



# MOST PRECIOUS BLOOD of JESUS PARISH

*A Roman Catholic Personal Parish  
for the Extraordinary Form  
in the Diocese of Pittsburgh.*

**Passion Sunday**

**April 6, A.D. 2025**

## **Mass Schedule**

**Sundays: 8am, 11am**  
**Monday: 12 Noon**  
**Tuesday: 12 Noon & 7pm**  
**Wednesday through Friday: 12 Noon**  
**1st Friday of Month: 12 Noon & 7pm**  
**Saturday: 9am**

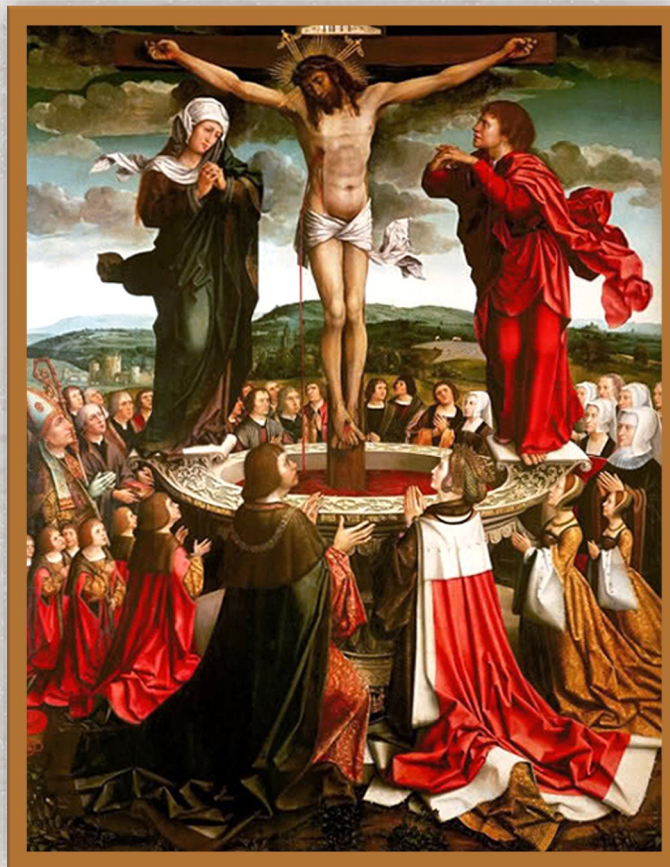
## **Confession Schedule**

**Sundays: 7-8am; 10-11am**  
**Monday-Friday: 11:15-11:45am**  
**Tuesdays: also 6:15-6:45pm**  
**Saturday: 8-8:45am**

*Please consult the Liturgical Schedule on page 2 for particular modifications to this standard schedule.*

## **Clergy & Staff**

**Canon William Avis, Pastor**  
*pastor@mpboj.com*  
**Canon Ross Bourgeois, Parochial Vicar**  
*canon.bourgeois@institute-christ-king.org*  
**Geraldine Redic, Business Manager/Safe Environment**  
*businessmanager@mpboj.com*  
**Gail Buchman, Administrative Assistant**  
*office@mpboj.com*  
**Charles R. Friend, Budgets & Financial Reporting**  
*temporalaffairs@mpboj.com*  
**John Rokosz, Music Director**  
*music@mpboj.com*  
**Jeannine M. Goelz, Office Coordinator**  
*volunteer@mpboj.com*  
**Jack Aul, Project Superintendent**  
*projectsuper@mpboj.com*  
**George Wright, ERT/Usher Coordinator**  
*usher-ert@mpboj.com*  
**Michael Eyler, Catechism Administrator**  
*catechism@mpboj.com*



## **Contact Information**

**Parish Office Hours: Monday - Friday 9am-2pm**  
**3250 California Avenue**  
**Pittsburgh, PA 15212**  
**Phone 412-761-1508**  
**Fax: 412-761-6454**  
**Email: office@mpboj.com**  
**Website: mostpreciousbloodparish.org or mpboj.com**

**Pennsylvania Childline** (report suspected child abuse)  
**1-800-932-0313**  
**Protection of Children and Youth** (diocesan office)  
**1-888-808-1235**



