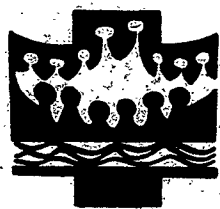


Insights In Liturgy

By Pam Schaeffer



The Easter Triduum: Indivisible

Easter, the feast of the Christian Passover, is the single feast that comes to us from the time of the apostles. Second century documentation records the celebration of the Christian Passover as a single liturgical service on the most significant night in the lives of the early Christians. It was a unitive celebration of the death and resurrection of Christ in the form of an evening vigil.

Gradually through the centuries Easter was extended to include preparatory days of Holy Thursday and Good Friday. Later the Lenten period of several weeks developed and the time after Easter became the 50 days that culminated in the feast of Pentecost. By the fourth century, Easter was seen as a time when Christian communities renewed themselves by bringing new members into their lives. The primary Easter celebration was still the vigil service with its emphasis on praise for the Paschal Mystery, but since the feast was so intimately bound to baptism it became coupled both theologically and ritually. The once simple liturgical calendar was embellished and a great emphasis was put on the historicization of the actions and events which ac-

complished salvation. The Pascha was divided and no longer could one see the celebration or the two elements (the death and resurrection) in one event.

This background may be helpful for understanding Easter in the liturgical year as an event that takes place over three chronological days and which is at the same time only one event. The Easter triduum of Thursday, Friday and Sunday is really one liturgical experience — the basic significance of the vigil feast, the watchful praise of the death and resurrection of the Lord, should be the controlling image of the triduum liturgies.

The Easter triduum is not some kind of historical walk through the death and rising of Jesus. The Paschal event is indivisible just as the Passover of the Jews includes their events of passing over to freedom from slavery in Egypt to the contemporary experience of the Holocaust. Jesus does not die on Good Friday and rise on Easter Sunday. Easter is three days, or to put it another way, the three days are one. The liturgy of the Sacred Triduum affirms that it is impossible to separate death and resurrection in Christ and that in his glorification are still found the signs of his suffering and death. Holy Thursday is Easter. Good Friday is Easter. And the Easter Vigil is Easter.

Harley School. Adults, \$2; students, \$1.

ART — Student exhibition now through May 2 in the foyer, Nazareth College Arts Center, free.

CHILDREN'S MINI SERIES — The Playhouse Puppet Players will present "Aladdin and the Magic Lamp," a production suggested for ages 4-8, at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., Saturday, April 3, room A-14, Nazareth College Arts Center. Tickets are \$1 and will be on sale one hour before each performance.

ART RECEPTION — For Paula Naselli, recipient of the Gordon Steele Memorial Medal for her collage, "Memories Past," 4-6 p.m., Sunday, April 4, at Casa Italiana, Nazareth College, free. Exhibition of her works can be seen 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., weekdays through April 16, free.

MUSIC — Nazareth College Percussion Ensemble, 8 p.m., Monday, April 5, in the main auditorium, Nazareth College Arts Center, free.

SEMINAR — Father Paul A. Schweitzer, SJ, of the Pontifical Catholic University in Rio de Janeiro and the Institute of Advanced Study in Princeton, will conduct a math colloquium sponsored by the math department at St. John Fisher College, at 2 p.m., Thursday, April 1. The lecture is free and open to the public.

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NFP SESSIONS — Sponsored by Natural Family Planning Education, 7:30-9 p.m., Monday, April 5; Kearney Building, St. Mary's Hospital.

CARD PARTY — For benefit of Susan B. Anthony House, 1 p.m., Thursday, April 1, at Brighton Presbyterian Church, 1775 East Ave. Tickets are \$1.25 and may be purchased at the door.

BUSINESS FILMS — "Claude" Group Dynamics — Group Think" at 12:12 p.m., Monday, April 5, room 333, Rochester Public Library.

AUTHOR SPEAKS — Madeleine L'Engle, young people's author, will speak informally, read from her work and autograph her books at 7:30 p.m., tonight, Wednesday, March 31, at the Wilson Arts Center/The

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