

A Meal on the Evening of Maundy Thursday

Maundy Thursday/ Dydd Iau yr Cablyd, means the Thursday of the Commandment or Commandment Thursday. We particularly celebrate Our Lord's commandment to us to Love one Another but we also celebrate his commandment to us to "do this in remembrance of him", to celebrate the Eucharist. In normal times we would celebrate the Eucharist, strip the altar and keep a watch before the Blessed Sacrament. Unfortunately we are not able to do any of that this year.

The Eucharist was instituted at a Passover Meal so the focus of our evening devotion can be a meal. The following prayers are to enable you to make a meal part of your worship and devotion. Maundy Thursday evening is a sort of mini-break from Lent so you can eat whatever you have given up for Lent.

1. The lighting of candles

A single candle may be used for simplicity, with one of the those present lighting it on behalf of all; but if you have enough candles and holders the following can be done.

Each person lights a candle of their own, setting it in front of them. A person also light another candle for important people close to them particularly if they are unable to be present, or in remembrance of those who have died.

The prayers over the lighting of the candles (the ones with the actions) are said by all present.

The other prayers are usually said by one person

Do all this as quickly or as slowly as you feel is appropriate to the occasion or suitable to your needs as a household. It need only take a few moments.

Blessed are You, Lord,
High King above all kings,
our Father for ever and ever.
Thine, O Lord, is the greatness,
the power, the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.

(Lighting candles individually or together:)

Let Thy face, O Lord, shine forth upon us,
and be Thou merciful unto us.

*(Individually or together moving hands over the candles,
palms down, with circular motion inwards towards the
eyes, three times:)*

The peace of God ...
and of Christ ...
and of the Holy Spirit ...
be upon us
[and upon us and our children]
for ever more.

(Individually or together, covering eyes with hands:)

I do not think that I shall fear Thee
when I see Thee face to face.

*(All together, removing hands from eyes, and looking at the
candles:)*

Thou art our trust, O King of kings.
I pray that no envy and malice,
no hatred or fear, may smother the flame.
I pray that indifference and apathy,
contempt and pride,
may not extinguish its light.
Be with us by day,
be with us by night,
and as darkness covers the earth
keep our lights shining brightly.
We are on a journey,
for our hearts have run before us
to Your Kingdom;
once far off,

we have now been brought near.

See how good and joyful a thing it is
to dwell together in unity!

2. The breaking of bread

One person should have the bread or wine before them, breaking the bread and passing it to the next person. They may eat first or last, as desired.

The same procedure is followed with passing and drinking the wine:

(Taking the bread:)

Blessed are You, Lord,
High King above all kings,
for through Your goodness we have this bread.
You have given us Your peace,
and set a hunger in our hearts.
Restore our strength.
Give new energy to tired limbs,
new thought to weary minds.
Share the bread.

(Taking the wine:)

Blessed are You, Lord,
High King above all kings,
for through Your goodness we have this wine.
We thank You for Your loving kindness
which has filled our days
and brought us to this time and place.
May the wine restore our souls,
giving new vision to dry spirits,
new warmth to cold hearts.
Share the wine.

3. Thanksgiving before sharing a meal

Food may have been prepared for the guests, or they may even have brought food as well to contribute to the shared meal, but in any case you should endeavour to sit at one table, and leave one spare place-setting, or one seat free. This is to welcome the Christ who comes in the guise of the stranger or 'unexpected' visitor. This reminds us that we long for the coming of Christ — His returning — and yet honour His presence with us. Also, it teaches us to treat with honour whoever may come and be given the place prepared as His.

(Before eating:)

Bless, O Lord,
this food we are about to eat,
and we pray You, O God,
that it may be good for our body and soul,
and if there is any poor creature
hungry or thirsty walking the road,
may God send them in to us
so that we can share the food with them,
just as Christ shares His gifts with all of us.

4. During the Meal

During the meal take some time to read an account of the last supper and the Jesus praying in the garden of Gethsemane Matthew 26:17-46

5. After the Meal

Almighty Father,
Whose Son Jesus Christ has taught us
that what we do to the least
of our brothers and sisters
we also do for him:
give us the will to be a servant of others
as he was the servant of all,
who gave up his life and died for us,
yet is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen

We conclude with the prayer that Jesus taught us:

Our Father who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us,
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.