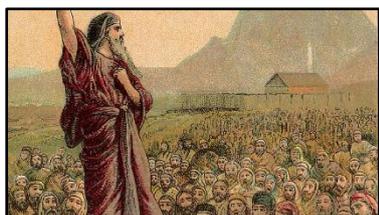


THE MOST HOLY BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF EXODUS 24:3-8



Moses went and told the people all the commands of the Lord and all the ordinances. In answer, all the people said with one voice, 'We will observe all the commands that the Lord has decreed,' Moses put all the commands of the Lord into writing, and early next morning he built an altar at the foot of the mountain, with twelve standing-stones for the twelve tribes of Israel. Then he directed certain young Israelites to offer holocausts and to immolate bullocks to the Lord as communion sacrifices. Half of the blood Moses took up and put into basins, the other half he cast on the altar. And taking the Book of the Covenant he read it to the listening people, and they said, 'We will observe all that the Lord has decreed; we will obey.' Then Moses took the blood and cast it towards the people. **'This' he said 'is the blood of the Covenant that the Lord has made with you, containing all these rules.'**

The Word of the Lord

RESPONSORIAL PSALM PS 115

How can I repay the Lord for his goodness to me?

The cup of salvation I will raise; I will call on the Lord's name.

The cup of salvation I will raise; I will call on the Lord's name.

O precious in the eyes of the Lord is the death of his faithful.

Your servant, Lord, your servant am I; you have loosened my bonds.

The cup of salvation I will raise; I will call on the Lord's name.

A thanksgiving sacrifice I make: I will call on the Lord's name.

My vows to the Lord I will fulfil before all his people.

The cup of salvation I will raise; I will call on the Lord's name.

A READING FROM THE LETTER OF ST PAUL TO THE HEBREWS 9:11-15.

Now Christ has come, as the high priest of all the blessings which were to come. He has passed through the greater, the more perfect tent, which is better than the one made by men's hands because it is not of this created order; and he has entered the sanctuary once and for all, taking with him not the blood of goats and bull calves, but his own blood, having won an eternal redemption for us.

The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer are sprinkled on those who have incurred defilement and they restore the holiness of their outward lives; how much more effectively **the blood of Christ**, who offered himself as the perfect sacrifice to God through the eternal Spirit, **can purify our inner self from dead actions** so that we do our service to the living God.

He brings a new covenant, as the mediator, only so that the people who were called to an eternal inheritance may actually receive what was promised: his death took place to cancel the sins that infringed the earlier covenant.

The Word of the Lord

I am the living bread which has come down from heaven says the Lord.
Anyone who eats this bread will live for ever.

A READING FROM THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK

14:12-16. 22-26.

On the first day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover lamb was sacrificed, his disciples said to him, 'Where do you want us to go and make the preparations for you to eat the passover?' So he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, 'Go into the city and you will meet a man carrying a pitcher of water. Follow him, and say to the owner of the house which he enters, "The Master says: Where is my dining room in which I can eat the passover with my disciples?" He will show you a large upper room furnished with couches, all prepared. Make the preparations for us there,' The disciples set out and went to the city and found everything as he had told them, and prepared the Passover.



And as they were eating he took some bread, and when he had said the blessing he broke it and gave it to them. 'Take it,' he said 'this is my body.' Then he took a cup, and when he had returned thanks he gave it to them, and all drank from it, and he said to them, 'This is my blood, the blood of the covenant, which is to be poured out for many. I tell you solemnly, I shall not drink any more wine until the day I drink the new wine in the kingdom of God.' After psalms had been sung they left for the Mount of Olives.

The Gospel of the Lord

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REFLECTION

In fidelity, hope and love for us, God has continually taken the initiative to call us – personally and communally - into relationship. God's Covenant with the people after freeing them from Egypt was celebrated by Jesus and the disciples at the Last Supper Passover Meal. It wasn't just something which happened in the past. As for Jews today, God was and is continuing to free the people from their 'Egypt's' in every era. At the Last Supper, Jesus took the bread and wine from the meal so we can continue to be renewed in the New Covenant – God's initiative again in Jesus revealing to us God's fidelity, love and hope through Jesus' teaching, through its cost to Him, and ultimately through God's fidelity both to Him in the resurrection and to us through the Gift and Presence of the Holy Spirit amongst us.

Jesus continues to call us to 'do this' - encountering his Risen Presence and the Father's fidelity through the Holy Spirit in every new time and context for us. Jesus invites us to 'live this' - growing in what, how and why we remember and living assuredly with faith in his Risen presence amongst us. We know we need 'to become' what we receive.

In our Covid 19-strapped world, society and Church, assured by God's fidelity, we pray that we do 'become' what we receive.. The tabernacle lamp in every Church reminds us of a Love which empowers us, refuses to abandon us but calls us to face challenges.