

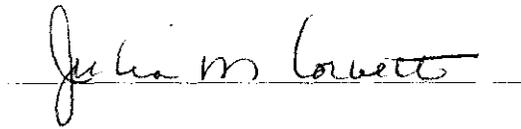
Passion Without Sin: The Tradition and Ritual of Holy Week

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

by

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A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Julia M. Corbett". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

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Abstract

This examination of the nature, function, and history of ritual and Tradition within the Roman Catholic Church is divided into two components. The first is a play based on the scriptural readings for the Church for the cyclical year A. This production is an exploration of the events that are called to mind and memorialized during Holy Week within the Roman Catholic Church. It depicts how the ritual and Tradition of the Roman Catholic Church have their foundations firmly planted within these events. The second part is an essay that compiles research demonstrating the history and explanation behind the Roman Catholic rituals, Tradition, and belief system.

Acknowledgments

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"Christus Rex et Redemptor Mundi"

Passion Without Sin

Prelude

(Scene begins with music. Suggested piece: "Are You Ready?" by Creed*. Music continues through Prelude narration.)

Narrator: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came to be through him, and without him nothing came to be. What came to be through him was life, and this life was the light of the human race; the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." (John 1:1-5)

(Music bridge - Continue to allow song to play, volume decreases, narration spoken over background music.)

Narrator: Jesus, the Word of God, both God and Man, was brought to Earth to follow the will of God, and this is what he did. He was brought to life, lived every moment to its fullest, always fulfilling the scriptures foretold by the prophets. At the culmination of his life, just as all humans must, he died. However, his death was different. It was a death that in turn brought forth life. Jesus died "so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin"(Romans 6: 6). His death was a heroic sacrifice, so that through the shedding of his blood, all people would be given life anew, a life in the eternal heavenly kingdom.

Scene I – Palm Sunday

(Song playing in background: “Jesus, Remember Me” by Taize Community.)

Narrator: Jesus knew. His followers did not know, but he knew. He knew that by the week’s end, it would all be over. Everything that had been declared would come to pass. Everything. Even though he knew that this all must happen, he was frightened -- not because he did not know what would happen... that he knew. He was frightened because he knew he was going to suffer, and then, he was going to die.

(Scene opens with Jesus and his disciples traveling to Jerusalem.)

Narrator: *When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them,*

Jesus: *Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, just say this, “The Lord needs them.” And he will send them immediately.*

Narrator: *This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet, saying, “Tell the daughter of Zion: Look, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.”*

(Disciples bring the donkey and the colt; put cloaks on them. Jesus sits on donkey. A very large crowd spreads their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from trees and spread them on the road. Song playing in the background: “Hosanna” by Scott Soper.)

Crowd: *Hosanna to the son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!*

Various individuals: (independently with confusion) *Who is this?*

Crowd: *“This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee.”*

All direct quotations are in italics and are taken from Matthew 21: 1-11. They are taken from the following source:

Rosser, A.R. (2002). *Workbook for Lectors and Gospel Readers (Canadian Edition: New Revised Standard Version)*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications.

Scene II – Holy Thursday

Narrator: The experience of a shared meal is a sacred event. However, this meal, Jesus' last meal with his disciples, was not only a sacred event at its occurrence, but a sacred meal forever.

Jesus knew that the end was near. He knew that God had sent him for a purpose, and he was going to fulfill that purpose. This was going to be the last meal that he shared with the ones that he loved. Therefore, knowing this, Jesus "got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with a towel that was tied around him.

Simon Peter: *Lord are you going to wash my feet?*

Jesus: *You do not know what I am doing, but later you will understand.*

Simon Peter: *You will never wash my feet.*

Jesus: *Unless I wash you, you have no share with me.*

Simon Peter: *Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!*

Jesus: *One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you.*

Narrator: *For he knew who was to betray him.*

(Jesus washes all of the disciples' feet. Song: "Triduum Hymn: Wondrous Love" by Marty Haugen. Holy Thursday verses 4-6.)

Jesus: *Do you know what I have done for you? You call me teacher and Lord--- and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set an example, that you also should do as I have done to you.*

Narrator: Then, after he had washed the disciples' feet, Jesus continued on with the meal. He knew that this all meant, but his disciples did not. However, within a few short days' time, all would be revealed.

Therefore, *the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said...*

Jesus: *This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.*

Narrator: *In the same way he took the cup...*

Jesus: *This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in memory of me.*

Narrator: This was the command that Jesus gave. He wanted us to celebrate the Eucharistic meal as a perpetual memorial of his sacrificial love for us. Therefore, “this day shall be a remembrance for you. You shall celebrate it as a festival to the Lord; throughout your generations you shall observe it as a perpetual ordinance”(Exodus 12: 14).