***Institute of Christ the King Sovereign Priest***

***Veritatem Facientes In Caritate—Furthering the Truth in Charity***

## Liturgical Schedule

### Sunday, April 6, 2025

Passion Sunday, 1st Class—Violet

8AM LM *Pro populo*

11AM HM James & Karen Paras Wed. Aniv. (Family)

Processional: *Anima Christi* (pg. 89)

Recessional: *Soul of My Savior* (pg. 92)

### Monday, April 7, 2025

Lenten Feria, 3rd Class—Violet

12PM LM The O'Connor Family (Paul & Hannah Allen)

### Tuesday, April 8, 2025

Lenten Feria, 3rd Class—Violet

12PM LM + Robert P. Blume, M.D. (Elizabeth R. Blume)

7PM LM + William F. Ryan (Joseph E. Wilson)

### Wednesday, April 9, 2025

Lenten Feria, 3rd Class—Violet

12PM LM + Robert & Gloria Mosberg (Michael & Christina Eyler)

### Thursday, April 10, 2025

Lenten Feria, 3rd Class—Violet

12PM LM SGR Theatre Group Members (Clare Young)

8PM Holy Hour of Adoration

9PM Compline

### Friday, April 11, 2025 *Abstinence*

Our Lady of Sorrows, 4th Class—White, *Comm. of Feria*

12PM LM Liv. & Decd Members of Conf. of Christian Mothers

6:30 PM Stations of the Cross

7:15 PM LM Spiritual & Temporal Welfare of Albert & Yolanda DiBucci (Eva Zigarovich)

### Saturday, April 12, 2025

Lenten Feria, 3rd Class—Violet

*Commemoration of St. Leo the Great*

9AM LM Spiritual & Temporal Welfare of Theresa Kish (Robert & Maria Kish)

### Sunday, April 13, 2025

Palm Sunday, 1st Class—Violet

8AM LM For Vocations

10:30 AM HM *Pro populo*

LM = Low Mass; LMO = Low Mass with Organ; HM = High/Solemn Mass

## Our Weekly Offerings

*Sunday, March 30, 2025*

Offertory .....	\$15,831.00
Parish Appeal 2025 .....	\$243.00
Poor Box .....	\$2,435.00
Parish Improvement .....	\$5.00
Easter Flower Offering .....	61.00
Catholic Campaign for Human Development.....	\$75.00
Good Friday (Holy Land) .....	\$5.00
Sacred Heart Retreat Center.....	\$5,481.00
ICRSS/Provincial Appeal .....	\$180.00

*Faith Direct Report (March 1 – 15, 2025)*

Offertory (incl. Ash Wednesday).....	\$10,382.78
Parish Appeal 2025 .....	\$870.00
Parish Improvement .....	\$1,130.00
Poor Box .....	\$410.00
ICRSS/Provincial Appeal .....	\$240.00

Attendance: 8AM 469; 11AM 415; Total 884

## **Parish Group News**

RESPECT LIFE GROUP (RLG) The Gospel of Life is at the heart of this group. RLG provides support to promote a culture of life through three working subcommittees: Legislation, Education, and Advocacy. *Thank you to all who participated in the talk with Dr. Blaise Milburn at last month's RLG meeting. And a special thank you to Dr. Milburn for the informative talk on NaProTechnology.*

CONFRATERNITY OF CHRISTIAN MOTHERS will next meet on **Saturday, May 6th, beginning with the 9AM Mass. Next month's topic will be "Tithing".** Please contact [christianmothers@mpboj.com](mailto:christianmothers@mpboj.com) for more information. All adult women are welcome to attend.

SURSUM CORDA-YOUNG ADULTS GROUP is a nationwide initiative to foster the spiritual lives of Catholic adults, AGES 18–35, at Institute apostolates. To sign up for the mailing list and receive notice of future events, text **Corda** to 84576 and choose "SC Pittsburgh." For more information, contact José Piñero at 863.450.5143 or [sursumcorda@mpboj.com](mailto:sursumcorda@mpboj.com). Join us for lunch **today @ 1:30pm** - Red Robin - 175 E Waterfront Dr, Homestead

## **Holy Week Schedule**

Sunday, April 13—Palm Sunday: **10:30am High Mass** with blessing of palms and procession (8 am Low Mass as usual)

