

A Prayer Service for Holy Thursday

Holy Thursday signals the end of Lent.

The forty days of prayer, fasting and almsgiving of Lent are over.

Now we begin the three days of what is called the **Triduum** – the period of three days that begins with the liturgy on the evening of Maundy Thursday, reaches its high point in the Easter Vigil, and closes with evening prayer on Easter Sunday.

Holy Thursday commemorates the Last Supper that Jesus had with the disciples.

There are two important aspects to it:

Firstly, it consisted of a Special Meal during which Jesus used the bread and wine of the meal to give us His Body and Blood. This is told to us in **the Gospel from Matthew**.

Secondly, during the meal Jesus washed the feet of His disciples. This is told to us from **the Gospel from John** –

- He was demonstrating the role of a servant and wanted His disciples to be servants to others.
- He was also demonstrating humility and wanting the disciples to be humble in their service of others.

Something you might like to try

The Meal

In the time leading up to Holy Thursday share with those in your house [bubble] the idea of connecting your meal on the evening of Holy Thursday with that Special Meal in the Gospel that recalls the Last Supper of Jesus with His Disciples.

It would help if you familiarize yourself with the Gospel stories from Matthew and John [see below].

Preparation

- # Prepare your usual meal.
- # In addition, allow for time during the meal to read the Gospel stories and perhaps reenact parts of the meal.
- # You may want to include bread and wine as part of the meal. If you wish to make some unleavened bread, here is a recipe from Google.
- # There are others. The wine could be a red wine.
- # If you don't have the internet or the necessary ingredients for the bread, just use a portion of ordinary bread.

Recipe for Unleavened Bread

Ingredients

2 cups + 2 TBSP flour
1 cup cold water
1/2 tsp salt

Directions

1. Combine the salt and flour together in a large bowl. Stir in the water until the dough comes together. Knead for 5 minutes.

2. Pre-heat skillet / frying pan over medium-low heat.

3. Pinch off 7 pieces of dough and form into balls. Roll out each piece on a lightly floured surface (approx 6-7-inch ovals).

4. Cook on a hot skillet / frying pan for 2 minutes on each side. Serve or store covered.

- # The Washing of the Feet may not be possible. If not, consider a creative alternative that focuses on serving others with humility.
- # The Liturgical colour for Holy Thursday is **Purple / Violet**. You might want to include the colour as a table cloth, an item of clothing, any decorations etc.
- # This could be an opportunity to share the occasion on the internet via Skype or Zoom with other family members who are away, friends, or another family.
- # Someone to act as Leader / Minita, two people might like to read a Gospel passage each, the Prayers of the Faithful could be shared around.

A suggested format for this Special Meal

Gather the family / people.

Leader: In the name of the Father
and of the Son and of the Holy
Spirit.

Minita: Ki te Ingoa o Te Matua
o te Tamaiti, o te wairua Tapu

All: Amen

Katoa: Amene

Let us Pray:

Me inoi tatou

Almighty God, Your Son left us a final meal, a Last Supper, which was to reveal His love for us. He gave it to us when He was about to die. He commanded us to celebrate it as the new and everlasting sacrifice. As we gather to share in this meal this evening, we ask your blessing on us and this food. May we celebrate the love that Your Son shows us.

We ask this through Christ Our Lord,

All: Amen

Katoa: Amene

Invite everyone to take their place at the table. Begin the meal as usual.

At some point during the meal, pause to read the story from St. Matthew. Have bread and wine ready to distribute at the appropriate stages in the Reading.

A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew:

Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had said the blessing he broke it and gave it to the disciples. 'Take it and eat,' he said, 'this is my body.' Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he handed it to them saying, 'Drink from this, all of you, for this is my blood, the blood of the covenant, poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. From now on, I tell you, I shall never again drink wine until the day I drink the new wine with you in the kingdom of my Father.'

Leader: The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

Ko te Rongo Pai no te Pukapuka a Matiu:

A, i a ratou e kai ana, ka mau a Hehu ki te taro, a, ka mutu te whakapai, ka whawhati, ka hoatu ki nga akonga, ka mea, “Tangohia, kainga; ko toku tinana tenei. Na ka mau ia ki te kapu, a, ka mutu te whakawhetai, ka hoatu ki a ratou, ka mea, “Inumia tetahi wahi o tenei e koutou katoa; ko oku toto hoki enei, ko o te kawenata hou, e whakahekea ana mo te tini, hei murunga hara. Na ko taku kupu tenei ki a koutou, e kore ahau e inu i tenei hua o te waina a mua ake nei, kia taea ra ano taua ra e inumia houtia ai e tatou i te rangatiratanga o toku Matua.

