



**Icon Title: The Last Supper: God's Gift Par Excellence**  
*The Eucharist, a memorial to celebrate*

**The Last Supper:**

- which Jesus celebrates with His Disciples and
- which the Church commemorates *from Holy Thursday to Easter Sunday*

*\*In the Gospel of John, the 'hour' of Christ refers to the four major events related to his death and which the Church commemorates from Holy Thursday to Easter Sunday.*

**Biblical Reference (s):**

Ex 12: 1-8, 11-14	<i>The sacrifice of the paschal lamb</i>
1 Cor: 11:23-26	<i>The last supper, institution of the Eucharist</i>
Ps 116 [115]:12-13	<i>R. The blessing cup that we bless is a communion with the blood of Christ. See: CBW III, 66, 112</i>
Mt 26: 26-29	<i>The last supper</i>
Mk. 14: 22-25	<i>The last supper</i>
Lk. 22: 14-20	<i>The last supper and the announcement of the betrayal of Judas</i>

**Points about the Icon:**

- Jesus is the central figure in the middle of his twelve disciples
- St. John the beloved is seated at Christ's right
- Our eyes are first drawn to Jesus as he is the person displaying "action"
- The disciples are trying to understand what Jesus is saying and doing (institution of Eucharist)
- The objects on the table indicate a meal is in progress
- Jesus' extended arms indicate a universal invitation: "Do this in Memory of Me"

**Link to Eucharist:**

- We celebrate the Lord's Last Supper on Holy Thursday and at every mass
- The very event of this meal
  - is at the center and summit of salvation history
  - is the entire mission of Christ
  - is the very purpose of the creation of the world in the first place - so that God's beloved creature (us) could be in the most intimate communion with him for eternity

- By his words and gestures, Jesus institutes a new rite, his paschal rite, by which he offered himself in place of the traditional lamb, giving himself and sacrificing himself out of love - the communion between God and man is restored and renewed.
- In the supreme gift of the Eucharist the risen Christ and his whole life is made present to us.
- This is the new covenant between God and his people which is to last forever.

**Catechism:**

(cf. 1211) ... the Eucharist occupies a unique place as the “Sacrament of sacraments”: all the other sacraments are ordered to it as to their end.



**Icon Title: The Washing of the Feet**  
*An Example to Follow*

**Biblical Reference (s):**

1 Cor 11: 17-34

*The Lord's Supper*

Jn 13: 1-20

*The Last Supper and the washing of the feet*

**Points about the Icon:**

- Jesus is the central figure on the left; has a halo to indicate holiness
- Jesus - washing a disciple's feet in a basin
- Peter: the chief disciple is depicted asking Jesus to wash "not only my feet, but my head also" (Jn 13:9)
- The other disciples are loosening their sandals
- Large red veil draping over the buildings and walls: calls to mind the rent - veil of separation that was split in two in the temple at the hour of Jesus' death ; the rent veil allowed man in, and also allowed God 'out' to dwell in the midst of His Church.
- They appear to be outside and even outside the city walls; God is no longer restricted to just the people of Israel, but everyone is invited to accept the salvation offered by Jesus through his resurrection on the cross
- Some disciples are sitting on a large table - projection of the altar - of the New Covenant that is expressed through the Eucharist

**Link to Eucharist:**

**To wash the feet, a loving service**

- This act is found only in the Gospel of John (Jn. 13: 13-15) and occurs during the Last Supper.
  - to wash the feet of somebody is the duty of a pagan slave (1 Sam. 25:41)
- but Jesus did it and said, "I am among you as one who serves" (Lk 22:27)

- This is an act of heavenly hospitality, symbolic of infinite love

### **To allow Jesus to cleanse us**

- At first, Peter was opposed to Jesus washing his feet
- Peter allows it when Jesus tells him “*You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand...Unless I wash you, you have no share with me.*” (Jn 13:7,8)
- Later, Simon Peter understands the idea of being saved or ***cleansed*** by the blood of Jesus on the Cross: it is all about being saved by **Jesus** - a name that means ***God Saves*** - or ***to be open to His salvation***
- Simon Peter - accepts a complete bath (bath = baptism) from Jesus
  - allows Jesus to cleanse - to save - his whole being
- Each of us is bathed, immersed in the divine life *with Jesus, through Jesus, in his saving name, through Baptism*

### **The Eucharist is a rite:**

- ***that takes away our sin***: each time we celebrate the Liturgy of the Eucharist, we invite Jesus to cleanse us- to save us - when we pray:  
*Lord, only say the word and I will be healed*
- ***that shows its meaning by a gesture of service***: the washing of the feet
  - in John’s Last Supper (Eucharist) - Jesus sent his disciples (each of us baptized or *immersed* in his life ) in mission - to serve one another
- Eucharist and Mission (service) are intrinsically united.



