

## **As We Continue Our Lenten Journey in the Month of March---**

Some dates to Remember

March 19-St. Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary

March 25-The Annunciation of the Lord

March 28-Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord

As the month of March comes to an end, we start the celebration of Holy Week. As you proceed with Christ to Calvary and then rejoice in the graces of Easter, may you experience anew the Lord's triumph over sin and death.

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Some Things to Reflect Upon That Are Mentioned in the Readings for Holy Week...

### PASSOVER LAMB

For the Jewish people, preparing the lamb for the Passover meal required following certain procedures, carefully outlined in the Old Testament Book of Exodus. For example, no bones of the animal are broken, and the lamb is roasted whole. The lamb is to be eaten with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.

The lamb Jesus and His apostles will eat at the Passover meal would have been sacrificed in the Temple earlier in the day. Jesus, through His death on the cross, will become the new "Lamb" who becomes my food at the Eucharistic meal. During Lent, when I say a prayer before the meals I eat, perhaps I can include a word of thanks to God for giving me the food of the Eucharist.

It might be something like "Thank you, Lord, for the food I am about to eat...and thank you for the body and blood of Christ which feeds the life within me that will never die."

### BREAD and WINE at PASSOVER

During Passover, bread and four cups of wine are an important part of the Seder meal. The dinner begins with a first cup of wine when two prayers of blessing to God are offered—one for the feast, and one for the cup of wine. Unleavened bread is eaten, dipped by hand into a dish of sauce. The first part of the Hallel (taken from Psalms 112-113) is sung, and the second cup of wine is drunk as a memorial to the Exodus. The lamb is eaten along with the herbs and unleavened bread, and the third cup of wine is drunk with thanksgiving to God for the meal and hope for the future. The rite ends with a fourth cup of wine (hope for the Messiah) and the singing of the rest of the Hallel.

Note: Scripture scholars often pose the question: which of the four cups did Jesus raise and say "This is my blood" during the Passover meal with the apostles?

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*Let us keep each other in Prayer*

*Almighty and merciful God, your Son took flesh in human weakness to deliver the weak. By the mystery of His Death and Resurrection, protect us against the forces of sin and death against which our own strength cannot prevail, through the same Christ our Lord. AMEN*