

HOLY THURSDAY - 2021
Ex.12.1-8,11-14//1 Cor. 11.23-26//Jn 13.1-15

→I remember when I was growing up, like a lot of families, mine had one of those small, cheap Kodak instamatic cameras.

→remember the flash bulbs that looked like ice-cubes...and how you took the little film cassette and put it in a mailer envelope and then days later, after waiting for the pictures to be developed you would get them back with the hope that all of them would be worth keeping

→a few weeks back I was with my mom and we must have spent a couple hours or so going through boxes of those old pictures...some curled and faded on the corners...life captured by Kodak...

→memories stored in a shoebox....

PAUSE

→[and] as I thought about tonight's Mass, I realized that the focus is really centered on two themes...remembrance and celebration...

→remembrance and celebration....is at the very heart of our gathering this evening...

→however...Jesus didn't leave us photographs in a shoebox but rather he left himself...as a remembrance.

Paul's letter to the Corinthians, our second reading tonight, is the earliest account ever written of the Last Supper.

→it even pre-dates our gospel accounts...and it is so close to the original event...that its words are even part of our Eucharistic prayer spoken at mass around the world this night....those very same words that is the beating heart of our Catholic faith....

→and through it all, one word leaps out at us....*remembrance....do this in remembrance of me*

→so...tonight we **remember** and we **celebrate**, the basic message of Christ our Lord

→to remember what Jesus did for us

→to celebrate what Jesus gave us

→You know as we gather here tonight... much has happened in the past two years since we last gathered for the this particular Mass for us to **remember** and **celebrate**

→we **remember** our sanctuaries being empty and are homes being places of confinement

→we **remember** being touched by fear, anxiety and separation

→we **remember** injustices caused by racism, mass shootings, and the storming of the Capitol building

→and we **remember**...the loss of life because of this pandemic....

→these are the things, among many, that we remember this night as Jesus washed the feet of his disciples...

→a gesture of great impact, that left his friends dumbfounded, confused and most of all startled.

→and at the same timewe **celebrate**...

→we **celebrate**...the slow yet positive return to normal as vaccines become more readily available

→we **celebrate** the awakening of human dignity and a new hope for a weary world

→we **celebrate** the reunion of families and friends, of church and community

→we **celebrate** the sharing of meals and the budding of flowers and trees...

→and in a just a few short hours...we will **celebrate** the empty tomb and the fifty days of Paschal joy

→and it all starts and ends with remembering and celebrating what we couldn't do last year...and what we **can do** this year.

→all of us have journeyed, both physically and spiritually to this room, to this meal, to this table.....

→[in a sense] // we have come to have our feet washed, so that we can go and wash the feet of others

...to be changed so that we might change others

→to **remember** and to **celebrate**.....

→that is what Holy Thursday and the Eucharist is all about

PAUSE

→each time we gather here....we do so to REMEMBER that we are to live as Christ lived...and to CELEBRATE the life of Christ in each one of us

PAUSE

→we are a people of remembrance...and a people of celebration

→for four thousand years, human beings have re-enacted and **remembered** the great Passover feast of Jesus

→for two thousand years people have gathered and **celebrated**...the words that the Corinthians and you and I have taken to heart

→uncounted generations...have come together, so that...as the body and blood of Christ are raised to God in thanksgiving...we too might also be raised to God in remembrance and celebration.

PAUSE...

→they say a picture is worth a thousand words...pictures taken with old instamatic Kodak cameras or even today with our cell phones and all our other devices....

→no matter how it's done...they all tell our story...and in doing so they speak of our happiness and sadness, nostalgia and history, good times and significant events...

[And]...Tonight...we gather once again...as a people broken and redeemed, sinful and saved,

→people with dirty feet to have them washed so that we may go forward to wash the feet of others...

→to share with one another this moment of hope and promise....

→for once again...and always.....we do **this** in remembrance and celebration of Him.