

## TERMS AND CUSTOMS OF THE TRIDUUM

**FASTING** throughout the Triduum or for 40 hours before Easter sunrise was a tradition in the first centuries of the Church.

**THE MASS OF THE LORD'S SUPPER** is celebrated on the evening of Holy Thursday inaugurating the Easter Triduum and commemorating the Last Supper of Jesus with his disciples. Many parishes reenact the washing of the disciples' feet during this Mass.

**MANDATUM** is the Latin word for commandment (referring to Christ's command that we love one another given to his followers at the Last Supper). Holy Thursday is also known as "Maundy Thursday" because of the *mandatum*.

The **STRIPPING OF THE ALTAR** occurs at the end of Mass on Holy Thursday. All the altar coverings are removed, symbolizing the fact that Christ was stripped of his garments upon his arrest.

The **VENERATION OF THE CROSS** is part of the liturgy on Good Friday. The clergy and congregation approach a cross or crucifix one by one, and offer a gesture of respect by either bowing or kneeling and reverently kissing the crucifix.

The **SERVICE OF LIGHT** takes place at the beginning of the Easter Vigil. The new fire and the paschal candle are blessed, the candle is lit and the community light their candles from it. Honoring Christ as the light of the world. It concludes with the singing of the *Exultet*, the Easter proclamation.

The **EASTER VIGIL READINGS** follow the story of salvation from God's creation of the world, the sparing of Noah and his family from the flood and the deliverance of God's people from Egypt to the Gospel accounts of Jesus rising from the grave.

**EVENING PRAYER** is part of the Liturgy of the Hours, the official public prayer of the Church comprised of hymns, psalms, spiritual and biblical readings and prayers. Evening Prayer on Easter Sunday concludes the Paschal Triduum.