

**Maundy Thursday Service**  
**St. Christopher-by-the-Sea**  
**April 1, 2021**

**Introduction – The Rev. Charles Rowins**

**Hymn 321 – My God, Thy Table Now is Spread**

My God, thy table now is spread, thy cup with love doth overflow;  
be all thy children thither led, and let them thy sweet mercies know.

Nor let thy spreading gospel rest till through the world thy truth has run,  
till with this Bread shall all be blessed who see the light or feel the sun.

**Maundy Thursday Prayer – said together**

*Almighty Father, whose dear Son, on the night before he suffered, instituted the Sacrament of his Body and Blood: Mercifully grant that we may receive it thankfully in remembrance of Jesus Christ our Lord, who in these holy mysteries gives us a pledge of eternal life; and who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.*

**Lesson – Luke 22:14-30**

When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. And he said to them, “I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God.”

After taking the cup, he gave thanks and said, “Take this and divide it among you. For I tell you I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.”

And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me.”

In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you. But the hand of him who is going to betray me is with mine on the table. The Son of Man will go as it has been decreed, but woe to that man who betrays him.” They began to question among themselves which of them it might be who would do this.

Also a dispute arose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest. Jesus said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors. But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves. For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves. You are those who have stood by me in my trials. And I confer on you a kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me, so that you may eat and drink at my table in the kingdom and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

**Homily** – The Rev. Charles Rowins

### **The Prayers of the People**

Father, we pray for your holy Catholic Church;  
*That we all may be one.*

Grant that every member of the Church may truly and humbly serve you;  
*That your Name may be glorified by all people.*

We pray for all bishops, priests and deacons;  
*That they may be faithful ministers of your word and Sacraments.*

We pray for all who govern and hold authority in the nations of the world;  
*That there may be justice and peace on the earth.*

Give us grace to do your will in all that we undertake;  
*That our works may find favor in your sight.*

Have compassion on those who suffer from any grief or trouble;  
*That they may be delivered from their distress.*

Give to the departed eternal rest;  
*Let light perpetual shine upon them.*

We praise you for your saints who have entered into joy.  
*May we also come to share in your heavenly kingdom.*

Let us pray for our own needs and those of others.

..... Silence . .....

Heavenly Father, you have promised to hear what we ask in the Name of your son: Accept and fulfill our petitions, we pray, not as we ask in our ignorance, nor as we deserve in our sinfulness, but as you know and love us in your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

## **Announcements**

### **Hymn 325 – Let us break bread together on our knees**

Let us break bread together on our knees;  
Let us break bread together on our knees;  
When I fall on my knees, with my face to the rising sun,  
O Lord, have mercy on me.

Let us drink wine together on our knees;  
Let us drink wine together on our knees;  
When I fall on my knees, with my face to the rising sun,  
O Lord, have mercy on me.

## **Eucharistic Prayer**

We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus, your Son. For in these last days you sent him to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In him, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In him, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

On the night before he died for us, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread, and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore, according to his command, O Father,

*We remember his death,  
We proclaim his resurrection,  
We await his coming in glory;*

And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O lord of all; presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine.

We pray you, gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Sacrament of the Body of Christ and his Blood of the new Covenant. Unite us to your Son in his sacrifice, that we may be acceptable through him, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In the fullness of time, put all things in subjection under your Christ, and bring us to that heavenly country where, with all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your sons and daughters; through Jesus Christ our Lord, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation.

By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. *Amen.*

### **The Lord's Prayer**

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

*Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by thy Name, thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.*

*Give us this day our daily bread.*

*And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.*

*And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.*

*For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever.*

*Amen.*

## **Breaking of the Bread**

Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.  
*Therefore let us keep the feast.*

## **The Invitation**

The Gifts of God for the People of God. Receive these gifts, and share them, in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

## **The Communion – at home, with these words**

The Body of Christ, the bread of heaven.  
The Blood of Christ, the cup of salvation.

## **Prayer of Thanksgiving– said together**

*Eternal God, heavenly Father,  
you have graciously accepted us as living members  
of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ,  
and you have fed us with spiritual food  
in the Sacrament of his body and Blood.  
Send us now into the world in peace,  
and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you  
with gladness and singleness of heart;  
through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

## **Hymn 336 – Come with us, O blessed Jesus**

Come with us, O blessed Jesus, with us evermore to be;  
and though leaving now thine altar, let us never more leave thee.  
Be thou one with us for ever, in our life thy love divine  
our own flesh and blood has taken, and to us thou givest thine.

