

Thursday 9th April 2020 Maundy Thursday

Matthew 26:26-29

The Institution of the Lord's Supper

²⁶ While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, 'Take, eat; this is my body.' ²⁷ Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying, 'Drink from it, all of you; ²⁸ for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

Reflection:

During the Passover meal, Jesus speaks words of consecration. This means that the meal they are having has been made holy by the Lord for future religious rituals. Jesus is not giving His own interpretation to the Passover meal, He is making it holy, sacred but also prophetic. Prophetic because, by pointing to the bread as His body, Jesus is predicting His imminent death. The bread becomes His body broken on the cross. The attention is no longer on the sacrificial lamb but on the bread. This is because Jesus is the true Paschal Lamb. As John the Baptist announced: "Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world".

Then Jesus does something new: The cup of wine becomes the blood of the new and eternal covenant, which will be shed on the cross for the forgiveness of sins.

The blood of the first covenant was the blood of animals poured on the altar by Moses in Exodus 24. Now, Jesus offers not the blood of animals but His own blood. The Word of God made man is offering His innocent life for our salvation. The innocent dying for the guilty.

Every year, at Trinity church, we celebrate the event of Last Supper of the Lord, culminating in the sacrament of the Holy Communion. We do this sacramentally but also in order to imagine ourselves as the disciples of the Lord receiving the bread and wine from Him. Therefore, eating and drinking His body and blood so that we can receive His grace into our hearts by accepting the gift of the cross.

Receiving His grace means that we were condemned to death, but He took our place. We have been pardoned. We are now free to go.

But receiving His grace means that we are held in God's heart. This means that if we truly know what love is, then we must respond to that grace with our love, devotion and adoration. It means being grateful for what He has done for us. It means being grateful for who He is in our lives.

By the grace of God, in the Holy Communion we become partakers with the life and nature of God. We literally belong to Him and we open the door of our heart to God the Holy Spirit.

Tonight, I would like you to reflect on **grace**. I would like you to take this with you. Because we need to let the grace of God inside the heart.

I visited many churches with stain-glass windows in my life. When you look at the windows from the outside, you see a meaningless jigsaw of lead and glass and you cannot work out what the picture is about. When you walk inside the church, the light shines through the glass showing the most beautiful images. This is because the church is full of light that came from outside. You are the temple of the Lord, let His light shine inside you, let him sanctify you and make you one of His own. Amen

Rev. Bruno Boldrini