death. What should we do? We must wait for the resurrection. At our side, according to an ancient, widespread popular tradition, will be Our Lady, the Sorrowful Virgin and Mother of Christ sacrificed.

On Holy Saturday night, however, during the solemn Easter Vigil, "the mother of all vigils", the silence will be broken by joyful song: the Exsultet. Once again the victory of Light over darkness, of Life over death, will be proclaimed and the Church will rejoice in meeting her Lord.

Thus we will enter the atmosphere of Easter, the Resurrection, the endless day which the Lord inaugurated by rising from the dead.

Dear brothers and sisters, let us open our hearts to God's grace and prepare ourselves to follow Jesus in his Passion and Death, in order to enter with him into the joy of the Resurrection.

With these sentiments, I wish everyone a fruitful paschal Triduum, and a holy and happy Easter.

Preparing for Holy Thursday

Opening Prayer:

Let us pray.
God our Father,
we are gathered here to share in the supper
which your only Son left to his Church to reveal
his love.
He gave it to us when he was about to die
and commanded us to celebrate it as the new
and eternal sacrifice.
We pray that in this eucharist
we may find the fullness of love and life.
Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your
Son,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy
Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

As we prepare to celebrate this wonderful liturgy we begin by entering into a new movement. As this liturgy begins, Lent has ended. Our 40 days of Lent helped us "prepare to celebrate the Paschal Mystery with mind and heart renewed." Now we come to three liturgies which help us experience what is offered us in the new Passover. Each liturgy helps us enter more deeply into the mystery and meaning. Holy Thursday evening takes us to the heart of the gift and to our mission.

The Elect and the children.

We begin with the Catechumens and Candidates with whom we have been journeying all year. If there are no persons preparing for full communion with us in our parish, or if we have not been aware of them, this is the time to become conscious of and sensitive to the Elect, in our community, our city and around the world. Through the rites of Acceptance and Election, our brothers and sisters have grown to "hunger" for communion with us. We have welcomed them, blessed them, anointed them, and cared for them as our own. For the last three weeks we have prayed for them and supported them in the temptations that come at the end of a long

On this night, we act out the meaning of the Eucharist, the meaning of salvation, and the meaning of discipleship.

journey.

Each Sunday, as we dismissed them after the homily and before the "Prayer of the Faithful," we told them that we "longed for the day" when we could be with them at the table of the Lord. Throughout the year, our care for them helps us understand who we are, the way a good teacher learns more about a subject through the process of education.

We remember our children, whom we are

continually forming in the life of our faith community. All our community's "religious education" comes to a special focus for our youngest members.

This Holy Thursday liturgy has the Elect in mind, and it is a wonderful night for children. On this night we "act out" the meaning of the Eucharist, the meaning of our salvation, and the meaning of discipleship. In our preparing for Holy Thursday, it helps to enter into this experience as a member of a community that desires to "show" to our newest and youngest members, who we are and who we desire to be.

The Word.

To begin to prepare, let us read the readings of this Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper. Our chewing starts here, as does our nourishment. The Exodus account of the Passover tradition reminds us of the

To come to this night prepared to celebrate, we can reflect on all the reasons we have to be grateful.

exit, the liberation, of the people in slavery in Egypt, and meal that commemorates it. "This day shall be a memorial feast for you, which all your generations shall celebrate." During our Lenten journey, we have desired greater freedom, and a deeper liberation from the patterns that keep us from being free. We want to come to the Holy Thursday memorial with those desires alive with hunger and thirst.

Psalm 116 asks, "How shall I make a return to the LORD for all the good he has done for me?" The word, "Eucharist" means "thanksgiving." To come to this night prepared to celebrate, we can reflect on all the reasons we have to be grateful. The Spirit of Jesus uses the gift of gratitude to gather us for Eucharist.