**Icon Title: The Disciples of Emmaus**

*To recognize Christ while meditating on the Scriptures and at the breaking of the bread*

**Biblical Reference (s):**

- Lk. 24: 13-35

*Jesus had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread*

**Points about the Icon:**

- Three figures; Jesus (with halo) in center, with two persons, one on each side
- Jesus is holding a book; holy scriptures
- The two seem to be in deep conversation with him
- Both men are pointing towards Jesus

**Background:** The resurrected Jesus lifts up the heart of two disciples on the road to Emmaus. He explains the Scriptures to them and makes himself known to them at the breaking of the bread. (Lk 24: 13-35)

**Link to Eucharist:**

Can you see in this event an outline of our Eucharist?

- **on the road to Emmaus:** - Jesus walked with the disciples and He listened to them
  - today:** Jesus joins us as we gather together & listens to us
  - however, he may also join us through the attentive listening of our neighbor as we share our joys and victories, our difficulties, our delusions, incomprehension, our lack of faith
- **Breaking the Bread of the Word/Scriptures**
  - **on the road to Emmaus :**
    - “Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures” (Lk 24: 27)

- **today: Liturgy of the Word:** scripture is proclaimed from the Old and the New Testament: Jesus teaches us
  - we cannot understand who Jesus is without knowing the Scriptures
  - we cannot understand Jesus' whole life, his passion and death - without knowing the rest of the Scriptures (Old Testament) - what had been previously said about him

### **Breaking the Bread of Life**

- **On the road to Emmaus:** At evening meal, Jesus repeated the same gestures made at his last supper. *“When Jesus was at table with them, he took bread and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him.”* (Lk 24:30-31)
  - This is how they recognized him. They *got up and returned to Jerusalem* and they shared what they had experienced.

- **In today's Eucharist,**
  - **We gather around the Eucharistic table (Lit. Of the Bread of Life) and give thanks to the Lord.**
  - At the breaking of the bread, we may recognize him and welcome him in a special and intimate way (Holy Communion). He lays down his himself for each of us. Then we get up and return to our home and work, sharing what we have experienced.



**Icon Title: The Multiplication of the Loaves**  
*To share*

**Short note from the guide:**

Jesus desired to give meaning to the lives of the people who followed him and the words he tells them foreshadow the Last Supper (cf. Mt. 14:19; 15: 36) and the people in the crowd, gathered to hear him, ate as much as they wanted of the *bread of life* which he shared with them (Cf Mt. 14: 20-21; 15: 7).

**Biblical Reference (s):**

Mt. 14:13-21 (*Feeding the five thousand*) & Mt. 15: 32-39 (*Feeding the four thousand*)

Mk. 6: 35-44 (*Feeding the five thousand*) & Mk 8:1-10 (*Feeding the four thousand*)

Lk 9:10-17 *Feeding the five thousand*

Jn 6: 1-15 *Feeding the five thousand* & Jn 6: 22-35 *I am the bread of life*

Jn 6:36-51 *I am the bread that came down from heaven*

Jn 6: 51-58 *Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh*

**Points about the Icon:**

- Three figures in the icon: Jesus is the central figure
- There is a boy in front of him and a disciple behind him
- Jesus appears to be blessing the food in the basket that the boy is presenting to him
- Jesus has a scroll in his left hand (his Word)
- The disciple is also looking in the same way that Jesus is, listening and watching what Jesus is doing
- Boy is in a respectful/humble posture
- White cloth under the basket - like an altar cloth - great respect for the bread that will become the “Eucharist”

**Link to Eucharist:**

- **To be nourished by Jesus -the Bread of Life**
  - The four evangelists all speak of the feeding of the crowds. Mark and Matthew even present two accounts. Although the accounts vary in the number of baskets collected, it is believed that this difference came from different traditions relating to either a Judeo-Christian context or from a Pagan - Christian context. One thing for sure is that this account appeared

to

be so important for the evangelists that the four of them accounted it and inserted it in their version of the Gospel.