Wednesday, April 16—Tenebrae: **7pm Matins & Lauds**

Thursday, April 17—Holy Thursday: **7pm Solemn Mass, Vespers, Adoration**

Friday, April 18—Good Friday: **10am Confessions; 11am Stations of the Cross; 12 noon Mass of the Presanctified & Vespers**

Saturday, April 19—Holy Saturday: **7pm Easter Vigil**

Sunday, April 20—Easter Sunday: **8am Low Mass with organ; 11am Solemn Mass followed by the Blessing of the Lambs**

## **LENTEN REGULATIONS**

1. Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of fast and abstinence. The Fridays of Lent are days of abstinence in the U.S.
2. The obligation of abstinence (refraining from eating meat) begins at the age of 14. The law of fasting (limiting oneself to one full meal and two lighter meals) obliges all between the ages of 18–59. No one should consider this obligation lightly.
3. Those individuals who have a medical condition in which fasting may be considered harmful are not obliged to fast, but should perform some other act of penance or charity.
4. Pastors and parents are to see to it that minors, though not bound by the law of fast and abstinence, are educated in the authentic sense of penance and encouraged to do acts of penance suitable to their age.
5. All members of the Christian Faithful are encouraged to do acts of penance and charity during the Lenten season beyond what is prescribed by the law.
6. As a general rule, a request for a dispensation from the obligation of abstinence on Fridays of Lent will not be considered unless some serious reason is present. (Attendance at social events, banquets, wedding rehearsals or receptions, or funeral wakes are not considered sufficient reason to request a dispensation.)

## **Stations of the Cross During Lent**

A venerable devotion during Lent is the *Via Crucis* or Way of the Cross. Stations are held at **6:30 p.m. on the Fridays of Lent**, followed by Holy Mass. On Good Friday, April 18th, Stations will be at 11 a.m. The faithful may gain a plenary indulgence under the usual conditions by praying the *Via Crucis*. This may be done privately or during public devotions.



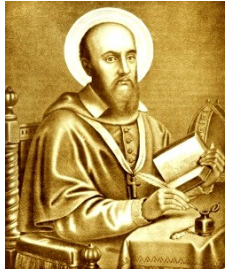
# Introduction to the Devout Life

By St. Francis de Sales

## How to Strengthen the Heart Against Temptation

(Book 4, Chapter 10)

Examine from time to time what are the dominant passions of your soul, and having ascertained this, mold your life, so that in



thought, word and deed you may as far as possible counteract them. For instance, if you know that you are disposed to be vain, reflect often upon the emptiness of this earthly life, call to mind how burdensome all mere earthly vanities will be to the conscience at the hour of death, how unworthy of a generous heart, how puerile and childish, and the like. See that your words have no tendency to foster your vanity,

and even though you may seem to be doing so but reluctantly, strive to despise it heartily, and to rank yourself in every way among its enemies. Indeed, by dint of steady opposition to anything, we teach ourselves to hate even that which we began by liking. Do as many lowly, humble deeds as lie in your power, even if you perform them unwillingly at first; for by this means you will form a habit of humility, and you will weaken your vanity, so that when temptation arises, you will be less predisposed to yield, and stronger to resist. Or if you are given to avarice, think often of the folly of this sin, which makes us the slave of what was made only to serve us; remember how when we die we must leave all we possess to those who come after us, who may squander it, ruin their own souls by misusing it, and so forth. Speak against covetousness, commend the abhorrence in which it is held by the world; and constrain yourself to abundant almsgiving, as also to not always using opportunities of accumulation. If you have a tendency to trifle with the affections, often call to mind what a dangerous amusement it is for yourself and others; how unworthy a thing it is to use the noblest feelings of the heart as a mere pastime; and how readily such trifling becomes mere levity. Let your conversation turn on purity and simplicity of heart, and strive to frame your actions accordingly, avoiding all that savors of affectation or flirting.

In a word, let your time of peace—that is to say, the time when you are not beset by temptations to sin—be used in cultivating the graces most opposed to your natural difficulties, and if opportunities for their exercise do not arise, go out of your way to seek them, and by so doing you will strengthen your heart against future temptations.

