

Maundy Thursday At Home - Holy Week 2020

Maundy Thursday is the first of what the church calls the Great Three Days of Holy Week or the Triduum. The three days include Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday.

Maundy Thursday is the day we remember that Jesus washed the feet of his closest friends and disciples before they shared their last supper together. And in the Gospel of John, at that same supper, Jesus gives his disciples a new commandment. "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another." (The word "maundy" is from the word commandment.)

Because we cannot gather to remember this important night, we offer you a few ways to remember it home. Each of these experiences includes the Word of God, an activity, and a prayer.

Note: Please read all the instructions ahead of time as you might find it helpful to have dinner ready to serve before you start washing feet.

Use the parts that make sense for your household. Whether you live with your family or live alone, there is something here to bless your experience of the first of the Great Three Days.



Foot-washing

You will need:

- a bucket or large bowl with warm soapy water
- a towel
- if you want to use music, please see the suggestions below.

Word:

Read John 13:1-17 and/or the Spark Story Bible pp. 462-3

Activity:

If you have more than one person in your house, take turns washing one another's feet. You can play music if you like. (See suggestions below.) Everyone can take a turn washing and being washed. Someone may choose not to and that's okay. We encourage you to be brave. It was very hard for Peter to let Jesus wash his feet. It's hard us to let someone else wash our feet. This is the kind of closeness and vulnerability Jesus asks of us. So, please give it a try.

If you live alone, place a bowl or tub of warm soapy water in front of a comfortable chair. Rest with your feet in the warm water as you read the story of Jesus. As you rest, listen to music that feels holy and blessed to you.

Here are some music suggestions:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QKfp8ZyjFgo> Peace of Christ – Rich Mullins (Contemporary)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pG3x22i9oys> Wash Away – Joe Purdy (Folk)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9PzS7rVTgKE> The Singers - Ubi Caritas - Maurice Duruflé (Choral)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8_7mcGqsKP8 CWU Chamber Choir/Gjeilo: "Ubi Caritas" with piano improv (Choral. The Trinity Choir sang this last Good Friday.)

After you have washed one another's feet or the music has ended, carefully wash your hands. Before you clear away the bowl and towel, say the prayer.

Prayer:

Loving God, we use these symbols of the new life: towel and basin and water. Let them be a sign of your love for us and of our gratitude for all that you have done for us. Let them be a promise of our commitment to serve – not out of duty, but out of love; not to obtain a reward, but to imitate the One who freely and willingly laid down his life for us. We have been called to serve as Jesus did. Amen.



Last Supper

You will need:

- Supper!

Jesus and his friends weren't eating an ordinary supper. They were celebrating an important holiday in their Jewish tradition: Passover.* The meal included specific foods and special prayers.

For your Maundy Thursday meal, whether you live with others or live alone, consider serving a family favorite or a meal that helps you remember. Pay attention to preparing the meal. Share the work. Talk about where the food came from. Light a candle if you can. Do you have a tablecloth or placemats you can use? Turn off the TV and put away cell phones, unless you are using one for music. Or you might consider calling a friend or family and plan to share the meal together over FaceTime, Zoom, Skype or just on the phone.

Word:

Read Matthew 26:20-30/Spark Story Bible pp 464-5

Activity:

Say your usual supper time prayer and have supper together.

Here are some things you can discuss, ponder or journal about during dinner:

- What memories do you have as you eat this food or sit at this table?
- What gifts from God do we see spread before us? (Food, life, nature, color, taste, creativity, memory, family recipes - talk about those family members.)
- Let the meal be a time of remembering family stories and where you have seen God's blessings in your life.
- Think about what the disciples might have been talking about at dinner: remembering the Jewish stories, how long they had traveled that day, how good the bread was.
- Then imagine Jesus changing the conversation and saying: "This is my body. This is my blood." Imagine what that would have been like for the disciples – confusing, frightening, worrisome.

When everyone is done eating, say this prayer:

Prayer:

Loving God, we thank you for the gift of this meal. We remember the last meal you shared with those closest to you. They didn't understand yet what was going to happen. But you were present with them as you are present with us now. Let this time of nourishment and remembering feed our spirits and our bodies. Let us grow in faith and walk with you. Even when the journey is hard. Knowing that you are with us and will bring us through to the light. Amen.

**A New Commandment****Word:**

Read John 13: 33-35 (36-38)

Activity:

Talk together, journal or draw a picture showing all the ways that Jesus showed love while on earth: feeding people, healing people, helping people belong, standing up for others, praying for others, showing kindness – especially to children and the vulnerable, standing up to those in power, washing feet. Have you felt this love?

Imagine together how you can show love in the same way. You can even talk about Stay at Home and Shelter in Place as a powerful way that we are loving our neighbor right now.

You might make a sign for you window that says: "We love our neighbors!" Perhaps you could write notes or draw pictures to mail to your neighbors.

Then say this prayer.

Prayer:

O Lord our God, tonight we remember our Savior Jesus and his sacrifice of love for us. We pause to remember his last meal with his closest friends and disciples. We pause to remember the betrayal he would suffer. We pause to remember the pain that would be His to bear. We pause to remember the new commandment to love as he loved. We gather to bear witness to our Savior. We gather to grow in our faith and be renewed once again by the Story of mystery, Story of the Resurrection. Send your Spirit to be with us this night till Easter morning. In Christ we pray. Amen.

Thank you for celebrating Maundy Thursday with us in this unique way. We look forward to the day when we can celebrate together.

**Our Jewish friends will be celebrating the Passover at the same time as we remember the last supper. We don't celebrate the Passover Seder meal because that is a holy practice that God asked of the Jewish people in order to remember a particular event: God liberating them from slavery in Egypt. Our Holy Communion is the practice God has asked of Christians to remember another particular event: Jesus' liberating sacrifice. We are more than welcome at one another's holy meals, but we do not practice each other's meals on our own.*