· **To be nourished by Jesus - the Word of Life**

- As the crowds followed Jesus, he welcomed all and talked to them about the Kingdom of God and healed the sick.
- **Jesus taught:** “*One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God*” (Mt. 4:4; cf Lk 4:4): to live, one needs not only earthly food (how to live) but also a reason, a sense (why to live), for his/her existence
- During Eucharist there is the Liturgy of the Word when Scripture texts are proclaimed - Jesus teaches His people\*. Jesus is, first of all, the Word of Life.

· **To be nourished by Jesus - the Bread of Life**

- The twelve asked Jesus to send the crowd away, ‘so that they may go into the surrounding villages and countryside, to lodge and get provisions,’ for they were ‘in a deserted place’ (Lk 9:12).
- Just as the people of Israel were tempted to leave Moses in the desert and go back to Egypt, (for a place to stay and something to eat), so the people surrounding Jesus (new Moses) were tempted to leave Jesus and go back and search for a place to sleep and something to eat.
- But people will be saved - not by going away from Jesus - but they will be saved WITH him, who is the bread of life which came down from heaven. The name Jesus means - ***God Saves***.
- Jesus told the Twelve what to do: “You give them something to eat” (Lk 9:13). “Make them sit in groups of about 50 each.” Then Jesus “took the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke them, and gave them to the disciples to set before the crowd”. (cf Lk 9: 16)
- These gestures are similar to those made at the last supper and at the table of Emmaus. Today, in the Eucharist, the same gestures are repeated, and everyone receives the ‘living bread that came down from heaven’ (Lk 6: 48, 51). The miracle happens again: as always, the bread never runs out (cf Lk 9:17; 2Kings 4:44); everyone receives more than expected; there is always something left for

others!

**Catechism:**

\*“Christ is present in his word since it is He Himself who speaks when the holy scriptures are read in the Church”. (Second Vatican Council, Sacrosanctum Concilium on Liturgy, n°7.)

Reference: Annex/Appendix to The Ark of the New Covenant – Guide  
Developed by Fr. Fernand Villeneuve, Diocese of Heart



**Icon Title: The Passion and Death of Jesus**  
*To say yes to God up to the end*

**Biblical Reference (s):**

Ps 22[21]: 7-8, 16-19, 22-23

Ps. 31[30]: 2,6,12-13,15-17,25

Ph 2:6-11

Mt. 26:14 - 27:66

Mk 14: 1-15:47

Lk 22: 14- 23:56

*R. My God, my God, why have you forsaken me*

*Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit*

*Jesus humbled himself. Therefore God highly exalted him*

*The passion of Jesus Christ*

*The passion of Jesus Christ*

*The passion of Jesus Christ*

**Points about the Icon:**

- Jesus- central figure with his Mother Mary and John to the right
- With arms wide open, Jesus is shown as the willing sacrifice for all our sins and seems to be welcoming everyone to come and partake of the new life he giving by His death.
- Christ's body is twisted right, his head bowed toward His mother, his eyes closed in death. "No one takes my life from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again." (Jn. 10:18)
- The cross is the symbol of victory by defeat - by the death of Jesus, death was defeated.
- At the foot of the cross, the rock was rent at the moment of Christ's death; the broken rock/earth indicates victory over death and hell
- We are all called to carry our cross

- Behind the cross, the wall of Jerusalem is seen: Christ died outside the gates of Jerusalem at the same time that the Passover lamb is slaughtered outside the wall of Jerusalem
- There is a kind of silence in the icon. Mouths are not open; nothing suggests sound. This silence moves us to prayer and contemplation of the event depicted.
- Mary and John are responding to his presence; they show emotion.
- Mary stands to the left with a halo distinguishing her: her hand touches her face in grief while her other hand is raised towards Christ - He is the Way.
- John is to the right, head down and has a philosophical contemplative look.
- As we look at the icon, our eyes are either on Jesus or are lowered in contemplation and mourning.

