

Maundy Thursday
St. John 13:1-15
April 9th, 2020
Sts. Peter & Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, UAC
Simpsonville, SC
Pastor Jerald Dulas

You Are Clean

In Nomine Iesu!

In the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:

O Lord Jesus Christ, we thank Thee, that of Thine infinite mercy Thou hast instituted this Thy Sacrament, in which we eat Thy Body and drink Thy Blood: Grant us, we beseech Thee, by Thy Holy Spirit, that we may not receive this gift unworthily, but that we may confess our sins, remember Thine agony and death, believe the forgiveness of sin, and day by day grow in faith and love, until we obtain eternal salvation through Thee, Who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one true God, world without end. Amen.

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ. Amen.

On Holy Monday the Apostle and Evangelist began the Gospel reading for that day by telling us that our Lord + Jesus went and visited the house of Lazarus, to eat and drink, on the sixth day before the Passover. That means that the triumphal entry into Jerusalem by our Lord + Jesus happened on the fifth day before the Passover. We know that the Passover happened on the fourteenth day of the first month, the month of Nisan. Therefore, on the day when the Passover lamb was to be chosen, on the tenth day of the month, our Lord + Jesus was chosen as the once and for all time Passover Lamb for the sins of the whole world. He was chosen on the tenth day of the first month to be our sacrificial Lamb to atone for our sins and the sins of the whole world.

Now according to the Jewish calendar today is the fourteenth day of the month. Our Lord + Jesus has gathered in the Upper Room to eat the Passover meal with His Apostles. They feast upon a Passover lamb while the True Passover Lamb institutes the meal of His Body and Blood given and shed for the remission of our sins. Our Lord + Jesus connects the Passover meal handed down to the them from the Prophet Moses to the True Passover meal to be eaten and drunk by all those who have been baptized and believe on the Lord + Jesus Christ, the Sacrament of the Altar; the gift of His Body and Blood given in bread and wine for us Christians to eat and to drink.

It makes one wonder, then, why does the Gospel reading seem out of place for this day? The Gospel from the Evangelist and Apostle St. John is on the washing of the feet of the Apostles. Would it not make more sense to have a Gospel reading from one the other Evangelists who actually record the institution of the Lord's Supper? This Gospel reading is a continuation of the Gospel readings we had on Holy Monday and Holy Tuesday from the previous chapter of St. John, chapter twelve. The connection to those events and the allusions to Holy Baptism prepare us for our Lord's suffering and death. The very thing which we remember and proclaim whenever we eat this Bread and drink this Cup and thereby receive our Lord's Body and Blood.

No one is to be allowed to the Lord's Supper who has not been baptized and examined. For infants who are baptized, they go through instruction when they have attained the proper age to both

understand in what they participate, and to be able to public confess that they believe that the bread that they eat is truly and substantially the Body of Christ, and the wine that they drink is truly and substantially the Blood of Christ. Adults who are baptized have this instruction before they come to Holy Baptism. But Holy Baptism is a prerequisite to receive the Lord's Body and Blood, for he who comes to this altar must be clean.

You are clean because you have been baptized into the Lord + Jesus Christ. All that is in us has been drowned and destroyed. The Old Adam has been drowned and destroyed, so that now we have been raised again by the Holy Ghost as clean and pure children of the Triune Lord God. We are declared righteous; we are declared clean on account of the faith that was created in us through the waters of Holy Baptism by the washing and regeneration of the Holy Ghost. Our Lord cleanses His Apostles in preparation of His giving them His Body and Blood in bread and wine.

But not all of the Apostles are clean. There is one who has already agreed to betray the Lord + Jesus by receiving thirty pieces of silver from the chief priests and scribes on Holy Wednesday, that is, yesterday. He is there in body only. His soul is far from the Lord. He no longer desires to be a part of the Lord and His gifts, yet he is there in his person pretending to be a member of the Church. This son of perdition eats and drinks the true and substantial Body and Blood of the Lord + Jesus in bread and wine to his own damnation, because he does not hold onto this gift with faith. He is faithless and has rejected all that the Lord + Jesus would offer. And so, he eats and drinks damnation upon himself as the Blessed Apostle St. Paul said when he wrote to the Church at Corinth.

