

Holy Week: Holy Thursday

All the content below is for you to make your own, please do read through it, pick what would work best for your children and would best engage them.

Rest assured of my prayers for your family and you this Holy Thursday.

Kathryn

What happened on the first Holy Thursday?

Holy Thursday is when we remember the very first communion. Communion also means *coming together*. Another word for communion is Eucharist, which means *thanksgiving*. We can think about today's feast as being about coming together to give thanks for each other and all the gifts God gives us. The greatest gift is Jesus!

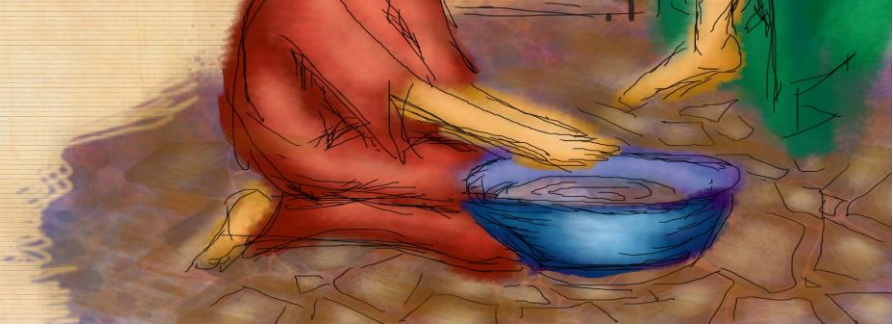
We also remember that Jesus asks us to love each other just as he loves us. Jesus showed his love to his special friends, the disciples, at the Last Supper when he washed their feet.

Jesus washes the disciples' feet

In Jesus' time some people had servants who would wash their feet for them! When Jesus started to wash his friends' feet, they were confused. At first, Peter said no to Jesus. When Jesus explained that this was an important way of showing his love for his friends and asked them all to do the same for each other to pass on this love, Peter thought it was a brilliant idea and even asked Jesus to wash all of him, not just his feet!

Jesus was giving his disciples and all of us a really important message that we should love each other like he loves us and we should find all sorts of ways of helping and serving others to show that love.





Last supper

Jesus shared a meal with his special friends. In the Gospel stories, we hear about bread and wine being shared. Jesus told the disciples that in sharing this special meal they were eating his body and blood and that they should remember him when they shared the meal in the future.

The disciples didn't fully understand that Jesus was about to die but afterwards they remembered this important meal and that is why Christians all over the world celebrate the Eucharist (communion) during Mass and other services.

The Gospel - This reading comes from the Gospels of John and Matthew

Soon came the day for the Passover feast. In the evening, the disciples all met in an upstairs room where everything was ready for the meal. Just as they were about to eat together, Jesus got up and tied a towel around his waist. He poured some water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet.

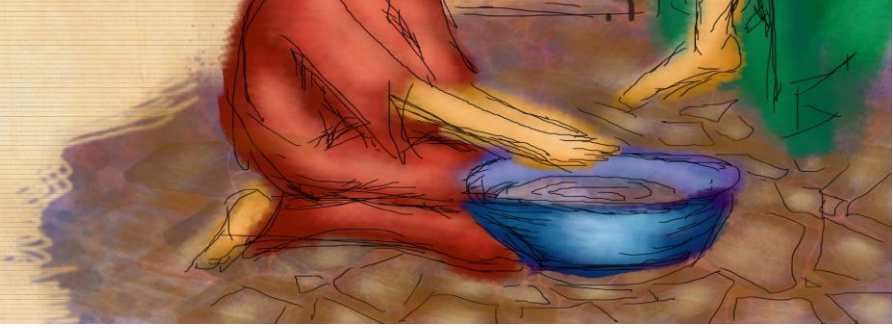
'You're not going to wash my feet' said Peter. 'I'm not going to treat you as some kind of household servant.'

'You must let me,' replied Jesus, 'or you won't be my disciple any more.' Peter laughed. 'In that case, wash all of me! It's all of me that wants to be your most faithful disciple.'

'It will be enough to wash your feet,' said Jesus. 'You're all clean enough to be my followers... all except one, that is.'

