

## **A Holy Thursday Message from Fr. Pinnisi**

Imagine the mood of that first Holy Thursday. The Lord desired to celebrate the Passover with his disciples for the last time. The atmosphere must have been somber. Jesus, aware of his impending arrest, wishes to leave the Apostles everything that he promised. He establishes the Holy Priesthood. He gives them the precious gift of the Eucharist and the power to continue that giving in his name and memory. He is aware of what they would endure themselves in the next twenty-four hours. Their faith would be shaken to its foundation and they would flee in terror. He recalled the words of scripture which foretold that; "They will strike the shepherd and the sheep will be dispersed." Jesus even reveals to his Chief Apostle that he would that very night deny knowing the Lord whom he claimed to love. What sorrow the Lord must have felt in his Sacred Heart during that Passover supper.

He teaches another lesson on that night. He removes his cloak, falls to his knees and washes the feet of his friends to illustrate what their mission was to be. A mission of service and self-sacrifice. A complete emptying of oneself for the other. Their imitation of Jesus in this way would mark their lives until each one would be put to death for love of him. Once this supper was over it was time for him to withdraw with his friends to the garden where he would commune with the Father, aware of his fate in the hours ahead. His heart would be pierced even before the thrust of the lance as he sensed the betrayal of one of them destined to accomplish that evil act which led to his arrest.

Finally, the soldiers come for him to fulfill what was foretold as the drama of our salvation approaches its fruition. Jesus is taken into custody by force to be brought before Pilate to be condemned. Two thousand years later, we enter into this drama. We experience this somber time aware of the cost for our salvation. Our lives purchased by the blood of the lamb. We spend this day although not in the church building with hearts filled with gratitude. We walk with the Lord through these moments conscious of his sacrifice.

May this day be for us an opportunity to enter into the mystery of his dying and rising so that on Easter morning we might feel the joy of being saved by the one sent by the Father. Jesus, we live for you. Jesus, we die for you. Jesus, remain with us now and always.

Peace,

**Fr. Robert**