

Maundy Thursday
April 21, 2011

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Sermon

The Offering

The Litany of the Holy Sacrament of the Altar

L: O Lord,

C: have mercy.

L: O Christ,

C: have mercy.

L: O Lord,

C: have mercy.

L: O Christ,

C: hear us.

L: God the Father in heaven,

C: have mercy.

L: God the Son, Redeemer of the world,

C: have mercy.

L: God the Holy Spirit,

C: have mercy.

L: Holy Triune God,

C: have mercy.

L: O Christ, the bread of Life, God and Man, the Hidden One who is in our midst; the Passover Lamb, the Sacrifice for the world, the Source

of Grace, our only Food, our only Joy; the Healing of the sick, the Comforter of the mourning, the Strength of the dying; our only Hope, the Bread from heaven; through Your body, sacrificed for us; through Your blood shed for us; through this sign of Your love and fidelity; through Your resurrection and ascension, through Your presence, and at Your return:

C: help us, good Lord.

L: We poor sinners implore You

C: to hear us, O Lord.

L: That we become strong in faith, that we proclaim Your death, that we praise Your resurrection; that we long for Your supper, that we be united at Your table, that none of us betray You; that we recognize Your way, that we go the way in the power of Your Food, that You lead us to the marriage feast of everlasting life:

C: hear us, good Lord.

L: Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God,

C: we implore You to hear us.

L: Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,

C: have mercy.

L: Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,

C: have mercy.

L: Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,

C: grant us Your peace.

L: O Christ,

C: hear us.

L: O Lord,

C: have mercy.

L: O Christ,

C: have mercy.

L: O Lord,

C: have mercy. Amen.

L: Let us pray. O Lord Jesus Christ, who has left to us the Mystery of Your Sacrament and has commanded, as often as we celebrate it, to remember Your suffering: help us to receive Your body and blood with faith, and daily to live from the power of Your redemption; who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

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The stripping of the Altar

After the stripping of the Altar, the congregation leaves in silence.

Features of Tonight's Service: The service this evening begins with the Invocation, Confession and Absolution, and then we will sing the first hymn where we customarily speak or chant the Introit. In the liturgy of the church from ancient times, the Confession and Absolution were actually done separately, even at other times of the week, and the actual Communion service would start without it. Thus, the "Introit," which means "Entrance Hymn," would be the first thing to take place in the worship service. Since having no printed "Introit" for this evening as is our usual custom, we are using the first hymn as this "Entrance Hymn" after the Confession and Absolution. You may have noticed in our usual Sunday services that pastor and vicar will remain on the chancel floor until the "Introit" or "Entrance Hymn" as a further illustration of this practice. Our sins separate us from God. Because of the Absolution (forgiveness given us by God) are we thus able to "enter," at God's invitation, into God's presence. The stripping of the altar is an ancient custom that reminds us of Christ being stripped of everything at the end of His earthly ministry when He was arrested and executed for our sins. The altar area of the church is a place that symbolizes for us the presence of God in our midst.

Why is there no blessing? The services which take place on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Sunday are taken as a unit. They are really one big remembrance and celebration. For this reason, the blessing is omitted on both Maundy Thursday and Good Friday because the service doesn't actually end until the Benediction on Easter Morning.