



Dear parishioners and friends of the Bread of Life / Pan de Vida Family of Parishes,

At the most recent Family of Parishes Pastoral Council we, the Worship Commission (the liturgy personnel from all five campuses), presented our proposal for a different approach to the way Holy Week will be celebrated in our Family of Parishes.

Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Vigil, together comprise a single celebration, the Paschal Triduum. These celebrations are not intended to be celebrated disconnected from one another in different locations. We are proposing a common celebration of the Holy Week Liturgies.

Within the next 18 months, we will experience a dramatic change in priest availability for the Bread of Life Family of Parishes due to Fr. Uriel's pending reassignment in the summer of 2025, and Fr. Len's anticipated retirement in the summer of 2026. The most likely scenario for additional support (at the moment) is a priest from outside the US, who only speaks Spanish. The

times for these liturgies are prescribed for the entire Catholic Church, which means it's impossible for one priest to celebrate multiple instances of any one celebration. The change to one celebration of Holy Week is an inevitable eventuality.

Making the change now redirects us to allocate our attention and focus on celebrating these liturgies with the dignity, solemnity, joy, and reverence they deserve and away from the scatteredness of multiple liturgies at multiple campuses concurrently. While we acknowledge members of our community will be disheartened and saddened by the need for change, those feelings will not be any less if we wait one or two more years and it is better to make one significant change now instead of several years of smaller changes (that ultimately adds to the same change).

We also believe that celebrating these liturgies together better allows us to live the vision our Church entrusts to us for these sacred celebrations. In the past few years, some of the Holy Week celebrations have been unable to recruit a sufficient number of lay ministers. For example, having fewer than twelve people for the feet washing on Holy Thursday or scrambling to find altar servers the morning of a celebration. Celebrating together also creates an opportunity for all of our choirs and musicians to come together to lead us in worship, in a way that we anticipate will be incredibly beautiful.

The recommendation of the worship commission is as follows:

- Holy Thursday – one bilingual Mass at Immaculate Conception at 7pm
- Good Friday – one English service at Immaculate Conception at noon & one Spanish service at St. Mary at 7pm
- Easter Vigil – one bilingual Mass at Immaculate Conception at 8:45pm
- Easter Sunday will be a normal Sunday schedule

The three major liturgical moments that comprise the Paschal Triduum will be supplemented by other prayer opportunities, such as Stations of the Cross, Liturgy of the Hours, and Tazié prayer across the campuses to maintain a Catholic presence in all our neighborhoods during Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday.

Holy Thursday is a feast of our unity through the Eucharist. On Holy Thursday we celebrate the Institution of the Eucharist by our Lord, Jesus Christ, at the Last Supper. Our Family of Parishes is Bread of Life / Pan de Vida which is Eucharistic in nature. The name of our Family of Parishes reminds us of the importance of the Eucharist and unity. As has been the custom of many bilingual celebrations in the Bread of Life Family of Parishes limited portions of the liturgy will be repeated in both Spanish and English, while others will have a translation available in the worship aid.

After discussion of this proposal and its reasoning among the combined Bread of Life Pastoral Parish Council, the council recommended this proposal be implemented. Members of the council viewed this as: a forward-thinking proposal; as a beautiful opportunity for us to all come together; and as a good way for our Family of Parishes to live out the vision the Church gives us for this celebration.

We look forward with great anticipation to this combined celebration. In the weeks ahead, we will continue to plan for this common celebration and discover ways to incorporate customs from all five of our campuses' practices. We hope for a large participation from our entire community both as the assembled People of God and by assistance as lay ministers (including combined choirs and musicians) for these celebrations.

In Christ,

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St. Helen Campus

Amy Gray
St. Anthony &
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