All direct quotations are in italics and are from John 13: 1-15 and I Corinthians 11: 23-26. They are taken from the following source:

Rosser, A.R. (2002). *Workbook for Lectors and Gospel Readers (Canadian Edition: New Revised Standard Version)*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications.

Scene III – Good Friday

(Scene opens with “By My Side” from “Godspell.” After vocals end, instrumentation continues until after narrator says “betray him”. Spotlights slowly come up on narrator and Judas before each one speaks.)

Narrator: *Judas Iscariot went to the chief priests.*

Judas: *What will you give me if I betray him to you?*

Narrator: *They paid him thirty pieces of silver, and from that moment he began to look for an opportunity to betray him.*

(Vocals of refrain repeat twice and end. After refrain ends, show Jesus and disciples in spotlight)

On the first day of Unleavened Bread, the disciples came to Jesus and asked him where he wanted them to make the preparations for the Passover meal. He told them...

Jesus: *Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, “The Teacher says, My time is near; I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples.”*

(Set scene - Jesus with disciples at the Last Supper.)

Narrator: *When it was evening, he took his place with the twelve.*

Jesus: *Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me.*

All disciples: (independently and with confusion) *Surely not I, Lord!*

Jesus: *The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me! The Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to the one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that one not to have been born.*

Judas: *Surely not I, Rabbi?*

Jesus: *Judas, you have said so.*

Narrator: *While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, and gave it to the disciples...*

Jesus: *Take, eat; this is my body...*

Narrator: *Then he took a cup and after giving thanks he gave it to them...*

Jesus: *Take, drink from it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.*

I tell you, I will never again drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

(Scene change - Jesus and the disciples appear on the Mt. of Olives.)

Jesus: *You will all become deserters because of me this night; for it is written, "I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered."*

But after I am raised up, I will go ahead of you to Galilee.

Peter: *Though all become deserters because of you, I, Peter, will never desert you.*

Jesus: *Truly I tell you, this very night, before the cock crows, you will deny me three times.*

Peter: *Even though I must die with you, I will not deny you.*

All disciples: (independently and with confusion) *Nor will I!*

Jesus: *Sit here while I go over there and pray.*

(Begin repeating refrain of "Stay With Me" by Taize Community.)

I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and stay awake with me.

My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass me by.

(Jesus goes back and confronts disciples.)

Could you not stay awake with me one hour? Stay awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; for the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak

My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it... your will be done.

(Repetitive refrain ends.)

Are you sleeping and taking your rest? See the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand.

(Judas appears.)

Judas: (To the soldiers and guards.) *The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him.*

Greetings, Rabbi!

Jesus: *Friend, do what you are here to do.*

Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me as though I were a bandit? Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me. All this has taken place so that the scriptures of the prophets may be fulfilled.

(Scene change -- Caiaphas' house)

Narrator: *Those who had arrested Jesus took him to Caiaphas the high priest, in whose house the scribes and the elders had gathered.*

Peter was following him at a distance, as far as the courtyard of the high priest; and going inside, he sat with the guards in order to see how this would end.

Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for false testimony against Jesus, but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward.

Person: *This man said, "I am able to destroy the temple of God and build it in three days."*

High Priest: *Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you?*

I put you under oath before the living God, tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God.

Jesus: *You have said so. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven.*

High Priest: *He has blasphemed! Why do we still need witnesses? You have now heard his blasphemy. What is your verdict?*

Scribes and Elders: *He deserves death!*

(scene change- Peter is found sitting in the courtyard of the high priest)

Servant girl: *You were with Jesus, the Galilean.*

Peter: *I do not know what you are talking about.*

Servant girl #2: *This man was with Jesus of Nazareth.*

Peter: *I do not know the man.*

Bystander: *You must be one of them; your accent betrays you.*

Peter: *I swear ... I do not know the man!*

(Rooster crows)

Narrator: *It was only then that Peter remembered what Jesus had said: "Before the cock crows, you will deny me three times."*

(Fade to spotlight in narrator.)

When morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people conferred together against Jesus in order to bring about his death. They bound him, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate the governor.

When Judas, his betrayer, saw that Jesus was condemned, he repented and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders.

(Scene change – Caiaphas' house)

Judas: *I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.*

Chief priests and elders: *What is that to us? See to it yourself.*

Narrator: *Throwing down the pieces of silver in the temple, he departed; and he went and hanged himself.*

The chief priests took the silver, but they knew that they could not put this money back into the treasury, for it was blood money. After meeting together, they used them to buy the potter's field as a place to bury foreigners. For this reason that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day.

*Then it was fulfilled, as had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah:
"And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of the one whom a price had been set, on whom some of the people of Israel had set a price, and they gave them to the potter's field, as the Lord commanded me."*

(Scene change – Pilate's chambers)

Now, Jesus stood before the governor.