When Jesus had washed the feet of all of them, he calmly returned to his place at the table. 'Do you understand what I have done?' he asked them. 'You call me Teacher and Lord, because that is what I am to you. But I have washed your feet, as a servant. You must wash one another's feet, and be ready to serve one another.'





The, Jesus and his disciples began the celebration meal. ‘I really wanted to share this Passover meal with you before my sufferings begin,’ he said.

The disciples looked at him, confused: they all knew that the Passover was meant to be a celebration of God’s rescuing the people and putting their suffering an end to their suffering. What was Jesus thinking of now?

‘But I can’t enjoy it,’ said Jesus. ‘Not until it is given its full meaning in the kingdom of God.’

Then he took a piece of bread and said a prayer of thanks. He broke it into pieces and gave it to his disciples. ‘This is my body, which is given for you,’ he said. ‘Do this in memory of me.’

After supper he gave them the cup of wine. ‘This cup is God’s new covenant; his promise,’ he said. ‘It is sealed with my blood, which is poured out for you.’

‘But look! Here at the meal with me is the one who will betray me’

Reflection on the Gospel story

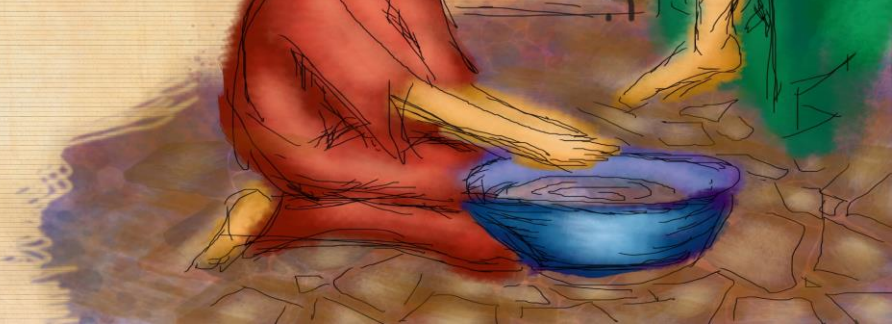
Talk together about the story or even act it out in your family or with little figures like Playmobil or Lego or by decorating pebbles as Jesus and his disciples. Send us your photos so we can see how creative you have been!

Talk about what the different characters might have been feeling. Were they scared, confused, excited...

If you have a children’s bible at home, you could compare the different Gospel writers’ versions of the story and see what you notice.

The disciples and Jesus were meeting together to celebrate Passover. Find out a bit more about the Jewish feast of Passover (a clue: look in a missal for today’s first reading or in the Old Testament of your bible at Exodus chapter 12)





Jesus showed his love to us by dying for us on the cross (you can find out lots more about that in tomorrow's children's liturgy). Think together about how you can show your love for Jesus, each other and people outside your family who are in need. Sometimes it is hard to show our love for other people (but not as hard as dying on a cross!) At the moment, we are all showing our care for other people by not going out and staying safe at home to keep others safe.

This is a sacrifice for sure. Think about ways that you can shine love out from your house. Maybe light a candle or draw or paint a cross for your window, or make a rainbow to show Hope and make someone smile as they pass by. Write letters or phone people and tell them you are praying for them.

A prayer to say together

Father God, thank you for the gift of your son Jesus who shows us how to love others. Help us to remember Jesus' words to show this love through helping others and putting them first whenever we can. Amen

Some hymns or songs that you could sing together

Eat this bread, drink this cup, come to me and never be hungry. Eat this bread, drink this cup, trust in me and you will not thirst

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x_QTrePmuLg

One bread, one body <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FG9T8UmN6VY>

