

Holy Thursday Homily 2024 **Mass of the Lord's Supper**

Tonight, as we usher in the Sacred Triduum, these hallowed three days, as a community of the Church we are extended a sacred invitation. We are summoned to journey more intimately into the profound depths of the mystery that defines our faith – the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

On this Holy Thursday, we gather to commemorate the Last Supper, where Jesus, on the eve of His passion, bestowed upon us the sacrament of His love, the Holy Eucharist. In this great mystery, we are invited to reflect upon the theme of hope, a virtue so essential to our Christian journey that it illuminates even the darkest moments of our existence.

The Apostle Paul, in his first letter to the Corinthians, provides us with an early account of the institution of the Eucharist, saying, "the Lord Jesus took some bread, and thanked God for it and broke it, and he said, 'This is my body which is for you. Do this as a memorial of me.' In the same way, he took the cup after supper, and said, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Whenever you drink it, do this a memorial of me'" (1 Cor 11:23-26).

In these words, we find the heart of our hope — Christ Himself, giving His body and blood for our redemption.

Hope reminds the believer of the never-failing promise which was given in Christ. In every Mass, when we partake of His body and drink His blood, we are reminded of this promise, the promise of His abiding presence, His saving work, and His gift of eternal life.

The Eucharist is not merely a symbol; it is the reality of Christ among us, the source of our hope. In the midst of our journey, especially when we encounter profound darkness or despair, the Eucharist stands as a beacon of hope. Through hope, the believer finds the strength to hold out even in extreme darkness, without despairing or giving up.

My sisters and brothers, in receiving the Eucharist, we are nourished by Christ Himself, empowered to continue our baptismal mission, and inspired to carry the light of hope into the world. Moreover, hope does not render effort superfluous, but demands it. Our participation in the Eucharist is a call to action, a call to live out the implications of this great mystery in our daily lives.

As we are nourished by the body and blood of Christ, we are sent forth to embody His love, to serve others in His name, and to strive for justice and peace in anticipation of the fullness of God's kingdom.

Each time we celebrate the Eucharist, we are united with the Church throughout the world, joining together in hope for the fulfillment of God's promise. As we eat His body and drink His blood, we profess our faith in Christ's abiding presence, trust in His saving work, and hope in the promise of eternal life. In the Eucharist we hope for God's justice and peace. As we keep these three holiest of days, might we strive now in anticipation of the justice and peace in which we hope for in eternal life.

On this Holy Thursday, let us renew our commitment to this hope. Let us draw near to the Lord with grateful hearts, receive Him with faith, and allow the hope that He offers to transform us and the world in which we live. Amen.