

Holy Thursday 2017

“Do this in memory of me”

Jesus together with his friends at their last supper said, *“Take this all of you and eat of this, for this is my body which will be given up for you. Take this all of you and drink from it, for this is the chalice of my blood, the blood of the new and eternal covenant, which will be poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in memory of me.”*

Do “what” in memory of him? Certainly more than the ritual. Jesus is saying, as I have given my body and blood for you, you are to give your body and blood for each other. *“Do this in memory of me.”* And we are doing what he is doing when we forgive those who are hurting us, when we help those who refuse to help us, when we show mercy to those who show no mercy to us.

This is what Eucharist means. It is not about the change that takes place in the bread and wine, it is about the change that takes place in us - in you, in me. We are the ones who are transformed, transfigured into Christ.

As you have noticed, there is no account of the institution of the Eucharist in the fourth Gospel. In its place is inserted the account of Jesus washing the feet of his disciples. What old John is saying to his community in about 100 AD is that the meaning of the Eucharist is about serving others - about lifting every burden, easing every sorrow, healing every wound carried by those around us. This is the bread we eat and the blood we drink in memory of him.

An historic moment of Eucharist

Georgetown U: *“Liturgy of Remembrance, Contrition & Hope.”* April 10, 2017:

“Dear Brothers in Christ,

“Blessings on this Monday of Holy Week. I’m writing to ask for your prayers and participation in events next week that are nearly two centuries in the making.

“As some of you are aware, next Tuesday, April 18, 2017, Georgetown University will hold a ‘Liturgy of Remembrance, Contrition and Hope,’ where the Society of Jesus will apologize publicly for the sins of Jesuit slaveholding. The public prayer service will include descendants of the slaves as well as all ten Jesuit provincials in the United States, along with His Eminence Donald Cardinal Wuerl, Archbishop of Washington.

Following the prayer service, Georgetown will rededicate two buildings that formerly honored the Jesuit leaders responsible for the 1838 slave sale.

“The night before the public events at Georgetown, the Jesuits of the Society of Jesus will host a private Mass and reception for Jesuits and descendants in the hopes it will “foster a spirit of healing and continue to move us forward on a path of reconciliation.”

“In this Easter season, let us all pray that our apology to the descendants can be an experience of grace and healing and a reminder of the love and mercy of the risen Christ.”
Sincerely in Christ, Timothy P. Kesicki, S.J. President. This is an historic Eucharist taking place at Georgetown University for over 187 years.

*“Whatever we do, whenever we do, wherever we do something for others,
we are washing their feet - in memory of him.”*

A Blessed Holy Thursday