

Maundy Thursday Service

April 9, 2020

Service of Corporate Confession and Absolution

AS WE GATHER

Holy Thursday begins the great three days that commemorate how God accomplished our salvation in Jesus Christ. The first part of the service is confession and forgiveness, the culmination of the Lenten season of repentance. Holy Thursday then recalls two central events leading up to Jesus' death and resurrection. First is the Lord's Supper. The Gospel tells of the Holy Thursday night when, during the Passover meal, Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to His disciples, saying, "This is My body." He then took the cup, blessed it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My blood of the new covenant." The old covenant involved regular repeated animal sacrifice. This new covenant involves the once-for-all sacrifice of Jesus' blood, which fulfilled the old covenant once for all. We now share this Meal regularly in remembrance of Jesus' all-availing sacrifice for the forgiveness of our sins. The second central event recalled tonight is the abandonment of Jesus by all who loved Him. This is remembered by the action of stripping the altar while Psalm 22 is sung or read. This reminder of how Jesus was forsaken also assures us that Jesus is with us at times when we feel forsaken.

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

P In the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

P I will go to the altar of God,

C **to God my exceeding joy.**

P Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C **who made heaven and earth.**

P During this Lenten season we have heard our Lord's call to intensify our struggle against sin, death, and the devil—all that prevents us from trusting in God and loving each other. It would be our intention to receive the Holy Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ on this night when He instituted this blessed meal for our salvation, however, circumstances this year prevent us from gathering around the Lord's Table. It is still proper that we complete our Lenten discipline by diligently examining ourselves, as St. Paul urges us to do. This holy Sacrament has been instituted for the special comfort of those who are troubled because of their sin and who humbly confess their sins, fear God's wrath, and hunger and thirst for righteousness.

But when we examine our hearts and consciences, we find nothing in us but sin and death, from which we are incapable of delivering ourselves. Therefore, our Lord Jesus Christ has had mercy on us. For our benefit He became man so that He might fulfill for us the whole will and law of God and, to deliver us, took upon Himself our sin and the punishment we deserve.

So that we may more confidently believe this and be strengthened in the faith and in holy living, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread, broke it, and gave it to His disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you." It is as if He said, "I became man, and all that I do and suffer is for your good. As a pledge of this, I give you My body to eat."

In the same way also He took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins." Again, it is as if He said, "I have had mercy on you by taking into Myself all your iniquities. I give Myself into death, shedding My blood to obtain grace and forgiveness of sins, and to comfort and establish the new testament, which gives forgiveness and everlasting salvation. As a pledge of this, I give you My blood to drink."

Therefore, whoever eats this bread and drinks this cup, confidently believing this Word and promise of Christ, dwells in Christ and Christ in him and has eternal life.

We should also do this in remembrance of Him, showing His death—that He was delivered for our offenses and raised for our justification. Giving Him our most heartfelt thanks, we take up our cross and follow Him and, according to His commandment, love one another as He has loved us. As our Lord on this night exemplified this love by washing His disciples' feet, so we by our words and actions serve one another in love. For we are all one bread and one body, even as we are all partakers of this one bread and drink from the one cup. For just as the one cup is filled with the wine of many grapes and one bread made from countless grains, so also we, being many, are one body in Christ. Because of Him, we love one another, not only in word, but in deed and in truth.

May the almighty and merciful God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, by His Holy Spirit, accomplish this in us, bring us relief from this virus, and gather us again in His House and at His Table according to His Will and at the time that He knows best.

C **Amen.**

P Having heard the Word of God, let us confess our sins, imploring God our Father for the sake of His Son, Jesus Christ, to grant us forgiveness.

Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

P O almighty God, merciful Father,

C **I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.**

P God be merciful to you and strengthen your faith.

C **Amen.**

P Do you believe that the forgiveness I speak is not my forgiveness but God's?

C **Yes.**

P Let it be done for you as you believe.

P In the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

P Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; He will surely do it. Go in T peace.

C **Amen.**

Old Testament Reading

Exodus 24:3–11

³Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD and all the just decrees. And all the people answered with one voice and said, "All the words that the LORD has spoken we will do." ⁴And Moses wrote down all the words of the LORD. He rose early in the morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. ⁵And he sent young men of the people of Israel, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the LORD. ⁶And Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and half of the blood he threw against the altar. ⁷Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read it in the hearing of the people. And they said, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient." ⁸And Moses took the blood and threw it on the people and said, "Behold the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words."

⁹Then Moses and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up, ¹⁰and they saw the God of Israel. There was under his feet as it were a pavement of sapphire stone, like the very heaven for clearness. ¹¹And he did not lay his hand on the chief men of the people of Israel; they beheld God, and ate and drank.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Verse

John 13:1b

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

Holy Gospel

Matthew 26:17–30

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the twenty-sixth chapter.