Pilate: *Are you the King of the Jews?*

Jesus: *You say so.*

Pilate: *Do you not hear how many accusations they make against you?*

Narrator: *Now at the festival the governor was accustomed to release a prisoner for the crowd, anyone they wanted. At Jesus gave no answer, and this amazed Pilate.*

At that time they had a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. So, after they had gathered, Pilate said to them...

Pilate: *Whom do you want me to release for you, Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?*

Narrator: *Pilate realized that it was out of jealousy that Jesus had been handed over.*

While Pilate was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him.

Pilate's wife: *Have nothing to do with that innocent man, for today I have suffered a great deal because of a dream about him.*

(Scene change – Pilate is shown with Jesus and Barabbas on a balcony before a large crowd.)

Narrator: *Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus killed.*

Pilate: *Which of the two do you want me to release for you?*

Crowd: *Barabbas!*

Pilate: *Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?*

Crowd: *Crucify him!*

Pilate: *Why what evil has he done?*

Crowd: *Crucify him!*

Narrator: *So, when Pilate saw that he could do nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands before the crowd.*

Pilate: *I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves.*

Narrator: *Pilate released Barabbas for the crowd and after beating Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.*

(Scene change – Pilate's chambers.)

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole cohort around him.

They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!"

They spat on him and took the reed and struck him on the head. After mocking him they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

(Spotlight on narrator; all else is darkness.)

As they went out, they came upon a man from Cyrene named Simon; they compelled this man to carry his cross.

And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it.

(Scene change – Jesus is shown hanging on the cross.)

And when they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots; then they sat down there and kept watch over him.

Over his head they put the charge against him, which read, “This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.” Then two bandits were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by derided him.

Passers-by: *You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.*

Chief priests and elders: *He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he wants to; for he said, “I am God’s Son.”*

Narrator: *From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon.*

Jesus: *Eli, Eli, lema sabachtani?*

Bystanders: *This man is calling for Elijah.*

Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him.

Narrator: *The Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last.*

(Silent pause, then song. “Were You There” by: Robert J. Batastini. Sung acapella by a single voice.)

(A long, absolutely silent pause... then suddenly, a crashing storm!)

At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. The tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. After his resurrection they came out of the

tombs and entered the holy city and appeared to many. Now when the centurion and those with him, who were keeping watch over Jesus saw the earthquake and what took place, they were terrified.

Centurion: *Truly this man was God's Son!*

Narrator: *Many women were also there, looking on from a distance; they had followed Jesus from Galilee and had provided for him. Among them were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.*

(During this section, the body of Jesus is taken down from the cross, but the cross is left standing.)

When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, names Joseph, who was also a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus; then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. So Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock. He then rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb and went away. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb.

(Scene change – Pilate's chambers)

The next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and elders gathered before Pilate.

Chief priests and elders: *Sir, we remember what that impostor said while he was alive, "After three days I will rise again." Therefore command the tomb to be made secure until the third day; otherwise his disciples may go and steal him away, and tell the people, "He has been raised from the dead," and the last deception would be worse than the first.*

Pilate: *You have a guard of soldiers; go, make it as secure as you can.*

Narrator: *So, they went with the guard and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone.*

(The cross is shown standing alone in a spotlight. Song: "Behold the Cross" by Bob Hurd.)

All direct quotations are in italics and are from Matthew 26: 14-27:66. They are taken from the following source:

Rosser, A.R., (2002). *Workbook for Lectors and Gospel Readers (Canadian Edition: New Revised Standard Version)*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications.

Scene IV – Easter Vigil

(Throughout this scene, the candidates and catechumens are shown receiving the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and First Eucharist. Each Sacrament is presented in a spotlight, dispersed evenly throughout the Exultet.)

Voice chanting the Exultet:

Rejoice, heavenly powers

Sing choirs of angels!

Exult, all creation around God's throne!

Jesus Christ, our King is risen!

Sound the trumpet of salvation!

Rejoice, O earth, in shining splendor,

radiant in the brightness of your King!

Christ had conquered! Glory fills you!

Darkness vanishes forever!

Rejoice, O mother Church! Exult in glory!

The risen Savior shines upon you!

Let this place resound with joy, echoing the mighty song of all God's people!

Lift up your hearts!

Response: *We lift them up to the Lord.*

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

Response: *It is right to give him thanks and praise.*

It is truly right that with full hearts and minds and voices we should praise the unseen God, the all-powerful Father, and his only Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

For Christ had ransomed us with his blood, and paid for us the price of Adam's sin to our eternal Father!

This is our Passover feast,

When Christ, the true lamb is slain.

Whose blood consecrates the homes of all believers.

This is the night, when first you saved our fathers:

You freed the people of Israel from their slavery, and led them to dry shod through the sea.