Minita: Ko te Rongo Pai a te Ariki

Katoa: kia whakanuia ra koe, e te Ariki, e Hehu Karaiti.

Responsorial Psalm: Pray this Psalm together.

How can I repay the Lord
for His goodness to me?
The cup of salvation I will raise;
I will call on the Lord’s name.

O precious in the eyes of the Lord
Is the death of His faithful.
Your servant, Lord, your servant am I;
You have loosened my bonds.

A thanksgiving sacrifice I make:
I will call on the Lord’s name.
My vows to the Lord I will fulfil
before all His people.

Read the Gospel Story from John –

A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to John

Before the festival of the Passover, Jesus, knowing that his hour had come to pass from this world to the Father, having loved those who were his in the world, loved them to the end.

They were at supper, and the devil had already put it into the mind of Judas Iscariot son of Simon, to betray him.

Jesus knew that the Father had put everything into his hands, and that he had come from God and was returning to God, and he got up from table, removed his outer garments and, taking a towel, wrapped it round his waist; he then poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel he was wearing.

He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, 'Lord, are you going to wash my feet?' Jesus answered, 'At the moment you do not know what I am doing, but later you will understand.'

'Never!' said Peter. 'You shall never wash my feet.' Jesus replied, 'If I do not wash you, you can have no share with me.' Simon Peter said, 'Well then, Lord, not only my feet, but my hands and my head as well!'

Jesus said, 'No one who has had a bath needs washing, such a person is clean all over. You too are clean, though not all of you are.'

He knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said, 'though not all of you are'.

When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments again he went back to the table. 'Do you understand', he said, 'what I have done to you? You call me Master and Lord, and rightly; so I am.

If I, then, the Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you must wash each other's feet.

I have given you an example so that you may copy what I have done to you.

'In all truth I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, no messenger is greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know this, blessed are you if you behave accordingly'.

Leader: The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

Ko te Rongo Pai no te pukapuka a Hato Hoane.

I mua ake o te rā haringa o te Pākate, ka mahara a Hēhu kua taka tana haora e haere atu ai ia i tēnei ao ki te Matua, na, ko ōna o te ao nei i aroha ai, arohata ana e ia taea noatia te mutunga. Na, te mutunga o te hapa, i te mea kua oti noa ake te whakaaro te hoatu e te rewera ki roto i te ngākau o Hura Ikariota tama a Himona kia tuku i ā ia, ahakoa mōhio a Hēhu kua homai ngā mea katoa e te

Matua ki tōna ringa, ā, i puta mai ia i te Atua, ā, e haere atu ana ki te Atua. Ka ara ia i te hapa, ka whakarere i ōna kākahu, ka mau ki tētahi kākahu rinena, ka whitiki i ā ia. Kātahi ka ringihia e ia he wai ki te peihana, ā, ka anga ka horoi i ngā waewae o āna ākonga, ka muku hoki ki te kākahu rinena i whitikiria ai ia. Na, ka tae ia ki a Haimona Petera. Ā, ka mea a Petera ki ā ia: E te Ariki, ko koe hei horoi i ōku waewae? Ka whakahokia e Hēhu, ka mea ki ā ia: Ko tāku e mea nei, ekore e mātauria e koe aianeī, otirā e mātauria e koe a mua ake nei. Ka mea a Petera ki ā ia: Ekore rawa koe e tukua kia horoi i ōku waewae ā āke āke! Ka whakahokia e Hēhu ki ā ia: Ki te kore ahau e horoi i ā koe, ekore koe e whiwhi tahi me ahau. Ka mea a Haimona Petera ki ā ia: E te Ariki, aua rā ko ōku waewae anake, ēngari ko ōku ringaringa hoki, me tōku mātenga. Ka mea a Hēhu ki ā ia: Ko ia hoki ka oti te horoi, kāhore atu he tikanga māna, heoi anake, kia horoi i ōna waewae, ā, ka mā katoa ia. Ā, e mā ana anō koutou, kāhore ia te katoa. I mōhio hoki ia ki te tangata e tukua ai ia: koia ia i mea ai: Kāhore koutou katoa e mā ana. Ā, ka mutu tana horoi i ō rātou waewae, ka mau ki ōna kākahu, ka noho anō ki raro, ā, ka mea: E mātau ana rānei koutou ki tāku e mea nei ki a koutou? E karangatia ana ahau e koutou: E te Kaiwhakaako, e te Ariki, ā, e tika ana anō ta koutou kōrero, ko ahau hoki ia. Na, kua horoia nei ō koutou waewae e ahau, e to koutou Ariki, e to koutou Kaiwhakaako, me horoi anō hoki e koutou ngā waewae o tētahi o tētahi. Kua hoatu nei hoki e ahau he tauira mā koutou, kia rite ai ta koutou e mea ai ki tāku i mea nei ki a koutou.

