

... They had ... no chance of making provision for their journey, with the Egyptians eagerly bidding them be gone, and allowing them no respite. It was 430 years since the Israelites had first dwelt in Egypt; at the end of that time, the whole muster of the Lord's people left Egypt in a single day.

*From the Gospel of Luke: 22:1-2; 22:7-20*

Now the feast of Unleavened Bread drew near, which is called the Passover. And the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how to put him to death; for they feared the people.

Then came the day of Unleavened Bread, on which the passover lamb had to be sacrificed. So Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the passover for us, that we may eat it." They said to him, "Where will you have us prepare it?" He said to them, "Behold, when you have entered the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you; follow him into the house which he enters, and tell the householder, 'The Teacher says to you, Where is the guest room, where I am to eat the passover with my disciples?' And he will show you a large upper room furnished; there make ready." And they went, and found it as he had told them; and they prepared the passover.

And when the hour came, he sat at table and the apostles with him. And he said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer; for I tell you I shall not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." And he took a cup and when he had given thanks he said, "Take this, and divide it among yourselves; for I tell you that from now on I shall not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." And he took bread, and when he had given thanks he broke it and gave it to them saying, "This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." And likewise the cup after supper, saying, "This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood."

*(Complete the selection above with the following from 1 Corinthians 11:25-26)*

"Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes."

# The Paschal Meal

## An Arrangement of the Last Supper as an Historical Drama

*For Group Participation*

*In Homes*

*In Parishes*

*In Schools*

*In Apostolic Groups*

The contents of this booklet are adapted from the booklet, *The Paschal Meal*, produced by the Grailville Art Center, Loveland Ohio, copyright 1956. The Foreword in the original version was by Vincent S. Waters, D.D., Bishop of Raleigh and President of the National Liturgical Conference. The original booklet contained the following:

Nihil obstat: Rev. Eugene Maly, S.T.D., S.S.L.,  
*Censor Deputatus.*

Imprimatur: The Most Rev. Karl J. Alter, D.D., L.L.D.  
*Archbishop of Cincinnati.*

Adaptations\* were done in accord with the final words of the introduction:

*This presentation of the paschal meal is meant, then, as a preparation for the paschal mystery, as it is renewed in every Mass, and most especially as it is celebrated on Holy Thursday and throughout Holy Week. Now that the liturgical ceremonies of Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday are restored to the evening hours, the dramatization can be carried out appropriately any time before the Holy Thursday Mass, and perhaps best on the Wednesday evening of Holy Week.*

*The presentation may also be used, of course, at any time of the year ... in coming to a deeper understanding of the Holy Sacrifice. Families interested in introducing the paschal meal in their own households may find it necessary to shorten the meal, especially where there are small children. Since this is not an official ceremony of the Church, they may feel perfectly free to abridge and adapt to suit their individual circumstances.*

We pray that this Paschal Meal will yield a greater appreciation of the context in which our Lord chose to institute the Holy Eucharist and a deeper understanding of the liturgical ceremonies of Holy Week and Easter. May our Blessed Mother Miriam, Ark of the Covenant, draw us ever closer to her son, Yeshua haMashiach. Amen.

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\*The adaptations, done for celebrations in various parishes, include: some minor changes in the instructions which are typed in *italics* throughout the booklet; a change in the selections from the Gospel of St. John beginning on page 13; inclusion of two ancient traditions: (1) *Breaking the Middle Matzo* on page 6 and *Eating the Afikoman* beginning on page 11; (2) inclusion of the *Dayenu* beginning on page 8.

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## Appendix

*From the Book of Exodus, Chapter 12:*

It was while the Israelites were still in the land of Egypt that the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, "For you, this month is to be the first month of the year. Make this proclamation to the whole assembly of Israel: On the tenth day of this month, each family, each household, is to choose out a yearling for its own use . . . It must be a male yearling lamb that you choose, with no blemish on it. These victims must be kept ready till the fourteenth day of the month, and on the evening of that day the whole people of Israel must immolate. They must take some of the blood and smear it on the doorway . . . of the house in which the lamb is being eaten. Their meat that night must be roasted over the fire, their bread unleavened; wild herbs must be all their seasoning . . . And this is to be the manner of your eating it: your loins must be girt, your feet ready shod, and every man's staff in his hand; all must be done in haste.