This is the night when the pillar of fire destroyed the darkness of sin!

This is the night when Christians ev'rywhere, washed clean of sin and freed from all defilement,

are restored to grace and grow together in holiness.

This is the night when Jesus broke the chains of death and rose triumphant from the grave.

What good would life have been to us, had Christ not come as our Redeemer?

Father, how wonderful your care for us!

How boundless your merciful love!

To ransom a slave you gave away your Son.

O happy fault, O necessary sin of Adam, which gained for us so great a Redeemer!

Most blessed of all nights, chosen by God to see Christ rising from the dead!

Of this night scripture says: "The night will be clear as day: it will become my light, my joy."

The power of this holy night dispels all evil, washes guilt away, restores lost innocence, brings mourners joy;

It casts out hatred, brings us peace, and humbles earthly pride.

Night truly blessed when heaven is wedded to earth and man is reconciled with God!

Therefore, heavenly Father, in the joy of this night, receive our evening sacrifice of praise, your Church's solemn offering.

Accept this Easter candle, a flame divided but undimmed, a pillar of fire that glows to the honor of God.

Let it mingle with the lights of heaven and continue bravely burning to dispel the darkness of this night!

May the Morning Star, which never sets find this flame still burning;

Christ the Morning Star, who came back from the dead, and shed his peaceful light on all mankind, your Son, who lives and reigns forever and ever.

Response: *Amen*

All direct quotations are in italics. They are taken from the following source:

The English Translation of the Exultet from *The Roman Missal* © 1973, International Committee on English in the Liturgy.

Scene V – Easter Sunday

(Song: “Alleluia” from the Mass for the Life of the World by David Haas.)

Narrator: The Lord is Risen! Jesus is Lord, and he lives among us! He has completed the work for which he was sent. However, we must remember, just as the disciples did not recognize Jesus, we too are not able to completely visualize Christ’s triumphant reign.

Narrator: *On the first day of the week, two of the disciples were going to a village called Emmaus, about eleven kilometers from Jerusalem, and talking to each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went to them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him.*

Jesus: *What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?*

Cleopas: *Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?*

Jesus: *What things?*

Both disciples: *(back and forth) The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that Jesus was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see Jesus.*

Jesus: *Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?*

Narrator: *(Spoken with a spotlight on the narrator, all else in darkness.) Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, Jesus interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures. As they came near the village to which they were going, Jesus walked ahead as if he were going on.*

(Scene change - Jesus and the two disciples are shown sitting at a table with a meal.)

Disciples: *Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.*

Narrator: *When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized Jesus; and he vanished from their sight.*

Disciples: *Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?*

Narrator: *That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together.*

Disciples: *The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!*

Narrator: *Then the two disciples told what had happened on the road, and how the Lord had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.*

(Scene ends with “Sow the Word” by J. Keith Zavelli and Steven R. Janco)

All direct quotations are in italics and are from Luke 24: 13-35. They are taken from the following source:

Rosser, A.R. (2002). *Workbook for Lectors and Gospel Readers (Canadian Edition: New Revised Standard Version)*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications.

*All musical selections are only suggested pieces to be used. The pieces that are actually used are at the discretion of the director.

*The Tradition and Ritual
of Holy Week*

For Christians, all of human history unites in one week. This week is known as Holy Week, “the annual commemoration of the central events in the history of mankind’s redemption”(Monti, 1993, p. 9). It is central to the liturgical year of the Catholic Church, and therefore the greatest feast of the Christian year. Over the centuries it has been given various names and titles, with each day itself having multiple designations. All this being so, one thing has remained steadfast. In the Catholic faith tradition, the week of Holy Week has been and continues to be a commemoration of the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

There are five liturgies that are celebrated during Holy Week. These are Palm Sunday, Holy Thursday, Good Friday, the Easter Vigil, and Easter Sunday. Each day and liturgy has its own distinctive characteristics and foci, but they all ultimately focus on one thing, the journey of Jesus from life to death to eternal life.

The first liturgy, the liturgy of Palm Sunday occurs on the sixth and last Sunday of Lent. It is the beginning of Holy Week. “The liturgy begins with a procession patterned after Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem”(Rosser, 2002, p.88). This is the procession where Jesus rode a donkey into Jerusalem, and all of the people wove palm branches and announced his presence. “The principle ceremonies of the day are the benediction of the palms, the procession, the Mass, and during it the singing of the Passion” (<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/11432b.htm>).

As is obviously observed, the palms are a central feature of the liturgy. It is held “that the branches of palms signify victory over the prince of death” (<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/11432b.htm>). The palms from this liturgy are later taken home by the members of the congregation and used as a sacramental. Also, the

leftover palms are collected and burned for the ashes for Ash Wednesday the following year. "Palm branches have been used by all nations as an emblem of joy and victory over enemies; in Christianity as a sign of victory over the flesh and the world"

(<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/11432b.htm>).