Minita: Ko te Rongo Pai a te Ariki.

Katoa: Kia whakanuia rā koe e te Ariki, e Hehu Karaiti.

Reflection / Homily

I once read that people remember 30 % of what they hear, 50 % of what they see but 85% of what they do.

When Jesus was approaching the end of His life, He wanted the Disciples to remember Him. He could have explained everything about God and heaven to them. As we know, they had enough trouble remembering some of the things He taught them without having to remember everything about God.

Instead, Jesus asked them to do two activities. He left them actions to be done. We hear of the first activity in Matthews Gospel. Jesus wanted them to remember the last meal He had with them during which He had said, “Take it and eat . . . Drink all of you from this”. We hear of the second memory in the Gospel of John. It was His words, “If I have washed your feet, you should wash each other’s feet”.

The first action was an example of His love for them. The second action was an example of the love they were to have for each other.

Matthew presents the last meal that Jesus had with His disciples in the context of a Passover supper. During that meal He blessed the bread and wine and gave them to the disciples as His Body and blood. Jesus identifies the bread and wine of the meal with His broken and bleeding body on the Cross.

John presents Jesus in a humbled servant mode. Jesus is issuing the disciples a commandment to do as he does, centred on love and in imitation of him.

This Holy Thursday is a time to celebrate, to remember and, where possible, to re-enact those two situations. The disciples made them real in their time. How can the love that Jesus shows in giving His life be made real today? How can the humble, loving service of others occur in the world today?

Some questions to ponder –

What is Jesus saying to you by His words and actions?

How do I demonstrate service, How do I demonstrate humility?

Prayers of the Faithfull –

Response: E te Ariki, whakarongo mai ki a matou / Lord, hear our prayer.

For Pope and Church leaders – Bless Pope Francis and Bishop Pat at this time. May Your Spirit be there for them as they shepherd your people. We pray to the Lord / E te Ariki

For Civil Leaders – continue to guide our civil leaders at this time Lord. Bless them with the skills, talents and stamina to lead us through this situation and guide them with Your Spirit. We pray to the Lord / E te Ariki

For the sick – those suffering from the virus, those in hospital – May they know your Healing power and the support of loved ones. We pray to the Lord / E te Ariki

For those who care for the sick /for the front line staff – Lord, thank you for their generosity and experience. Strengthen them in the tough times, may

they know that their efforts are appreciated and guide them by Your Spirit.
We pray to the Lord / E te Ariki . . .

For family – Lord, strengthen the bonds of family at this time, particularly for those who may be in isolation because of work or illness. May they experience the love that You have for them. We pray to the Lord / E te Ariki

For ourselves – Lord, you left us an example of loving service of others. As we experience that in many ways from You and others, may we look for ways to be faithful to the example You have given us. We pray to the Lord / E te Ariki

Other intentions –

Our Father / E to matou Matua.

Final Prayer:

Minita / Leader: Almighty God, we receive new life from the Last Supper Your Son gave us in this world. May we find full contentment in the meal we hope to share in with You in heaven. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen

Katoa: Amene

Complete the meal

Conclusion:

Leader / Minita: We give you thanks almighty God for this meal we have shared this evening and for the example of loving service that you have given us. May we continue to draw strength from this love that You show us. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen

Katoa: Amene