

# HOLY THURSDAY



Offering: Wisdom's Freely Shared  
Banquet

# Matins Holy Thursday (Wed. Eve)

On Holy & Great Thursday the City of God is given its life-sustaining true Food by which it is to live eternally in Christ's Kingdom.

“Two events shape the Liturgy of the Great and Holy Thursday: the Last Supper and the betrayal of Jesus by Judas. The Last Supper is the ultimate revelation of God's redeeming love for man. The betrayal by Judas reveals that sin, death and self-destruction are also due to love, but love directed at that which does not deserve love. (Schmemmann, Explanation Holy Week)

“The mystery of this unique day, and its liturgy where light and darkness, joy and sorrow are so strangely mixed, challenges us with the choice on which the eternal destiny of each one of us depends. ‘Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour was come... having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end...(John 13:1)’ To understand the meaning of the Last Supper, we must see it as the very end of the great movement of Divine Love which began with the creation of the world and is now to be consummated in the death and resurrection of Christ. (Schmemmann, Explanation Holy Week)

# Matins Gospel Luke 22:1-39

## Betrayal by Judas, Last Supper, Who is the greatest?

### Servanthood, Peter's Betrayel

The context of the **betrayal** is the Eucharist, it is always a moment of judgment and salvation, of life and death: “And being exceedingly grieved, they began to say to Him, each of them, ‘I am not *the one*, am I, Lord?’ [Mt. 26:22].

“Then Satan entered into Judas Iscariot...

Saint Kyril: “...there was place for him (Satan) in the traitor. For the bitter malady of covetousness, which the blessed Paul says is the root of all evil [1 Tim. 6:10], had overpowered him....Satan, whenever he would gain possession of any man's soul, searches out that particular passion which has power over him, and by means of **it make him his prey.**”

“And the Lord said, “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan asked *to have* you for himself, in order to sift *you* as the wheat; <sup>32</sup>“but I have supplicated for you, that your faith might not fail; and when you have turned back, make steadfast your brethren.” <sup>33</sup>And he said to Him, “Lord, with You I am ready to go both to prison and to death.” <sup>34</sup>And He said, “I tell you, Peter, in no wise shall a cock crow today, before that thou shalt thrice deny to have known Me.” [Lk. 22:31-34]

“As we all draw near with fear to the mystical table, let us receive the Bread with pure souls, remaining beside the Master, that we may see how He washes the feet of the Disciples and dries them with a towel. And let us do as we have seen, being subject to one another and washing one another's feet; for Christ Himself commands this, as He declared it before to His disciples.” (Oikos, Holy Thursday Matins)



“Receiving the bread in his hands, the betrayer in secret extends those very hands receiving from the priests the price of Him who had fashioned mankind with His own hands. He remained irredeemable, Judas the enslaved and deceitful. (Kontakion of Matins)”

“When he (Christ) receives abuse, he treats this abuse as a gift, and responds with the real gift of his own body, in order finally to gift all people with eternal life. He takes the absence of mutuality he finds in Jerusalem (Judas), and behaves as though it were an honest exchange, even an intimate wedding union. Through gratitude, he assimilates abuse into an encounter of love. The central example of this reinterpretation of his own crucifixion comes at the Mystical Supper. (Patitsas, The King Returns to His City, Holy Week)

## Christ displays his ardent desire to share His Life by becoming the food of immortality

<sup>12</sup>“And he shall show you a large upper room which has been furnished; there make ready.” <sup>13</sup>And they went and found *it* even as He had said to them. And they made ready the passover. <sup>14</sup>And when the hour came to pass, He reclined *at table*, and the twelve apostles with Him. <sup>15</sup>And He said to them, “With desire I desired to eat this passover with you before My suffering; <sup>16</sup>“for I say to you that in no wise will I eat of it any more, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.” <sup>17</sup>And having taken the cup, He gave thanks, and said, “Take this, and divide *it* among yourselves; <sup>18</sup>“for I say to you that in no wise will I drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God should come.” <sup>19</sup>And He took bread and gave thanks, and broke *it*, and gave to them, saying, “This is My body which is being given for you; be doing this in remembrance of Me.” [Lk. 22:12-19]

## God's Begotten Wisdom (Proverbs 8:22-31)

The choice metaphor for Jesus in the hymns on Holy Thursday in the foot washing and last supper is "God's begotten Wisdom" becomes a metaphor for Christ putting on a "bodily temple" – the last act of creation takes place on the Cross

Wisdom (Sophia) of God: Holy Thursday – Wisdom has become food for the faithful. In communion Wisdom comes into us and acts in us. (Hopko, The Names of Jesus)

"The Lord created me at the beginning of his work...before the beginning of the earth ...he begets me." (Proverbs 8:22-25)."