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

¹⁷Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying, “Where will you have us prepare for you to eat the Passover?” ¹⁸He said, “Go into the city to a certain man and say to him, ‘The Teacher says, My time is at hand. I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples.’” ¹⁹And the disciples did as Jesus had directed them, and they prepared the Passover.

²⁰When it was evening, he reclined at table with the twelve. ²¹And as they were eating, he said, “Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me.” ²²And they were very sorrowful and began to say to him one after another, “Is it I, Lord?” ²³He answered, “He who has dipped his hand in the dish with me will betray me. ²⁴The Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born.” ²⁵Judas, who would betray him, answered, “Is it I, Rabbi?” He said to him, “You have said so.”

²⁶Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, “Take, eat; this is my body.” ²⁷And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, “Drink of it, all of you, ²⁸for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. ²⁹I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.”

³⁰And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to You, O Christ.**

431 Not All the Blood of Beasts



1 Not all the blood of beasts On Jew - ish al - tars slain
2 But Christ, the heav'n - ly Lamb, Takes all our sins a - way;
3 My faith would lay its hand On that dear head of Thine,
4 My soul looks back to see The bur - den Thou didst bear
5 Be - liev - ing, we re - jice To see the curse re - move;



Could give the guilt - y con - science peace Or wash a - way the stain.
A sac - ri - fice of no - bler name And rich - er blood than they.
While as a pen - i - tent I stand, And there con - fess my sin.
When hang - ing on the curs - ed tree; I know my guilt was there.
We bless the Lamb with cheer - ful voice And sing His bleed - ing love.

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Sermon

Prayer of the Church

Lord's Prayer

C **Our Father who art in heaven,**

**hallowed be 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
forever and ever. Amen.**

Stripping of the Altar

The altar is stripped, and the chancel is cleared in preparation for the solemn services of Good Friday.

- ¹My God, my God, why have you for- | saken me?*
- Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my | groaning?
- ²O my God, I cry by day, but you do not | answer,*
and by night, but I | find no rest.
- ³Yet you are | holy,*
enthroned on the praises of | Israel.
- ⁴In you our fathers | trusted,*
they trusted, and you de- | livered them.
- ⁵To you they cried and were | rescued;*,
in you they trusted and were not | put to shame.
- ⁶But I am a worm and | not a man,*
scorned by mankind and despised by the | people.
- ⁷All who see me | mock me;*,
they make mouths at me; they | wag their heads;
- ⁸“He trusts in the LORD; let him de- | liver him;*,
let him rescue him, for he de- | lights in him!”
- ⁹Yet you are he who took me | from the womb;*,
you made me trust you at my | mother’s breasts.
- ¹⁰On you was I cast | from my birth,*
and from my mother’s womb you have | been my God.
- ¹¹Be not far from me,
for trouble | is near,*
and there is | none to help.
- ¹²Many bulls en- | compass me;*,
strong bulls of Bashan sur- | round me;
- ¹³they open wide their | mouths at me,*
like a ravening and roaring | lion.
- ¹⁴I am poured out like water,
and all my bones are | out of joint;*,
my heart is like wax;
it is melted with- | in my breast;
- ¹⁵my strength is dried up like a potsherd,
and my tongue sticks | to my jaws;*,
you lay me in the | dust of death.
- ¹⁶For dogs en- | compass me;*,
a company of evildoers encircles me;

they have pierced my | hands and feet—
¹⁷I can count | all my bones—*
 they stare and gloat | over me;
¹⁸they divide my garments a- | mong them,*
 and for my clothing they | cast lots.
¹⁹But you, O LORD, do not be | far off! *
 O you my help, come quickly | to my aid!
²⁰Deliver my soul | from the sword,*
 my precious life from the power | of the dog!
²¹Save me from the mouth of the | lion! *
 You have rescued me from the horns of the wild | oxen!
²²I will tell of your name to my | brothers,*
 in the midst of the congregation I will | praise you:
²³You who fear the LORD, praise him!
 All you offspring of Jacob, glo- | rify him,*
 and stand in awe of him, all you offspring of | Israel!
²⁴For he has not despised or abhorred
 the affliction of the afflicted,
 and he has not hidden his | face from him,*
 but has heard, when he | cried to him.
²⁵From you comes my praise in the great congre- | gation,*
 my vows I will perform before those who | fear him.
²⁶The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied;
 those who seek him shall | praise the LORD! *
 May your hearts live for- | ever!
²⁷All the ends of the earth shall remember
 and turn | to the LORD,*
 and all the families of the nations
 shall worship be- | fore you.
²⁸For kingship belongs | to the LORD,*
 and he rules over the | nations.
²⁹All the prosperous of the earth eat and | worship,*
 before him shall bow all who go down to the dust,
 even the one who could not keep him- | self alive.
³⁰Posterity shall | serve him,*
 it shall be told of the Lord to the coming gener- | ation;
³¹they shall come and proclaim his righteousness to a people | yet unborn,*
 that he has | done it.

Acknowledgments

Holy Thursday from Lutheran Service Book

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