

## A Meal with Jesus

*The Jewish Passover is traditionally a family meal filled with symbolic acts and a retelling of the Exodus (see Exodus 12) from Egypt. Invite Jesus to your meal table tonight. Light a candle. Play some recorded music, if you like. Put some bread (or a cracker or biscuit) on a plate and have a cup of juice (or something similar - preferably red in colour.)*

**Opening sentences:** *Before you start your meal some words to focus us.*

We are here to rejoice in all that you give us. Thank you, loving Father.

We are here to remember how you rescue those in captivity. Thank you, saving Son.

We are here to receive so that we might give. Thank you, giving Spirit.

### **Read Mark 14: 12-16**

<sup>12</sup> On the first day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover lamb is sacrificed, his disciples said to him, 'Where do you want us to go and make the preparations for you to eat the Passover?' <sup>13</sup> So he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, 'Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you; follow him, <sup>14</sup> and wherever he enters, say to the owner of the house, "The Teacher asks, Where is my guest room where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?"' <sup>15</sup> He will show you a large room upstairs, furnished and ready. Make preparations for us there.' <sup>16</sup> So the disciples set out and went to the city, and found everything as he had told them; and they prepared the Passover meal.

*It is remarkable that a large room was vacant as Passover was such an important time for the Jews. Notice the similarities to the preparations for the entry into Jerusalem a few days earlier (See Mark 11: 1-6). Now think of how you prepared for this meal. Spend some moments preparing your heart. Use silence or confession as seems best.*

### **A Jewish-style grace:**

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation: Each spring time, through your goodness, the earth brings forth plants and fruits, to renew the world in which we live. Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation: through your goodness, we have this food to eat which earth has given and human hands have made. As we eat our food today, may we always be aware of those less fortunate than ourselves and give us sharing hearts and hands.

Blessed be God forever. **Amen.**

### **Before your second course or pudding read Mark 14: 17-22**

<sup>17</sup> When it was evening, he came with the twelve. <sup>18</sup> And when they had taken their places and were eating, Jesus said, 'Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me.' <sup>19</sup> They began to be distressed and to say to him one after another, 'Surely, not I?' <sup>20</sup> He said to them, 'It is one of the twelve, one who is dipping bread into the bowl with me.' <sup>21</sup> For the Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that one not to have been born.'

<sup>22</sup> While they were eating, he took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to them, and said, 'Take; this is my body.'

**Imagine:** what it is like to be betrayed by one of your closest friends. Or even to be accused of betrayal when you know it is not you.

**Eat bread:** As you do this, think how the Jews saw this as the bread of suffering of their ancestors and how Jesus gave new meaning when he said: "This is my body." Pause and think of his suffering for you and the whole world.

Now eat in remembrance of his sacrifice once and for all.

**Enjoy your pudding.** *Then, at the end of the meal, turn to the cup. During a Passover meal 4 cups are shared. The two before the meal are the "Cup of Sanctification - I, the LORD, will bring you out of Egypt", and the "Cup of deliverance - I will deliver you from slavery". The two after eating are the "Cup of redemption - I will redeem you with my power" and the "Cup of restoration - I will take you as my people". Jesus would have shared the first two cups with his disciples. It is often assumed that the 4<sup>th</sup> cup was not shared - see 14: 25.*

#### **Read Mark 14: 23-26**

<sup>23</sup> Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, and all of them drank from it. <sup>24</sup> He said to them, 'This is my blood of the<sup>l</sup> covenant, which is poured out for many. <sup>25</sup> Truly I tell you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.' <sup>26</sup> When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

**Take the cup of redemption.** As you drink think of the redeeming blood of Jesus; the healing power bringing forgiveness and not just for you - but many!

**Read a psalm:** Jesus and the disciples probably sang one of the traditional Passover Psalms (Psalms 113-118). Choose one and make it your song.

**A final prayer** (the collect for Maundy Thursday):

God our Father, your Son Jesus Christ was obedient to the end and drank the cup prepared for him: may we who share his table watch with him through the night of suffering and be faithful. **Amen.**