MAUNDY THURSDAY

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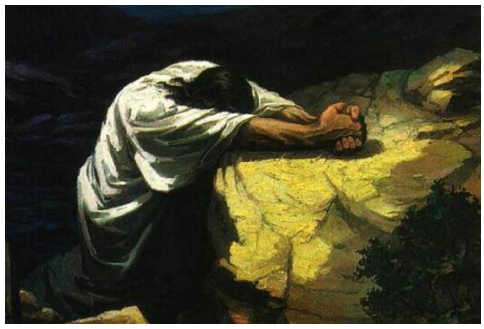
We remember:



Jesus celebrating the Passover meal (the Last Supper), with his disciples and instituting the Eucharist.

Jesus washing the disciple's feet.

Jesus suffering in the Garden and being betrayed by Judas and then taken away to be imprisoned.

We see at Mass:

The priest's wearing white because it's a joyful day, when we are celebrating our love for Jesus in the Eucharist.

The priest washing peoples' feet.

After Mass, the altar is stripped and most decorations are taken down or covered and the consecrated hosts are taken to the Altar of Repose. This helps us experience the loss and emptiness the apostles felt on Good Friday.

Other interesting facts:

- On this day there is a Chrism Mass where the Bishop blesses the oils for his diocese that will be used for the sacraments during the coming year.
- As there is no Mass on Good Friday extra hosts are consecrated for the Good Friday service.

Things you could do:

To help you get ready for this special Mass why not do the two activities in the following pages.

- Jesus washed his disciples' feet: You will need a bowl of water, and towels.
- Last Supper meditation.

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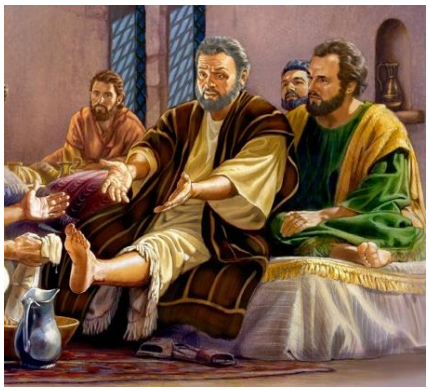
Jesus Washed his Disciples' Feet

Jesus lived in a hot dry land. Most people travelled from place to place on foot, wearing sandals that let the dirt in! It was custom to welcome visitors by washing their feet in clean, cold water. Normally a household servant would do this. Read the story and find out how Jesus did things differently.

John 13: 1-17



During the evening meal, Jesus stood up and took off his outer clothing. Taking a towel, he wrapped it around his waist. Then he poured water into a bowl and began to wash the followers' feet. He dried them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

Jesus came to Simon Peter. But Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

Jesus answered, "You don't understand what I am doing now. But you will understand later."

Peter said, "No! You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "If I don't wash your feet, then you are not one of my people." Simon Peter answered, "Lord, after you wash my feet, wash my hands and my head, too!"

Jesus said, "After a person has had a bath, his whole body is clean. He needs only to wash his feet"

When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and sat down again. Jesus asked, "Do you understand what I have just done for you? You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord.' And this is right, because that is what I am. I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet. So you also should wash each other's feet."

I wonder what Jesus' friends felt while he was washing their feet?
I wonder what Jesus felt?
Who would wash the feet, faces, noses and nappies in your family?
What can we do for people to show them our love?

Now wash each other's feet. Choose who will go first.

As you wash their foot in water and dry it, think about the love you have for that person.

How might you continue to show them love this week?