### **Link to Eucharist: The Last Mystery (cf. Jn. 19:31-37)**

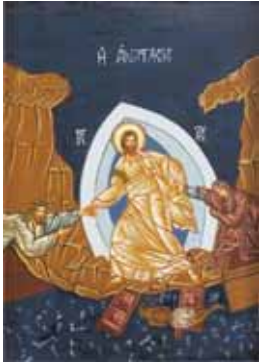
- The **Jewish tradition** stated about the paschal lamb: “*It shall be eaten in one house: you shall not take any of the animal outside the house, and you shall not break any of its bones.*” (Ex 12 46; cf Num 9:12).
- **John** notes that the soldiers “*did not break his legs*” (Jn. 19:33):
  - Jesus was a real paschal lamb - sacrificed on [the altar of] the cross - whose blood was shed for our salvation; from his pierced side “*at once blood and water came out*” (Jn. 19:34), an early sign of the Baptism (cf. Jn. 3:5) and of the Eucharist (cf. Jn 6:54).

### **Catechism: (cf. 1010)**

Because of Christ, Christian death has a positive meaning: “*for to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*” (Phil. 1:21) “*The saying is sure: if we have died with him, we will also live with him.*” (2Tim 2:11)

What is essentially new about Christian death is this: through Baptism, the Christian has already **“died with Christ”** sacramentally, in order to live a new life; and if we die in Christ’s grace, physical death completes this **“dying with Christ”** and so completes our incorporation into him in his redeeming act.

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**Icon Title: The Resurrection of Jesus**

*To raise up, to live again, to be reborn with Christ.*

The resurrection of Jesus on Easter morning, which is celebrated on Easter Sunday.

**Biblical Reference (s):**

Acts 2:22-36	<i>This Jesus God raised up, and of that all of us are witnesses</i>
Ps 16: 1-2, 5,7-11	<i>Lord, you will show us the path of life. See: CBW III, 94</i>
1 Cor 15: 12-19	<i>Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead</i>
Mt 28:1-20	<i>He has been raised from the dead and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee</i>
Mk 16:1-20	<i>You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; He is not here</i>
Lk 24:1-53	<i>Why do you look for the living among the dead: He is not here, but has risen</i>
Jn 20: 1-31	<i>He saw and believed</i>

**Points about the Icon:**

- Broken ground, and coffins without lids- Christ is standing over the broken gates of hell
- Broken cross also underfoot - Jesus' death - victory over death
- Christ is pulling out Adam and Eve who represent all of humanity (those before and after Jesus) - bringing all with him to the Father and eternal glory
- Jesus - holding the hands of Adam & Eve- invites them and all humanity to look toward Him, to restore the loving relationship between God and mankind
- Light color behind and around Jesus indicates the door to Paradise, the access to everlasting happiness with God, is re-opened to all (*cf. Gen 3:23-24; 1 Cor 15:12-19*)

- Floating body: all are called from darkness (a place of no hope) to a place of light- a place of joy & eternal life
- All the squiggles at the bottom of the icon - all the locks, padlocks that represent captivity, oppression etc. of any sort are set free: Jesus is the one who gives us freedom

### **Link to Eucharist:**

- All four evangelists mention that Jesus' resurrection took place on the day after the Sabbath, on *the first day of the week*.
- **For Christians**
  - *the first day of the week* became the memorial day in which Christ had risen from the dead (day of resurrection)
  - and made all things new; it evokes a new beginning, a new creation, a new world
- Today, every time the Christian community gathers in his name, Jesus - the living One, stands among his disciples (us), comforts them and makes them live again
- *Sunday, the first day of the week*, is the day of the resurrection - the first day of a new creation
- The risen Jesus, whom Mary Magdalene first mistakes as the gardener (c.f. Jn 20:15), opened her eyes by saying her name and sent her to go to his brothers and to say to them that he was ascending to his Father (c.f. Jn 20:17). Mary Magdalene was led to discover a different "body" of Jesus, a different way in which the Risen Lord would be present to his disciples, from now on. *This new true presence of Jesus to his disciples may be seen in the Eucharist!* The same but different!

**Catechism:**

#654 The Paschal mystery has two aspects:

- by his death, Christ liberates us from sin;
- by his Resurrection, he opens for us the way to a new life.

