

## Scripture Reading

### **A Reading of the Gospel According to Matthew** (*Matthew 26:26-28*)

While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to His disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is My body." Then He took a cup, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. This is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. The Gospel of the Lord. R. Praise to You Lord Jesus Christ.

### **Reflection – I have Greatly Desired to Eat this Passover with You**

**Jesus' great desire - "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer."** (Luke 22:15). The Hebrew expression "with desire I have desired" in the original Hebrew text means "I have greatly desired." Through the precious last words of Jesus at the Last Supper we have a good idea of what was going on in His mind before He entered into His Sorrowful Passion. Jesus had a great desire to sit down together with His disciples and have this last meal with them before He was arrested. It was more than mere sentimentality. The tender heart of Jesus was preoccupied with something much greater. He was thinking too of you and me, of the people that existed before and after His coming on earth. Having decided to offer Himself as a sacrifice to His Father to atone for our sins, Jesus could not wait to carry it out – such is His love for us. *"No tongue," said St. Peter of Alcantara, "is able to declare the greatness of the love that Jesus bears for every soul."*

**Our Lord places before us His life of sacrifice in the Blessed Eucharist to motivate us to visit Him frequently in the Blessed Eucharist.** Significantly, Jesus broke the bread before giving it to His disciples, signifying His body would soon be broken on Calvary. It was no ordinary Passover meal. This Eucharistic Passover was celebrated by way of anticipation, before the consummation of the bloody sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross of Salvation on Mt Calvary. Transcending time and space we, the present-day disciples of Jesus through faith partake of this beautiful ceremony during the Offertory and Consecration stages of the Holy Mass. Because of His great love for each of us, Jesus has a very ardent desire to be received by us in Holy Communion.

**Detachment – emptying our hearts of everything that is not of God and for God.** To receive the greatest fruits from Holy Communion, assuming the soul is in the necessary state of grace, St. Alphonsus Liguori advised there are two things which we should endeavour to obtain in order to prepare ourselves for Holy Communion. The first is detachment from people and things, emptying our heart of everything that is not of God and for God. Even if the soul is in a state of grace, if the heart is pre-occupied with things, there will be less room for welcoming Jesus and His fire of divine love. St. Gertrude once asked our Lord what preparation He required of her for Holy Communion. *Jesus answered, "I require nothing more from you except that you come to receive Me not full of your self."*

**The desire to receive Jesus with the intention of loving Him more.** This is the second thing that is necessary. Gerson says that at the Eucharistic banquet no one is filled except for those who feel great hunger. St. Francis de Sales writes that the principal intention of a soul receiving communion should be to grow in the love of God. *"He should be received for love because it is out of pure love that He gives Himself to us."* St. Mechtilde writes that our Lord told her: *"When you are going to communicate, desire all the love that any soul ever had for Me, and I will receive it according to the desire, as if it were your own."*

### **Conversation with Jesus**

Precious Lord, thank You for the wondrous gift of the Holy Eucharist by which You enable us through faith to participate in Your supreme Sacrifice on Calvary transcending time and space. Through this beautiful gift You bestow upon us Your Real Presence in Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity hidden in the holy Eucharist wherein You place Your life of Sacrifice. Yes, receiving the Lord of lords and the King of kings in Holy Communion is the most solemn act I can ever make in my day. I ask my Blessed Mother Mary to purify my heart of all sins and earthly attachments before I receive Holy Communion and to impart to me the desire to love You more and more with the pure and ardent love which Her Immaculate Heart bears for You. May my poor heart be a clean chalice in which my Eucharistic Lord can find rest and comfort from all the iniquities of this world. Bestow upon me a great love for the Blessed Sacrament and to prove this love by frequent visits to You, my Eucharistic Lord. Mary, Mother of the Blessed Sacrament, please teach me how to love our Eucharistic Lord. Thank You Jesus. Praise You Jesus.