The liturgy of the day is very particular. At no other liturgy is there a procession as there is on this day. There are three forms from which the form of the liturgy may be chosen. "The First Form is that of a solemn procession that starts outside the church; in the Second Form the whole procession takes place within the church; and with the Third Form the procession is emitted entirely"(Monti, 1993, p. 50). After the priest blesses the palms, which are placed on the altar in order to be blessed, "one of the gospel accounts of Christ's triumphant entry into Jerusalem is then read; a three-year cycle is used to determine which account (Mt 21:1-11, Mk 11:1-10, Jn 12:12-16, or Lk 19:28-40) will be selected in a given year"(Monti, 1993, p. 51). The procession begins following this reading.

The procession of Palm Sunday is an inspiring sight to behold. The entire church gathers together and reenacts the procession of Jesus into Jerusalem. As this is done, the choir leads the congregation in singing a form of the praises demonstrated by the crowds of Jerusalem. These often consist of "Hosanna in the highest!" or "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" There are various forms of these proclamations put to music, and most are appropriate for use during this procession.

The Liturgy of the Word follows as it would in any Mass, except that the Gospel that is read is always an account of the Passion. This reading is also set in a three-year cycle, with the readings consisting of the accounts of Saint Matthew, Saint Mark, and

Saint Luke. Saint John's version of the Passion is never read on Palm Sunday because it is reserved for Good Friday. "This aspect of the Palm Sunday liturgy can be traced back through fifteen hundred years of history"(Monti, 1993, p. 55). Pope Saint Leo the Great (C.E. 390-461) wrote seven sermons that speak of the Passion as being the focus of the Palm Sunday liturgy (Monti, 1993, p.55). The reading of the Passion on Palm Sunday is also noted in the earliest Roman lectionary, the Capitulary of Wurzburg, which dates back to the seventh to early eighth centuries (Monti, 1993, p. 55).

Another aspect of the reading of the Passion is that three people must participate in the reading of it. "This division of the Passion among three characters is very ancient, and it is often indicated by rubrical letters in early manuscripts of the Gospel" (<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/07435a.htm>). These three individuals represent the Evangelist, or narrator, Jesus, and the other speakers, also known as the Synagoga (<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/07435a.htm>). Today, the priest and any two other individuals read the Passion, but it was not always this way. Between the tenth and eighteenth centuries, "it was customary for three deacons to take part in the Passion-one as narrator, one as Christ, and the other taking the words of Peter, Pilate, and the crowd"(Harper, 1991, p. 140).

The only other noteworthy feature of the Palm Sunday liturgy is that the vestments worn that day are red. "The red vestments worn for the procession signify royalty, but red is also the color of blood"(Rosser, 2002, p. 89). This is important to demonstrate the Christian belief that Jesus is the King of all, but in order for that role to be fulfilled, he will have to offer the heroic sacrifice of his blood. This can serve as a reminder and precursor to the days to come.

The second liturgy of Holy Week is the liturgy of Holy Thursday. Holy Thursday was originally known as Maundy Thursday, “which derives its English name from *Mandatum*, the first word of the Office of the washing of the feet” (<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/07435a.htm>). This is because the washing of the feet is one of the central foci of the liturgy for that day. Also central to the liturgy is that “the feast of Maundy (or Holy) Thursday solemnly commemorates the institution of the Eucharist and is the oldest of the observances peculiar to Holy Week” (<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/10068a.htm>). Ultimately, Holy Thursday “brings about the anniversary of the institution of the Liturgy” (<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/10068a.htm>).

In relation to other liturgies, the Holy Thursday liturgy is basically set in the same format. Mass begins as usual with the Liturgy of the Word, and after the homily, the washing of the feet takes place. Saint John’s gospel is always the gospel reading that is read because it is the one that speaks of Jesus washing the feet of the disciples. There are stations set up around the church where individuals can come and have their feet washed and then in turn wash someone else’s feet.

The reason that feet are washed at the liturgy is one of great importance. Through Saint John’s gospel, the congregation is given “insight into the meaning and consequence of the eucharist”(Rosser, 2002, p. 105). This is because the celebration of the eucharist requires individuals to serve one another, and the washing of the feet is a prime example of servitude. It teaches the congregation that all people should be servants to one another. This is even emphasized by the presence of Judas in the reading. Judas was the disciple who betrayed Jesus, and he was not excluded from the washing of the feet. This

reading teaches that “no one – not even a traitor – is undeserving of... loving service” (Rosser, 2002, p. 106).