Paul tells us the simple and profound words of Jesus, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." The gift and the mandate. And Paul says, "For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes." Our celebration on Holy Thursday will show us how to proclaim the meaning of the Lord's gift to us. John's gospel is a puzzle and a revelation. The account of the Last Supper in this gospel does not include the narrative Paul gives us, as do the accounts in Mark, Matthew and Luke. In this account of the Last Supper, Jesus does not take bread and wine, say the prayer of thanksgiving, break the bread and share the cup, with the words, "This is my body; this is my blood; do this in memory of me." In this narrative of the

Visit the *Online Ministries* site: *Praying Lent.*

In addition to this resource for Lent, there are many others to support our journey through Lent.

And, there is a ***Lenten Daily Prayer*** for each day of Lent.

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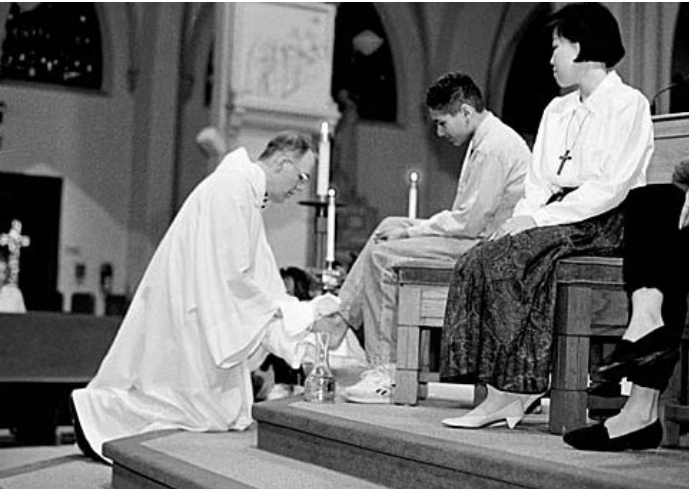
this ritual Jesus shows us how he gives us his body and allows his blood to be poured out for us. By his action Jesus says, here I am as servant for you, do *this* in memory of me.

***By his action Jesus says,
here I am as servant for you,
do this in memory of me.***

The Foot Washing.

It is not enough for us to simply hear this gospel and to "break open" this word in a homily. Our tradition is to engage us in the drama of this ritual. So, it is not enough to simply go to the Holy Thursday liturgy and "watch" it happen. We need to prepare.

In the ritual we will experience on Holy Thursday, Jesus washes our feet. The twelve representatives of our community have their feet washed, but each of us is having our feet washed. Each of us needs to "feel" the resistance of Peter. We have to "let" Jesus wash our feet, let Jesus give himself to us, let him be our servant. One of the best preparations is to "taste" my resistance, my independence, my rationalizing which almost convinces me that I don't need washing or healing or saving. Perhaps I need to "name" the part of my life, the part of myself, I want to surrender to the Lord to be embraced and loved, washed and healed. Perhaps on Thursday morning, I can stand in the shower and experience the Lord's love pour over me. Or, if I live in a part of the world where water is not so plentiful, I can wash my face slowly and gratefully. Preparing is a matter of opening our hearts to the gift we will ritualize on Holy Thursday.



In the ritual we will experience on Holy Thursday, Jesus gives us a "mandate." He gives us the *one commandment* of the gospel, "Love one another, as I have loved you." He gives his very self to us, is broken and poured out, and calls us to give our very selves, to be broken and poured out, in love for others. It is important for us to "taste" our resistance to love. We can come to Holy Thursday prepared by our reflection on how difficult it is to love some people, either because we recoil at their "smelly-ness" or because we find them unattractive or unable to love us in return.

The liberation happens when we let ourselves have our feet washed by Jesus. Then Eucharist flows from our gratitude. Gratitude is the seed for great loving - the "return" I can make to the Lord for his great love for me.