F L O R I A N I



THURSDAY | APRIL 10th | 7:00PM

Regina Coeli Parish | Assumption Church  
Bellevue, PA  
FREE ADMISSION



Join us for Pittsburgh's Lenten Campaign's

## CLOSING EVENT

WITH

## Abby Johnson!



Sunday, April 13th (Palm Sunday)

Divine Mercy Parish, Epiphany Church

4:00 pm: FREE Talk by Abby Johnson

5:00 pm: Eucharistic Procession to  
Planned Parenthood, returning  
to the church for Benediction

(NOTE: There will NOT be Mass!)

Abby Johnson's abrupt exit from Planned Parenthood and pro-life conversion made national headlines in 2009. She created an exit strategy for abortion industry whistleblowers by establishing *And Then There Were None* in 2012 and launched a national support hotline for pregnant women and mothers with complex needs called *LoveLine* in 2019. Armed with truth, Abby continues to be a voice for the unborn while dismantling the abortion industry from the inside out through peaceful, prayerful outreach.



We are excited that Abby Johnson will be joining us in Pittsburgh as we close our Lenten 40 Days for Life campaign with a Eucharistic Procession to Planned Parenthood, led by our beloved Bishop Waltersheid! Immediately before the procession, Abby will give a talk in the church.

This is a free event, however there will be an opportunity to support her ministry through a free-will collection taken in the church. Please be as generous as you can!

A DIAPER COLLECTION FOR LOCAL PREGNANCY CENTERS WILL TAKE PLACE DURING THIS EVENT. DROP OFF DIAPERS IN FRONT!

So that we will know approximately how many are attending, RSVP to Nikki at [nbruni@40daysforlifepgh.com](mailto:nbruni@40daysforlifepgh.com), or call 412-926-9413



## Rosary Rally April 12th

From the earliest age, innocent children across our country are being bombarded with gender-confusing messages and an immoral lifestyle presented as normal and attractively-presented to shatter their innocence. Please gather together to join in a Rosary Rally to pray for God to protect their innocence at MPBOJ parking lot on 12 April 2025 at 12 noon. Contact Mary Brodka at 724 816-5573 for further information.

## Retreat Center Donations

Donations for the completion of renovations at the Institute of Christ the King's *Sacred Heart Retreat Center* in Burlington, Wisconsin are still being accepted. Simply drop your donation in the collection basket, with a memo on your check or envelope noting "Retreat Center". Checks may be made payable to the parish (MPBOJ).

## No Catechism, Coffee, Donuts Next Two Weeks

Catechism classes are on hiatus for two weeks after today, and the "Coffee & Donuts" which usually follow the 8 a.m. Low Mass are also cancelled on Palm Sunday and Easter. All will resume April 27th.

## Betsy Ann Candy – Pickup Today

Betsy Ann Easter Candy orders may be picked up today after both Masses in Room 102 of the Parish Hall.



## Keep Parish Records Up to Date!

If you move, change your phone number or your email address, please be sure to contact the parish office ([office@mpboj.com](mailto:office@mpboj.com)) to update your parish record. In addition, don't forget to update your email address in the Flocknote system.

## To All of Our Guests...

The Canons and faithful of Most Precious Blood of Jesus Parish welcome you to our parish and to the Traditional Mass, celebrated in accordance with the classical Roman Liturgy. This personal parish was established by Bishop David Zubik on July 1, 2019, the feast of *The Most Precious Blood of Jesus*. Our parishioners come from all over the diocese for the prayerful tranquility of the Traditional Mass.

According to liturgical tradition, Holy Communion is received on the tongue, kneeling at the communion rail. Reception of Holy Communion is the sign of Divine and Ecclesial unity, so only practicing Catholics, free from mortal sin and who have observed the Eucharistic fast, may present themselves for Holy Communion. Visitors who are not of the Catholic Faith are welcome to join in prayer, but are requested not to receive Holy Communion. Those who need a low gluten Host should inform the usher as they approach the Communion rail, at the end of the distribution line for Holy Communion.

For more information about the parish, contact the Parish Office at 412-761-1508.

The pastoral care of Most Precious Blood of Jesus Parish is provided by  
THE INSTITUTE OF CHRIST THE KING SOVEREIGN PRIEST.