The other important aspect of this liturgy is the commemoration of the institution of the Eucharist. The concept of the Eucharist is absolutely central to the Catholic faith. Catholics believe that Jesus instituted this sacrament “in order to perpetuate the sacrifice of the Cross throughout the ages and to entrust to the Church his Spouse a memorial of his death and resurrection”(U.S. Catholic Bishops, 2001, p. 1). This event is spoken of in the second reading for that day, which is from the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians. It is also spoken of in the First Reading, which comes from the Old Testament. This reading speaks of the prophecy of the Paschal Lamb that will be the final sacrificial lamb. “The Catholic Church professes that, in the celebration of the Eucharist, bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit and the instrumentality of the priest”(U.S. Catholic Bishops, 2001, p.1). The Church believes that this takes place through a process known as transubstantiation. “Transubstantiation means that the appearance of the bread and wine stays the same but their substance is changed”(Johnson, 1994, p. 59). Therefore, Catholics believe that although the bread and wine still appear to be just bread and wine, their substance is changed into the actual body and blood of Jesus.

The consecration of the Eucharist at this liturgy is the last time that it will be consecrated until Easter. Therefore, a large amount of hosts are consecrated, and then they are saved in a ciborium so that they can be dispersed on Good Friday. This focus on the Eucharist also leads to the final act of the liturgy, which also differs from the common Mass. This act is the commemoration of the Blessed Eucharist.

The commemoration of the Blessed Eucharist is an event that is particular to this liturgy, at least in terms of concluding a liturgy with this type of commemoration. After communion, the Eucharist is placed in a ciborium or a tabernacle, and the priest leads a Eucharistic procession into a chapel that has been prepared for Eucharistic Adoration. Eucharistic Adoration is where the Eucharist is placed in the ciborium or tabernacle so that people may come and sit in adoration of it. Many people pray in this situation, while some just come to spend time in the peace and serenity that they believe is present in the Eucharist.

As with every aspect of liturgy, there are specifications as to how this procession is to take place. This procession “is not a solemn procession but a simple action of taking the bread to the tabernacle”(Huck, 1992, p. 51). During this procession, the assembly sings the “Pange Lingua,” which was written by Thomas Aquinas. “This text is acclamation of the Passover, the passing over of Jesus and of the church. It is acclamation for [the] encounter with that Passover, food and drink... body and blood”(Huck, 1992, p. 51). The context of this procession also allows for the liturgy to “fade out” instead of end (Huck, 1992, p.51). This is because the church is now in the Triduum, which continues from the evening of Holy Thursday through the evening of Easter Sunday. It is one continuous remembrance.

The next liturgy, the celebration of Good Friday, is the day when “ ‘the Church reflects on the Passion of its Lord and Spouse, adores his cross, commemorates its own origin from the side of the dead Christ on the cross, and intercedes for the salvation of the entire world’ ” (Circular Letter #58, Huck, 1992, p.63). The origin of the name if the day is not clear, although many believe that it originated from “God’s Friday”

(<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/06643a.htm>). This service is not a Mass because there is no consecration of the Eucharist. There is a distribution of the Eucharist, but this is the excess Eucharist that was consecrated the night before. The focus of the day is on the crucifixion and death of Jesus.

The service technically should begin at three in the afternoon, but it is also allowed to take place at another time if this other time is one that is easier for more people to attend. “The liturgy begins with silent and spoken prayer, followed by the liturgy of the word. The liturgy makes no effort toward including an entrance rite or a concluding rite”(Huck, 1992, p. 64). The church gathered the night before for the Triduum, and that is where it still remains on Good Friday. Following a silent entrance, the Liturgy of the Word takes place, followed by the Veneration of the Cross. This “dramatic unveiling of the Cross, which was introduced into the Latin Liturgy in the seventh or eighth century, had its origin in the Church of Jerusalem”

(<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/06643a.htm>). It developed from the worshipping of the True Cross observed in Jerusalem. “During the veneration, a veiled image of the Cross is gradually exposed to view, while the celebrant sings “Behold, behold, the wood of the Cross, on which is hung our salvation” three times. The congregation responds each time with “Oh come, let us adore.” Then the celebrant and the members of the congregation are invited to approach the Cross. Each person must first remove their shoes, and then they are allowed to approach the Cross, where they are encouraged to touch it and kiss it.

It is important to understand the meaning behind the adoration and veneration of the Cross. Many people will question this act because of the belief that adoration is due

to God alone. It is important that it is understood that this act “is not intended as an expression of absolute supreme worship... the essential note of the ceremony is reverence, which has a relative character”(http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/06643a.htm).

Catholics believe that while they are bending their bodies before the Cross, they are bending their spirits before God. They believe that although they are reverencing the cross, which they believe is the instrument of their redemption, they must pray to the one who they believe redeemed them.