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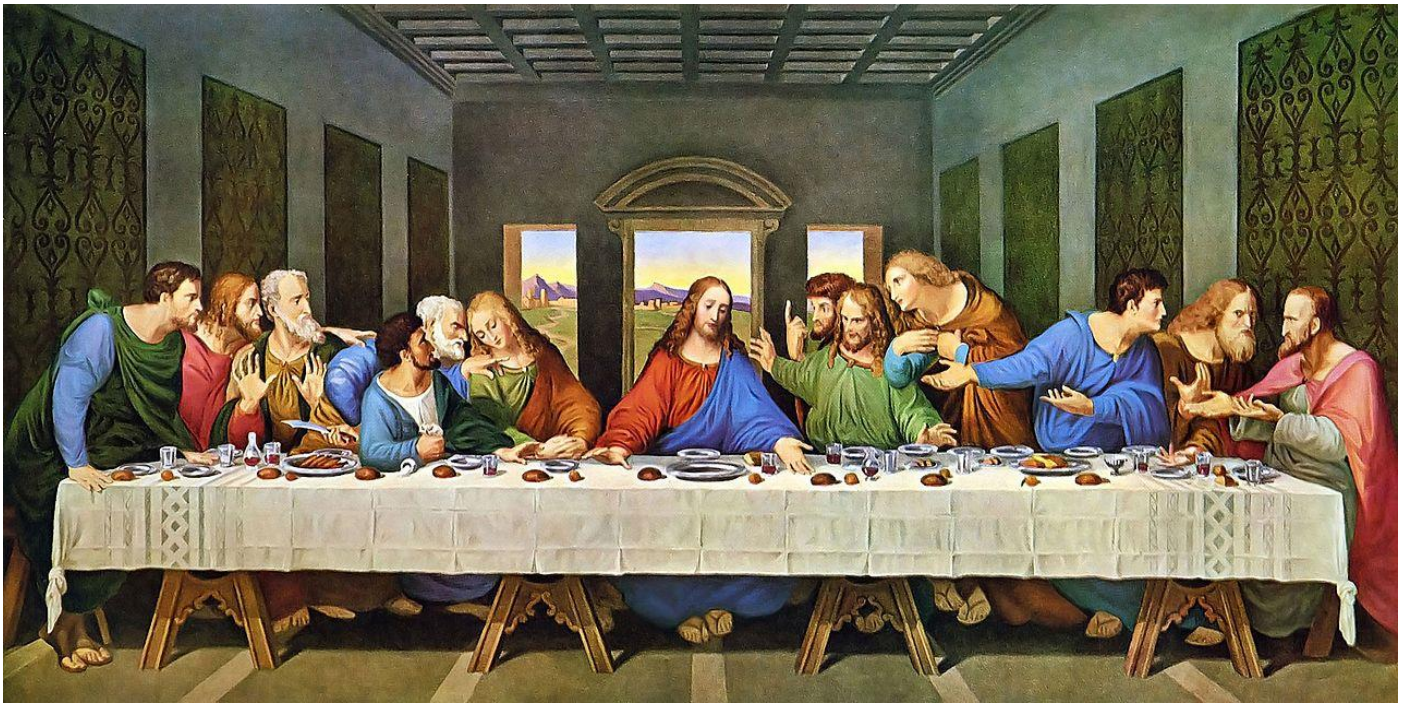
Last Supper Meditation

Go to your dining table. Imagine that you are you are sitting in the upper room where Jesus sat with his disciples for his last meal before his death. Imagine that the table is set for a special meal.

There are thirteen people sitting in front of you.

From your left to right there is: Bartholomew, James, Andrew, Judas Iscariot, Peter and John. From your right to left there is: Simon, Jude Thaddeus, Matthew, Philip, James and Thomas. In the centre, sits Jesus.



Read the guided meditation together.

Guided Meditation

Sit in a comfortable position. Close your eyes. Take a deep breath in then release. Take another deep breath and relax. Be in the silence. Be nowhere but here now. Let your thoughts be released with your next deep breath. Breathe in and release.

You are walking in the heat of the day down a sandy road. You are wearing sandals and can feel the sand under your feet. The air is dry and hot. You are walking through the middle of a town there are people scurrying about packing up their goods on their mules and in baskets trying to get home before the sun sets. You find yourself drawn to an older building. As you make your way in you climb the rickety wooden steps to an upper room. It is a large room, nothing special, but there are several people in the room. You feel strangely drawn to one of the people seated at the table. They are all sitting on the floor around a long low

table that has some food on it. Normally you would turn around and exit because you were obviously not invited but something in you makes you continue walking more quietly now.

