

Maundy Thursday 2020

Some prayers and readings to help you remember the events in Jerusalem the night before Jesus died: the Last Supper which Jesus celebrated with his disciples, and when he washed their feet; and Jesus' arrest in the garden of Gethsemane

Prayers of Penitence

Let us confess to almighty God our sins against his love,
and ask him to cleanse us.

Have mercy on us, O God,
in your great goodness;
according to the abundance of your compassion
blot out our offences.
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

Against you only have we sinned
and done what is evil in your sight.
Christ, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.

Purge us from our sin and we shall be clean;
wash us and we shall be whiter than snow.
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

May the Father forgive us
by the death of his Son
and strengthen us
to live in the power of the Spirit
all our days.
Amen.

Readings

1 Corinthians 11.23-26.

Written around 55AD by St Paul to the church in Corinth, this is the earliest account we have of the Last Supper and Jesus' command to break bread and drink wine 'in remembrance of me.'

For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: the Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.' For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

John 13:1-17

Jesus washes his disciples' feet

It was just before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.

The evening meal was in progress, and the devil had already prompted Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel round his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped round him.

He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, 'Lord, are you going to wash my feet?'

Jesus replied, 'You do not realise now what I am doing, but later you will understand.'

'No,' said Peter, 'you shall never wash my feet.'

Jesus answered, 'Unless I wash you, you have no part with me.'

'Then, Lord,' Simon Peter replied, 'not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!'

Jesus answered, 'Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you.' For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean.

When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. 'Do you understand what I have done for you?' he asked them. 'You call me "Teacher" and "Lord", and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.'

Prayers of Intercession

In the power of the Spirit let us pray to the Father through Christ the saviour of the world.

Father, on this, the night he was betrayed, your Son Jesus Christ washed his disciples' feet. We commit ourselves to follow his example of love and service. Lord, hear us
and humble us.

On this night, he prayed for his disciples to be one. We pray for the unity of your Church. Lord, hear us
and unite us.

On this night, he prayed for those who were to believe through his disciples' message. We pray for the mission of your Church. Lord, hear us
and renew our zeal.

On this night, he commanded his disciples to love, but suffered rejection himself. We pray for the rejected and unloved. Lord, hear us
and fill us with your love.

On this night, he reminded his disciples that if the world hated them it hated him first. We pray for those who are persecuted for their faith. Lord, hear us
and give us your peace.

On this night, he accepted the cup of death and looked forward to the new wine of the kingdom. We remember those who have died in the peace of Christ. Lord, hear us
and welcome all your children into paradise.

Reading:

Mark 14.32-50.

Gethsemane

They went to a place called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples, 'Sit here while I pray.' He took Peter, James and John along with him, and he began to be deeply distressed and troubled. 'My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death,' he said to them. 'Stay here and keep watch.'

Going a little farther, he fell to the ground and prayed that if possible the hour might pass from him. '*Abba*, Father,' he said, 'everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will.'

Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. 'Simon,' he said to Peter, 'are you asleep? Couldn't you keep watch for one hour? Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.'

Once more he went away and prayed the same thing. When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. They did not know what to say to him.

Returning the third time, he said to them, 'Are you still sleeping and resting? Enough! The hour has come. Look, the Son of Man is delivered into the hands of sinners. Rise! Let us go! Here comes my betrayer!'

Jesus arrested

Just as he was speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, appeared. With him was a crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests, the teachers of the law, and the elders.

Now the betrayer had arranged a signal with them: 'The one I kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard.' Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, 'Rabbi!' and kissed him. The men seized Jesus and arrested him. Then one of those standing near drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear.

'Am I leading a rebellion,' said Jesus, 'that you have come out with swords and clubs to capture me? Every day I was with you, teaching in the temple courts, and you did not arrest me. But the Scriptures must be fulfilled.' Then everyone deserted him and fled.