After the Veneration of the Cross, the presanctified Eucharist is retrieved from the chapel. This is the host that was consecrated at the Holy Thursday liturgy. The celebrant consumes the Eucharist, followed by the distribution and consummation of the Eucharist to the members of the congregation. The remaining Eucharist is then taken to “a suitable place. If the church has a tabernacle in it, this is not used; it remains empty”(Huck, 1992, p. 87). The closing prayer is then spoken, and all depart in silence.

The events of Good Friday blend into the next day of the Triduum, Holy Saturday, which is also known as the Easter Vigil. This liturgy is extremely important because it is when the catechumens and candidates, those who have been studying catechesis in order to become Catholic, receive the sacraments and are welcomed as full members of the Church. This day is a day of joy as well as sadness; “it is the close of the season of Lent and penance, and the beginning of paschal time, which is one of rejoicing” (http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/07424a.htm). This liturgy must always begin after dark, and it must end before the daybreak of Sunday.

The liturgy for this day begins with the blessing of the new fire, the lighting of candles, and the lighting of the paschal candle. The paschal candle is a candle that

remains lit throughout the year, reminding the Church of the “light” that Jesus brought to the world through his heroic sacrifice. “The obtaining and blessing of the new fire is probably a rite of Celtic or even pagan origin, incorporated into the Gallican Church service of the eighth century”(http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/07435a.htm). This all begins outside where a fire is blessed, and then a procession is led into the church with all the members of the procession holding lit candles. Once the procession has ended, the Exsultet is sung. This is a chanted piece that depicts the importance of the Vigil, and it can be traced back to the time of Saint Jerome or earlier, which would place it around the early fifth century (Engelbert, 1994, p. 370).

After the Exsultet is chanted, the Liturgy of the Word begins. This liturgy is different from most Masses because there are a total of seven Old Testament readings that are read before the New Testament reading and the Gospel reading. These seven Old Testament readings begin with Genesis and follow through to a reading from one of the books of the prophets. These readings are read to tell the story of the Hebrews. In order to understand the role that Catholics believe Jesus fulfills, it is necessary to understand the history and tradition behind that role. That history and tradition are made evident through the Old Testament. Catholic Christians believe that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets, and to understand these two things, it is necessary to know the foundations of the Jewish tradition.

After these seven readings are read, the “Gloria” is joyously sung. This marks the end of the Easter Vigil, a day of sadness and penance, and the beginning of Easter, a day of elation and celebration. Following the “Gloria” the Epistle or New Testament Reading is read, and Mass continues as usual with the Gospel and Homily.

The second part of this liturgy is the Liturgy of Initiation. This is where the catechumens come forth to be baptized, and then both the candidates and the catechumens receive the sacrament of Confirmation. Catechumens and candidates are individuals who have been studying catechesis in order to receive the sacraments of the Catholic faith. Catechumens are people who have never been baptized, while candidates are people who have already been baptized, only in another Trinitarian tradition.

The third and final part of the liturgy is the Liturgy of the Eucharist. The host is consecrated as is ordinarily done at Mass, and the catechumens and candidates, who are now known as neophytes, are able to receive the sacrament of the Eucharist. These individuals are now considered to be full members of the Church. The liturgy then concludes with a closing prayer, a chanted "Alleluia" response, and a closing hymn.

The fifth and final celebration of Holy Week is Easter Sunday. This is the day that the entire week has ultimately been focused upon, and it a day of rejoicing. "It marks the central faith confession of the early church and is the focal point for Christian worship" (<http://www.crecourcei.org/cyeaster.html>). Easter commemorates "the slaying of the Lamb of God and the Resurrection of Christ, the cornerstone upon which faith is built. It is also the oldest feast of the Christian Church, as old as Christianity, the connecting link between the Old and New Testaments" (<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/05224d.htm>).

The actual date of Easter is not fixed. The tradition of selecting the date on which it occurs originated in Rome. "Easter was celebrated in Rome and Alexandria on the first Sunday after the first full moon after the spring equinox, and the Roman Church claimed for this observance the authority of Saints Peter and Paul" (<http://www.newadvent.org/>

cathen/05224d.htm). In 325 C.E. the First Council of Nicea decreed that the entire Church should observe the Roman practice of determining the date of Easter. This method of date selection is still practiced today.

The liturgy of the day is in the custom of a regular Mass. It consists of the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist, just as on all other Sundays. The focus of this liturgy is what makes it so distinctive. The readings focus upon the belief that Jesus has been resurrected. He has shown that he fulfills the requirements of the true Messiah. In addition to his having risen, there is an emphasis upon his rising again. The belief that “there is more to come and that the work of salvation is not complete until the end of time” (Rosser, 2002, p. 137) is part of the central focus of the day.