"It is the night of the Pasch, the Lord's passing by; the night on which I will pass through the land of Egypt, and smite every firstborn thing in the land of Egypt, man and beast alike; so I will give sentence on all the powers of Egypt, I the Lord. The blood on the houses that shelter you will be your badge; at sight of the blood, I will pass you by, and there shall be no scourge of calamity for you when I smite the land of Egypt. You are to observe this day as a memorial of the past, a day when you keep holiday in the Lord's honor, generation after generation; a rite never to be abrogated. For a whole week you will eat unleavened bread. The man who eats any leavened thing between the first day and the seventh, is lost to Israel . . ."

Then at midnight, the Lord's stroke fell; fell on every firstborn thing in the land of Egypt, whether it were the firstborn of Pharaoh, where he sat on his throne, or the firstborn of some captive woman where she lay in her dungeon; all the firstborn too, of their cattle. So Pharaoh and all his servants and all Egypt rose up at dead of night, and all over Egypt there was loud lament; in every house a man lay dead.

And it was still night when Pharaoh sent for Moses and Aaron, and said to them, "Up, out, go and offer your God the sacrifice you spoke of. You shall have your way, and take your flock and herds with you; leave me only your blessing, and be gone."

The Egyptians, too, urged the people to hasten their departure, "We are dead men else," they said. So the Israelites carried away the dough in their kneading-troughs before they had time to leaven it, tying it up in cloths and carrying it on their shoulders . . . They then set out . . . about six hundred thousand men on the march, not reckoning in the children; . . . they had flocks and herds too, and beasts of all kinds, in great numbers

bear much fruit, and so prove to be my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

“This is my commandment, that you love one another **as I have loved you.**”

## 8. The Final Blessing

*Server: The cups are filled for the fourth time, for the cup of Melchizedek. All lift their cups, the leader says in Hebrew and all repeat in English:*

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם  
בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגָּפֶן.

*Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheynu Melech Haolom  
Bohray Pree Haogawofen.*

**All:** Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who hast created the fruit of the vine.

*All drink the fourth cup of wine. The leader then concludes the ceremony with the ancient blessing from Numbers 6:24-26.*

**Leader:** The Lord bless you and keep you: The Lord make His face to shine upon you and have mercy on you! May the Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace!

**All:** So be it! So be it! So be it!

*ALL SING the final song of blessing.*

# The Paschal Meal in the Time of Christ

The paschal meal evolved over the centuries of its observance. At the time of Christ it seems to have contained the following elements, each of which had a special significance for the Jews.

First in importance was the lamb, which was sacrificed in the temple. All its blood was drained out; the commandment of the Lord that none of its bones be broken was carefully observed. It was roasted on a cross-like spit of pomegranate branches, and it reminded the Jews of the lamb whose blood had saved their ancestors at the time of the great Exodus. The name “pesach” (pasch, passover) was applied in particular to the lamb, as well as to the deliverance from Egypt and the feast in general.

*Unleavened bread* - matzos - was called the “bread of affliction” because it was made of flour and water alone. It represented the bread baked by the Jews during their hasty flight from Egypt, when there was no time for leavening. The division of the single piece of matzos among all those at the table was an expression of unity.

*Bitter herbs*, dipped in vinegar - moror - reminded them of the bitterness of their slavery and suffering in Egypt.

*Haroses*, a mixture of chopped apple, nuts, cinnamon and wine, with its reddish color recalled the mortar used by the Jews in building the palaces and pyramids of Egypt during their centuries of forced labor.

*Wine*, drunk from a common bowl, like the unleavened bread expressed the unity of the people, their brotherhood as sons of Abraham and co-heirs of the promise. Four cups are drunk during the course of the meal because the Book of Exodus records four different words, all signifying redemption, spoken by God when He sent Moses to deliver the Jews.

The *blessings over the food* were an expression of thanks to God for His gifts to them, a symbol of their recognition that all they had came from the Lord and must be given back to Him.

The *story of the deliverance from Egypt* - the Haggadah - was triumphantly retold, as related in the Book of Exodus. The word “Haggadah” means “telling.” God had commanded that this story be kept alive among them: “And thou shalt tell thy son in that day (the passover), saying: This is what the Lord did to me when I came forth out of Egypt” (Ex. 13:8).

The *Hallel psalms* were sung as a prayer of thanksgiving and praise to God for His deliverance of the Jews.

# The Paschal Meal

## 1. Lighting of the Festival Lights

**Commentator:** According to an ancient Jewish custom, it is the task of the mother to light the festival lights in every service which takes place in the Jewish home.

