

# THE PHILADELPHIA ORDINARIATE POST

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A NEWSLETTER OF THE CHURCH OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST  
THE PERSONAL ORDINARIATE OF THE CHAIR OF SAINT PETER IN THE PHILADELPHIA AREA

[WWW.ORDINARIATEPHILADELPHIA.ORG](http://WWW.ORDINARIATEPHILADELPHIA.ORG)

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March, 2016

Dear Parishioners and Friends,

Holy Week, when we commemorate, celebrate and enter into the events of our salvation, is the center of the church year, and should be at the center of each Christian's life when it comes around each year. Palm Sunday is March 20<sup>th</sup>; Good Friday the 25<sup>th</sup>, and Easter the 27<sup>th</sup>. Just as there is no resurrection without death, there is no Easter without Good Friday, and all Christians should be in church on Good Friday as well as Easter. The other key services are on Maundy Thursday (when we observe the institution of the Eucharist, and then the Agony in the Garden, with the procession of the Blessed Sacrament to the Altar of Repose and the stripping of the altar) and the Easter Vigil on Saturday night (which takes us from the darkness of the tomb to the light and glory of the risen Lord). Here is the schedule. All services are in our church in Bridgeport.

**Palm Sunday:** Palm Rite & Sung Mass, 10 a.m.  
*Confessions, 9:15 – 9:45 a.m.*

**Monday in Holy Week:** Mass, 6 p.m.

**Tuesday in Holy Week:** Mass, 6 p.m.

**Wednesday in Holy Week:** Mass, 10 a.m.

*Confessions after the Mass each day*

**Maundy Thursday:** Sung Mass, Procession to the Altar of Repose 7:30 p.m.  
The Watch

**Good Friday**

The Watch continues

Good Friday Liturgy, noon-3

Liturgy of the Word, Adoration of the Cross, Mass of the Presanctified, Preaching on the Seven Last Words

*Confessions after the service*

**Holy Saturday**

Liturgy of the Word, 9 a.m.

Vigil & First Mass of Easter, 8:30 p.m.

*Confessions 8 p.m.*

**Easter Day**

Procession & Sung Mass, 10 a.m.

*Confessions, 9:15-9:45 a.m..*

Since this is our first year with the Divine Worship (Ordinariate) Missal, a word on the special Holy Week liturgies is in order. These generally follow the pattern of the Roman Rite, and are very close to what we did last year. The Mass on Palm Sunday, which focuses on the Passion of Christ, is preceded by the Palm Gospel, Blessing of the Palms, and procession, which is our celebration of Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem. But just as the cries of the crowd change from "Hosanna" on Palm Sunday to "Crucify him!" on Good Friday, so too, we sing "Hosanna" during the procession, and "Crucify him" when we sing the Passion. Worldly glory is fleeting, and Christ's love for us abides, even when He is betrayed.

The Maundy Thursday Mass, always in the evening, is a celebration of the institution of the Mass. Vestments are white in gratitude and celebration of such a great gift. Yet the shadow of the Cross is still present, and at the end of the Mass, there is a procession with the Blessed Sacrament to the Altar of Repose, which is decorated with flowers and plants, as the Garden of Gethsemane. There the Sacrament remains until the liturgy of Good Friday. Since Jesus asked His disciples to watch an hour with Him in the Garden while He was in agony, it has been a devout custom ever since to spend an hour watching before the Altar of Repose. If there are those who are willing to take the overnight hours, we will keep the watch from the Maundy Thursday Mass until the Good Friday liturgy at noon. I will put out a sign up sheet. If we don't have the people, we will watch until midnight on Thursday, and resume the Watch at 10 on Friday.

There is no celebration of the Mass at the liturgies on Good Friday or Holy Saturday morning. The Good Friday liturgy begins with silent prayer, the priest prostrate before the altar. The Liturgy of the Word follows, centered on the Passion according to Saint John. Then comes the intercession in the form of the

Solemn Prayers: a series of biddings and collects. For the Adoration of the Cross, a crucifix is unveiled ("Behold the wood of the Cross, whereon was hung the world's salvation: O come, let us adore."). It is then held at the communion rail for the priest, the acolytes and then the congregation to come and venerate. In the final part of the liturgy, the Blessed Sacrament is brought to the altar from the Altar of Repose, and Communion given to the people. The service ends without a blessing. After the liturgy, I will preach on the Seven Last Words from the Cross, ending at 3, the hour of Christ's death. Such preaching used to be common in Philadelphia, but is now (sadly) rare. It allows us to enter more deeply into the Passion of our Lord, spending the three hours He hung on the cross in church and focused on Him.

