

LESSON 18: THE LAST SUPPER, OUR FIRST MASS

The night before Jesus died, He and the disciples gathered to celebrate the feast of Passover. This is referred to as the Last Supper. Jesus knelt down to wash their feet. Jesus taught His disciples a lesson in service and humility.

Later, He took bread, blessed and broke it and gave it to His disciples saying "This is My Body, which will be given up for you". Then He took a cup of wine, gave thanks and gave it to them saying, "this is the Cup of My Blood, the Blood of the new everlasting Covenant. It will be shed for you, and for all, so that sins may be forgiven". Jesus instituted the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. He gave us His Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity, this is wholly present in the Host and in the contents of the chalice. This is called Transubstantiation.

When the disciples ate it, Jesus came into their souls. They were the first ones ever to receive Holy Communion. Jesus told them, "Do this in remembrance of Me".

At every Holy Mass the priest says the same words over bread and wine and they become the Body and Blood of Jesus. We call this the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist.

The Last Supper was actually the first Mass that took place on a Thursday, the night before Jesus died. Every year on Holy Thursday we especially remember the first Mass and Jesus' gift of the Holy Eucharist and of the priesthood.

The important things that happened on Maundy Thursday:

- Jesus washed the feet of the disciples and gave the 'new commandment' to love one another.
- Jesus had the Passover meal, the first Mass. He gave us the sacrament of the Eucharist.
- Jesus instituted the priesthood.
- Jesus was about to lay down his life so that we could go to Heaven.
- Jesus' agony in the Garden of Gethsemane.
- Judas betrayal and Jesus arrest.

When we receive Holy Communion:

- Our souls are cleansed from venial sin.
- We become more like Christ.
- We receive grace to grow in love and virtue.

I am the Bread of Life. He who comes to Me shall not hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst" (John 6:35)

"Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.' I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." (John 13: 33-35)

Words to know:

Last Supper:	the dinner Jesus had with the Twelve disciples the night before He died. At the Last Supper Jesus gave us the Holy Eucharist.
Holy Thursday:	the day Jesus gave us the Holy Eucharist for the first time.
Transubstantiation:	the bread and wine is changed into the Body and Blood of Jesus.
Remembrance:	in memory of someone or something.

Holy Days of Obligation

For us Catholics, Sunday is observed as a Holy Day of Obligation. Those who deliberately fail in this obligation commits a grave sin. Besides Sunday the church observes the following days of Obligation.

The Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God - January 1

Feast of the Ascension of our Lord - (Thursday, 6th week of Easter)

Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary - August 15

All Saints Day - November 1

Immaculate Conception - December 8

Christmas, Birth of our Lord - December 25

Questions and Answers

1	<p><i>The Passover feast celebrated by the Jews every year. What does it signify?</i> The Passover or Pesach is a Jewish holiday commemorating the Hebrews' liberation from slavery in Egypt.</p>
2	<p><i>What does Passover mean?</i> In the Book of Exodus, during the night of the final plague God "passed over" and protected the houses of the Israelites, giving the festival its name.</p>
3	<p><i>When is Maundy Thursday or Holy Thursday celebrated?</i> Maundy Thursday or Holy Thursday is celebrated during Holy Week when Jesus had the Last Supper with his disciples before he died.</p>
4	<p><i>What are the important things that happened on Maundy Thursday?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jesus washed the feet of the disciples and gave the 'new commandment' to love one another.• Jesus had the Passover meal, the first Mass. He gave us the sacrament of the Eucharist.• Jesus instituted the priesthood.• Jesus was about to lay down his life so that we could go to Heaven.• Jesus' agony in the Garden of Gethsemane.• Judas betrayal and Jesus arrest.
5	<p><i>When was the first Mass celebrated?</i> The first Mass was celebrated at the Last Supper when Jesus instituted the Holy Eucharist.</p>
6	<p><i>Why did Jesus wash the disciples' feet?</i> By doing this humble act Jesus told His disciples that the Son of man came to serve and not to be served.</p>