

# Integral Faith

"Homily helps and liturgy resources highlighting care for our common home."



## Homily Helps and Petitions for the Holy Thursday, Cycle B (April 1, 2021)

### Homily Helps

#### † Scripture Passages to Note:

**Exodus 12:** If a family is too small for a whole lamb, it shall join the nearest household in procuring one and shall share in the lamb in proportion to the number of persons who partake of it. . . . This day shall be a memorial feast for you, which all your generations shall celebrate with pilgrimage to the Lord, as a perpetual institution.

**1 Corinthians 11:** The Lord Jesus . . . took bread, and after he had given thanks, broke it . . .

**John 13:** Peter said to him, “You will never wash my feet.” Jesus answered him, “Unless I wash you, you will have no inheritance with me.”

#### † Comments for the Day:

The best part of a holiday or fiesta is gathering with loved ones and eating our favorite foods. Filled with music, dance, and celebration, we remember who we are and how we are connected in a long line of familial kinship and love. In some families, the foods of the day are traditional and sacred, and made with tenderness and great care. Wine flows, and the stories that have been told for generations are once again retold. Through these sacred narratives a new generation becomes acquainted with the deep roots planted by their foremothers and fathers.

Some cultures have the wonderful custom of sharing their festive foods with strangers and the poor. In Sudan, many homes practice the custom of attaching a string or wire from the exterior of the door to the inside lock so that hungry persons might let themselves in and be seated at the dinner table of a gathered family. A Sudanese expression says, “We ate together,” or, “There was harmony between us.” Once strangers, they now become friends because of the generous sharing of food and fellowship. Sadly, this beautiful custom of welcome is becoming less frequent due to Sudan’s extreme poverty and political unrest. It is also a challenge for those families and communities throughout the world who, like those in Sudan, suffer from a lack of food due to drought and famine exacerbated by climate change.

This first night of the Paschal Triduum calls our attention to food and service. Jesus takes bread, gives thanks, breaks it, and gives it to his disciples; then he washes their feet. It is an intimate act. Jesus asks them to remember him by doing the same. It is, therefore, only within the context of a fraternal and sororal relationship that we can truly participate in this meal on this holy night. We come together and recall a festive holiday meal celebrated by a rabbi and his disciples. And we recall that the same Jesus, God beyond all names, the One who made the majestic mountains

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and set the limits of the sea, placed a towel around his waist and washed the feet of his disciples. Here, Jesus offers an example of what makes a real relationship, and asks that it be repeated in his memory, and not for the sake of just sheer ceremony. This ritual can only make sense when it becomes a living liturgy. It changes us in a way that directs every aspect and action of our being in order to focus our energy on making peace and renewing life.

One way we can do this is to become aware of how blessed we are to have food to celebrate with family and friends, and have access to resources needed for daily life. We can be honest with ourselves that what we often want is not necessarily what we need. We can then make choices about how to reduce our consumption of resources that contributes to climate change that impacts human life, now and in the future.

### † **Passages from *Laudato Si'* to Note:**

To blame population growth (for the problems of the poor) instead of extreme and selective consumerism on the part of some, is one way of refusing to face the issues. It is an attempt to legitimize the present model of distribution, where a minority believes that it has the right to consume in a way which can never be universalized, since the planet could not even contain the waste products of such consumption. Besides, we know that approximately a third of all food produced is discarded, and “whenever food is thrown out it is as if it were stolen from the table of the poor.” (#50)

“Use and throw away” logic generates so much waste, because of the disordered desire to consume more than what is really necessary. (#123)

The pace of consumption, waste, and environmental change has so stretched the planet’s capacity that our contemporary lifestyle, unsustainable as it is, can only precipitate catastrophes, such as those which even now periodically occur in different areas of the world. The effects of the present imbalance can only be reduced by our decisive action, here and now. (#161)

## Related Prayers of the Faithful

**Option 1:** That the church may be renewed during this springtime of the year and become a voice for the voiceless and a champion of the poor, let us pray to the Lord.

**Option 2:** That we may enter this Easter Triduum with open minds and hearts, so as to be changed by the example of Jesus’ total self-giving and recognize that what we often want may not be what we really need, let us pray to the Lord.

## Further Resources

**Feedback:** [info@catholicclimatecovenant.org](mailto:info@catholicclimatecovenant.org)

**Webpage:** <http://www.catholicclimatecovenant.org/resource/english-homily-help>

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