Besides an obvious practical purpose, this gesture symbolizes the coming of Christ the Messiah, the Light of the World. The solemn blessing of light at the beginning of the Easter vigil service finds its origin in this Jewish custom. We are reminded also of the lighted candles upon the altar, the table of our daily Eucharistic banquet.

*The mother lights the candles. ALL REMAIN STANDING.*

**Mother:** Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who hast sanctified us by Thy commandments and, commanded us to kindle the festival lights. Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who hast kept us alive and sustained us and brought us to this season. May our home be consecrated, O God, by the light of Thy countenance, shining upon us in blessing and bringing us peace.

**All:** Amen.

## 2. Kiddush, The Blessing of the Feast

*ALL ARE SEATED. On the table before each participant is a small dish of salt water and a plate containing matzo, horseradish or other bitter herb, haroses, and sprigs of some green herb. Before the leader is a bottle of wine (as well as on each table).*

**Commentator:** Every food used in the Jewish passover meal was blessed before it was eaten. Similarly, the bread and wine which are to be consecrated are blessed by the celebrant during the offertory of the Mass.

**Leader:** Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who hast chosen us above all peoples, and hast exalted us above all tongues, and hast hallowed us with Thy commandments. In love hast Thou given us, O Lord our God, seasons for gladness, holy-days, and times for rejoicing, this day of the feast of the unleavened bread, the time of our freedom, an assembly-day of holiness, a memorial to the exodus from Egypt. For Thou hast chosen us and hast sanctified us above all peoples, and Thou hast given us Thy sacred seasons for our inheritance. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, Who dost sanctify Israel and the festivals.

*Server: The first cup of wine, the cup of thanksgiving, is poured for each person at the table.*

*All lift their cups, the leader says in Hebrew and all repeat in English:*

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם  
בוֹרֵא פְרִי הַגֶּפֶן.

*Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheynu Melech Haoolom  
Bohray Pree Haogawofen.*

**All:** Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who hast created the fruit of the vine.

*All drink the cup of blessing.*

*Words of Jesus are now read from the Gospel of St. John, by a priest (preferably) or by the leader.*

13;34-35: “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

14;1-7: “Let not your hearts be troubled; believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many rooms; if it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And when I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. And you know the way where I am going.” Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going; how can we know the way?” Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but by me. If you had known me, you would have known my Father also; henceforth you know him and have seen him.”

14;12--17: “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I go to the Father. Whatever you ask in my name, I will do it, that the Father may be glorified in the Son; if you ask anything in my name, I will do it.

“If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Counselor, to be with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him; you know him, for he dwells with you, and will be in you.”

15;4-12: “Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. If a man does not abide in me, he is cast forth as a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you will and it shall be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you

body, which is given for you.” (Luke 22:19)

*All hold the particle of afikoman in their hands, while the leader says:*

**Leader:** Let us bless the Lord.

**All:** May the name of the Lord be blessed from now unto eternity.

**Leader:** Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who dost feed the entire world with Thy goodness, with grace, with loving kindness and with pity. He gives bread to all flesh, for His loving kindness endures forever. And in His great goodness, food has not been, and shall not be lacking for us, forever and ever, for the sake of His great name; for He is God, Who feeds and supports all, and does good unto all, and prepares food for all His creatures, which He did create.

**All:** Blessed art Thou, O Lord, Who feedest all Thy creatures.

*All eat the particle of afikoman.*

*Server: The third cup of wine, “the cup of blessing” is then poured.*

**Commentator:** St. Paul refers to this cup of blessing when he asks, “The chalice of benediction which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?” (1 Cor. 10:16) And St. Luke tells us that “after He had supped” Christ took a cup and offered thanks and gave it to them, and He said, “This is the chalice, the new testament in my blood, which shall be shed for you.” (Luke 22:20)

Part of Psalm 115 which follows is recited by the priest before he takes the chalice at every Mass. The chalice of salvation is the blood of Christ; God has broken our bonds through His sacrifice; He is the Holy One Whose death is precious in the sight of the Lord; together with Him we offer the perfect sacrifice of praise in the Mass.

*ALL STAND.*

**Leader:** What shall I render to the Lord: For all the things that he hath rendered to me?

**All:** I will take the chalice of salvation: And I will call upon the name of the Lord.

**Leader:** I will pay my vows to the Lord: Before all his people.

**All:** Precious in the sight of the Lord: Is the death of His saints.

**Leader:** O Lord, for I am thy servant: I am thy servant, and the son of thy handmaid.

**All:** Thou hast broken my bonds: I will sacrifice to thee the sacrifice of praise, and I will call upon the name of the Lord.

