

## The Seder

**The practice of celebrating the Seder Supper in parishes and by groups within the Diocese of Fort Worth is to be discontinued immediately.**

The Seder, as a Jewish family liturgy, is a sacred ritual still deeply meaningful to Jews everywhere. For faithful Jews, the Seder is not simply a re-enactment of the events of Passover, but to become mystically present at those events. For Catholics to co-opt this sacred ritual is both insensitive and disrespectful of the Jewish tradition. Just as people of the Jewish faith have their own sacred religious practices and celebrations, we Catholics would find it disrespectful for Jews to re-enact our Sacraments and Sacred Liturgies.

We are an Easter people. Our Christian faith teaches us that Jesus came 'not to abolish the Law or the Prophets...but to fulfill them'. (Matthew 5:17) The Paschal mystery, the saving Life, Death, Resurrection and Ascension of Christ, celebrated in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is the completion, the fulfillment of the Old Covenant law. The Mass, instituted by Christ at the Last Supper, is the 'Seder', the order of service, which celebrates the divinity of Christ. The Seder of the Old Covenant does not recognize Christ as the expected Messiah. In celebrating the Seder of the Old Covenant, we are denying (by our actions) that Christ, our Savior, is the expected Messiah who completed the Law.

In his Eucharistic hymn, Pange Lingua Gloriosi, St. Thomas Aquinas reminds us: On the night of that Last Supper, seated with His chosen band, He the Pascal victim eating, first fulfills the Law's command; then as Food to His Apostles gives Himself with His own hand. ... Down in adoration falling, Lo! the sacred Host we hail; Lo! o'er ancient forms departing, newer rites of grace prevail; faith for all defects supplying, where the feeble senses fail.

Within Holy Week and the Easter Triduum, we are invited to participate in the solemn liturgies that celebrate the fullness of our Catholic faith. What more could we presume to add?