MOST PRECIOUS  
BLOOD of JESUS PARISH

### General Information

**Bulletin Announcements:** Requests for proposed bulletin announcements must be submitted **ten days in advance** of the publication date. Submit to [bulletin@mpboj.com](mailto:bulletin@mpboj.com).

**Mass Intentions:** The Parish Mass Intention Registry is currently CLOSED. Mass intentions are accepted at specific periods in the year and announced in the bulletin. Instructions and forms are available during those periods.

**Parish News:** The parish uses **Flocknote** to circulate news and information. Please text MPBOJ to 84576 from your cell phone and follow the instructions, or check the parish website ([MPBOJ.com](http://MPBOJ.com)) for more information.

**Parish Materials/Events:** At both church entrances, there are racks containing church forms, reading materials and prayer cards. Please feel free to take what you need, but do not leave any materials without explicit permission from the Pastor. Parish events publicized on the bulletin boards at both entrances. If you are involved in an event that you would like to publicize or schedule, please provide a copy of the notice or request to [office@mpboj.com](mailto:office@mpboj.com) for approval.

**On Line Contributions:** Most Precious Blood of Jesus Parish greatly appreciates all donations and contributions. If interested in making on-line contributions via Faith Direct, please visit: [membership.faithdirect.net/PA678](http://membership.faithdirect.net/PA678) or call 866-507-8757.

**Catholic Faith Formation and Spiritual needs:** For those seeking to join the Catholic faith, or who wish spiritual direction, please call the Parish Office for information.

**Rosary:** The Rosary is publicly recited one-half hour before most parish Masses.

### Sacramental Information

**Penance:** The parish offers the sacrament of penance forty-five minutes prior to each Mass. Confessionals are located on the Epistle (right-hand) side of the church, with a sign indicating where to stand for the line. There is an accessible confessional located on the right side of the double confessional, where the kneeler can be lifted for easy access. Both sides of the double confessional may be occupied at the same time. Start your confession when you hear the priest's blessing.

**Infant Baptism:** Baptism should be administered within two weeks of birth. Please call the Parish Office prior to the baby's birth, to begin arrangements.

**Holy Matrimony:** Couples planning to marry at the parish must contact the Parish Office at least six months in advance, to schedule an appointment to begin marriage preparation instructions.

**First Holy Communion and Confirmation:** School age students receive First Holy Communion and the sacrament of Confirmation as part of our Catechism Program. Please see the parish website for registration instructions.

**Extreme Unction/Anointing of the Sick:** If you need the assistance of a priest for someone who is dying, please contact the Parish Office at 412-761-1508. If after hours, listen to the prompts and select option #1.

**Funerals:** The funeral home should directly contact the Parish Office to make Mass and burial arrangements.

**Sacramental Records/Letters of Good Standing:** To obtain sacramental records or a letter in good standing, please contact the Parish Office at 412-761-1508 for instructions.

### Safety Awareness

In an effort to make Most Precious Blood of Jesus Parish a safe place for all parishioners and visitors alike, please be mindful of our urban neighborhood and the constant traffic. If visiting the parish for Mass or a social event, parents should ensure their children's safety by maintaining prudent watch and supervision of their children at all times. When children are registered and/or involved in a parish related activity overseen by a parish program manager (e.g., Children's Choir; Catechism; altar server practice), at least one parent/guardian must remain on site for the duration of the program.

*Most Precious Blood of Jesus Parish reserves all copyrights to the contents of the bulletin.*

# Passiontide from *The Liturgical Year* by Dom Guéranger

## THE HISTORY OF PASSIONTIDE AND HOLY WEEK

After having proposed the forty-days' fast of Jesus in the desert to the meditation of the faithful during the first four weeks of Lent, the holy Church gives the two weeks which still remain before Easter to the commemoration of the Passion. She would not have her children come to that great day of the immolation of the Lamb, without having prepared for it by compassionating with Him in the sufferings He endured in their stead.

The most ancient sacramentaries and antiphonaries of the several Churches attest, by the prayers, the lessons, and the whole liturgy of these two weeks, that the Passion of our Lord is now the one sole thought of the Christian world. During Passion-week, a saint's feast, if it occur, will be kept; but Passion Sunday admits no feast, however solemn it may be; and even on those which are kept during the days intervening between Passion and Palm Sunday, there is always made a commemoration of the Passion, and the holy images are not allowed to be uncovered.

