

## LET THE SPIRIT BREATHE . . .



“DO THIS IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME.”

Creator God, feed us at your table. And when we take the bread, when we drink the cup may we not forget the sacrifice of your son, Jesus. Amen

### *This month . . . Reflections on* ✧ *Sacrament of Communion* ✧

And he said to them, “This is my blood, which confirms the covenant between God and his people. It is poured out as a sacrifice for many.” Mark 14:24 NLT

Communion, the Lord's Supper, is a sacrament of partaking of bread and wine. The bread and wine represent the body and blood of Christ. Jesus used symbols of the Passover meal (Exodus 12) to point to his own sacrifice, paralleling God's deliverance of the Israelites out of the bondage of Egypt, and his own sacrifice on the cross, delivering us from the bondage of sin. Primary in the Sacrament of communion is remembering God's covenant to us and Christ's sacrifice for us: his life, ministry, death, and resurrection. Communion declares the compelling truth that “God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish, but have eternal life.” (John 3:16)

Communion is about looking back, remembering both covenant and sacrifice so we might look forward: “For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.” (1 Corinthians 11:26 NRSV) When we participate in communion we look also to the promise of Christ's return.

We come to the Table of Communion to worship, to give thanks, to participate in love freely and unconditionally given. We receive the bread and the cup from the hands of Christ as we partake in the mystery of salvation. Here we are filled, nourished and transformed into the likeness of Christ, empowered by the Spirit, to be witness to God's love.

### Preparing for the Sacrament of Communion.

Lectio Divina: Using the four elements of Lectio Divina (reading, meditation, prayer, and contemplation) read the contemporary version of the ‘Combined Prayer on the Bread and Wine’ (listed on back page) 1) In the first reading listen to the words, noting any words or phrases that catch your attention. 2) Read the passage again, meditating on what was read, pondering with expectation words or phrases that caught your attention. 3) Read the selection again, respond to this passage in prayer to God. This is the prayer of the heart, the beginning of a conversation with God. 4) Read the passage one last time, contemplating the words. This step is about hearing God talk to us, opening our mind, heart and soul to the His influence. What is God's response and gift to you during this time of sacred reading? Journal your insights for future meditation/contemplation.

Personal Imagery: In preparation for Communion, using the scripture from Mark 14:20-25. Place yourself at the table with Jesus. What are your feelings, your thoughts? Considering your own personal weaknesses/betrayals how do you feel as you lift the cup to partake? Sit with your insights. Take a moment to confess your sins as you open yourself to the blessings of Communion.

Walking Meditation: As you walk, focus on God's covenant to us and Christ's sacrifice on our behalf. In light of God's redemptive plan through Christ's ministry, death and resurrection, recall how you have experienced God's redemption and need for deeper transformation in response to his covenant?

Spiritual Reflections  
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### IN THE GARDEN . . .

The symbolism associated with the herb 'rosemary' is remembrance.

#### At Another Table

"Now on that same day two of them [disciples] were going to a village called Emmaus. They were talking with each other about all the things that had happened. While they were talking, Jesus came near and traveled with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. When they neared the village Jesus walked on, but the two urged him to stay for the evening was almost over. So he went with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it and gave it to them. And then their eyes were opened and they recognized him; and he vanished. That same hour they got up and went to Jerusalem and told the others and how they had known him [Jesus] through the breaking of the bread." Luke 24:13-35 NRSV adapted.

These men knew the Christ, spent time with him during his ministry, yet did not recognize him as they walked together on the road to Emmaus discussing the events of the past days. Possibly the despair they were experiencing, a despair so deep, obscured their vision to his presence. Yet, when sitting around their table, sharing a meal, as Jesus took the bread, blessed it and broke it, their eyes were opened and recognition immediately came . . . an intimate moment of breaking bread. Can you imagine the joy of their knowing and the profound implications, the reality of it all?

Perhaps we can gain insight from this story as we prepare for our communion experience with God. What do we bring to the table that prevents us from seeing/experiencing the reality and fulness of this sacred meal? Will we allow ourselves to come to the table in expectation, opening our eyes to new revelation into the nature of God's love and Christ's sacrifice as the bread and wine are blessed in remembrance of Him?

#### Reflection moment . . .

When we gather around the Lord's Table, how do we recognize Jesus?

#### In perspective . . .

Communion is a time of remembering God's covenant to us and the sacrifice made by our Lord Jesus Christ . . . it is a time to participate in and receive the grace of God's salvation. "Do this in remembrance of me."



### Combined Prayer on the Bread and Wine

"Eternal God, we ask you in the name of your Son Jesus Christ, to bless and sanctify this bread and wine to the souls of all those who receive them, that they may eat and drink in remembrance of the body and blood of your Son, and witness to you, O God, that they are willing to take upon them the name of your Son, and always remember him and keep the commandments which he has given them, that they may always have his Spirit to be with them. Amen.

This contemporary reading is based on the Blessing of the Bread and Wine from the Doctrine and Covenants. If you prefer to use the prayers as read from the Doctrine and Covenants they can be found in Section 17:22d (bread) and Section 17:23b (wine).

#### Scripture focus:

"While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, 'Take and eat; this is my body.' And he took a cup of wine and gave thanks to God for it. He gave it to them and said, 'Each of you drink from it, for this is my blood, which confirms the covenant between God and his people. It is poured out as a sacrifice to forgive the sins of many.'" Matthew 26:26-28 NIV

"As they were eating, Jesus took some bread and blessed it. Then he broke it in pieces and gave it to the disciples, saying, 'Take it, for this is my body.' And he took a cup of wine and gave thanks to God for it. He gave it to them, and they all drank from it. And he said to them, 'This is my blood, which confirms the covenant between God and his people. It is poured out as a sacrifice for many.'" Mark 14:22-24 NLT

"For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes." 1 Corinthians 11:26

"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partaker of the one loaf." 1 Corinthians 10:16-17