

Maundy Thursday -- April 9, 2020 [Lutheran]

Set out a bowl of water and a clean towel. Sit with them before you and begin with these texts. First, remember God's forgiveness:

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ.

By grace we have been saved. Our sins are forgiven in the name of Jesus Christ. Almighty God strengthen us with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in our hearts through faith.

Amen.

Then pray the prayer for this night:

Holy God, source of all love, on the night of his betrayal, Jesus gave us a new commandment, to love one another as he loves us. Write this commandment in our hearts, and give us the will to serve others as he was servant of all, your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

The readings for Maundy Thursday may be read, as follows.

First Reading Exodus 12:1-14

The Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt: ²This month shall mark for you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year for you. ³Tell the whole congregation of Israel that on the tenth of this month they are to take a lamb for each family, a lamb for each household. ⁴If a household is too small for a whole lamb, it shall join its closest neighbor in obtaining one; the lamb shall be divided in proportion to the number of people who eat of it. ⁵Your lamb shall be without blemish, a year-old male; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. ⁶You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month; then the whole assembled congregation of Israel shall slaughter it at twilight. ⁷They shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. ⁸They shall eat the lamb that same night; they shall eat it roasted over the fire with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. ⁹Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted over the fire, with its head, legs, and inner organs. ¹⁰You shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn. ¹¹This is how you shall eat it: your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it hurriedly. It is the passover of the Lord. ¹²For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike down every firstborn in the land of Egypt, both human beings and animals; on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the Lord. ¹³The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live: when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague shall destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

¹⁴This day shall be a day of remembrance for you. You shall celebrate it as a festival to the Lord; throughout your generations you shall observe it as a perpetual ordinance.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19

¹I love the Lord, who has heard my voice,
and listened to my supplication,

²for the Lord has given ear to me
Whenever I called.

¹²How shall I repay the Lord
for all the good things God has done for me?

¹³I will lift the cup of salvation
and call on the name of the Lord.

¹⁴I will fulfill my vows to the Lord
in the presence of all God's people.

¹⁵Precious in your sight, O Lord,
is the death of your servants.

¹⁶O Lord, truly I am your servant;
I am your servant, the child of your handmaid; you have freed me from my bonds.

¹⁷I will offer you the sacrifice of thanksgiving
and call upon the name of the Lord.

¹⁸I will fulfill my vows to the Lord
in the presence of all God's people,

¹⁹in the courts of the Lord 's house,
in the midst of you, O Jerusalem.

Second Reading 1 Corinthians 11:23–26

²³For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, ²⁴and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." ²⁵In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." ²⁶For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Word of God, word of life
Thanks be to God.

Gospel John 13:1–17, 31b–35

The holy gospel according to John.
Glory to you, O Lord.

¹Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. ²The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper ³Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, ⁴got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. ⁵Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. ⁶He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" ⁷Jesus answered, "You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand." ⁸Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you,

you have no share with me.”⁹ Simon Peter said to him, “Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!”¹⁰ Jesus said to him, “One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you.”¹¹ For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, “Not all of you are clean.”

¹²After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, “Do you know what I have done to you?”¹³ You call me Teacher and Lord — and you are right, for that is what I am.¹⁴ So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet.¹⁵ For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you.¹⁶ Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them.¹⁷ If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.

^{31b}“Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him.³² If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once.³³ Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, ‘Where I am going, you cannot come.’³⁴ I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

The gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ

Reflection

This word about the love of Jesus is always the beginning of any time. By remembering the Passover and the Last Supper and the footwashing, we are not trying to get back to an old time. In the face of the suffering and death with which the world is filled, our trying would not come to much. But God’s word comes to us now. To our time. Even when we cannot meet for the holy supper together, this word — which takes these three nights to say — comes to us: Jesus Christ is our forgiveness. He is the Lamb whose blood marks the doors of our houses and bodies. In the power of the Spirit, he has washed our feet and our lives. And he turns us toward our neighbors. In this word — and in the cross proclaimed tomorrow and the resurrection proclaimed on Saturday night — Easter comes out to hold us already.