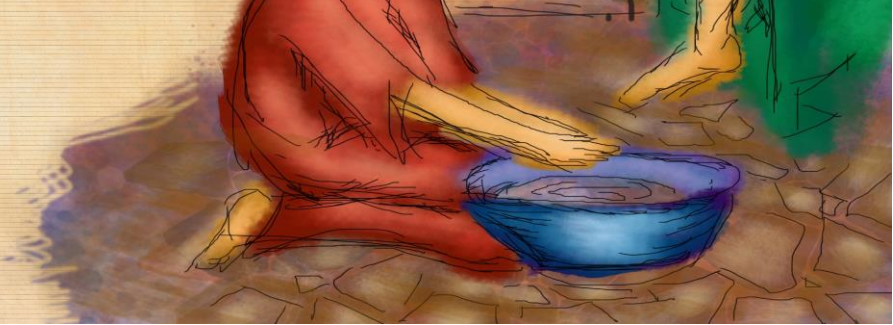
A new commandment <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yy7W8avIXIY>

This is my body, broken for you <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QrxGJAzAzJO>

I am the bread of life <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1CRMbh8ViUI>

Remember me <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SkwEN4nRNPO>

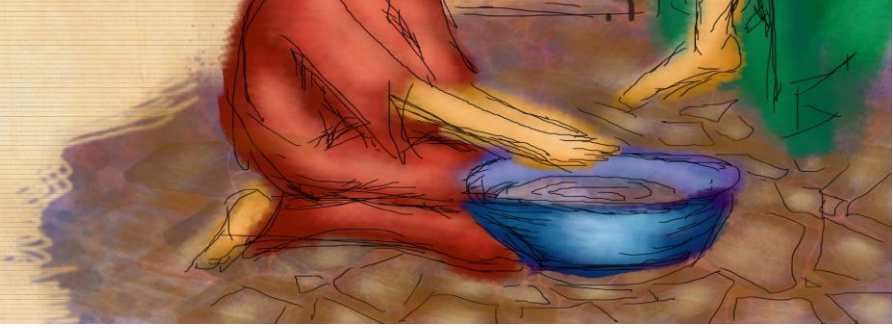




Some activities for you and your family to choose from

- The Last Supper is when we remember the first ever communion. Children, why don't you ask your parents or phone or video call aunts, uncles, grandparents, cousins or friends to tell you about their First Holy Communion. Are there any photos you could look at together? Can anyone remember what hymns were sung at the Mass?
- Do an internet image search for 'The Last Supper'. See how many results you find; there will be millions! Lots of them will be the most famous painting of the Last Supper by Leonardo da Vinci. Leonardo didn't tell us which disciple is which in his painting (and of course, he wasn't there at the time and so no one knows what they actually looked like!) but some people have done research and made guesses about which disciple is which. See if you can find all the names of the disciples and which one might be which. Look at other people's paintings too – do you have a favourite?
- Draw or paint your own version of the Last Supper and do send us photos of what you have created!
- If you have a printer, here is an activity to make your own family version of the painting of the Last Supper. The link is for you to print out and follow <https://www.sundayschoolkids.com/activities-lent-easter/1-last-supper-1-instru.htm>
- If you have space on a wall, your fridge, a big piece of paper or even a bit of patio and chalk, you could draw or make a lot of hearts and write or draw on them ways for you each to show Jesus' love for each other and our community. Add some things you are thankful for too and you have made your very own Eucharist (giving thanks) and Communion (coming together) at home.
- There are some great activities on the website/blog www.catholicicing.com It's run by a Catholic mom in the USA.





The specific link for Holy Thursday is here

<https://www.catholicicing.com/holy-thursday-last-supper-craft/>

Activities she suggests and gives instructions for are: making unleavened bread; feet washing craft or role play; and preparing a Christian version of the Jewish Seder meal. There is also a brilliant Last Supper model using her printout (available when you subscribe) and egg boxes. Some of the activities need to be paid for, others are free for everyone and there are some which you get when you subscribe for free by putting in your email address.

- If you wanted to do an assembly style version of the Holy Thursday story, there are various versions available online. We like the idea of using flat bread and red juice to act out the very special meal. There is a link here that you could follow <https://www.assemblies.org.uk/pri/543/the-last-supper--an-easter-assembly>

Some Holy Thursday themed videos that you might like to watch on YouTube

Another animated version of the Holy Thursday story

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wYAVu4MR7rc>

Animated version of the Holy Thursday story

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SigoALSS1R8&t=28s>

My God is so big! Why don't you learn this and make up some of your own actions.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Aq1ZIC4IsEw>

