

FROM FR. JASON



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We are now standing at the threshold of the most sacred time in the life of the Church: Holy Week 2026. This year, the great Paschal Triduum begins with the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday, April 2. We then enter the depths of Good Friday on April 3, the silent waiting of Holy Saturday, and finally the explosion of joy on Easter Sunday, April 5. The true heart and climax of this entire mystery, the moment toward which everything converges, is the Easter Vigil on the night of April 4.

Have we been given the grace to rediscover, with astonishment and gratitude, that the Easter Vigil is not merely one beautiful liturgy among many others? It is the liturgy par excellence, the mother of all vigils, the feast that gives meaning and power to every other celebration of the Church. On this holy night, the Lord Jesus truly rises from the dead *today*, and He wants to raise *us* with Him. He wants to make us participants in His Passover, to lead us out of our personal 'Egypt' of sin, fear, division, and death into the promised land of freedom and new life.

Let us walk together through these days with open hearts. On Palm Sunday, we acclaim Jesus as King, waving our branches and singing Hosanna. But we know that this same crowd will soon cry "Crucify him!" We enter Holy Week aware of our own inconsistency, our own betrayals, so that we can be healed by the mercy of the Cross. On Holy Thursday, we gather in the Upper Room. The Lord washes our feet, the gesture of the servant, and institutes the Eucharist, the sacrament of His Body given for us. We especially cherish this night because it reveals the new commandment: "Love one another as I have loved you." The washing of feet is not a pious rite; it is the concrete way we are called to live the Gospel in our families, in our communities, in our parishes. On Good Friday, the Church stands at the foot of the Cross in silence and adoration. We venerate the wood on which hung the salvation of the world. We contemplate the Lamb who takes away the sin of the world. Have we learned to see in the Cross not only suffering, but the supreme act of love, the love that God has for each one of us personally, the love that says: "I die for you, even if you were the only one?" Then comes Holy Saturday. The tomb is sealed. The Lord has descended into hell to proclaim victory to the dead. The Church waits in prayer and fasting. And in the darkness of the evening, when night has fallen, we begin the Easter Vigil, the longest, richest, most luminous celebration of the entire year.

This Vigil is a true journey through salvation history. We start outside with the blessing of the new fire and the lighting of the Paschal Candle, the symbol of Christ, the Light that shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. The deacon or priest sings the *Exsultet*, that ancient hymn of joy that makes the whole church resound: "This is the night... the night when Christ has conquered death... O happy fault, that deserved so great a savior, O happy fault!"

Readings from the Old Testament, plus the Epistle and the Gospel, recount the whole story: creation, Abraham's sacrifice, the crossing of the Red Sea, the new covenant promised by the prophets. This is our history, your history and mine. God has never abandoned His people, and tonight He comes to save us again. After the Gloria rings out for the first time since Lent began, the bells peal, the organ thunders, the alleluia returns. The whole assembly renews its baptismal promises, renouncing Satan and professing faith in the Triune God. We are all reborn tonight!

This night changes everything. It is the night when death loses its power, when sin is forgiven, when families can be reconciled, when vocations are born, when the Church is renewed. It is the night when the Lord says to each one of us: "Fear not! I have conquered the world. You are mine. Today I have begotten you in my Resurrection."

Peace,