## **Dismissal**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
*Thanks be to God.*

**Homily offered by The Rev. Charles Rowins at St. Christopher-by-the-Sea,  
Gibson Island, Maryland, April 1, 2021.**

“Do this in remembrance of me.”

What went through the minds of the disciples when Jesus uttered these words at the last supper? It wasn't a suggestion. It was a commandment. “Do this.” Would there be an exclamation mark, as in “Do this!” Or would it be a simple request, as in “Please do this”? Or perhaps a more nuanced request, as in “I want you to do this for your sake and for the sake of the world!”

Well, we weren't there, so we can't be sure. But, we are here, presumably with the same commandment, the same expectation, the same hope. The Son of God counting on us – little old you and me? Imagine that. Jesus counting on us to continue his ministry, fueled in part by a simple meal of bread and wine.

The more convinced we are by the identity of Jesus as the Son of God, the more intimidated we are by his call to carry on his ministry. Are you sure, Jesus? Are you talking about us? And, if so, is there any way that you can continue to be with us to sustain our effort? Or, perhaps, is this meal that means of continuity?

These are interesting questions in the abstract, but they are crucial questions in reality. We are, by our choice, the Lord's representatives in our time. And, as such, we own the commandment “Do this in remembrance of me.” We have accepted that responsibility. And, it's not just “continue to have a supper of bread and wine,” but of “taking risks on my behalf.”

So, this may be a simple meal that we recreate, but we cannot forget the reason that we are being fed, namely to carry on the Lord's work, which is substantial. That work cost Jesus his life. That work will mean some sacrifice for us as well.

Given the stakes, it's surprising that we're even here. But we are here, reminding ourselves of the Lord's love for us and our promise to extend that love to others. It wasn't easy work for him, and it isn't easy work for us. Not a piece of cake, by any means. Rather, bread and wine, assuring us of the presence of the Lord himself.

How is Jesus present tonight? That answer is above our pay grade. But, that he is present tonight is not above our pay grade. We are capable of being with the Lord in all sorts of ways, including and especially this meal of Thanksgiving, this Eucharist, this Communion. It's special. It's **Holy** Communion.

“Do this in remembrance of me.” And, so we do this. Not with sharing actual bread and wine just yet, but with our presence, our faith, the variety of our gifts and talents, and most important our promise: “Yes, Lord, we will do this in remembrance of you and in thanksgiving for you.”

Amen.

## Maundy Thursday Introduction

Good evening. Thank you for being here to say thanks to our Lord for sacrificing his life for us. Traditionally we do this via the Service of Holy Communion. We bless bread and wine, as He did at the Last Supper, and then we share that bread and wine. At least we do so in normal times. But for now we make some changes in the name of caution and safety.

Note that the title of tonight's service is "The Lord's Supper: Here and There." The "Here" is here. The "There" is wherever you want it to be. Probably your home. We will bless the bread and wine here in the chapel, and then, if you choose, you will take the blessed elements home with you to consume there with family or friends or both.

What we will bless are individual packets. Each packet contains a single wafer and a sip of wine. The packets will be in clear bags, one packet to a bag. Take as many bags as you would like to share. Two people, two bags. Four people, four bags.

As you distribute the packets at home or wherever, please offer verbally the "Prayer of Thanksgiving" that is printed on the last page of tonight's program.

This modification, in the name of caution and safety, is comparable to what we did with ashes at the start of the Season of Lent. Remember, we provided ashes to be applied at home.

Maundy Thursday, Mandate Thursday, is one of the most thoughtful occasions in the Church calendar. It's not a hustle/bustle occasion. It's a quiet and sensitive moment. The Lord is a few hours away from Crucifixion. It's our last time with him before Good Friday, which we know is not so good, at least in the short run.

And so we gather. Not in the hundreds. Just a few. Just like that evening when Jesus met with his disciples for a final meal. A really special evening. It was for him and it is so for us. We need this time with the Lord, because there are trials and tribulations on the horizon.

Again, thank you for being here. Let us begin, as we remain seated, with two stanzas of *My God, Thy Table Now Is Spread*.