The writing of St. Paul and the example of Judas Iscariot should serve as a warning to us to not take this Holy Supper lightly; that we should approach this altar and kneel to receive this Blessed Sacrament with all due honor and reflection. We should not just go through the motions when we receive it, but focus on what we receive, and more importantly, what gifts are being given to us when we receive this blessed meal on bended knees. We receive our Lord's very Body and Blood given and shed for us for the remission of our sins. And where there is remission and forgiveness of sins, there is also eternal life and salvation given to us.

We have all been baptized in the Name of the Triune Lord God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost. We have been made clean by our Lord's washing us and calling us His own. On account of this—that we bear the Name of the Lord—we have been invited to receive our Lord's Body and Blood in bread and wine. We have been invited to join with the Apostles in the Upper Room and eat the Passover Lamb of our Lord + Jesus Christ. Indeed, we have been invited through the washing of our Lord + Jesus in Holy Baptism to join with all the saints in Heaven—with angels and archangels and all the company of Heaven—in eating and drinking a foretaste of the eternal marriage feast of the Lamb in His Kingdom.

On this fourteenth day of the month (liturgically speaking), we join with one another and with all those who have gone before us in the faith—who have been washed and made clean by the Lord + Jesus to celebrate the institution of the Lord's Supper. Our Lord + Jesus on the night when He was betrayed—the night when the Passover lamb was sacrificed for the sins of the people—He took bread, gave thanks and gave it to them saying, "Take, eat, this is My Body given for you." In the same manner also, after supper, He took the Cup, gave thanks, and gave to them saying, "Drink of it all of you. This Cup is the New Testament in My Blood, which is shed for you for the remission of sins. This do as oft as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

You are clean because you have been made clean by the Lord + Jesus in the waters of Holy Baptism. Through the Holy Ghost you have been made a child of God, and have been washed clean of all your sins. You remain clean when you daily live in your Holy Baptism by daily drowning the Old Adam through daily contrition and repentance, and daily clinging in faith the Lord + Jesus and His works and merits. This meal of our Lord's Body and Blood given in bread and wine, which we eat every Lord's

Day, and on other feasts and festivals, also makes us clean. For the Blood of the Lamb slain for the sins of the whole world, which we drink, washes us clean of all our sins and trespasses. Therefore, in the Lord + Jesus—in the Paschal Lamb sent to atone for the sins of the whole world—we have forgiveness and remission of all of our sins and iniquities.

Let us therefore, cling to Him and His works in faith, for in Him and Him alone are we made clean. For outside of Him—outside of faith in Him—we only find the Lord God's eternal wrath and displeasure. Just like Judas Iscariot did for his unbelief and betrayal of the Lord + Jesus. Therefore, let us daily repent of our sins in contrition, and turn away from our works to the works of our Lord + Jesus, Who offers up His life as a ransom for us; Who washed us clean in the waters of Holy Baptism, and gives to us a precious life-giving meal in the Lord's Supper. Let us eat this bread and drink this Cup, and thereby receive our Lord's precious and innocent Body and Blood given for us. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus Christ. Amen.

Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:

We thank Thee, O Lord Jesus Christ, the Savior of all men, that Thou hast given Thyself into death for us to make atonement for our sins, and hast also left us an example of mutual service by humbly washing Thy disciples' feet; and we heartily beseech Thee, govern and direct our hearts by Thy Holy Spirit that we may in true faith firmly cling to Thee as our Savior, faithfully serve our neighbor with works of love, and obtain eternal salvation through Thy merit, Who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

The Votum:

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Amen.

Soli Deo Gloria!