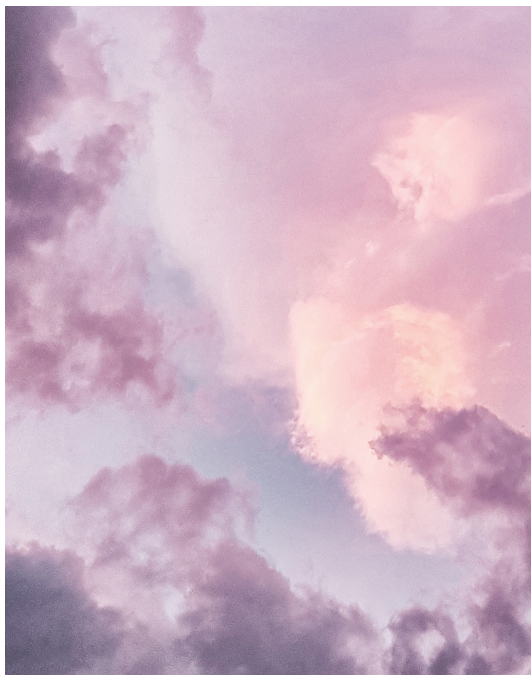


UNITED IN PRAYER

And the world came together as the people stayed apart.¹

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of this land and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.



INTRODUCTION

Holy Thursday begins the Easter Triduum: that is, the three days concerning the events of Christ's passion, death and resurrection. Our prayer today invites us to enter more deeply into the mystery of Christ's institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper – where Jesus “took, blessed, broke and gave.” The Gospel reading today is John’s account of Christ washing the feet of His disciples. This is the example Christ sets for each of us to follow; what Henri Nouwen would refer to as the “nobility of service” – which for us as Christians, sees the Eucharist made visible in the witness of service and selfless love.

We begin our prayer today with the sign of our faith:
*In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

OPENING PRAYER

Let us pause and call to mind
the presence of God within and among us,
today and always.

Brief pause.

God of mercy and infinite love,
we place ourselves before you.
Help us to be open to your Word,
responsive to your Spirit,
and alert to your call.

May your peace be with us.

We make this prayer through
Christ our Lord. Amen.

Amen



WE LISTEN

Speak Lord, your servant is listening...

A reading from Paul's first letter to the Corinthians. (1 Cor 11:23-26)

This is what I received from the Lord, and in turn passed on to you: that on the same night that he was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took some bread, and thanked God for it and broke it, and he said, ‘This is my body, which is for you; do this as a memorial of me.’ In the same way he took the cup after supper, and said, ‘This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Whenever you drink it, do this as a memorial of me.’ Until the Lord comes, therefore, every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you are proclaiming his death.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM ²

115(116):12-13,15-18

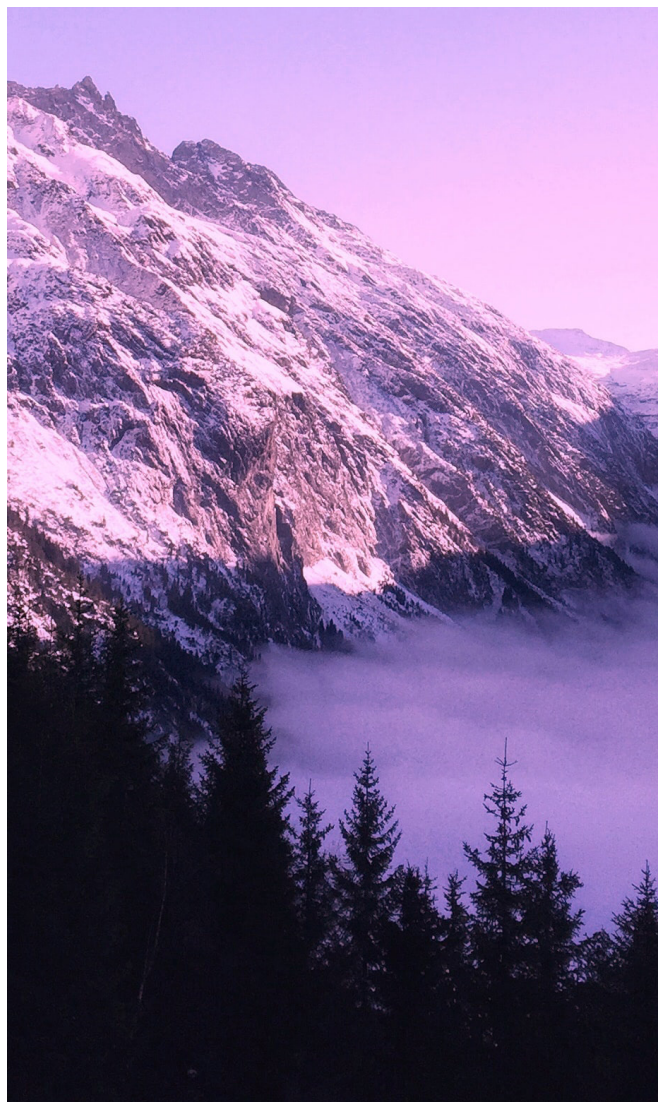
Option: Listen to the Psalm [here](#).

