

## ***Save the date!***

### ***An invitation for you to celebrate how Jesus saved the world...***

They arrive in our mailbox. They are beautifully designed and full of good news. The bride and groom have scheduled the wedding! And, because they love you, they want *you* to plan ahead so that you can join in the celebration. So they send you this information, asking you to *save the date*.

During the season of Lent, Christians are full of anticipation. We are preparing to celebrate the events through which Jesus saved our world and offered us the gift of eternal life. And, because he loves you, the Lord wants *you* to plan ahead so that you can join in that celebration. Jesus is asking you to *save the date*. Actually, he is asking you to save the *dates*.

The celebrations of Holy Week are the most sacred moments of the liturgical year. During Holy Week, we hear our most important Scriptures, we celebrate life-changing sacraments, and we are surrounded by ancient gestures and solemn music. These celebrations reveal what it means to be Catholic.

The celebrations of **Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Easter Vigil** form the most important days in our faith each year. These three days are called the **Triduum** (a Latin word which means “three days”). These liturgies reveal God’s love for us. Without these days, our faith makes no sense. Every Catholic should strive to participate fully in these liturgies.

On the evening of **Holy Thursday (March 29)**, we gather to begin our Triduum. We recall how Jesus gathered with his friends around the Passover table to celebrate God’s ancient mercies. In the midst of that meal, Jesus asked us to celebrate the Eucharist “in memory of me.” During that Supper, he wrapped a towel around his waist and washed the feet of his disciples. On Holy Thursday, we humbly follow the Lord’s example, washing feet in the midst of the Mass. At the conclusion of the celebration, we go in solemn procession to the Daily Mass Chapel, praying silently with the Lord who asks us to “watch and pray” with him.

On **Good Friday evening (March 30)**, we gather in somber silence, preparing to ponder Jesus’ ultimate act of love and self-giving: his death on the Cross. We hear the Passion narrative from John’s Gospel. We faithfully pray for all who are in need of God’s grace. We receive Holy Communion which was consecrated on Holy Thursday. And we come forward to venerate the Cross of Christ, by which our sins are forgiven and our eternal life assured.

