

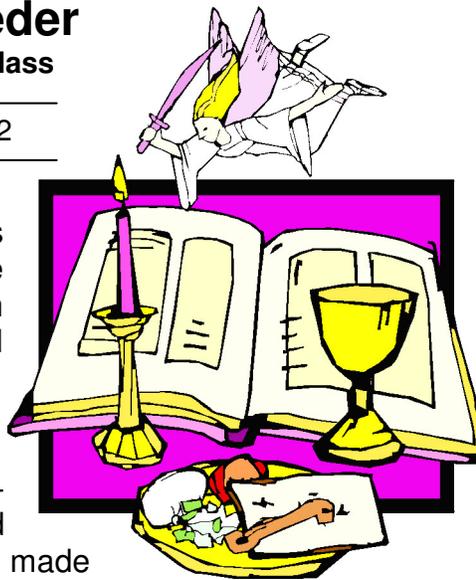


The Jewish Seder

Roots of our Catholic Mass

Prepare: Read Exodus 12

Passover celebrates the liberation of the Israelite people from slavery. Its story is told in Exodus, chapters 12 and following. Today, the Passover meal still commemorates this event and the covenant that God made with his people.



We usually think of Passover only as a Jewish festival. Its rituals are unfamiliar to us Catholics – or are they? Christianity is rooted in Judaism, and the Passover is an important event of liberation that has meaning for Jews and Christians alike.

Jesus and the Apostles and all the original Christians were Jews. In fact, during the early years of the Church, a convert had to become a Jew to be considered a "full" Christian. First century Christians observed all of the Jewish traditions and customs and attended Synagogue. They considered the Christian faith to be an extension of Judaism.

The Seder (or "Passover Meal") is a fun yet solemn way to gain more understanding of the beginnings of our faith. Its rituals are very important to our faith and should be experienced at least once in every Christian's life, because Jesus took it very seriously. It was at his "last Seder" ("Last Supper") that he instituted the Sacrament of the Eucharist.

Here are some of the links between our Mass celebration and the Seder:

1. We use unleavened bread during the Mass because only un-leavened bread (matzo) is allowed at the Seder in honor of what happened in the historic Passover event. And the wine, which during the consecration prayers of Mass becomes the blood of Jesus, has always been an integral part of the Seder.

2. At one point during the Mass, our priest performs a ritual cleansing by washing his hands, just like the Jesus and the Apostles did in their Jewish Seder.

3. The Seder is a meal of remembrance and thanksgiving, and our word Eucharist comes from the Greek word for giving thanks.

4. Our Priest says: "Then Jesus held the cup and gave a blessing." This blessing during the Seder is called the "Kiddush" and is recited before drinking the wine: "Blessed are you, Lord our God, ruler of the Universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine."

These are just some of the connections between the Mass and the Seder.

The Passover is an important event of liberation that has meaning for Jews and Christians alike. To learn more about the Jewish heritage of our Catholic Mass, come celebrate the Passover meal in our church:

Date & Time

Location

To register, call: XXX-XXXX