**Leader:** I will pay my vows to the Lord in the sight of all his people: In the courts of the house of the Lord, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem.

**Commentator:** Four times during the paschal meal the wine was passed. The act of distributing wine [originally from a common bowl] to all present was a symbol of unity.

At the Last Supper, Christ passed this first cup of unconsecrated wine to His apostles saying: “Take, and divide it among you: For I say to you, that I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, till the kingdom of God come.” (Luke 22:17-18). The consecration was to come later, after the meal, at the pouring of the third cup of wine, “the cup of blessing.”

*All lift their cups, the leader says in Hebrew and all repeat in English:*

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם  
בּוֹרֵא פְרֵי הַגֶּפֶן.

*Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheynu Melech Haoolom  
Bohray Pree Haogawofen.*

**All:** Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who dost create the fruit of the vine.

*All drink the first cup of wine. Then the server presents a basin, pitcher and napkin to the leader who washes his hands while saying the prayer below.*

**Commentator:** The washing of hands during the paschal meal symbolized the interior cleansing necessary for those partaking in the ritual - just as does the celebrant’s act of washing his hands during the offertory of the Mass.

It was probably at this point of the ritual that Our Lord washed the feet of His disciples, as an expression of His new commandment of love and to show the dignity of service in the new dispensation:

**Leader:** Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who hast hallowed us with Thy commandments and hast commanded us concerning the washing of hands.

*All take up from their plates the green herb, dip the herb in the salt water, symbolic of tears and sorrow, and say together:*

**ALL:** Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who dost create the fruit of the soil.

*All eat the green herb. The server then brings in a plate on which are three large matzos, pieces of unleavened bread, each wrapped in a napkin. The leader uncovers the upper piece, and lifts it on the plate.*

**Commentator:** Unleavened bread was prescribed for the eight days of the passover, to commemorate the first passover; for in the flight from Egypt, there had been no time to make leavened bread. So the bread which Our Lord used when He instituted the Eucharist was unleavened, a custom which has carried over into the Latin rite.

## Breaking the Middle Matzo – The Afikoman

**Commentator:** Three Matzos are on the table in a covering called the “matzo toff,” or “Unity.” The middle matzo is removed and broken. One half is wrapped and hidden, and later redeemed for a reward. It is called the *afikoman*, a Greek word meaning “that which is to come.” For us, this ancient tradition presents a beautiful picture. Jesus, the second person of the Holy Trinity, left Heaven and came to earth in two natures, divine and human. In His humanity he was broken for us on the Cross. Like the afikoman, He was wrapped in linen and hidden away in a tomb. On the third day He rose again, and those who find him truly receive a great reward, the greatest known to man – Eternal Life.

**Leader:** Behold! This is the bread of affliction which our fathers ate in the land of Egypt. Let all who are hungry come and eat. Let all who are in want come and celebrate the passover with us. May it be God’s will to redeem us from all evil and from all servitude.

*Leader breaks the middle matzo and another hides the afikoman.*

### 3. The Haggadah: The Story of the Deliverance from Egypt

*Server: A second cup of wine, the cup of Haggadah, is poured.*

**Commentator:** Now the story of the first passover is retold, as commanded by God in the book of Exodus. This part of the paschal meal, like the Mass of the Catechumens, is for instruction. The youngest person present - at the Last Supper this was probably St. John - asks the four traditional questions.

**Youngest:** *Will recite the four questions in Hebrew. The leader will then repeat these questions in an approximate English translation.*

Why is this night different from all other nights? On all other nights we eat either leavened or unleavened bread. Why on this night do we eat only unleavened bread?

On all other nights we eat all kinds of herbs. Why on this night do we eat especially bitter herbs?

On all other nights we do not dip herbs in any condiment. Why on this night do we dip them in salt water and haroses?

On all other nights we eat without special festivities. Why on this night do we hold this passover service?

**Leader:** The Syrians pursued our fathers who went down into Egypt and sojourned there in a very small number, and grew into a nation great and strong and of an infinite multitude. And the Egyptians afflicted us

**Commentator:** As in the case of the wine (originally shared from a common bowl), the breaking and distribution of a single piece of matzo to all present signified unity. “For we, being many, are one bread, one body, all that partake of one bread,” says St. Paul. (I Corinthians 10:17.) For the householder during the passover meal to dip a piece of bread in haroses and give it to one of the guests was a customary token of affection. This lends special poignancy to the act of Christ in dipping a piece of bread and handing it to Judas: it was a last loving appeal to him, but as the Gospel tells us: “He therefore having received the morsel, went out immediately.” (John 13:30.)