Just as the foot washing isn't just about those twelve representatives, it isn't just about me and the family and friends I need to love. This ritual can be as big as we prepare to let it be. The love of Jesus is for *all* of God's people. We need to come to Holy Thursday with the whole world in our hearts. The mandate to love, as Jesus loves, calls us to be people whose self giving love reaches out to all who need liberation and the dignity God desires.

The Table of the Lord.

Now we are prepared for the Eucharist. Now we can say, with a much louder voice, "It is *right* to give God thanks and praise!" Now, when we remember and celebrate how he loved us, the words are joined to the ritual of foot washing, servanthood, ministry for others. Now, when we open our hands to receive his body and blood, we can feel, with great devotion, the power of this gift and the meaning of its mission.

The Stripping of the Altar and Sanctuary.

Our final preparation is to be ready to appreciate the ritual of transition with which Holy Thursday concludes. The Body and Blood of Jesus, which we share at this Eucharist is taken to a special place, so that we might continue to be nourished with this Sacrament on Good Friday. Then our liturgy engages us in a rich ritual. The altar and the whole sanctuary are stripped bare. With this solemn gesture, we ritualize what we as a community are doing to prepare for Good Friday. We strip our focus down to Jesus alone. All the signs and symbols are put aside. We are left with the taste of the Eucharist and the gratitude in our hearts. We leave in focused silence. We leave with the image of Jesus, as servant for us, our hearts readied to celebrate the mystery of his passion and death for us.

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Preparing for Good Friday

From the *Online Ministries*, CREIGHTON UNIVERSITY

Opening Prayer:

Let us pray.
Father, look with love on your people,
the love which our Lord Jesus Christ showed
us
when he delivered himself up
and suffered the agony of the cross,
for he lives and reigns with you and the Holy
Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

We enter the liturgy on Good Friday in silence. We don't need a "gathering rite." It is as though we have been "gathered" since the night before. The first act of the liturgy is for the Presider and ministers to lay face down before the cross, in silence. As with all liturgical rituals, that invites *us* to lay prostrate before the cross as well. That takes some preparation. We can prepare to begin the Good Friday celebration by reflecting upon ourselves laying there -

***When the Presider lays face down,
perhaps I will want to simply open my
hands and say "I know this is for me;
thank you."***

with all the feelings we want to identify and pay attention to. Our feelings may not be consistent or even inspiring. I might feel awe, gratitude, guilt, powerlessness, all at once. In my reflection preparing for Good Friday, I prepare that brief silent moment at the beginning of the service. Perhaps I will want to simply open my hands when the Presider lays face down and say "I know this is all for me; thank you."

The Word.

The readings take on a power today, from the quiet and solemnity of the service. Read the Daily Reflection and Reflection on the Passion, to the right, to chew them more deeply.

The General Intercessions.

These prayers, and their style, are perhaps the oldest liturgical ritual we have. They link us to the prayer of our sisters and brothers down through the centuries. They also give us a sense of our long tradition of public prayer. The Presider makes an invitation to pray - saying who it is we pray for and what it is that we ask.

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We respond to the invitation with our silent prayer. Then, the Presider prays out loud in our name, first praising God and naming how God has been loving and caring for the person or need we present, then asking for a particular grace. We affirm that prayer with our "Amen." We could prepare for these great intercessions by reflection on our prayer for each of the people and needs to the right. That will help us with our responding to the invitation to pray in silence, and to appreciate the powerful words of these ancient prayers.

Venerating The Cross.

To "venerate" is becoming a lost experience to many of our cultures. In our growing "equalitarianism," we want and expect everyone to be "equal" (which is a good thing). But, sometimes it is at the expense of reverence. To revere a wise person, an extraordinary role model, or someone who has struggled heroically, is still very important. And part of that is to have reverence for places or objects or symbols which are full of meaning and very special significance for us, because they re-connect us with relationships. Visiting

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there, and gave his life for us there.***

the place where I grew up, holding a newborn baby, treasuring a gift from a loved one, seeing a photograph or piece of art that stirs my spirit, and a thousand other places and things, all can become "religious" and objects of veneration.

