

## November 4, 2020 - Associates Gathering

**BEFORE SAYING OPENING PRAYER:** I chose the Our Father because it is a prayer I have turned to especially in this pandemic, lifting the needs of our world to the Father. Let us pray for our family and friends, our SASV Family, our Church, our world; praying slowly and intentionally, phrase by phrase, with Jesus, and Mary of Assumption Hope, with the Saints, and the Souls of the Faithful Departed.

**Opening Prayer: OUR FATHER**

**Opening Song: One Bread, One Body - John Micahel Talbot**

**Liz will read Scripture** (Luke 22:14-20)

**Reflection:** Since November is a month of Thanksgiving and of all souls, the title "The Feast of Heaven," from the book Walking the Sacred Path by Dan Schutte, caught my eye. The passage from Luke describing Jesus at the Passover Feast with the apostles brought up images of Thanksgiving meals. This year, Thanksgiving gatherings will be different. Some may be limited to immediate families, or smaller numbers, or unfortunately, there may be those who are alone, unable to join with others or have friends and loved ones be with them. We will remember those who have passed on, those who we loved and who touched our lives, especially thinking of our friend Paul Plante. Because we miss their presence, what they brought to our relationship, or what we did or enjoyed together, our hearts may be conflicted with thanksgiving and sadness, but we give thanks for the blessing of them.

Yet, with all these changes, we still **know** we have much to give thanks for. Our thanks to God may be for our family and friends not coming down with Covid-19; being grateful for our health, or having enough food, shelter, or a job. Many have helped others less fortunate with food, money or volunteering services, checking on and keeping in touch with others--we've seen the best in people and pray this concern continues because loving our neighbor as ourselves is God's command. Meister Eckhart, the German mystic, is often remembered for saying, "If the only prayer you ever say is **Thank You**, that would be enough;" so, in thanksgiving for

all that comes from God, we say "Thank You," even during very difficult circumstances and times.

At the Passover meal, as Jesus gives to his friends and to us, the gift of himself, His Body and His Blood, we recognize how much we missed the opportunity to receive the Eucharist this year. Even now, as many must safely distance themselves from Church liturgies, our love, desire and longing is heightened to be in communion with the Lord at His Banquet and with His Body of Christ. The word "Eucharist," from the Greek, means "Thanksgiving" - Thanksgiving for Jesus' offering of Himself in His Body and Blood in the simple, humble form of bread and wine. Yet, we give thanks that we can nurture this relationship of Jesus' self-gift of love to us with meditation, reflection, praise or adoration whether in our hearts or in person.

In this Year of the Eucharist, I read of a teenager named Carlo Acutis, who had great love for the Eucharist, and visited the sites of many Eucharistic miracles and then built a website that promoted Eucharistic miracles. He died in 2006 and was designated "Blessed" just this past October. Carlo would tell people that "the more we receive the Eucharist, the more we will become like Jesus, so that on this earth we will have a foretaste of heaven." The writer suggests: "Imagine how different you might anticipate your coming to Mass, and, I will add, even Mass on TV with Spiritual Communion, when thinking you will experience a foretaste of heaven by receiving the Eucharist."

**Silence:** Now, we will have about 10 minutes of silence to reflect on something God brings to mind, our experience with the Eucharist, **or the question below, which is: Are there ways that we bring about thankfulness or gratitude, especially when we feel sad, hurt, blamed, upset, anxious, etc.?**

**Sharing:** Eileen Luddy will call on people to share.