The liturgy Saturday morning is a brief service of prayer and Scripture. More significant (and longer) is the Vigil in the evening. It begins in darkness, with the kindling of the New Fire. The Paschal Candle is lit from the Fire, and, as "The Light of Christ" is proclaimed, the hand candles of the congregation are lit from the Paschal Candle. The Exsultet, the solemn blessing of the Paschal Candle is sung, followed by readings from the Law (beginning with Creation) and the Prophets. The First Mass of Easter then begins with the singing of the Gloria and ringing of bells, which have been silent since Maundy Thursday. The Alleluia returns (having been absent since Septuagesima) before the Gospel. After the Sermon, the Font is solemnly blessed, with the renewal of our Baptismal vows. The Mass then continues from the Offertory.

Please plan to be in church for Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and the Easter Vigil, as well as Palm Sunday. Obviously Holy Week is demanding, of our time and energy. Most weeks of the year are structured around work or family or home: in Holy Week those legitimate responsibilities need to be fit in around Church. And if we are tempted to think it too demanding, we have only to think of what Jesus put into it: our demands are nothing to His. The generosity of His love for us in the Passion should call forth our loving generosity towards Him, and thus the desire to be with Him liturgically in Holy Week. Everyone should also be making a sacramental Confession before Easter if at all possible. Note the additional times provided. I am also available by appointment if those times don't suit.

#### **24 hours for the Lord**

As part of the special Year of Mercy, the Holy Father has asked that all observe *24 Hours for the Lord* Friday and Saturday, March 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>, principally by adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and special opportunities for Confession. Given our size and transition to Bridgeport, 24 hours of Exposition does not seem feasible. So with due humility that we cannot do more, we will do an abbreviated observance. On Saturday, Mass will be celebrated at 9 (in Bridgeport), followed by Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament until Benediction at noon. I will be available for confessions 9:30-10:30. If at all possible, please plan to spend some time (an hour would be the ideal) before the Blessed Sacrament on Saturday. A sacramental confession is also encouraged, but come for adoration even if confession is not in the cards for you. As may be evident, I did not get wind of this early enough to plan more than this – and my apologies for the short notice.



*Mardi Gras*

#### **Bishop Lopes's Visit**

Our new Bishop, the Most Reverend Steven Lopes, will be making a visitation to St John the Baptist on April 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>. His main time with the parish family will be Sunday morning for Mass (at 10 as usual) and coffee hour. At coffee he will make a few remarks and take questions. On Friday evening, 7:30, he will preach at Evensong & Benediction. We are inviting our friends from Holy Cross, Our Lady of the Assumption and Sacred Heart to join us for this service and a reception afterward, as our chance to thank them for their hospitality towards us, and to welcome them to our new home. While he is here he will also be meeting with the Pastoral and Finance Councils. I'm grateful for his coming to us so soon after his ordination. Please be sure this is on your calendar, and help spread the word, especially about the Evensong: an ideal time to invite folk who are or might be interested in the Ordinariate.

#### **The Move**

The movers are due to move us to the Bridgeport rectory on March 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>. The floor refinishing in the St John's rectory is done, and the painting is well along. Provision for the parish offices is not settled, but will no doubt get done after we move. Things are bound to be a little chaotic that week, so please bear with me if I don't respond right away to email or phone messages. Barring unforeseen glitches, I should be able to get messages in both media during the move, even while the phone and internet are being transferred from Mount Airy to Bridgeport. The phone remains the same, 215-247-1092. Email and web address don't change either. The new parish and rectory address is 502 Ford Street, Bridgeport, Pennsylvania 19405.

Beginning March 5<sup>th</sup>, all weekday Masses will be in Bridgeport. The times will remain the same, except for Saturday, which moves to 9 from 9:30. The others are Tuesday and Thursday at 6 p.m., Wednesday (with healing) at 10 a.m., and Friday at 8 a.m. There may be other changes as we discern the needs in our new loca-

tion. There will be no Masses on the 8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> because of the rectory move.

Work continues on our property – including treatment for a small termite infestation in the school building. More visibly, the marble of the high altar has been cleaned. Along with the Tabernacle, it has been restored to its original – and lovely – condition.