We revere and venerate the wood of the cross, because our Savior was nailed there, and gave his life for us there. Preparing for this special veneration on Good Friday is very important. We may want to pray by making the Stations of the Cross, in our church, or in the privacy of our home, or with the Online version to the right. We want to be prepared to touch, kiss, embrace the cross with the greatest devotion we can express. We want our gesture to be able to ritualize our acceptance for the love, forgiveness and everlasting life that flows from that cross. We want to feel the love of Jesus, to feel it as being "for me," and to express our grateful response as reverence.

Receiving the Eucharist from the Holy Thursday Celebration of the Lord's Supper.

We fast from celebrating the Eucharist today, but we are gathered by the Spirit to re-connect with our celebration of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday. We do not want to forget what that liturgy continues to mean for us. This is the bread that gives life. This is his self-giving love for us. This is our nourishment for our mission.

institution of the Eucharist, Jesus washes his disciples' feet. With

Departing in Silence, Again.

With closing prayer and a blessing, we again depart in silence. We are a people who are full of faith, but who continue to wait for the fullness of our redemption. Our leaving in silence links this celebration to the Easter Vigil, as our beginning in silence connected us with Holy Thursday.

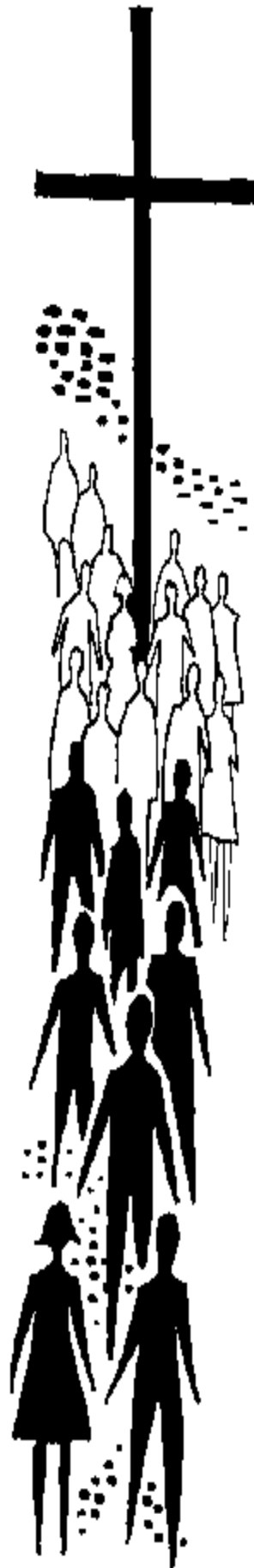
Good Friday Closing Prayers:

Let us pray.

**Almighty and eternal God,
you have restored us to life
by the triumphant death and
resurrection of Christ.**

**Continue this healing work within us.
May we who participate in this
mystery never cease to serve you.
We ask this in the name of Jesus the
Lord. Amen.**

**Lord,
send down your abundant blessing
upon us who have devoutly recalled
the death of your Son
in the sure hope of the resurrection.
Grant us pardon; bring us comfort.
May our faith grow stronger
and our eternal salvation be assured.
We ask this through Christ our
Lord. Amen.**



Prayer for the Veneration of the Cross

**Dear Lord, as I approach your
cross, I am like the disciples who
ran.**

**I love you and I want to be a
good servant, but getting close
to your cross is difficult.**

**I'm not sure why. I want to say
that it is just a struggle to let
you die for me. But there is
more. I resist responding
gratefully. I resist seeing in your
death the mystery of my life.**

**When I behold you there on the
cross I see the meaning of life.
You are completely who you are
there. Giving your life away you
receive it. The grain of wheat
falling to the ground and dying.**

**I see the meaning of my life. To
love as I have been loved by you.
To be your disciple is to take up
my meaning and to follow you.
To receive my life only by giving
it away is to bear fruit that will
last.**

**As I embrace your cross please
give me the grace to place my
life in your hands and become
day by day a servant of your
own mission.**

HOLY SATURDAY

There is no liturgy on Holy Saturday. We spend the day reflecting upon the powerful reality of Jesus' death. What is important is that we keep this day holy, and let our "sense" of the mystery of death shape our reflection, and our longing to celebrate the Easter gift of Jesus alive, for us and with us.