This new life is above all ***justification*** that reinstates us in God's grace, "*so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.*" (Rm 6:4)

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**Icon Title: The Vigil of Mary, His Mother**

*To say 'yes' to God*

*To allow Christ to come and live in ourselves*

**Biblical Reference (s):**

Lk 1:38      *Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me  
according to your word*

cf. Jn 1:14      *In her, the Word was made flesh*

**Points about the Icon:**

- Mary is the central figure - we are drawn to her
- The crucified Jesus is on the cross in the background
- Mary's left hand points to Jesus, the source of our salvation
- Mary's downward look is contemplative (reminds us of her response to the Lord's invitation to make the new and everlasting Covenant happen (Lk. 1:38))
- 3 stars on Mary; one on each shoulder and one above her forehead affirm and proclaim the total virginity of Mary - before, during and after the birth of Jesus
- It questions us if we can be as faithful and steadfast to the Father as Mary

**Link to Eucharist:**

- God's gift to the world came through a woman who believed and handed herself over unconditionally to the Father
- Mary's *yes* to the God of the Covenant- starting at the annunciation
  - became the beginning of the Church
  - accompanied the incarnation of God's Word from the first moment of his conception to his death & resurrection

- No other creature (human):
  - possesses such a concrete memory of the Word enfleshed even unto Eucharistic bread
  - knows so well what mercy, pardon, compassion and suffering of redeeming Love mean
- Mary is the Eucharistic woman par excellence:
  - she is the new Eve whose openness made it possible for the new Adam (Jesus) to take its course
  - she is *Mother of God and Mother of the Church*
  - in and by her, the church already communes perfectly with the cross, with the sacrificial offering of the Son of God
- The Church:
  - contemplates Mary at the foot of the cross as the glorious and sorrowful icon of its own mystery of communion
  - is destined, like Mary, to the glory of being the spouse of the Lamb
- Mary is the spotless virgin who becomes mother of the whole reconciled human race
- The Church , just as Mary and by the grace of God who is love, learns to be in communion with the redeeming and nuptial love of the sacrificial lamb



**Icon Title: The Wedding at Cana**  
*To do whatever God says*

**Biblical Reference (s):**

Ex. 19: 2b-8

Is 40: 1-11

Ps. 96:[95] 1-3, 7-10

Ps 119 [118]: 1-2, 10-12, 14-16

Jn 2: 1-12

*Everything that the Lord has spoken we will do*

*The word of our God will stand forever*

*R. Proclaim God's marvellous deeds to all the nations*

*R. Lord, I love your commands*

*The wedding at Cana*

**Points about the Icon:**

- Jesus and Mary are to the left of the icon, with golden halos over their heads to indicate holiness
- Mary's hand is pointing to Jesus (*Do as He says*)
- The servant is looking questioningly at one of the jars while several other stone water jars are there for the purification rites
- Three other figures are in the picture and they seem to be concentrated on Jesus, with their arms extended towards him, giving him attention and importance
- Their extended arms also show acceptance of Jesus' action
- Jesus' feet are on a pedestal, a projection that he will have the world at his feet
- On the table are articles that look like bread and wine have been served, a precursor of the last supper and the institution of *Eucharist as the sign of the new covenant*

## Link to Eucharist:

### The wedding:

- We may think that the wedding Jesus and Mary attended was a historical familiar wedding, but there is more - it is also the wedding or covenant between God and his people
- Three weddings or covenants have been celebrated in the history of the people of Israel:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> after the **Great Flood**, with Noah (Gen 9:4-13) where the *rainbow* was the sign of that covenant
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> the time of **Abraham** (cf Gen 17: 2, 4) where the sign of that covenant was **circumcision**
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> the time of **Moses** at the foot of Mt. Sinai where the people promised to observe God's commandments: "*All that the Lord has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient*" (Ex 24:7). This covenant gave the people a **specific identity = the people of Israel**
- Throughout their history, the people of Israel were not a faithful 'bride' with God her bridegroom
- When Mary observes that "They have no wine", she is indicating that they are no longer celebrating their covenant with God
- Wine is a symbol of strength, joy and of the Word of God (of the first Law given to 'celebrate' the covenant with God)
- At the time of Jesus and his mother, only water, an external observance, remained (the purification rites): the inward meaning had been lost
- Mary speaks on behalf of the people: "*They have no wine*". That is, they are no longer celebrating their covenant with God; they are simply observing external rituals
- Jesus, by replenishing the jars with new wine - with himself - will renew the old Covenant in Israel, making it possible that the celebration of the covenant between God and his people may continue. Being the new wine, he will be the source of new strength and joy which will be found in him.
- **4<sup>th</sup> Covenant:** Jesus, in the **Eucharist, is the sign** of the New and Everlasting Covenant