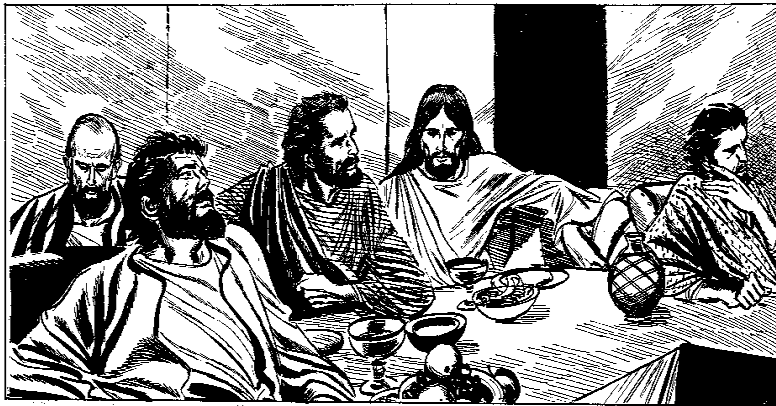


The Last Supper



Luke 22.14-30

When the hour came, he took his place at the table, and the apostles with him.

He said to them,

"I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I tell you, I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God."

Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he said,

"Take this and divide it among yourselves; for I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."

Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying,

"This is my body, which is given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me."

And he did the same with the cup after supper, saying,

"This cup that is poured out for you
is the new covenant in my blood.

But see, the one who betrays me is with me, and his hand is on the table.

For the Son of Man is going as it has been determined, but woe to that one by whom he is betrayed!"

Then they began to ask one another,
which one of them it could be who would do this.

A dispute also arose among them as to which one of them was to be regarded as the greatest.

But he said to them,

"The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those in authority over them are called benefactors. But not so with you; rather the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like one who serves. For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves?"

Is it not the one at the table?

But I am among you as one who serves.

You are those who have stood by me in my trials; and I confer on you, just as my Father has conferred on me, a kingdom, so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

Reflection

When Jesus Christ entered the supper room to eat the Passover meal that last Thursday night, he was aware a dark fate awaited him.

Powerful forces were drawn up against him ready to take his life. His enemies were moving to stop him.

Beside him were his disciples, "his own who were in the world." Arguing among themselves as they took their place at table, they gave him little support.

Not only did Jesus face their pettiness;
he also sensed their impending betrayal of him.

What would he do?

Understandably he might respond with caution and draw back. Like the servant, whom Isaiah described, he might well say, " I toiled in vain; and for nothing, uselessly, spent my strength..."(Is. 49).

Jesus, however, took bread and gave it to his disciples. "Take this," he said, "this is my body."

He took the cup and gave it to them.

"This is my blood, the blood of the new covenant,
to be poured out in behalf of many."

That night, without wariness or regret, he gave himself in love to his Father and his disciples.

As Saviour and Redeemer he gave himself unhesitatingly for the life of the world.

We remember that love each time we celebrate the sacrament of the Holy Communion, the sacrament which makes a supper room of every time and place.

Until the end of time, the sacrament says, Jesus Christ will offer his body and blood for all.

Reflective Prayer

Lord Jesus,
once in the wilderness
your people ate heavenly manna
and they were filled.

And once in a desert place
you fed the hungry
with blessed bread.

A simple thing, we say,
costing our mighty God little effort.

But what if bread is
a body offered for all,
and a cup of wine
your own life-blood
given to those who hardly care?

A costly thing, we say,
Is there anything more
God could have done?

Anything more
Love could do
than lay down his life for his friends?