### Lent

Meanwhile, Lent continues. Every Friday there is **Stations of the Cross** and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament at 7:30. We specially blessed at our new location with splendid marble Stations. They appeal to our hearts as well as our aesthetic sense, bringing home the reality of what Jesus suffered for us. Come and see, and allow Jesus to touch your heart through this devotion. I have been giving addresses at Stations on the Eight Capital Temptations. Recordings are on the web site. Hopefully next year we can restore the Lenten suppers before Stations.

The Lenten **Quiet Day** will be in Bridgeport on Saturday, March 12<sup>th</sup>. It will follow the usual format, and we should be much more comfortable in our own space. Mass is at 9, followed by breakfast, which will be provided. Silence begins with the first address (of three). There is opportunity for confession between the addresses. The day concludes with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament at 2. Bring something for your lunch. The Quiet Day is an opportunity to draw apart from the usual routine of daily life to devote some time to God. This is helpful for all of us from time to time. Our devotions, and especially our quiet when we seek to hear God and let Him tell us what we need to hear, so often get squeezed out by seemingly more pressing concerns. We lay aside those concerns for the time of quiet, and focus on being with God, and letting Him be with us.

I offer a word of encouragement for your **Lenten Fast** and self-denial. While the Precepts of the Church require a strict fast only on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, the collects for the Lenten weekdays frequently speak of our fast. Without fasting or comparable self-denial in Lent, we miss out on much of the spiritual blessing that God would like to give us. I know it isn't always easy or pleasant, but it can be very fruitful. At this point in Lent especially, it can become tiresome. I repeat Joshua's words (himself a type of Christ, his namesake): be strong and of a good courage!

I wrote last time about our **cleaning** routine for the church and parish hall. The weekly cleaning takes only 15-20 minutes for one person, less for a family working together. If everyone able-bodied helps out, no one will need to do it more than two or three times a year. The monthly cleaning is on a Saturday after Mass. Again, if everyone who is physically able can pitch in, once a year will satisfy the obligation. You can sign up at the parish web site or at coffee hour. There will also be a special cleaning on Holy Saturday when we will also be decorating the church for Easter (since this is our first time, ideas for decorating are also most welcome), in addition to the monthly cleaning on the Saturday before Palm Sunday (March 19<sup>th</sup>).

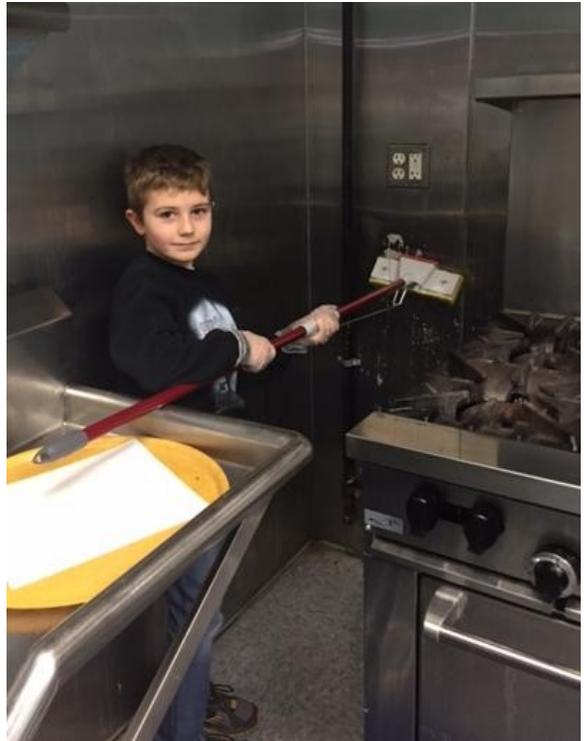
There have been some great additions to our **web site**, including an album of photos of the altar restoration, and a new Events section, which includes a calendar of our coming events. Dates and times are now easy to find. Many thanks go to our web master, Bruno Dantas!

I also want to thank the Bridgeport Council of the **Knights of Columbus** for including St John's in their Easter grocery support for those in need. Through their generosity, I have been able to help several impecunious folk connected with St John's. We are planning to have some of the Knights come to speak to any interested men of the parish about the work of the Knights of Columbus (we haven't set the date yet). I hope the men of the parish will consider becoming Knights. They do a good work and the Bridgeport Council meets in our school building.

Last but not least, thanks goes to Wendy Ewing, Bill Gatens, Chelsea Nunziato and all those who made Mardi Gras an enjoyable diversion before the beginning of Lent. Thanks!.

Yours faithfully,

Fr David Ousley



*Youthful cleaning helper*