We cannot give any historical details upon the first of these two weeks; its ceremonies and rites have always been the same as those of the four preceding ones. [It would be out of place to enter here on a discussion with regard to the name *Mediana* under which title we find Passion Sunday mentioned both in ancient liturgies and in Canon Law.] We, therefore, refer the reader to the following chapter, in which we treat of the mysteries peculiar to Passiontide. The second week, on the contrary, furnishes us with abundant historical details; for there is no portion of the liturgical year which has interested the Christian world so much as this, or which has given rise to such fervent manifestations of piety.

This week was held in great veneration even as early as the third century, as we learn from St. Denis, bishop of Alexandria, who lived at that time [*Epist. ad Basilidem*, Canon i]. In the following century, we find St. John Chrysostom, calling it the *great week* [*Hom. xxx in Genes.*]:- 'Not,' says the holy doctor, 'that it has more days in it than other weeks, or that its days are made up of more hours than other days; but we call it *great*, because of the great mysteries which are then celebrated.' We find it called also by other names: the *painful week* (*hebdomada poenosa*), on account of the sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of the fatigue required from us in celebrating them; the *week of indulgence*, because sinners are then received to penance; and, lastly, *Holy Week*, in allusion to the holiness of the mysteries which are commemorated during these seven days. This last name is the one under which it most generally goes with us; and the very days themselves are, in many countries, called by the same name, *Holy Monday, Holy Tuesday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday*.

The severity of the lenten fast is increased during these its last days; the whole energy of the spirit of penance is now brought out. Even with us, the dispensation which allows the use of eggs ceases towards the middle of this week. The eastern Churches, faithful to their ancient traditions, have kept up a most rigorous abstinence ever since the Monday of Quinquagesima week. During the whole of this long period, which they call *Xerophagia*, they have been allowed nothing but dry food. In the early ages, fasting during Holy Week was carried to the utmost limits that human nature could endure. We learn from St. Epiphanius [*Expositio fidei*, ix *Haeres.* xxii.], that there were some of the Christians who observed a strict fast from Monday morning to cock-crow of Easter Sunday. Of course it must have been very few of the faithful who could go so far as this. Many

passed two, three, and even four consecutive days, without tasting any food; but the general practice was to fast from Maundy Thursday evening to Easter morning. Many Christians in the east, and in Russia, observe this fast even in these times. Would that such severe penance were always accompanied by a firm faith and union with the Church, out of which the merit of such penitential works is of no avail for salvation!

Another of the ancient practices of Holy Week were the long hours spent, during the night, in the churches. On Maundy Thursday, after having celebrated the divine mysteries in remembrance of the Last Supper, the faithful continued a long time in prayer [St. John Chrysostom, *Hom. xxx in Genes.*]. The night between Friday and Saturday was spent in almost uninterrupted vigil, in honor of our Lord's burial [St. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catech.* xviii.]. But the longest of all these vigils was that of Saturday, which was kept up till Easter Sunday morning. The whole congregation joined in it: they assisted at

the final preparation of the catechumens, as also at the administration of Baptism; nor did they leave the church until after the celebration of the holy Sacrifice, which was not over till sunrise [*Const. Apost. lib. 1. cap. xviii.*].

Cessation from servile work was, for a long time, an obligation during Holy Week. The civil law united with that of the Church in order to bring about this solemn rest from toil and business, which so eloquently expresses the state of mourning of the Christian world. The thought of the sufferings and death of Jesus was the one pervading thought: the Divine Offices and prayer were the sole occupation of the people: and, indeed, all the strength of the body was needed for the support of the austerities of fasting and abstinence. We can readily understand what an impression was made upon men's minds, during the whole of the rest of the year, by this universal suspension of the ordinary routine of life. Moreover, when we call to mind how, for five full weeks, the severity of Lent had waged war on the sensual appetites, we can imagine the simple and honest joy wherewith was welcomed the feast of Easter, which brought both the regeneration of the soul, and respite to the body.