"Let us listen, all we who believe, and the uncreated and innate Wisdom of God is calling from the highest point of town. For He is shouting. "Taste and see that I am good, and knowing this, call out: He is Christ our God, and He is greatly glorified (On the Cross)." (Holy Thursday, Matins Canon)."

The Theotokos becomes the "temple of Wisdom" or "throne of Wisdom"

*"Wisdom has built a house for herself, and set up seven pillars. (Prov. 9:1)*

"Since Wisdom is the Son of God, once he became man he built his house, that is, the flesh from the Virgin" (Chrysostom)."

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# 14<sup>th</sup> C. Icon of Christ the Wisdom of God



# THE CRUCIFIED CHRIST IS THE IMAGE OF GOD (Col 1:15)– THE HUMAN-BEING

- ❖ Adam is a type of the One to come

“There is one vocation for Christians and that is to be martyrs...As we grow in self-sacrificial love we come to see each other as human and become human (Fr. John Behr) “

- ❖ Through desire and love (eros, leads us out of egoism, the realization that “I” need an “Other” in order to be fully human.
- ❖ As males and females we learn to lay down our lives for one another – the martyrdom of marriage/monasticism



# CHRIST ON THE CROSS IS THE IMAGE OF GOD – THE HUMAN-BEING

- ❖ Adam (Gen 2) God said, that it is not good for man be alone, I will make a helper fit for him”
- ❖ God brings him animals and after Adam comes to the realization (he needs to learn, Adam needs to come to an awareness that) that there is no helper fit for him, he recognizes the limitations of his ego, being alone.
- ❖ Adam falls asleep, from his side a rib is taken and he calls her called woman.
- ❖ A man leaves his father and mother and cleaves to his wife (it is the women culturally who leaves her family and not the male. Christ leace His Father offers his Himself to His new Bride the Church
- ❖ Christ as the new Adam is crucified, blood and water come from his side
- ❖ Eve (Zoi/Life) is the mother of all the living yet all her children die
- ❖ Mary – ‘behold your son’, ‘behold your mother’ – Theotokos she is the Mother of the Living, the true Zoi, (Eve)
- ❖ The Church is our mother, the New Eve - the mother of all Christians through blood (Eucharist) and Water (Baptism) we are born in the womb of the church, the children of the Church are now truly made alive in Christ. -

Isaiah 52:13-54:1 The Suffering Servant, the suffering Christ on the Cross is giving birth to the Church – this is read at the tomb on Holy Friday Vespers

“Sing, O barren, You *who* have not borne! Break forth into singing, and cry aloud, You *who* have not labored with child! For more *are* the children of the desolate, than the children of the married woman,” says the LORD. (Isaiah 54:1)

“The infinite Wisdom of God, which is the cause of all and the provider of life, has built himself a house, from a pure mother who knew no man; for He put on the temple of His Body. He is Christ our God, and He is greatly glorified.” (Holy Thursday Matins, Canon).”

Hymns: Proverbs 8:22-31; 9-1-5, with the “personification of Wisdom.

<sup>30</sup>But of Him are you in Christ Jesus, Who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, [1 Cor. 1:30]

# VESPERAL LITURGY HOLY THURSDAY MORNING

Exodus: 19:10-19 – consecration of the people on the eve of receiving the new Sinai covenant parallels the foot washing, God's coming in the Eucharist and the baptism of Catechumens

"Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow. Have them wash their clothes and prepare for the third day, because on the third day the Lord will come down upon Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people."

Job 38:1-21, 42:1-5 – Job acknowledges God's Creative Wisdom

"I know that You can do everything, And that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You... Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand, Things too wonderful for me, which I did not know..." "I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, But now my eye sees You."

Schmemmann - "and these *great and wonderful things* are fulfilled in the gift of Christ's Body and Blood."

