

After the Heart of Jesus ...

*When Jesus and the disciples drew near Jerusalem
and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives,
the disciples brought the ass and the colt
and laid their cloaks over them, and Jesus sat upon them.
The very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road,
while others cut branches from the trees
and strewed them on the road.
The crowds preceding him and those following
kept crying out and saying:
“Hosanna to the Son of David;
blessed is the he who comes in the name of the Lord;
hosanna in the highest.”*



Jesus made his way into Jerusalem amidst the cheers of a welcoming crowd. They give him a king's welcome. How soon things would change during those fateful days of that Passover. That final week of Jesus' earthly life before his death was an incredible one: The crowds' change from shouting "Hosanna, Hosanna, blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord," to "Crucify him, Crucify him;" the apostles gathered together in the upper room to celebrate that first Eucharist and last supper with Jesus; Peter's promise of fidelity followed by his tri-fold denial; the agony in the garden; the kiss of Judas; the trial; the scourging; carrying the cross; the nails; Jesus being abandoned by so many he loved; his death; the piercing by the sword, his burial ...AND HIS RESURRECTION. Notice who has the final say in all this. It was an incredible week.

This week for us however is not called "Incredible Week." It is called Holy Week, and the power of the Lord's presence will be in our midst throughout as we celebrate and remember the sacred moments of that week here at St. Walter. We retell the story each year and participate in once-a-year rituals, like Palm processions, feet washing, Eucharistic processions, reverencing the Cross, Holy Fires and candle light passing, to make real in our lives once again the agony of His suffering, the glory of the Cross, the power of the Resurrection, and true meaning of His life in our lives today. My hope is that you will encounter in this week the power of Christ at work in you and in this parish family. Our schedule of Holy Week services is listed in the bulletin and was sent to all registered parishioners. Please make time to be with us, especially for the services on Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday. These days will be another mini-retreat or mission to draw us closer to Christ. Bring your family, and invite your friends.

This Sunday, March 16, marks the return of the Traditional St. Joseph Table at St. Walter Church. It will be a wonderful celebration of faith and family. Please come between 1:00 and 4:00 PM, in the McDonald Parish Center, for a feast in honor of St. Joseph. Bring the children! All proceeds will be given to the St. Vincent DePaul Society of St. Walter Church to assist in their outreach to the needy in our area.

Please note that we have changed the Mass schedule for Easter Sunday to accommodate larger crowds and length of Masses. There will be a Mass every hour on the hour from 8:00 AM to 12:00 Noon, either in the Church or at Lake Park West Campus. The 8:00, 10:00, and 12:00 are in Church, and the 9:00 and 11:00 are at the High School. There will also be a 10:15 overflow Mass in our school gymnasium. Please make a special effort to express welcome and hospitality to those who are visiting St. Walter during these Holy Days. Our kind word or gesture may be the beginning of a journey back to God for someone who has been away for some time.



Congratulations to Dr. Ken Ortega, our Director of Religious Education. Ken recently defended his doctoral dissertation at Northern Illinois University and will be awarded an Ed.D. this coming Fall. Achieving this doctorate demonstrates Ken's commitment to excellence in education and his concern for the formation of our young people. We are proud of Ken and his accomplishments!

As Lent ends this week please be generous in your almsgiving to the healing projects we are supporting. The moneys collected can either be brought back in the mini first-aid kit (securely sealed with tape) or in an envelope with the sticker from the kit attached. .

As we enter into these days of saving grace, may we learn to die and rise and live anew with the One who offers real life!

After the Heart of Jesus,

Father John