*The leader breaks the upper matzo and distributes a piece to the server of each table. All servers then break the matzo into small pieces and distribute a piece to each person at their table. Holding the matzo in their hands, all say:*

**All:** Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who hast sanctified us by Thy commandments and hast commanded us concerning the eating of unleavened bread.

*All eat the matzo.*

**Leader:** Let us combine the unleavened bread and the bitter herbs and eat them together, as it is written: “With unleavened bread and with bitter herbs, they shall eat it.”

*Each person places a piece of bitter herb and some haroses between two pieces of matzo, and all say together:*

**All:** Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who hast sanctified us by Thy commandments and has commanded us concerning the eating of bitter herbs.

## 6. The Paschal Supper Takes Place

*At the end of the meal, a most appropriate reading is the Gospel account of the institution of the Eucharist. (Luke 22.)*

### 7. Eating the Afikoman and Drinking of the Third Cup of Wine, The Cup of Blessing

*When the meal is finished, the young people search for the afikoman. The leader redeems it by giving a coin to the one who finds it.*

*The leader then breaks the afikoman and distributes it to the servers of each table. The servers then break their piece into smaller pieces and distribute a piece to each person at their table.*

**Commentator:** It was the custom to conclude the passover meal with the afikoman. It was most probably at this moment that Christ took bread and blessed and broke it and gave to them saying: “This is my

**Leader:** At the presence of the Lord the earth was moved: At the presence of the God of Jacob:

**All:** Who turned the rock into pools of water: And stony hill into fountains of waters.

**Hallelu Yah,** Praise the Lord!

## 5. The Solemn Blessing of the Food

*ALL ARE SEATED.*

**Commentator:** Here are blessed the unleavened bread and the bitter herbs, symbols of the slavery in Egypt from which God freed the Jews.

*The leader takes his cup in his hand and says:*

**Leader:** Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who hast redeemed us and hast redeemed our fathers from Egypt, and hast permitted us to live unto this night, to partake on it of the unleavened bread and the bitter herbs. So may the Lord our God and the God of our fathers, permit us to live unto other festive seasons and holy days. May Thy will be done through Jacob, Thy chosen servant, so that Thy name shall be sanctified in the midst of all the earth, and that all peoples be moved to worship Thee with one accord. And we shall sing new songs of praise unto Thee, for our redemption and for the deliverance of our souls. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, Who dost redeem Israel.

*All lift their cups, the leader says in Hebrew and all repeat in English:*

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם  
בּוֹרֵא פְרִי הַגֶּפֶן.

*Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheynu Melech Haoolom  
Bohray Pree Haogawofen.*

**All:** Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who dost create the fruit of the vine.

*All drink second cup of wine. The leader takes the upper matzo and blesses it with the following prayer:*

**Leader:**

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם  
הַמוֹצֵיא לֶחֶם מִן-הָאָרֶץ.

*Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheynu Melech Haoolom  
Hamotzee Lechem Min Ha-oretz.*

**All:** Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who dost bring forth bread from the earth.

and persecuted us, laying on us most grievous burdens. And we cried to the Lord God of our fathers, Who heard us, and looked down upon our affliction and labor and distress. And He brought us out of Egypt with a strong hand, and a stretched-out arm, with great terror, with signs and wonders.

Therefore, even if all of us were wise and well-versed in the Torah, it would still be our duty from year to year to tell the story of our deliverance from Egypt. Indeed to dwell at length on it is accounted praise-worthy.

*One of the group now reads of the deliverance from the Book of Exodus, chapter 12. An abridged version of the chapter is found in the Appendix.*

*The paschal lamb is brought in and placed before the leader at the head table.*

**Commentator:** To make clear how the deliverance from Egypt is symbolized in the paschal supper, the leader lifts each of the ceremonial foods in turn to explain their significance. This was the high point of the meal for the Jews of old; it is likewise a high point for us, the new Israel. For the lamb was the subject of ritual requirements which are full of prophetic significance: it must be a male, unblemished; it was roasted on a cross-like spit, one branch penetrating its length, the other separating the front feet; and no bone of it could be broken.

*As the leader lifts the paschal lamb, all ask:*

**All:** What is the meaning of pesach?

**Leader:** Pesach means the paschal lamb which our forefathers sacrificed to the Lord in memory of that night when the Holy One passed over the houses of our fathers in Egypt, as it is written: "When your children shall say to you: What is the meaning of this service? You shall say to them: It is the victim of the passage of the Lord, when He passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, striking the Egyptians, and saving our houses." (Exodus 12:26-27.)

