

**Maundy Thursday Vespers
With Communion
And The Stripping of the Altar**

I. Vespers

1. The Confession of Sin, p. 120

Dearly beloved! We have come together in the presence of God our heavenly Father, to render thanks for the great benefits that we have received at His hand, to set forth His most worthy praise, to hear His holy Word, and to ask for ourselves and on behalf of others, those things that are necessary for our life and salvation. O come, let us worship Him! Let us kneel and bow down before Him. Let us confess our sins with penitent hearts, and obtain forgiveness by His infinite grace and mercy.

Almighty and most merciful Father, we have strayed from Your ways like lost sheep. We have followed the devices and desires of our hearts. We have offended against Your holy law. We have done those things which we should not have done, and we have not done those things which we should have done. Have mercy on us, O Lord! Spare us, according to the promises You have declared to us in Jesus Christ, Our Lord. For His sake grant that we may live a godly, righteous, and sober life, to the glory of Your holy name.

The almighty and merciful Lord has granted us pardon and forgiveness of all our sins, grace for true repentance and amendment of life, and the comfort of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

2. The Versicles, p. 120

O Lord, open my lips.

♪ **And my mouth shall show forth Your praise.**

Make haste, O God, to deliver me.

♪ **Make haste to help me, O Lord.**

♪ **Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be; forever more. Amen.**

3. The Psalmody: Psalm 41

♪ Blessed is he who con`siders the poor;/ The LORD will deliver him in `time of trouble.

The LORD will preserve him and `keep him alive,/ And he will be `bless`d on the earth;

You will not `deliver him/ to the will of `his enemies.

The LORD will strengthen him on his `bed of illness;/ You will sustain him `on his sickbed.

I said, "LORD, be mer`ciful to me;/ Heal my soul, for I have `sinned against You."

My enemies speak `evil of me:/ "When will he die, and `his name perish?"

And if he comes to see me, he speaks lies; His heart gathers iniqui`ty to itself;/ When he goes `out, he tells it.

All who hate me whisper togeth`er against me;/ Against me they `devise my hurt.

"An evil disease," they say, "`clings to *him*./ And now that he lies down, he will `rise up no more."

Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, `Who ate my bread,/ Has lifted up his `heel against me.

But You, O LORD, be merciful to me, `and raise me up,/ That I `may repay them.

By this I know that You are `well pleased with me,/ Because my enemy does not tri`umph over me.

As for me, You uphold me in my `integrity,/ And set me before Your `face forever.

Blessed be the LORD God of Israel From everlasting to `everlasting!/ A`men and Amen.

Glory be to the Father, `and to the Son,/ and to `the Holy Ghost; as it was in the be- `ginning, is now,/ and ever shall be: forever-`more. Amen.

4. The Lessons:

Exodus 12:1-14

Now the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, "This month *shall be* your beginning of months; it *shall be* the first month of the year to you. Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: 'On the tenth of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of *his* father, a lamb for a household. And if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next to his house take *it* according to the number of the persons; according to each man's need you shall make your count for the lamb. Your lamb shall be

without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take *it* from the sheep or from the goats. Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight. And they shall take *some* of the blood and put *it* on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it. Then they shall eat the flesh on that night; roasted in fire, with unleavened bread *and* with bitter *herbs* they shall eat it. Do not eat it raw, nor boiled at all with water, but roasted in fire—its head with its legs and its entrails. You shall let none of it remain until morning, and what remains of it until morning you shall burn with fire. And thus you shall eat it: *with* a belt on your waist, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. So you shall eat it in haste. It *is* the LORD's Passover.

'For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I *am* the LORD. Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses *where you are*. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy *you* when I strike the land of Egypt.

'So this day shall be to you a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance.

O Lord, have mercy upon us. ♪ **Thanks be to You, O Lord!**

I Corinthians 11: 23- 32

For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when 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 also he took the cup, 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. Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself. That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died. But if we judged ourselves truly, we would not be judged. But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined so

that we may not be condemned along with the world.

O Lord, have mercy upon us. ♪ **Thanks be to You, O Lord!**

John 13:1-16

Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.

And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's *son*, to betray Him, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe *them* with the towel with which He was girded. Then He came to Simon Peter. And *Peter* said to Him, "Lord, are You washing my feet?"

Jesus answered and said to him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this."

Peter said to Him, "You shall never wash my feet!"

Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me."

Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, not my feet only, but also *my* hands and *my* head!"

Jesus said to him, "He who is bathed needs only to wash *his* feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you." For He knew who would betray Him; therefore He said, "You are not all clean."

So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. If I then, *your* Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him.

