

## **DAY 14: MAUNDY THURSDAY - Institution of the Lord's Supper**

### **Opening Prayer**

God, our Father  
your Son revealed his love  
in washing the feet of his disciples  
and giving us this supper:  
nourish us by Christ's presence  
and unite us in Christ's love;  
who is alive and reigns with you and  
the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen

**Scripture Readings: Exodus 12:1-4, 11-14; Psalm 116:1-2, 11-18; 1Corinthians 11:23-26; John 13:1-17, 31b-35**

### **Reflection**

The Lord's Supper is celebrated in the evening time just as the Passover Meal was celebrated in the evening to recall the first Passover in which the Israelites left Egypt. As the blood of the lamb saved the Israelites, so the blood of Jesus Christ brings salvation to the whole world. The first reading from the Book of Exodus recounts the instructions given to the people regarding the preparations for and the eating of the Passover meal and how the blood of the lamb was to save the people from death. In keeping with the last line of the text, it is a festival kept to this day throughout the Jewish world. The letter of St Paul to the Corinthians tells of the institution of the Eucharist when Jesus gave his disciples bread and wine as his very own body and blood during their celebration of the Passover in Jerusalem. It is an important text because it was written over twenty years after the event, and by one who was not present, which testifies to the importance that these words and actions had in the early Christian Community. The gospel passage from St John shows us the scene in the upper room and in it we see Jesus washing the feet of those who were with him. In this way he showed that they were to be servants of all and this is a key element for Christians today. **Maundy Thursday Ritual:** Traditionally after the sermon, the washing of feet takes place as a reminder to us of the instruction Jesus gave us – that we need to wash each other's feet, i.e. to be servants. At the end of the Eucharistic celebration the Reserved Sacrament is removed from the Tabernacle (Umbry) to the Altar of Repose, while the altar are stripped. This gives us a stark reminder that the Lord has been taken from us. The liturgy begun tonight does not end with a blessing and dismissal because the liturgy continues until the end of the Easter Vigil. Adapted from: <http://www.carmelites.ie/readingsreflect.html>

### **Conclusion Prayer**

"I love the Lord, for he heard my cry for mercy.  
Because he turned his ear to me, I will call on him as long as I live.  
The cords of death entangled me, the anguish of the grave  
came upon me; I was overcome by trouble and sorrow.  
Then I called on the name of the Lord: O Lord, save me!" Amen (Ps. 116:1-4)

**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,  
be with us all for ever. Amen**