If we are able to celebrate the Easter Vigil, we can renew our Baptismal Promises in a way that completes our Lenten journey to the font. We offer a renewal of our Baptismal promises here, which we might do, in these or similar words, which any of us might make as we keep a vigil of readings and prayer Saturday night, or early Easter Sunday Morning.

Preparing for the Easter Vigil

From the *Online Ministries*, CREIGHTON UNIVERSITY

Darkness.

The Easter Vigil begins with darkness. The darkness itself is the first movement of the liturgy, so we begin our preparations with that darkness. It represents all darkness, and all the meanings of darkness - devoid of light; evil thoughts, motivations, deeds; all that is hidden and secret, deceitful and dishonest, divisive and abusive, immoral and sinful. It's the darkness of our world, and the darkness in my heart. If I come to the vigil and restlessly and impatiently fidget in the dark "until something happens," I miss the power of what is about to happen. So, we prepare by readying ourselves to experience the darkness. It is distasteful and reprehensible, embarrassing and humbling, fearful and despairing.

Then a light is struck. It breaks into the darkness. "Make this new fire holy, and inflame us with new hope."

"May the light of Christ, rising in glory, dispel the darkness of our hearts and minds."

The Light of Christ.

The candle lit from the new fire is then

Nine readings and eight psalms help us with our night's vigil. "The reading of the word of God is the fundamental element of the Easter Vigil."

processed into the community, and we receive its light and experience the power of that light as it grows. When the candle is brought front and center, we celebrate the [Easter Proclamation](#). This prayer sounds like a Eucharistic Prayer. We give thanks and praise over this symbol of the Light of Christ in our midst and "consecrate" it as Christ's presence among us. Reading this proclamation carefully and letting its joyful song into our hearts is a wonderful way to prepare to feel its exultant praise at the Vigil.

"Dear friends in Christ, we have begun our solemn vigil. Let us now listen attentively to the word of God, recalling how God saved his people throughout history and, in the fullness of time, sent his own Son to be our Redeemer."

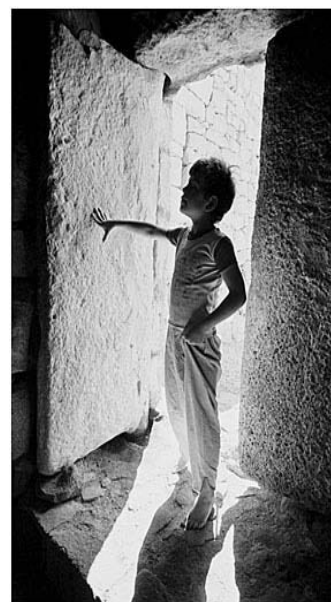
The Word of Our Salvation History.

There are nine readings and eight psalms or songs that have been prepared to help us with our night's vigil. Each reading is followed by an invitation to pray in silence, which is followed by a special prayer designed for that reading. (The help that comes with the liturgy says this: "The number of readings from the Old Testament may be reduced for pastoral reasons, but it must always be borne in mind that the reading of the word of God is the fundamental element of the Easter Vigil.") If we have time on Saturday, a wonderful way to prepare for the Vigil would be to read the readings and psalms and then articulate prayer to the Lord, expressing gratitude to God for an extraordinary story of fidelity and love for us.