Prayers of Intercession

United with Christians around the globe on this Maundy Thursday, let us pray for the church, the earth, our troubled world, and all in need, responding to each petition with the words, “Your mercy is great.”

A brief silence.

Blessed are you, holy God, for the church. Gather all the baptized around your presence in the Word. Strengthen the body of your people even when we cannot assemble for worship. Grant bishops, pastors, deacons, musicians, and all worship leaders faithfulness and creativity for their ministry in this time, and accompany those preparing for baptism.

Hear us, holy God.
Your mercy is great.

Blessed are you, bountiful God, for this good earth and for the flowering of springtime. Save dry lands from destructive droughts. Protect the waters from pollution. Allow in this time the planting of fields for food. Make us into care-givers of your plants and animals.

Hear us, bountiful God.

Your mercy is great.

Blessed are you, sovereign God, for our nation. Inspire all people to live in peace and concord. Grant wisdom and courage to heads of state and to legislators as they face the coronavirus. Lead our elected officials to champion the cause of the needy.

Hear us, sovereign God.

Your mercy is great.

Blessed are you, faithful God, for you accompany suffering humanity with love. Abide wherever the coronavirus has struck. Visit all who mourn their dead; all who have contracted the virus; those who are quarantined or stranded away from home; those who have lost their employment; those who fear the present and the future. Support physicians, nurses, and home health aides; medical researchers; and the World Health Organization.

Hear us, faithful God.

Your mercy is great.

Blessed are you, gracious God, for you care for the needy. We beg you to feed the hungry, protect the refugee, embrace the distressed, house the homeless, nurse the sick, and comfort the dying (*especially*).

Hear us, gracious God.

Your mercy is great.

Blessed are you, loving God, that your Son knelt before us, your unworthy servants. Preserve our lives, comfort our anxiety, and receive now the petitions of our hearts.

Hear us, loving God.

Your mercy is great.

Blessed are you, eternal God, for all who have died in the faith, and those whom we name before you here.

At the end, bring us with them into your everlasting glory.

Hear us, eternal God.

Your mercy is great.

Receive, merciful God, our prayers, for the sake of Jesus Christ, the host of our meal of life, who died and rose that we might live with you, now and forever.

Amen.

Finally, remembering Jesus going to his arrest and his death, the events from which all the mercy that fills this night flows, pray this Psalm.

Psalm 88

¹O Lord, my God, my Savior,
by day and night I cry to you.

²Let my prayer enter into your presence;
incline your ear to my lamentation.

³For I am full of trouble;
my life is at the brink of the grave.

⁴I am counted among those who go down to the pit;
I have become like one who has no strength;

⁵lost among the dead, like the slain who lie in the grave,
whom you remember no more, for they are cut off from your hand.

⁶You have laid me in the depths of the pit,
in dark places, and in the abyss.

⁷Your anger weighs upon me heavily,
and all your great waves overwhelm me.

⁸You have put my friends far from me; you have made me to be abhorred by them;
I am in prison and cannot get free.

⁹My sight has failed me because of trouble;
Lord, I have called upon you daily; I have stretched out my hands to you.

¹⁰Do you work wonders for the dead?
Will those who have died stand up and give you thanks?

¹¹Will your lovingkindness be declared in the grave,
your faithfulness in the land of destruction?

¹²Will your wonders be known in the dark
or your righteousness in the country where all is forgotten?

¹³But as for me, O Lord, I cry to you for help;
in the morning my prayer comes before you.

¹⁴Lord, why have you rejected me?
Why have you hidden your face from me?

¹⁵Ever since my youth, I have been wretched and at the point of death;
I have borne your terrors and am helpless.

¹⁶Your blazing anger has swept over me;
your terrors have destroyed me;

¹⁷they surround me all day long like a flood;
they encompass me on every side.

¹⁸My friend and my neighbor you have put away from me,
and darkness is my only companion.