In the preceding volume, we mentioned the laws of the Theodosian Code, which forbade all law business during the forty days preceding Easter. This law of Gratian and Theodosius, which was published in 380, was extended by Theodosius in 389; this new decree forbade all pleadings during the seven days before, and the seven days after, Easter. We meet with several allusions to this then recent law, in the homilies of St. John Chrysostom, and in the sermons of St. Augustine. In virtue of this decree, each of these fifteen days was considered, as far as the courts of law were concerned, as a Sunday.

But Christian princes were not satisfied with the mere suspension of human justice during these days, which are so emphatically days of mercy: they would, moreover, pay homage, by an external act, to the fatherly goodness of God, who has deigned to pardon a guilty world, through the merits of the death of His Son. The Church was on the point of giving reconciliation to repentant sinners, who had broken the chains of sin whereby they were held captives; Christian princes were ambitious to imitate this their mother, and they ordered that prisoners should be loosened from their chains, that the prisons should be thrown open, and that freedom should be restored to those who had fallen under the sentence of human tribunals. The only exception made was that of criminals whose freedom would have exposed their families or society to great danger. The name of Theodosius stands prominent in these acts of mercy. We are told by St.



John Chrysostom [Homil. in magn. Hebdom. Homil. xxx. in Genes. Homil. vi ad popul. Antioch.] that this emperor sent letters of pardon to the several cities, ordering the release of prisoners, and granting life to those that had been condemned to death, and all this in order to sanctify the days preceding the Easter feast. The last emperors made a law of this custom, as we find in one of St. Leo's sermons, where he thus speaks of their clemency: 'The Roman emperors have long observed this holy practice. In honor of our Lord's Passion and Resurrection, they humbly withhold the exercise of their sovereign justice, and, laying aside the severity of their laws, they grant pardon to a great number of criminals. Their intention in this is to imitate the divine goodness by their own exercise of clemency during these days, when the world owes its salvation to the divine mercy. Let, then, the Christian people imitate their princes, and let the example of kings induce subjects to forgive each other their private wrongs; for, surely it is absurd that private laws should be less unrelenting than those which are public. Let trespasses be forgiven, let bonds be taken off, let offences be forgotten, let revenge be stifled; that thus the sacred feast may, by both divine and human favors, find us all happy and innocent.' [Sermon xl. de Quadragesima, ii].

This Christian amnesty was not confined to the Theodosian Code; we find traces of it in the laws of several of our western countries. We may mention France as an example. Under the first race of its kings, St. Eligius bishop of Noyon, in a sermon for Maundy Thursday, thus expresses himself: 'On this day, when the Church grants indulgence to penitents and absolution to sinners, magistrates, also, relent in their severity and grant pardon to the guilty. Throughout the whole world prisons are thrown open; princes show clemency to criminals; masters forgive their slaves.' [Sermon x]. Under the second race, we learn from the Capitularia of Charlemagne, that bishops had a right to exact from the judges, for the love of Jesus Christ (as it is expressed), that prisoners should be set free on the days preceding Easter [We learn from the same capitularia, that this privilege was also extended to Christmas and Pentecost]; and should the magistrates refuse to obey, the bishops could refuse them admission into the church [Capitular. lib. vi.]. And lastly, under the third race, we find Charles VI, after quelling the rebellion at Rouen, giving orders, later on, that the prisoners should be set at liberty, because it was *Painful Week*, and very near to the Easter feast [Joan Juvénal des Ursins, year 1382].

A last vestige of this merciful legislation was a custom observed by the parliament of Paris. The ancient Christian practice of suspending its sessions during the whole of Lent, had long been abolished: it was not till the Wednesday of Holy Week that the house was closed, which it continued to be from that day until after Low Sunday. On the Tuesday of Holy Week, which was the last day granted for audiences, the parliament repaired to the palace prisons, and there one of the grand presidents, generally the last installed, held a session of the house. The prisoners were questioned; but, without any formal judgment, all those whose case seemed favorable, or who were not guilty of some capital offence, were set at liberty.

