



Homily for the Mass of the Lord's Supper

Holy Thursday - 18th April 2019

Cardiff Cathedral: St. David's Cathedral, Cardiff

Archbishop George Stack

This Saturday, Jewish people all over the world will begin the celebration of the feast of Passover which will last for seven days. At the Seder Meal, during which they will eat unleavened bread and roast lamb, the youngest person will ask the father of the house “Why is this night different to any other night?”. And the father will explain the escape of the people of Israel from slavery in Egypt. We heard part of the dramatic story tonight. How they had to sacrifice the lamb for the meal. Smear the blood over their doors. Eat the meal quickly as the angel of death was passed through Egypt so that they could pass over from death in Egypt to life in the Promised Land.

On this Holy Thursday night, we could ask the same question. “Why is this night different to any other night?”. And the answer is contained in the words and actions of the Mass. The Last Supper. The Passover Meal. Jesus the real Lamb of God who offers himself to his disciples: This is my Body. This is my Blood. This is what is going to save you from suffering, sin and death. This is what is going to save you from yourselves. And he washed their feet as a sign of how to save you and I from the selfishness and sin which makes each one think I am the centre of the world, everything and everyone should revolve around me. *“Do you understand what I have done to you?”* Why is this night different to any other night?

When he went further and took bread and wine and said “This is me” he meant this is the food and nourishment you

need in your passing through life, journey of faith, in your passing over death and into life. The Eucharist, the Holy Communion, is indeed Viaticum, Food for the Journey, the Bread of Life. The sacrifice he makes of his life through his death on the cross is the living reminder that he is the true Lamb of God. His blood poured out is the sure sign of the saving love of God. During Mass we say: *“Behold the Lamb of God. Behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the Supper of the Lamb”*. No wonder we reply *“Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof. Say but the word, and my soul shall be healed”*