*The leader uncovers the upper piece of unleavened bread and holds it up.*

**All:** What is the meaning of matzo?

**Leader:** This is the bread of affliction which our fathers took with them out of Egypt as it is written: "And they baked the meal, which a little before they had brought out of Egypt, in dough: and they made earth cakes unleavened: for it could not be leavened, the Egyptians pressing them to depart, and not suffering them to make any stay: neither did they think of preparing any meat." (Exodus 12:39.)

*The leader lifts up the bitter herb, while all ask:*

**All:** What is the meaning of moror?

**Leader:** Moror means bitter herb. We eat moror to recall that the Egyptians embittered the lives of our fathers, as it is written: “And the Egyptians hated the children of Israel, and afflicted them and mocked them: And they made their life bitter with hard works in clay, and brick, and with all manner of service wherewith they were overcharged in the works of the earth.” (Exodus 1:13-14.)

## 4. Prayer of Thanksgiving for the Deliverance from Egypt

**Commentator:** This prayer of gratitude for the deliverance from Egypt which the leader now speaks or chants is similar to the preface of the Mass. And the hallel psalms - the great psalms of praise - which all chant in reply, are like the sanctus, a hymn of joyful praise. Hallel, our English alleluia, means literally, “Praise the Lord.” These psalms were often prayed by Our Lord.

*As a preface to the Hallel psalms, the leader, lifting his cup of wine, says:*

**Leader:** In every generation each one ought to regard himself as though he had personally come out of Egypt, as it is written: “And thou shalt tell thy son in that day, saying: This is what the Lord did to me when I came forth out of Egypt.” (Exodus 13:8.)

Therefore, it is our duty to thank, praise, laud, glorify, extol, bless, exalt and adore Him Who did all of these miracles for our fathers and for ourselves. He has brought us forth from slavery to freedom, from sorrow to joy, from mourning to festive day, from darkness to a great light, and from subjection to redemption. Let us then recite before Him a new song.

*The leader replaces his cup of wine. The Leader recites “If...” and all respond “Dayenu”*

### Dayenu (“It would have been enough for us”)

If He had merely rescued us from Egypt, but had not punished the Egyptians **Dayenu**

If He had merely punished the Egyptians, but had not destroyed their gods **Dayenu**

If He had merely destroyed their gods, but had not slain their firstborn **Dayenu**

If He had merely slain their firstborn, but had not given us their property **Dayenu**

If He had merely given us their property, but had not opened the sea for us **Dayenu**

If He had merely opened the sea for us, but had not brought us through

on dry ground **Dayenu**

If He had merely brought us through on dry ground, but had not drowned our oppressors **Dayenu**

If He had merely drowned our oppressors, but had not supplied us in the desert for forty years **Dayenu**

If He had merely supplied us in the desert for forty years, but had not fed us with manna **Dayenu**

If He had merely fed us with manna, but had not given us the Sabbath **Dayenu**

If He had merely given us the Sabbath, but had not brought us to Mt. Sinai **Dayenu**

If He had merely brought us to Mt. Sinai, but had not given us the Law **Dayenu**

If He had merely given us the Law, but had not brought us to the land of Israel **Dayenu**

If He had merely brought us to the land of Israel, but had not built us the Temple **Dayenu**

**Leader:** How much more then, should we love God for all that He has done for us. For He did all these things and more. As disciples of Jesus, we can add a few more Dayenus.

If God had merely come to be with us, but had not died to free us from slavery to sin **Dayenu**

If He had merely died to free us from sin, but had not risen again to bring us into the promised land of heaven **Dayenu**

It would have been enough for us, but not for Him. And, if God had merely given us Jesus on the Cross, but had not given us His Body and Blood in the Eucharist, that too may have been enough for us. But He did so much more!

### Psalm 114

**All: Hallelu Yah,** Praise the Lord!

**Leader:** When Israel went out of Egypt: The house of Jacob from a barbarous people:

**All:** Judea was made his sanctuary: Israel his dominion.

**Leader:** The sea saw and fled: Jordan was turned back.

**All:** The mountains skipped like rams: And the hills like the lambs of the flock.

**Leader:** What ailed thee, O thou sea, that thou didst flee: And thou, O Jordan, that thou wast turned back?

**All:** Ye mountains, that ye skipped like rams: And ye hills, like lambs of the flock?