As you approach the table, the people continue talking except for the one you feel drawn to. You stop, knowing now that He has sensed your presence. You think about turning around and running back down the stairs, but before you can take a single step, you hear him call you by name. His voice is gentle and inviting. And he says to you come and join us and again he says your name. You are now face to face with this person. You recognize his face, but do not know his name. His face is like that of a person you have known and loved all your life. You stand simply staring at him. All of the people who had been talking turn to watch him go to you. He extends his hand and says come and sit with me. You grasp his hand and he leads you to the table. The people shift their positions and you are seated directly across the table from him.

He smiles at you and looks around at his friends he then bows his head for a moment, maybe to pray. Everyone is silent and then…

He says, "I wanted very much to eat this Passover meal with you before I suffer. I will not eat another Passover meal until it is given its true meaning in the kingdom of God." Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and said, "Take this cup and share it among yourselves. I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until God's kingdom comes." Then he took the bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it you, saying, "This is my body, which will be given for you; do this in memory of me." In the same way, he took the cup saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which will be shed for you."

Taking a piece of the bread, you eat it and then as they pass the cup to you, you take a drink. The man sitting in front of you makes eye contact with you and in his gentle eyes; you see only love and compassion. It is as though he is talking to you, as if no one else is in the room. He gets up from the table walks over to you and you rise to meet him. He embraces you and whispers in your ear, "I have loved you since before you were born, I will love you for all eternity. I must go now to give you eternity. Eat of my flesh and drink of my blood and you shall have everlasting life with me. Never forget this moment, remember it every time you eat and drink of the Eucharist." He holds you so close that you can feel his heart beating. You long to stay in this moment, to freeze it forever and never let go.

As he slowly breaks your embrace, you watch as he descends the steps and as though in a blur you see the people follow him. You blink and look about you and the entire room is empty except for the table. You want to follow but something within you says not too. You watch as he fades into the distance and you turn the other way and begin to walk down the dark and dusty road, all the while recalling his words and the peace that still lingers in your soul. You will cherish this moment forever.

Slowly and quietly, take a deep breath in and release it. Slowly, open your eyes and just sit in the silence for another moment.

GOOD FRIDAY

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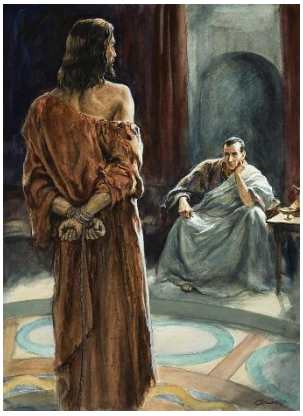

We remember:

Pontius Pilate questioning Jesus (during this time Peter denies knowing Jesus).

Jesus being scourged, and carrying the cross, which he is then nailed to and left to die.

Guards coming to break Jesus' legs to speed up his death but realising he is already dead; they pierce his side.

Jesus' body being taken down from the cross and placed in the tomb.

We see at Mass:

The priest wears red to bring to mind the blood Jesus shed.

The tabernacle is still empty and the church is still undecorated.

St John's account of the Passion is read.

People venerate (kiss, genuflect etc.) the cross so that they can show their love and thanksgiving for Jesus dying on the cross for us.

Other interesting facts:

This is the one day all year when no Masses are celebrated.

Things you could do:

- Keep silence throughout the day (especially from 9-3pm, when Jesus was on the cross)
- Pray the stations of the cross
- Pray the sorrowful mysteries of the rosary
- The activity below: You will need two sticks, string and a plaster.

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God is Present in our Suffering

The story of Jesus' death is called the Passion.

It is a story about injustice, doubt, fear, pain and, ultimately, death.

