



SAINT ANDREW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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April 9, 2020: *Maundy Thursday*

Dear friends:

"On the night before he was betrayed," Thursday in Holy Week, Jesus instituted the Eucharist at his last supper with his disciples. The Gospel of John says that on that occasion just before his crucifixion, Jesus emphasized his role as God's servant by washing the disciples' feet, a task usually reserved for slaves in that world of dusty roads and sandaled feet. As he did that, Jesus said, "I give you a new commandment: Love one another as I have loved you." In Latin, "a new commandment" is "mandatum novum" – hence, "Maundy" Thursday.

The liturgy for Maundy Thursday is one of the most beautiful and elaborate of the Church Year. Yet at its core we find the three basic elements of water, bread and wine that are so central to our tradition – all of which point toward the call to service and sacrifice that are the essence of our faith.



Over the past few weeks, I have spoken to or received messages from many of you with outpourings of concern and offers of help for anyone who is having trouble getting the things they need during this lockdown. It is heartwarming, and not the least surprising to learn how much people care for each other. As the virus continues to work its way through our society and starts to touch members of our own parish family, know that you are part of a loving community that, even though we are apart, is caring for each other in the best ways we can.

This is a difficult time. May we seek to reflect the image of a loving Christ that is in each of us to see us through it.

God bless,
Fr. Alan

Hear the prelude as performed by organist
Dragan Trajer: <https://youtu.be/FTyvgKdIIzc>

CLICK TO LISTEN

The Collect

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.

Old Testament

Exodus 12:1-14

The Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt: This month shall mark for you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year for you. Tell 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. If 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. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a year-old male; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month; then the whole assembled congregation of Israel shall slaughter it at twilight. They shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. They shall eat the lamb that same night; they shall eat it roasted over the fire with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted over the fire, with its head, legs, and inner organs. You shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn. This 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. For 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. The 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.

This 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.

The Response

Psalm 116:1, 10-17: *Dilexi, quoniam*

- 1 I love the Lord, because he has heard the voice of my supplication, *
because he has inclined his ear to me whenever I called upon him.
- 10 How shall I repay the Lord *
for all the good things he has done for me?
- 11 I will lift up the cup of salvation *
and call upon the Name of the Lord.
- 12 I will fulfill my vows to the Lord *
in the presence of all his people.
- 13 Precious in the sight of the Lord *
is the death of his servants.
- 14 O Lord, I am your servant; *
I am your servant and the child of your handmaid;
you have freed me from my bonds.
- 15 I will offer you the sacrifice of thanksgiving *
and call upon the Name of the Lord.
- 16 I will fulfill my vows to the Lord *
in the presence of all his people,
- 17 In the courts of the Lord's house, *
in the midst of you, O Jerusalem.
Hallelujah!

Hear the psalm as performed by the Choir of the
Church of St. Luke in the Fields, New York:
<https://youtu.be/dLA3CciZLpU>

CLICK TO LISTEN

The Epistle

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

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, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In 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." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Now 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. The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then 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. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" Jesus answered, "You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand." Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no share with me." Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" 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." For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, "Not all of you are clean."

After 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? You call me Teacher and Lord--and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.

"Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. 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.' 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."

Anthem

Ubi Caritas

Maurice Duruflé (1902-1986)

Where charity and love are, there God is. The love of Christ has gathered us into one. Let us exult, and in Him be joyful. Let us fear and let us love the living God. And from a sincere heart let us love each other. Where charity and love are, there God is. Amen.

Hear the anthem as performed by the Cambridge Singers: <https://youtu.be/E6J3CL0Y2TE>

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The Prayers

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, whose blessed Son did share at Nazareth the life of an earthly home: We ask you to bless our homes, and our families and keep us in this time of sickness. Grant us, day by day, your strength and protection; watch over us in times of danger and necessity; and unite us with each other in your steadfast love; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Sermon

Fr. Alan Gibson

“Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.”

Or as one translation puts it, “he loved them completely.” To me, that is one of the most beautiful and overwhelming sentences in all of scripture. To love and be loved to the end, to completion, is the deepest desire of every human being, whether we know it or not.

Yet all sorts of things can get in the way. John sums up those obstacles for us in the very next sentence. After this outpouring of love, unique divine love, who is it that is waiting for us in the very next breath? The devil . . . who had already put it into Judas’ heart to betray the one who embodies complete love.

Jesus was fully aware of what was happening. He and the devil were old acquaintances. They had met long ago, and one was never very far from the other. Or more precisely, the devil never let Jesus get out of sight, but waited for an opportunity to entrap him. The devil was waiting for Jesus to be at his most vulnerable. What better time than in an expression of love.

Love leaves us open to be taken advantage of, to be hurt, betrayed – all of which happened. The opportunity presented itself. Evil leapt into action. Judas was moved according to plan and before you know it Jesus is caught in the trap which only he anticipated – all because “he loved them (and us) to the end.”

On that Thursday night Jesus washed Judas' feet just as he did everyone else's. His love is not selective, which is so hard to understand. While love opens us up to be hurt, it is also the only way that we can be made complete.

Jesus didn't just say love your enemies, he did it. He took in his hands the dirty, beat up feet of Judas and Peter, and all the rest and washed them. To some degree they all betrayed him, as we have. But that's not the end of their or our story. Love is what is at the end. Love is what will save us all. It is not only the example that Christ has given us, it is his very self that we receive when we love and are loved in his name.

“Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to end.” That is Christ's gift, his example, his call. It is who he is, and who he wants us to be.

Anthem

On the Mount of Olives

Healey Willan (1880-1968)

On the Mount of Olives he prayed to his Father: Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. [Matthew 26]

Hear the anthem: <https://youtu.be/7Yn8vUZT7bw>

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STAY IN TOUCH WITH US

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Please know that your privacy is important to us. We do not add anyone to our email list until they have specifically requested it. If you know someone who isn't getting our emails, have them email Kathy.

