

## HOLY (MAUNDY) THURSDAY

The Mass of the Lord's Supper, which inaugurates the sacred Easter Triduum, recalls that last supper, when the Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, offered his Body and Blood under the species of bread and wine to God and, under these symbols, gave them to his Apostles that they might consume them and commanded them and their successors in the priesthood to offer them.

By means especially of the homily, attention should be focussed upon the mysteries which are commemorated in this Mass, namely the institution of the Holy Eucharist and that of the priestly Order, together with the Lord's command to love one another.

**Preparation:** The tabernacle should be empty before the liturgy begins and holy water stoups emptied, to be refilled with water blessed at the Easter Vigil. The font should be emptied and prepared in time for the celebration of the Easter Vigil. Enough bread should be consecrated at this Mass for Holy Communion today and tomorrow, Good Friday. Though Holy Communion may be brought to the sick today, Holy Communion may be distributed at the church itself **only** within the Mass. It is fitting that for the reservation of the Eucharist to serve communion on Good Friday, a chapel should be arranged in which prayer and meditation may be fostered. The Blessed Sacrament should be reserved in a closed tabernacle, exposition in a monstrance being absolutely excluded. Nor should the tabernacle in any way have the appearance of a tomb or a sepulchre, since the chapel of reservation is not intended to represent the Lord's tomb, but simply to reserve the Holy Eucharist for communion the next day.

**The Mass:** Only the Mass of Chrism and the Mass of the Lord's Supper may be celebrated today. Mass without a congregation is not permitted. Funeral Masses may not be celebrated. The custom of receiving the newly blessed oils can be incorporated into the Mass of the Lord's Supper, with ministers carrying the vessels of blessed oil in procession. Alternatively the oils may be received at another appropriate time (e.g. Holy Wednesday evening Mass on the day of our Diocesan Chrism Mass). The old oils should be burned or poured into the Blessed Sacrament lamp (where appropriate). During the singing of the 'Gloria', the Church bells and other bells are rung and then remain silent until the Gloria at the Easter Vigil.

**The Washing of Feet** is encouraged in all parishes following the liturgy of the Word. This rite should be characterised by its simplicity, allowing the beautiful gesture of service to speak to all of ministry in the church. There is no provision in the Roman Rite to substitute the washing of feet for hands.

**The Liturgy of the Eucharist** begins with the Procession of the Gifts. The Missal instructs that the collection of gifts and money today be for the poor. It is appropriate to include gifts collected during Lent as the fruits of penance. During this procession the *Ubi Caritas* (*Where charity and love is...*) is sung. The proper parts for Eucharistic Prayer 1 should be used. Holy Communion under both kinds takes on even greater meaning on this day, and thus some

additional care in planning will add greater richness to the meaning of this celebration. The sick may receive communion at any time during the day.

Following the Prayer after Communion, the Holy Eucharist is transferred to the place of reposition. After the transfer of the Holy Eucharist (or at some other suitable time) the altar is stripped privately, and any crosses are removed or covered with a red or purple veil. The faithful should be encouraged to continue adoration before the Blessed Sacrament for a suitable period of time during the night, according to local circumstances, but there should be no solemn adoration after midnight.

The procession and the reposition of the Blessed Sacrament should not take place in churches where it is not intended to celebrate the solemn Liturgy of the Lord's Passion on Good Friday.