After the last reading from the Old Testament, the candles are lit and the bells ring as we sing our Glory to God. Now we are ready to hear the New Testament word in the light of Christ, and the good news, "He has been raised!" Powerful religious experience is prepared for. At this point in the liturgy, we want to be prepared to be exultant with joy at the resurrection of Jesus - the victory of our God over sin and death - for us.

The Liturgy of Baptism.

The Presiders and ministers go to the font of baptism, thereby drawing us together there. (The ritual says that if the font can't be seen by the congregation, then "water is placed in the sanctuary.") Those who are to be baptized are called forward, along with their sponsors. In our excitement for them, we realize that this is very much about the renewal of our whole community. Initiation and revitalization become one



this night.

"Dear friends in Christ, as our brothers and sisters approach the waters of rebirth, let us help them by our prayers and ask God, our almighty Father, to support them with his mercy and love."

The Litany

We turn to the community of saints in glory to ask for their help. We remember that we do this same litany before the ordination of priests. As we turn to each of these saints we recall how these very special women and men journeyed in situations very much like ours and let God transform their lives, and that they are now in glory interceding for us. In our hearts we might also turn to the saints we have known, who are not part of this list, whose love we have known and to whom we can turn tonight to intercede for these candidates for baptism and for our whole community. **"Give new life to these chosen ones by the grace of baptism."**

The Blessing of the Water

The Presider now blesses the water. These wonderful prayers are like a mini lesson, both for those about to be baptized, and for us. We can prepare by praying this prayer before the Vigil, at the link to the right. When the priest inserts the candle in the water and pull it out and lifts it up, we experience the ritual that announces the meaning of our baptism into these waters - one with him in dying that we might be one with him in rising.

The Profession of Faith and Renunciation of Evil

We have renewed our baptismal promises many times. We can prepare to make the Easter Vigil a powerful experience of grace if we make each of the renunciations and professions with a meaning that is

All the power of this night's rituals and sacraments, lead us to celebrate the Eucharist, to "give thanks and praise."

personal to us.

"Do you reject sin, so as to live in the freedom of God's children?"

That question begs me to spontaneously say, "YES! Of course!" But, reflection tells me that I long to be free at the same time that I cling to some of my unfreedoms. So the next question takes me deeper.

"Do you reject the glamor of evil, and refuse to be mastered by sin?"

There really is a glamor to evil and it does claim a mastery over me. The renunciation that is asked of me is about freedom, so I am asked if I will personally choose to be free and reject the rules the sin and darkness.

"Do you reject Satan, father of sin and prince of darkness?"

Now I am ready to profess the faith of the Church,

choosing to believe in the One who gives me life.

Baptism and the Rites Explaining Baptism.

The candidates are baptized. Even if our church isn't able to immerse the baptized into the water, the ritual of pouring water over their heads is meant to be a sign of their entry into the waters of baptism. We should feel the power of this moment and open our hearts to its joy, for them and for ourselves.

The newly baptized are anointed, with the same oil used to anoint priests. **"He now anoints you with the chrism of salvation, so that, united with his people, you may remain forever a member of Christ who is Priest, Prophet, and King."**

They are then clothed in a white garment. **"You have become a new creation and have clothed yourselves in Christ. Receive this baptismal garment and bring it unstained to the judgment seat of our Lord Jesus Christ, so that you may have everlasting life."**

Finally, they receive a candle lit from the Easter fire. **"You have been enlightened by Christ. Walk always as children of the light and keep the flame of faith alive in your hearts. When the Lord comes, may you go out to meet him with all the saints in the heavenly kingdom."**

The Celebration of Confirmation

The newly baptized and those who are about to be received into full communion are ready to "share in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit." We all pray in silence, and feel the power of God's Spirit among us. And in silence, the Presider lays hands on each person, the same sign used in ordination to the priesthood. As they are anointed, we can imagine the gifts of the Spirit that we have received and can let ourselves feel the grace offered us to be strong witnesses to the union with Jesus in mission that we are offered. The newly confirmed take their places in the assembly of the faithful, ready to join us for the first time at the table of the Lord.

