

## *Holy Week and The Triduum*

Think of a wedding celebration in its many moments which are usually spread over a whole weekend (not including the months of preparation, planning, gift showers and such). The ceremony itself is usually the shortest moment, a 30-60 minute ceremony on a Saturday afternoon. Prior to the Saturday Ceremony there is the Friday Rehearsal and Dinner. After the Ceremony there is the reception and dance. Then often another gathering on Sunday to finish off the cake and open the gifts. Because a marriage is such a big a deal, it takes three days to get it all properly celebrated. It's even more so with our celebration of the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Thus, we begin Holy Week on this Passion- also called Palm Sunday, then on Thursday move into the Sacred Triduum – a word that means “three days” – during which we have what we could call one worship service in three parts, so big is the mysterious reality we celebrate. It seems like we have three different services, the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Thursday, the Celebration of the Lord's Passion on Friday, then the Easter Vigil on Saturday. But a little realized feature of the Triduum services which reveals their true unity is that the sign of the Cross, with which we begin all our Catholic liturgical services, is made only at the beginning of the Mass on Thursday, but not at the beginning of the Friday or Saturday services. Likewise, there is no final blessing or dismissal at the end of the Thursday or Friday services. It's only at the end of the Saturday Vigil service that our one service in three parts is concluded when the priest or deacon proclaims *The Mass is ended, go in peace, alleluia, alleluia!*

Please let us know what else about our faith tradition you'd like to find out more about. Contact Fr. Dan Krettek at [dkrettek@saintmaryhc.org](mailto:dkrettek@saintmaryhc.org).