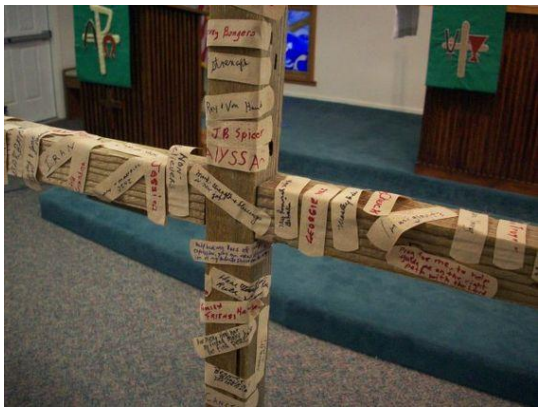
It tells how God experienced these things in the same way as ordinary human beings do.

The death of Jesus shows humanity that God had become truly human and that he was willing to undergo every human suffering, right up to the final agony of death. He died an appalling, humiliating death by crucifixion, reserved by the Romans for the worst criminals.

The cross shows us that God is present in the middle of suffering.

Take two sticks

Tie them together using string



Think of a person who you know that is suffering at the moment. They could be ill; in a broken home; having a hard time at school.

Write their name on a plaster and put it on the cross.

As you do this, **pray** for them. Thank God that he is with them in their suffering.

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EASTER VIGIL

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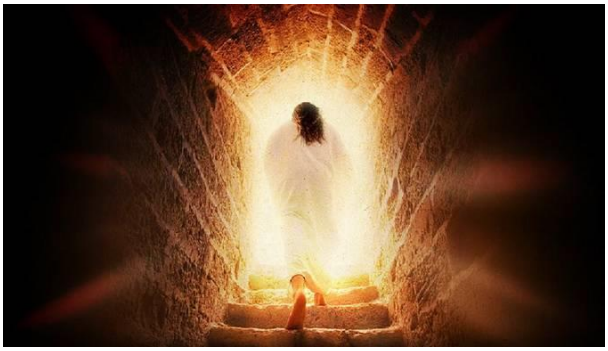

We remember:

The celebration of Easter Sunday actually starts the night before.

Jesus rising from the dead and leaving the tomb.

Peter and John checking out the tomb and only finding the burial cloths.

Mary Magdalene sticking around the tomb and encountering Jesus.

Jesus appearing to more disciples, showing them his wounds and giving them power to forgive sins.

We see at Mass:

The priest wears white because we're joyfully celebrating Jesus' victory over death.

The Paschal Candle, the "Light of Christ", is lit from a fire and carried into the dark church and the congregation's candles are lit from it – lighting up the whole building.

People coming into the Catholic Church are Baptised and Confirmed.

Other interesting facts:

- Lots of extra readings helps us recall salvation history.
- We sing alleluia for the first time since before lent started.
- Easter is 8 days long (so keep celebrating)!

Things you can do:

- Decorate your house to symbolise hope, joy and new life found in the Resurrection
- Have a feast.
- Do the activity below: you will need a plant pot, soil, a bulb or seed.
- Create your own Easter Story Stones

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Planting a Bulb or Seed

Jesus said,

"The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed.

A man plants the seed in his field.

That seed is the smallest of all seeds.

But when it grows, it is one of the largest garden plants. It becomes a tree, big enough for the wild birds to come and make nests in its branches." Matthew 13:31-32

Put a pair of gloves on.

Pick up a bulb or seed, and hold it in your hand.

Look at it carefully. It is such a small thing, and yet from this, God can bring a beautiful plant.

Put some compost in your pot.

Plant the bulb in it.

The soil will keep it warm. Water and light will encourage it to grow. The bulb or seed in your hand was dormant, but given the right circumstances, it comes alive.

Now think for a minute about your life. It may seem small and insignificant. It may not look like much now. From you, God can bring forth great things.

What do you need to grow?

In the right circumstances of God's love, we come alive!

Write, "All things are possible with God" around your plant pot to remind you of what God can do with your life.

As you look after your plant, make sure the soil stays slightly moist and watch it grow, think about what God is doing in your life day by day.

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