

St John the Apostle & Evangelist

Watford



Holy Week

**The Calendar for  
Lent, Holy Week & Easter  
2018**

**Ash Wednesday:** Ash Wednesday is one of the most solemn and important days in the Church Year – today marks the beginning of Lent. Ashes are an ancient sign of penitence and from the Middle Ages it became the custom to begin Lent by being marked in ash with the sign of the cross. I encourage you all – wherever you may be – to go to Mass today, and receive the sign of the cross on your forehead as you begin your Lent Journey with Christ.

**Holy Week:** For Christians, Holy Week is the most important and exciting liturgical week of the year. It demands a great deal from us, and the rewards that it can give us back are immeasurable. This is the week when we are expected to be, and indeed should want to be, in church frequently, so that we might accompany our Lord on the last days of his earthly ministry. Our services are a little different from usual, as we celebrate in a theatrical way the saving events of this special week. But this is not spectator theatre, but real theatre, theatre in which we all participate and in which we all have a role to play! Remember, there is a Mass everyday of this week (see page 3) except Holy Saturday.

**Palm Sunday:** Today is the start of Holy Week. We begin in triumph, with the blessing of Palms as we process into church joyful, just as Jesus entered Jerusalem for the Passover in triumph. But the mood changes as the priest changes vestments from triumphal red to penitential purple as we all join in the reading of the Passion and Death of Jesus from S. Matthew.

**Maundy Thursday:** Today's Liturgy begins at St Albans Cathedral at 11am where Bishop Alan will bless the Holy Oils of Catechumens (used at Baptisms) and of the Sick, and Consecrate the Holy Oil of the Chrism, used at Confirmations, Ordinations and the Coronation of the King or Queen. The Clergy will also renew their Ordination Vows in front of the Bishop. At 8pm we then will celebrate the Mass of the Institution of the Holy Eucharist, the traditional Jewish Passover Meal in which Jesus gives a new and eternal significance to. Before we do this however, Fr David will wash the feet of some parishioners, just as Jesus did with his disciples as a sign of his loving service to all. After Mass, we go with Jesus, present in his Blessed Sacrament, in a slow solemn procession to a place of repose (representing the Garden of Gethsemane) where we will spend the night in prayer.

*\*Fr David can be contacted on (01923) 236174 or rev.davidstevenson@gmail.com*

**Good Friday:** Today is a day of utter desolation and despair, for it was on Friday, Jesus died his saving death for us. Our liturgy today begins at 1:30pm; there will be plenty of time for quiet and reflection following Holy Communion.

**Holy Saturday:** This Holy Sabbath Day is one of rest, and reflection as we remember Christ slept in the tomb this day. Today we will celebrate the coming Easter Feast as we go about quietly and prayerfully, preparing church and our homes for the Easter Celebrations which begin after Evening Prayer tonight.

**Easter Vigil:** The first Mass of Easter is traditionally held very early on Sunday morning – the time when Jesus rose from the dead. However, we now celebrate this on Saturday evening. We will begin at 7:30pm outside church where the Holy Fire will be lit and the ‘Paschal Candle’ representing Christ will break the darkness as we proclaim the Easter Praises. We will hear the history of our Salvation from the Scriptures, bless the waters of the Font, and renew our Baptismal promises. We then celebrate the First Mass of Easter as we sing our ‘*Alleluias*’ once again to welcome the Resurrection of Jesus and his triumph over death. There is a lot to do on this evening, so we round it off with Easter Celebration Drinks here at S. John’s afterwards.

**Easter Day:** We all come together again on Sunday morning at 10:30am to celebrate our Parish Easter Mass with much joy and gladness. This is the most important day in the Christian Year – this is the day that Jesus Christ was raised from the tomb and won for him a Holy People – you and I – who will live and reign with him forever and ever! Alleluia, the Lord is Risen – Alleluia, He is Risen Indeed, Alleluia! Please stay after Mass for yet more Easter Celebration Drinks!

**Confessions:** If anyone would like to make their confession (something which we all should do) before Easter Day, please contact Fr David who will be able to arrange for a priest to be available for you. Not everyone likes to come to their parish priest at confession and prefer to speak with someone they do not know and Fr David is happy to arrange a time and date that is suitable for you to do this. You can contact him on (01923) 236174 or email on [revdavidstevenson@gmail.com](mailto:revdavidstevenson@gmail.com)

Date	Day	Service/Event	Time
Beginning on 7 <sup>th</sup> February	Wednesday evenings & Friday mornings	<b>Pilgrim Lent Course: Turning to Christ.</b> <i>Please choose one day and stay with that course group.</i>	7:00pm 11:00am
14 <sup>th</sup> February	Wednesday	<b>Ash Wednesday Mass with Ashing</b>	12:15pm 7:30pm
During Lent	Friday Evenings	Alternating with the Stations of the Cross/Holy Rosary	7:00pm
18 <sup>th</sup> March	Sunday <i>Passiontide</i>	<b>5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent – Mass APCM – followed by lunch</b>	10:30am 11:45am
24 <sup>th</sup> March	Saturday	Church Cleaning and Preparation for Easter Lunch & Refreshments Provided	10am till we finish!
25 <sup>th</sup> March	Sunday	<b>HOLY WEEK BEGINS Palm Sunday</b> Mass & Procession with Palms	10:00am <i>Note Time</i>
26 <sup>th</sup> March	Monday	Said Mass with Holy Week Address	7pm
27 <sup>th</sup> March	Tuesday	Said Mass with Holy Week Address	7pm
28 <sup>th</sup> March	Wednesday	Said Mass with Holy Week Address	7pm
29 <sup>th</sup> March	<b>Maundy Thursday</b>	<b>Chrism Mass &amp; renewal of Priestly Vows at St Albans Cathedral</b> <b>Mass with Washing of Feet</b> followed by Stripping the Altars & Watch till Midnight	11am  8pm
30 <sup>th</sup> March	<b>Good Friday</b>	<b>The Liturgy of Good Friday</b> <i>Today is a day of Fasting till 3pm</i>	1:30pm
31 <sup>st</sup> March	<b>Holy Saturday</b>	<b>Easter Vigil Mass followed by Easter Celebration Drinks</b>	7:30pm
1 <sup>st</sup> April	<b>EASTER DAY</b>	<b>Parish Easter Mass followed by Easter Bubbles &amp; Nibbles!!</b>	10:30am