The Eucharist.

All our preparations, all the power of this night's rituals and sacraments, lead us to celebrate the Eucharist, to "give God thanks and praise." As the newly confirmed receive the final Sacrament of Initiation, the Body and Blood of Jesus, we are ready to celebrate Easter.

The tomb is empty. There is Light in the midst of our darkness. We've been fed by the Word and given new life in the waters of baptism. Now we eat his Body and drink his Blood and receive the life in him that he promises.

Alleluia, Alleluia!

www.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/Lent

A Renewal of Baptismal Promises

*Our baptismal promises may be renewed
using these prayers in italics
or with similar words, from our heart,
after our Lenten journey to the font.*

**Dear friends,
through the paschal mystery
we have been buried with Christ in baptism,
so that we may rise with him to a new life.
Now that we have completed our lenten observance,
let us renew the promises we made at baptism
when we rejected Satan and his works.**

And so:

**Do you reject sin,
so as to live in the freedom of God's children?**

I do.

*Lord, all I want is to live in the freedom you offer me.
I want to reject the unloving choices I have made,
and the sinful failures to love anywhere in my life.
I reject all injustice,
all violence,
all that disrespects the dignity of all human life*

**Do you reject the glamor of evil,
and refuse to be mastered by sin?**

I do.

*Lord, I admit that some evil has a hold on me:
it is attractive, it has such powerful rewards,
it has become a habitual way for me to be myself.
Lord, I renew my commitment this day
to turn from that evil
and from letting any disordered attachment,
any empty promises master me,
and try to separate me from you.
By this promise, I commit myself
to greater courage in acting justly
and refusing to let unjust systems and structures
numb my conscience or dull my heart.*

**Do you reject Satan,
father of sin and prince of darkness?**

I do.

*Lord, as I renew my the promises
that accompany my becoming one with you
in the baptism of dying to sin and rising to life,
I know that an Enemy tries to
tempt me to sin and to many dark patterns,
I now promise to you,
and to my sisters and brothers
who depend upon my fidelity,
that I renew my commitment
to reject that Enemy,
and all his ways of subverting
your reign and the coming of your kingdom.*

**Do you believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth?**

I do.

*Lord, you made me and give me life every day.
I believe in you, I turn to you,
and I place my life,
and the graces I need each day,
in your loving hands.*

**Do you believe in Jesus Christ,
his only Son, our Lord,
who was born of the Virgin Mary,
was crucified, died, and was buried,
rose from the dead,
and is now seated at the right hand of the Father?**

I do.

*Jesus, my Lord and Savior,
my life is in your hands.
I believe in you, I turn to you,
I commit myself to growing closer to you,
placing myself with you,
in love - compassionate, self-sacrificing love -
for others.*

**Do you believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Holy Catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting?**

I do.

*Holy Spirit of Jesus,
Jesus promised not to leave us orphans.
I so desire to be enkindled with
the fire of your love,
that I might be renewed in courage.
I believe in and renew my commitment to
your work among us.
I want to contribute to the unity that you desire for
us.
I promise to be as merciful,
for I have known your mercy.
And I pledge to live my life each day on this earth,
full of faith in the resurrection Jesus gained for me.*

**God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ
has given us a new birth by water and the Holy Spirit,
and forgiven our sins.**

**May God also keep us faithful to our Lord Jesus Christ
for ever and ever.**

Amen.

*Lord, Our God,
this year's journey to the waters of baptism
has renewed me.
I have come to know more intimately
the complexity of my weakness
and the depths of your love for me.
By your grace, I have come to experience
the mystery of the gift of life you offer.
Please help me to remain free and faithful
that I might grow as a servant of
Jesus' own mission.
I ask this with growing faith in
the name of Jesus, my Lord.*