The revolutions of the last eighty years have produced in every country in Europe the secularization of society, that is to say, the effacing from our national customs and legislation of everything which had been introduced by the supernatural element of Christianity. The favorite theory of the last half century or more, has been that all men are equal. The people of the ages of faith had something far more convincing than theory, of the sacredness of their rights. At the approach of those solemn anniversaries which so forcibly remind us of the justice and mercy of God, they beheld princes abdicating, as it were, their scepter, leaving in God's hands the punishment of the guilty, and assisting at the holy Table of Paschal Communion side by side with those very men, whom, a few days before, they had been keeping chained in prison for the good of society. There was one thought, which, during these days, was strongly brought before all nations: it was the thought of God, in whose eyes all men are sinners; of God, from whom alone proceed justice and pardon. It was in consequence of this deep Christian feeling, that we find so many diplomas and charts of the ages of faith speaking of the days of Holy Week as being the *reign of Christ*: such an event,

they say, happened on such a day, 'under the reign of our Lord Jesus Christ: *regnante Domino nostro Jesu Christo*.

When these days of holy and Christian equality were over, did subjects refuse submission to their sovereigns? Did they abuse the humility of their princes, and take occasion for drawing up what modern times call the *rights of man*? No: that same thought which had inspired human justice to humble itself before the cross of Jesus, taught the people their duty of obeying the powers established by God. The exercise of power, and submission to that power, both had God for their motive. They who wielded the scepter might be of various dynasties: the respect for authority was ever the same. Now-a-days, the liturgy has none of her ancient influence on society; religion has been driven from the world at large, and her only life and power is now with the consciences of individuals; and as to political institutions, they are but the expression of human pride, seeking to command, or refusing to obey.

And yet the fourth century, which, in virtue of the Christian spirit, produced the laws we have been alluding to, was still rife with the pagan element. How comes it that we, who live in the full light of Christianity, can give the name of progress to a system which tends to separate society from every thing that is supernatural? Men may talk as they please, there is but one way to secure order, peace, morality, and security to the world; and that is God's way, the way of faith, of living in accordance with the teachings and the spirit of faith. All other systems can, at best, but flatter those human passions, which are so strongly at variance with the mysteries of our Lord Jesus Christ, which we are now celebrating.

We must mention another law made by the Christian emperors in reference to Holy Week. If the spirit of charity, and a desire to imitate divine mercy, led them to decree the liberation of prisoners; it was but acting consistently with these principles, that, during these days when our Savior shed His Blood for the emancipation of the human race, they should interest themselves in what regards slaves. Slavery, a consequence of sin, and the fundamental institution of the pagan world, had received its death-blow by the preaching of the Gospel; but its gradual abolition was left to individuals, and to their practical exercise of the principle of Christian fraternity. As our Lord and His apostles had not exacted the immediate abolition of slavery, so, in like manner, the Christian emperors limited themselves to passing such laws as would give encouragement to its gradual abolition. We have an example of this in the Justinian Code, where this prince, after having forbidden all law-proceedings during Holy Week and the week following, lays down the following exception: 'It shall, nevertheless, be permitted to give slaves their liberty; in such manner, that the legal acts necessary for their emancipation shall not be counted as contravening this present enactment.' [Cod. lib. iii. tit. xii. de feriis. Leg. 8.]. This charitable law of Justinian was but applying to the fifteen days of Easter the decree passed by Constantine, which forbade all legal proceedings on the Sundays throughout the year, excepting only such acts as had for their object the emancipation of slaves.

But long before the peace given her by Constantine, the Church had made provision for slaves, during these days when the mysteries of the world's redemption were accomplished. Christian masters were obliged to grant them total rest from labor during this holy fortnight. Such is the law laid down in the apostolic constitutions, which were compiled previously to the fourth century. 'During the great week preceding the day of Easter, and during the week that follows, slaves rest from labor, inasmuch as the first is the week of our Lord's Passion, and the second is that of His Resurrection; and the slaves require to be instructed upon these mysteries.' [Const. Apost. lib. viii. cap. xxxiii].

Another characteristic of the two weeks, upon which we are now entering, is that of giving more abundant alms, and of greater fervor in the exercise of works of mercy. St. John Chrysostom assures us that such was the practice of his times; he passes an encomium on the faithful, many of whom redoubled, at this period, their charities to the poor, which they did out of this motive: that they might, in some slight measure, imitate the divine generosity, which is now so unreservedly pouring out its graces on sinners.