O Lord, have mercy upon us. ♪ **Thanks be to You, O Lord!**

5. *The Chief Hymn: #329, "The Death of Jesus Christ, Our Lord"*

6. *The Sermon*

7. *The Offering*

8. *The Prayers*

II. The Service of Holy Communion

9. *Communion Hymn: #309, "A Wondrous Mystery" (Tune, St. Crispin)*

10. *Prayer Before Holy Communion, p. 40*

We do not presume to come to Your table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in Your manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy to gather up the crumbs under Your table. But You are the Lord who desires always to have mercy. Grant us, therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat of the Body of Your dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink His Blood, that we may evermore dwell in Him and He in us. **Amen.**

11. *The Lord's Prayer: ♪ **Our Father...** (sung in unison)*

12. *The Words of Institution*

Our Lord Jesus Christ, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread and when He had given thanks He broke it and gave it to His disciples saying: "Take, eat, this is My + body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me." In the same way also He took the cup after supper, 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 and for many, for the remission of sins. This do as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

13. *The Agnus Dei*

♪ **O Christ, the Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world, have mercy upon us. O Christ, the Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world, have mercy upon us. O Christ, the Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world, grant us Your peace, Amen.**

14. *The Dismissal*

15. *The Collect of Thanksgiving I, pp. 82-83*

We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through these beneficial gifts, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through them in faith toward You; and in fervent love toward one another; through; Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one true God, now and forever. **Amen.**

III. The Stripping of the Altar

(In the stripping of the altar we travel with the Lord to the Garden where we see His humiliation for us at the hands of His enemies. The stripping of the altar is a stunning visual reminder of Christ's emptying of Himself for us. This symbolic action is accompanied by the singing of Kingo's great passion hymn "Over Kedron Jesus Treadeth" and David's hymn of His Lord's suffering, Psalm 22.)

The Lesson: Matthew 26:30-32, 36

And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. Then Jesus said to them, "All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: 'I will strike the Shepherd, And the sheep of the flock will be scattered.' But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee." Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples, "Sit here while I go and pray over there."

Hymn: #295:1-3 (communion vessels)

Psalm 22: 1-5

My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?

Why are You so far from helping Me,

And from the words of My groaning?

O My God, I cry in the daytime, but You do not hear;

And in the night season, and am not silent.

But You are holy,

Enthroned in the praises of Israel.

Our fathers trusted in You;

They trusted, and You delivered them.
They cried to You, and were delivered;
They trusted in You, and were not ashamed.

Hymn 295: 4,5 (pulpit antependium, pastor's stoles)

Psalm 22:6-10

But I am a worm, and no man;
A reproach of men, and despised by the people.
All those who see Me ridicule Me;
They shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying,
"He trusted in the LORD, let Him rescue Him;
Let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him!"
But You are He who took Me out of the womb;
You made Me trust while on My mother's breasts.
I was cast upon You from birth.
From My mother's womb
You have been My God.

Hymn 295: 6-7 (candles and missal stand)

Psalm 22: 11-15

Be not far from Me,
For trouble is near;
For there is none to help.
Many bulls have surrounded Me;
Strong bulls of Bashan have encircled Me.
They gape at Me with their mouths,
Like a raging and roaring lion.
I am poured out like water,
And all My bones are out of joint;
My heart is like wax;
It has melted within Me.
My strength is dried up like a potsherd,
And My tongue clings to My jaws;
You have brought Me to the dust of death.

Hymn 295:8 (fair linen and frontal)

Psalm 22: 16-18

For dogs have surrounded Me;
The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me.
They pierced My hands and My feet;
17 I can count all My bones.
They look and stare at Me.
They divide My garments among them,
And for My clothing they cast lots.

Collect of Thanks: I, p. 85

We thank You, Lord God the Father, that You have given your only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. We thank You, Lord Jesus Christ, that You have borne in Your sacred body all our sins, and by Your blood have blotted out all our transgressions. We thank You, Lord, the Holy Spirit, that You have created in our hearts true faith, that we know of nothing to trust for our salvation, except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. O God, grant us Your grace, that we may perfectly believe that all our sins are forgiven for the sake of the passion and death of our Lord Jesus Christ, and so enlighten us by Your Holy Spirit, that, in the power of our Redeemer's death, we may day by day put off sin, and never forsake the Lord Jesus Christ, until we see Him face to face in life eternal. We ask it all in Christ's name. **Amen.**

Silent Prayer

(Because of the unifying services from Maundy Thursday to Easter, called the Triduum, no Benediction is spoken at the conclusion of the service. The benediction spoken on Easter Sunday concludes all the services of the Triduum.)

Postlude

*Our Triduum
Continues with the
Good Friday Tenebrae at 7 PM and
Concludes with the
Easter Sunday Festival at 10 AM*