

The City Church, New York

The Prayer of Thanksgiving and Intercession – Sunday April 2, 2006

It was late on the evening of this day in AD 33 that Jesus and his disciples observed the Passover in an Upper Room at Jerusalem. We call it "The Last Supper." The next day, Jesus was crucified.

Let us pray.

Lamb of God:

With both grieving and gratitude we look back to that night in an upper room at Jerusalem when You offered the bread and the cup to Your disciples on the eve of Your offering up Your body to be pierced and Your blood to be poured out for the salvation of the world. We grieve, for it was our sin that You bore. We're grateful, for it was Your love that bore you there. And so, on this anniversary of Your "Last Supper" before God's Kingdom comes, we bow in prayer to praise You. We commemorate and we contemplate Your Good Gift today as we appropriate and encounter it on those other Lord's Day mornings when we commune in the Eucharist, thanksgiving above all thanksgivings. Yet we give thanks in but very slight awareness of all for which we would give thanks, for the cost to You is too terrible for us to duly conceive and the grace that You grant is really too great for us to grasp – at least until we, at last, eat and drink with You in the Father's House. But nonetheless we wish to express our gratitude to the extent that we're capable for now. Help us to live out our thanksgiving by doing as You would have us do – loving You in return for Your loving us, loving You by loving Your presence in the very least among those in whom You show up in our daily lives. Dear Jesus, What less could we do, even in our little awareness of the amazing grace we've been shown from the world's foundation? May we glory in Your cross. May we gladly, freely, give to all what we've received at no cost to us but at such dreadful cost to You.

And now, as we continue to worship You through the rest of this hour together, may we do so in Your Spirit and in Your truth. Give each one here an attentive mind and a receptive heart for what You would have each of us receive. And may we leave this hallowed place, revived for lives of service in a city in so much need of Your grace and peace. Trusting in You, we pray our prayers, adding the prayer You taught us, saying:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day, our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.