

THE THREE DAYS TO SAVE

WHAT WE DO FROM
HOLY THURSDAY
TO EASTER SUNDAY



Holy Thursday brings the end to Lent. That night we begin the three days that are the center of our year. Please take a few moments to read this pamphlet. It asks: Why are these three days so important? What do they mean for you? It invites us all to make these three days different from all the days of the year.

From mid-winter to the end of springtime, the church keeps the great Paschal Season. It has three parts:

40 The Forty Days are the days of Lent, from Ash Wednesday to Holy Thursday. They are days of prayer, almsgiving and fasting. In these ways we try to become as fully as possible the baptized people we are, living by the gospel—and so we prepare to baptize the catechumens.

3 The Three Days are between the Forty and the Fifty. The Triduum (Latin for “three days”) begins Holy Thursday night and continues through Good Friday and Holy Saturday. The climax of the church’s whole year is in darkness between Saturday night and Sunday morning. The church keeps vigil, baptizes the catechumens and celebrates the eucharist. The Three Days conclude on Sunday afternoon.

50 The Fifty Days are the days of Easter-time, from Easter Sunday to Pentecost Sunday. They are the time of birth, marriage, festival and feasting. They are like the wedding of earth and heaven, Christ and the church. The early church allowed no kneeling and no fasting and sang “alleluia” constantly.