Isaiah 50:4-11 – The Suffering Servant call us to imitate his self-sacrificial life on Holy Friday

"I gave my back to scourges, and my cheeks to blows; and I turned not away my face from the shame of spitting; but the Lord God became my helper; therefore I was not ashamed, but I set my face as a solid rock; and I know that I shall never be ashamed..."



## The Foot Washing (before or after liturgy)

John 13:3-17 (Vesperal Liturgy St. Basil)

Servant Leadership & humility are foundational to discipleship

<sup>3</sup>Jesus, knowing that the Father hath given all things into *His* hands, and that He has come from God and was going to God, <sup>4</sup>rose from the supper and laid aside *His* outer garments; and He took a towel and girded Himself. <sup>5</sup>Then He put water into the basin, and began to wash the feet of the disciples, and to wipe *them* off with the towel with which He was girded. [Jn. 13:3-5]...“If I then, the Lord and the Teacher washed your feet, you also owe to wash the feet of one another. [Jn. 13:14]... 17 “If you know these things, happy are you if you be doing them (beatitude). [Jn. 13:17]

The way of the Cross, laying down ones' life for one another. The host of the meal, Jesus, as servant and teacher washes the feet of his disciples

## The Foot Washing

“When Christ kneels to tend the disciples, it is not just in distinction to, but in reinforcement of, the manner in which he cares for the universe. His condescension is a repeat of that gesture by which he created the world from watery chaos. In the case of the washing of the feet, it is indeed akin to baptism, since he is plunging a portion of the body back into the water from which all created bodies were first raised, and to which all bodies have sunk again through sin. ”(Patitsas, The King Returns to His City, Holy Week)

# The Last Supper

Wisdom throws a banquet with a life-sustaining table on which she mixes ambrosia (immortality – the drink of the ancient Greek gods) an illusion to the Eucharist – bodily temple and food of immortality (Pentiuc, Hearing the Scriptures)

“Initiating His friends into mysteries, the very Wisdom of God sets a life-sustaining table, and mixes the wine of immortality (ἀμβροσία, ambrosia ) in His chalice, for those who believe. Let us religiously draw near and call out: ‘He is Christ our God, and He is greatly glorified.’ (Canon on Holy Thursday Matins, celebrated Holy Wednesday Evening)

“The future Kingdom inaugurated at the Last Supper by Wisdom’s banquet will be marked by a ‘new drink’ and Jesus as God among gods (deified human beings)...a fully brand-new drink, something along the lines of the Pauline ‘spiritual drink’...He is the source of this eternal life, will be with His disciples forever as God among gods.(1 Cor. 10:4., Ex. 17:1-7; Numb 20:7-13) (Pentiuc, Hearing the Scriptures)



# The Last Supper

“But world and food, once they are deprived of their initial sacramental meaning -- as means of communion, with God, once they are not received for God's sake, and filled with hunger and thirst for God...for they have no life in themselves... And thus ...man deviated his love from the only object of all love, of all hunger, of all desires...Man thought to find life in the world and in food, but he found death. His life became communion with death, for instead of transforming the world by faith, love and adoration into communion with God, he submitted himself entirely to the world, he ceased to be its priest and became its slave. And by his sin the whole world was made a cemetery, where people condemned to death partook of death...(Schmemmann, An Explanation of Holy Week, pg. 9).”

# The Liturgy- membership in New Jerusalem - The City of the Crucified King

“Great Week's soteriological vision extends to other aspects of the real ordinary life of man. In the institution of the Eucharist there is already a political vision of service - the greatest will be the servant of others

A vision of a Liturgical state - "For He has chosen Zion (the Church); there has He been pleased to dwell, ruling over the peoples that cry aloud with faith: Glory to Thy power, O Lord."

A Liturgical Manner of common life - "be at peace with each other and with all men"

The Eucharist is a political act, going beyond even the concern for the common good to the recognition that the good is always held in common and dynamically.

The call to celebrate the liturgy without ceasing is not only other-worldly but intensely this worldly, because it negates the possibility of a separate, liturgy-free, secular sphere.

Finally, it grounds the lives of its adherents in the heavenly liturgy, as they join the angels in the glorification of the Holy Trinity. Christians are only saved to the extent that their lives are assimilated into the rhythms and patterns of the glorification of the Trinitarian God. (Professor, Timothy Patitsas, *The King Returns To His City*, p. 285-6)."