

An Agape.

On this day we would normally celebrate the Last Supper in which Jesus washed His disciples feet and gave us the commission to go and do likewise. Tonight, as we gather in our homes and unable to come together as a parish family perhaps we could make our evening meal on this night a real celebration of love, of fellowship and of our commitment to follow the Lord's example. This meal is called an Agape. This comes from the Greek word referring to the 'highest form of love' that of God's love for us and our love for Him expressed in our seeking a selfless love for each other. Below I have put together a simple outline for this celebration but please feel free to do with it what you will. The idea is to make of this meal something special and one in which memories of the past can be invoked and memories for the future created.

Elements that you need.

Candles, Food, Drink and People with whom we can share aforesaid.

When to celebrate.?

The evening is, obviously, the best time but what time of the evening is up to you. The Mass of the Lord's Supper will be being celebrated at 730pm on the Parish Facebook Page so if you intend to join with that you will need to decide whether before or after but if you were not intending to do so then wouldn't it be marvellous to celebrate your Agape as the great meal of love, from which all meals of love originate, is being celebrated. You can decide whether to celebrate the whole meal in the context of your prayer or just the final part. Once more, it is totally up to you.

The Agape

Reading:- Gen.1:27-31.

Lighting the first candle the person says.

This candle, lit this night, may it brighten our world, our homes and our relationships. May it renew our **FAITH** in each other and in humanity's openness to the world and to the world's Creator, Our Father God.

Lighting the second candle the person says

This candle, lit this night, may it enliven our lives, our futures and all our journeys. May it fill us with **HOPE** in our world's ability to use this time of isolation and quiet to rediscover and realign. To discover anew the Son's love for us, and to enable Him to again take centre stage.

Lighting the third candle the person says

This candle, lit this night, may it change our minds, our hearts, our souls. May it fire our vision with **LOVE** so as to warm lives grown cold through isolation or fear, through rejection or hostility. May we be more clearly sharers of the transforming power of the Spirit.

Poem:- George Herbert.

LOVE bade me welcome; yet my soul drew back,
 Guilty of dust and sin.
But quick-eyed Love, observing me grow slack
 From my first entrance in,
Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning 5
 If I lack'd anything.

'A guest,' I answer'd, 'worthy to be here:'
 Love said, 'You shall be he.'
'I, the unkind, ungrateful? Ah, my dear,
 I cannot look on Thee.' 10
Love took my hand and smiling did reply,
 'Who made the eyes but I?'

'Truth, Lord; but I have marr'd them: let my shame
 Go where it doth deserve.'
'And know you not,' says Love, 'Who bore the blame?' 15
 'My dear, then I will serve.'
'You must sit down,' says Love, 'and taste my meat.'
 So I did sit and eat.

Lord Jesus, this night you shared a meal with your
closest companions. A meal of love and welcome, of
forgiveness and acceptance. In joy and in confidence
we ask You to come and join us this night, be our guest,
this day and forever.

We sing:- Ubi caritas et amor, ubi caritas, Deus ibi est

Lord Jesus this night you washed Your disciple's feet.
Enable us to serve you in others, in our families and our
friends, in those with whom we enjoy fun and
fellowship but also those with whom we struggle.

We sing:- Ubi caritas et amor, ubi caritas, Deus ibi est.

Lord Jesus, this night you promised to be with us
always when we celebrate in memory of You. Help us
always to know this presence and rejoice in it at all
times and in all places.

We sing:- Ubi caritas et amor; ubi caritas, Deus ibi est.

Gospel:- Jn:13:1-15.

(Maybe at this time a sign of that commission could be carried out. If there are enough people perhaps you could wash each other's hands with the bowl of water that is with the candles)

At this time, if you have any thoughts on the Gospel story you could share them. Or perhaps relate some act of kindness and generosity that you have witnessed or heard about in the media during this time of difficult isolation and social distancing. Reminding ourselves of the essential goodness of the vast majority of people..

Now is time for food perhaps. And as you prepare to eat what could be better than to pray together the Lord's Prayer.

Eat, enjoy, laugh and love.

Once the meal is finished. Each person can say their own prayer aloud but below is a prayer which all could say together.

Lord Jesus, thank you for food, friendship and faith. Bless all of us gathered here today and all those with whom we would dearly love to be. Be with those who are alone and feel isolated and frightened. Send them your peace, help us to be that peace. Help us to know the joy of the Eucharist which You gave to us this night, not for us to keep to ourselves but to share. You nourish us with Your Body and Blood, help us to nourish our world. This we ask in Your Name. Amen.