

In Their Midst

Session 5. The Night of Passover

The Lord delivers a people through the lamb, the blood, and the meal, then commands them to live by the memory of what he has done.

What We Found

Passover is one saving event expressed through several inseparable signs. A lamb is selected and slain, its blood marks the household, its flesh is eaten, and the people depart in trusting obedience. God is the deliverer, and Israel receives his protection and provision.

The deliverance becomes a perpetual memorial through a feast, prescribed actions, communal worship, and the instruction of children. Those whom God rescues now belong to him. The New Testament identifies Jesus as the Lamb of God and our Passover, whose saving sacrifice stands at the center of the New Covenant meal.

Voices of the Church

St. Melito of Sardis, d. c. 180

St. Melito proclaims that the mystery once displayed in the slain lamb reaches its fulfillment in Christ, who was bound, slain, buried, and raised, leading humanity from slavery into freedom.

On Pascha 65-71.

How this is cited. This is a summary of St. Melito's sustained identification of Christ with the Passover lamb and deliverer in sections 65-71, not a direct quotation.

For the group. Let the group see the Passover pattern as a preparation for Christ, not as an isolated religious custom.

St. Cyril of Jerusalem, c. 315-386

St. Cyril teaches that because Christ himself declared the bread to be his Body and the wine to be his Blood, Christians receive them with faith rather than judging only by what the senses perceive.

Mystagogical Catechesis 4.1-3.

How this is cited. This is a close summary of St. Cyril's Eucharistic teaching in the cited catechesis. It does not claim that those paragraphs provide a detailed commentary on Exodus 12.

For the group. The Passover meal prepares the group to ask how Christ gives the saving reality of his sacrifice to his people as food and drink.

St. Gaudentius of Brescia, d. c. 410

St. Gaudentius teaches that Christ fulfills the ancient Passover and leaves the sacrament of his Body and Blood to the Church, so that the one saving sacrifice is received sacramentally among God's people.

Tractate 2.1-2.

How this is cited. This is a summary of the tractate's treatment of the Passover figure and Christ's Eucharistic gift. Section numbering can vary slightly between editions.

For the group. Israel had to receive God's appointed meal, and Christians likewise receive rather than invent the form of covenant communion.

Live It This Week

Practices

1. Set aside fifteen minutes to reread Exodus 12:1-28. Circle every command, underline every promise of protection, and finish by thanking God for one specific way he has delivered you.
2. At one meal this week, pray the *Agnus Dei* slowly: 'Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.' Then name one person who needs Christ's mercy and pray for that person.
3. At your next Mass, listen for the language of sacrifice, memorial, covenant, Lamb, Body, and Blood. After receiving Holy Communion, remain in silent thanksgiving for at least two full minutes.
4. Give the first ten minutes of one morning to God before checking messages or social media. Offer him your work, relationships, plans, and fears as a concrete act of belonging.

Scripture Memory

Exodus 12:14

"This day shall be for you a memorial day, and you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD; throughout your generations you shall observe it as an ordinance for ever."

Exodus 12:14

Go Further in the Catechism

- CCC 608. Jesus is the Lamb whose sacrifice brings redemption.
- CCC 1093. The Church reads the exodus and Passover as preparation for Christ.
- CCC 1334. Passover bread recalls Israel's liberating exodus.
- CCC 1340. Jesus gives Passover its definitive meaning at the Last Supper.
- CCC 1363. Liturgical memorial proclaims and sacramentally presents God's saving work.
- CCC 1374. Christ is truly, really, and substantially present in the Eucharist.
- CCC 2258. Human life is sacred and remains under God's sovereignty.
- CCC 1022. Each person receives particular judgment at death.

Before next session. Read Exodus 13:17-15:21 before we meet again.