

## Maundy Thursday Reflections



In order that there may be good beginnings, there needs to be good ends. On this last full day of Jesus's earthly life, he gives all in love to make this a special time for his disciples. Jesus has planned carefully for his Last Supper with his friends. Those simple actions familiar to their Jewish heritage yet presented in ways that are new, make a great impression and bestow honour on all who came to share his Passover meal.

### **Luke 22:7-12**

*Then came the day of Unleavened Bread, on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. So, Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover meal for us that we may eat it." They asked him, "Where do you want us to make preparations for it?" "Listen," he said to them, "when you have entered the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you; follow him into the house he enters and say to the owner of the house, 'The teacher asks you, "Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?"' He will show you a large room upstairs, already furnished. Make preparations for us there."*

And now it is evening. Jesus must be tired, yet as they all gather, he washes the feet of his companions. During this most precious meal, he will humbly share bread with the one who will betray him. And once Judas has departed, Jesus will make sure his friends understand the important things he has to tell them.

He gives them bread and wine to share; a foretelling of the sacrament that keeps Jesus alive always to us today. Later in his agony in the Garden of Gethsemane he will be tormented with fear and doubt before being led away captive to be scorned and derided and taken to trial and ultimately to his death on a cross.

## Reflection 1 The servant

### John 13:34-35

*I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”*



Washing the disciple's feet, got the message across to them that they should love one another as he had loved them because this was a familiar part of Jewish ritual. It was the example he used to show love and service. But what about us today? What examples might Jesus use if he was physically with you now.

Maybe he would do the washing up. It's a chore that most of us really hate. Or maybe he would choose to make something simple to eat and drink- a slice of toast and a cup of tea. Simple food but something that will nourish and bring comfort to someone who needs it. Perhaps he might use the example of picking up litter out in the community.

### Action

**This commandment is to us too. You are invited to spend a few moments reflecting on how to live out this commandment in daily life.**

### A prayer

Lord, during our lives we often have had to clean up after others in our homes, in our workplaces and on our streets. We give thanks for those who clear up for us. May we always be ready to serve others in simple and kindly ways, just as Christ washed the feet of his disciples. And may we care for our community as Christ cares for us. May we always honour Christ by seeking to do the little things well. Amen.

## **Mark 14: 22-25**

*While they were eating, he took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to them, and said, "Take; this is my body." Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, and all of them drank from it. He said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. Truly I tell you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."*



## **Reflection 2 Sacrament**

For some of us reading those words about Jesus taking bread and wine from the table and sharing it with others may be quite hard as so many of us have had to fast from the Eucharist during this pandemic. Jesus tells the disciples that the bread is his body and that the wine is his blood and that it is to be poured out for the forgiveness of sins. In this simple act he opens up the vision of the divine rule promised as the final renewal of creation and gives us a foretaste of that heavenly banquet’.

## **A prayer**

Lord, we love you above all things, and we desire to receive You into our souls. Since during this time of pandemic we are unable to receive You through the physical sacrament, we ask that you come spiritually to us now in our hearts and our minds. We embrace you as if you were already here and ask that we may be wholly united both to you and to each other and that we may never be separated from your love. Amen

## Mark 14:32-38

*They went to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." He took with him Peter and James and John and began to be distressed and agitated. And he said to them, "I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and keep awake." And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. He said, "Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want." He came and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep awake one hour? Keep awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.*



### Reflection 3 Watch and pray

Jesus loved us so much that he gave up everything for us. This night he was arrested, he lost his freedom and tomorrow he will lose his life. If we were in church then at this point in our service, we would be stripping the church, laying aside all the beautiful decoration that so help us to worship. These actions help to remind me how Jesus allowed himself to be stripped of everything in his love of each one of us.

### Action

**You are invited to make space on a coffee table or other flat surface. Clear away unnecessary furnishings and place in that space, if you have it, something that will allow that space to be, for you, the Garden of Gethsemane; maybe a small cross, a picture, a stone, or a plant.**

**Watch and Pray:** Jesus asked his disciples to pray with him he asked him three times, "Could you not keep watch for one hour". Will we find it any easier than they?

You are invited to Watch and Pray now for as long as you wish. You might like to say the Lord's Prayer or read your Bible or just sit and reflect more on something you have just read.