In the Catholic Church, Easter is not just celebrated on one single day. It is a seven-week long season what begins at sundown on the Easter Vigil and continues until Pentecost Sunday. “These seven Sundays are called the ‘Sundays of Easter,’ climaxing on the Sunday before Pentecost Sunday. This day is often celebrated as ‘Ascension Day’... [which] marks not only the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, but his exaltation from servanthood (Eph 1:20-22)” (<http://www.cresourcei.org/cyeaster.html>).

For Catholics Easter Sunday is the greatest feast of the liturgical year. “‘Within the cycle of the year,’ says Vatican II’s *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, the Church ‘unfolds the whole mystery of Christ, not only from his incarnation and birth until his ascension, but also as reflected in the day of Pentecost, and the expectation of a blessed, hoped-for return of the Lord’” (Johnson, 1994, p. 83). For Catholic Christians, this is the culmination of their faith belief system.

The practices and liturgies of Holy Week are simple and complicated. There is an abundance of information, while at the same time there is one central idea of focus. Each liturgy works with the next to centralize the concept of the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Even though each liturgy seems to end, it continues on and links with the next to continue to remember and to teach the Catholic faith and the ideals of that faith. For Catholics, this is absolutely central to their belief system. They believe that through the heroic sacrifice of Jesus' death, he was able to be resurrected, and therefore be present through the Eucharist every day until he returns.

Reflections

There was one main reason that I chose to examine the ritual and Tradition of Holy Week. For the last three years, I have been very involved in the study of liturgy. For me, that study has been an investigation that delves into why Catholics do the things they do. I myself am Catholic, and as a child, I never learned the reason behind the things that I did at church and the things I was taught to believe. Through the Religious Studies program here at Ball State University, as well as an intense two-year internship at the Newman Center, I have been able to come to at least a basic understanding of these things. I still have a great deal to learn, but this is an area that for me holds an endless amount of information. I never seem to tire of studying the Church from a liturgical perspective.

I chose to do a study of the ritual and Tradition of Holy Week within the Roman Catholic Church because I feel that the basis behind Catholicism lies within this week. It demonstrates and recalls the institution of so many concepts that the Church holds as being fundamental to its belief system. I felt that by studying the ritual and Tradition of Holy Week I would be able to come to a better understanding of Catholicism, as well as compile information that would allow others to also understand why Catholics believe and behave as they do.

When it was first suggested to me that I write something relaying what I had experienced through completing this study, I immediately agreed. I thought that it would be simple, no problem whatsoever. However, as I sat and pondered on what I had learned, I discovered that I really had to think about my experience. I myself am Catholic, so I have participated in various Holy Week activities such as the ones mentioned in this composition every year for the majority of my life. Nonetheless, this

time my experience was different. This year when Holy Week came around, I really understood. I always thought that I understood what was going on, but never before had I had the understanding of what I was doing as I did this year.

This year I participated in every liturgy of Holy Week. I was able to truly understand what I saw happening before me, as well as what I was participating in because I had read the readings beforehand. I had even done a fairly in-depth study of them, so I knew the underlying meanings that might get overlooked by someone who was not as familiar with them. On Palm Sunday, when the Passion was read, I was even able to recognize that it was a different translation than the one I had studied. Every reading had some familiarity to me, and I was able to look at them as a concise unit and learn from them.

In addition to understanding the readings, I was able to appreciate the Tradition of the Church even more so than before. Personally, I love the ritual and Tradition of the Church. I find it fascinating. What was different this time was that I was able to understand where the rituals and Tradition came from instead of just knowing that "it had been done this way for centuries." I was able to have a greater appreciation for the belief system that I was participating in, as well as for the Tradition and traditions that have survived over the centuries.

In terms of actually writing this project, I really enjoyed doing it. Writing the first section, the play "Passion Without Sin," was exciting because I was able to see the scenes in my mind and hear the music playing or the characters speaking. I could really envision the production being performed, and I hope that someday that might actually be possible. I think that "Passion Without Sin" gives an accurate portrayal of the Catholic

perspective of the events of Holy Week, and I think that it would be an educational experience to anyone who would participate in or view its performance.

I also derived a great deal of pleasure from writing the paper, “The Tradition and Ritual of Holy Week,” to accompany the play, “Passion Without Sin.” I like writing and researching topics, but for me this topic was more interesting than most that I have researched. I never tired of writing, and I always wanted to find more information concerning whatever liturgy I was studying and analyzing. I feel that I am more informed on the belief and liturgical systems of the Catholic Church than I was prior to writing this, and I hope that others will be able to benefit from the work I have done.

Ultimately, I am thoroughly pleased with my experience of researching, composing, and developing this project. I feel that I have become much more educated in the beliefs of the Catholic religion, and I feel that I will most absolutely be able to benefit from this in the future. I also hope that through possibly reading this composition, other people will be able to learn more about the actual teachings of the Catholic faith and the foundations that it holds to be true.

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