R. Our blessing-cup is a communion, with the Blood of Christ

How shall I make a return to the Lord
for all the good he has done for me?
The cup of salvation I will take up,
and I will call upon the name of the Lord. **R.**

Precious in the eyes of the Lord
Is the death of his faithful ones.
I am your servant, the son of your handmaid;
You have loosened my bonds. **R.**

To you I will offer sacrifice of thanksgiving,
And I will call upon the name of the Lord.
My vows to the Lord I will pay,
In the presence of all his people. **R.**



This is the Night of Love

(cf Matt 26:17-30 | John 13:1-15)

On the night Jesus took a towel and basin,
and washed his disciples' feet.
On this night he told them to do the same for
others
to show their love for him
and for one another.
This is the night of love.

On this night, followers of Jesus
have invited those preparing for baptism
to begin with them a solemn vigil of prayer
and fasting
until the day of Christ's resurrection is
fulfilled.
This is the night of love.

On this night, Jesus broke bread and shared
wine with his followers
for the last time,
and invited them to remember him
to encounter him anew,
whenever they did the same.
This is the night of love.

On this night, followers of Jesus
have welcomed those who have returned to
the way of Jesus
after a time of wandering
and a journey of returning.
This is the night of love.

This is the night of love.
And so, on this night,
we welcome the penitent -
all here have wandered -
and invite all preparing -
all here are still learning -
to join us in hearing and obeying
the commandment of our Master
and to feast at his table,
that we may love one another
as he has loved us.

Come to the night of love.

A time for stillness and contemplation.



The Washing of Feet by Sieger Koder

WE REFLECT

*Crumbs on the floor, remnants of bread broken.
Drops of sweet wine in the bottom of a cup.
The sound of water splashing into a basin.
A servant's towel wrapped around the waist.*

Today is a day of taste and touch. It is a day of earthiness, of remembrance. Today we wash feet.

The famous painting of *The Washing of Feet* by Sieger Koder is often used as a visual meditation on John's Gospel (13:1-15). Koder's art is predominantly paintings of gospel scenes which invite the viewer into the scene. This particular piece is the washing of Peter's feet during the Last Supper, in which we see things from Christ's angle - including His reflected face.

Look at the painting. What do you notice? What seems to be happening?

Looking closely, we see in the bowl of dirty water, the face of Christ revealed.

Where is the face of Christ to be found today? Is it in the places of messiness, disruption, confusion, chaos and anxious moments of our lives?

Where is Jesus in this moment most present to you?

This is Love – John Birch

This is love.
Not that you spoke words of comfort,
walked with the unclean and unloved,
shared wisdom, bread and wine,
brought healing into lives
and challenged the status quo.

This is love.
That you spoke the word of God,
walked a painful road to the Cross,
shared living water, bread of life,
brought Salvation to the world
and died for the sake of all.

This is love.
It is a seed
sown in the ground,
which germinates,
blossoms,
and spreads its sweet perfume.

John Birch, [Faith and Worship](#)



*What a wild love it is that does these things, that suffers these things!
What can anyone say to do it justice?
Stillness before it is our best response.*

Dr Eleonore Stump, 2018

A time for stillness and contemplation.

WE RESPOND

Life together supports and challenges us to be a community of mission. We listen to the invitations of God that flow through our shared life and discern our shared response. Based on a common trust in God, we offer our lives in service. In ministry we find ourselves, like Jesus, broken open for our brothers and sisters. Truly, we are bread of life for others as Jesus has been for us. (*WFR 107*)

Let us pray:

In remembrance we gather in spirit.
In humility we look to God.
In confidence we pray for the Church and the world.

For all those who are affected by COVID-19,
through illness, isolation or anxiety,
that they may find peace and comfort.

We pray to the Lord.

For the those who are vulnerable and fearful,
for the critically ill and those who have died,
that they find rest and peace in You.

We pray to the Lord.

For those who are guiding our country,
developing plans and policies,
that they make wise decisions.

We pray to the Lord.

For all Marists around the world
that they find renewed inspiration in serving one another.

We pray to the Lord.

For what else shall we pray...

A time for stillness and contemplation.

CLOSING PRAYER

Jesus, may Your perfect example of endless love and service model our own lives.
Jesus, may Your life teach us how to love and care for all people in our world.
Jesus, may Your life be reflected in our heart, hands, and words.

Amen.

Saint Marcellin Champagnat	<i>Pray for Us</i>
Mary of the Cross MacKillop	<i>Pray for Us</i>
Mary Our Good Mother	<i>Pray for Us</i>
And let us always remember	<i>To Pray for One Another</i>